

Descriptor: 1.6 Strategies to support full participation of students with disability

- **Highlighted in yellow:** Strategies that the organisation has provided to support students with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity (ADHD).
- **Highlighted in blue:** Appropriate legislation requirements.

Dear John Smith (Principal),

I am writing to file a complaint on behalf of my son, James Jones, who is a grade 3 student at your school. This complaint is regarding the refusal of his enrolment for next year due to his behaviour management issues that are caused from his Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD). I am very disappointed about how the school is treating my son. ADHD particularly affects a child's behaviour, therefore he may be disruptive at times, find it hard to pay attention or sit still, however with support from teachers and you James would be able to live a normal life by participating within the school environment (Better Health Channel, 2015).

I would firstly like to bring your attention to what social justice is. "Social justice is about equality and fairness between human being" (FSG Australia, 2015). It is about treating all people the same and acknowledging that all people have the same human rights that must be respected. James is certainly not receiving the same rights and opportunities as the other students within the school due to his disability, as you are denying him the right to an 'education'. In regards to education, inclusion is about providing support and catering for all students. Cologon (2013) states that "inclusive education is about every child's right to be a valued member of society and to be provided with equal opportunities to actively participate in and contribute to all areas of learning" (p.20). **The Convention on the rights of the child (CROC) is one of the main human rights treaty for children (Human Rights & Equal Opportunity Commission, 2007). Their role is to make sure all students are respected, have the right to life, development and live free from discrimination (Australian Human Rights Commission, n/a). The Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission Act 1986, also has a major role in promoting and protecting children's rights. (Australian Human Rights Commission, n/a & Human Rights & Equal Opportunity Commission, 2007). The commission indicates that there should not be a gap in education between students with a disability and students without a disability (Australian Human Rights Commission, 2011). They both state that children with a disability should not be discriminated**

Comment [JV1]:

The Convention on the rights of the child, aims to treat all students with respect and enables them to live a life free from discrimination.

The Human Rights and Equal Opportunities Commission Act, also has a role in promoting and protecting children's rights.

This letter demonstrates that I have knowledge of legislative requirements that support participation and learning of students with a disability.

against, that every child has a right to life and has the right to quality education (United Nations Human Rights, 2015).

People should not feel restricted due to their disability. Students with a disability should have the same opportunities and rights as those without, such as the right to learn (Foreman & Arthur-Kelly, 2014). All students have the right to learn as all children can learn and are capable of learning. It is the role of the teacher to cater for each individual needs so they are able to provide him or her with a quality education (Foreman & Arthur-Kelly, 2014). Under the Victorian teaching profession code and conduct, it states that teachers must provide opportunities for all students so they are able to learn and reach their full potential. It clearly states that teachers demonstrate this by “knowing their students well, respecting their individual differences and catering for their individual abilities” (Victoria Institute of teaching, 2008). Having a disability should not hold the student back from living and participating in the community, and specifically not prevent them from engaging in their local school environment (Foreman & Arthur-Kelly, 2014). Students should be able to attend their local student, and live a normal life just like the students without a disability.

The National Safe schools framework has made me aware that a safe, supportive and positive learning environment is essential as it promotes students wellbeing and respectful relationships. It is very important that the schools promote and maintain a positive school environment as “students have a fundamental right to learn in a safe, supportive environment and to be treated with respect” (MCEECDYA, 2011 and SCSEEC, 2013). Within the framework there are nine elements identified to help schools implement and maintain a safe, positive environment. One of the elements stated where positive behaviour management. I believe this element is very important as there is evidence that a positive, inclusive learning environment can decrease behavioural problems in children as they are able to develop positive qualities from others students (Cologon, 2013). There are many simple actions that can be put in place to promote a positive learning environment; these include recognising positive behaviour such as

Comment [JV2]:

These are some of the teaching strategies that can be implemented in the classroom for a child with a disability.

Teachers need to know teaching strategies that support participation and learning of students with a disability so they are able to give them a quality education, that enables students to thrive and reach their full potential.

giving a student immediate praise or a reward, having classroom rules, routines, giving out clear instructions and clear and consistent consequences (Foreman & Arthur-Kelly, 2014). I believe a behaviour plan should have been put in place for James that focused on one or two behaviours at a time. Once he demonstrated the behaviour, immediate feedback or a reward should have been given to him so he is aware with what he has done right. If these simple steps are put in place, I truly believe James will be less likely to demonstrate disruptive behaviour.

There are many legislations that support students with a disability and promote inclusion.

The Equal Opportunities Act, 2010, helps promote inclusion, as their role is to eliminate discrimination and promote equal opportunities such as the freedom to participate in life; this includes education (Department of Education and Training, 2015 and The Equal Opportunities Act 2010, Part 1:Section 3). The Equal Opportunities Act 2010 (Part 4: Section 38) states that schools must not discriminate against students when making decisions about enrolment. They also must not discriminate against a student by limiting access to facilities and services that the school offers. The Disability Standards for Education 2005 also states legal requirements for education under the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 1992. The legal requirements ensure all students with a disability have an equal right to an education, educational opportunities and decision making just like students without a disability (Department of Education and Training, 2014 and Education Standards, 2006). The Disability Standards for Education 2005, indicates that a person with a disability can enroll in a school on the same basis as a student who doesn't have a disability. Schools must treat students with a disability the same as students without a disability when making a decision regarding enrolment. It also states that the students are able to participate in activities or programs, use facilities and services that are provided by the school on the same basis as students who do not have a disability (Department of Education and Training, 2014 and Foreman & Arthur-Kelly, 2014). Your school is certainly not meeting the requirements as you are refusing James enrolment due to behavioural issues caused by his disability. You are not treating disabled students equally to those who are without a disability.

Comment [JV3]:

This letter demonstrates that I have knowledge of legislative requirements that support participation and learning of students with a disability, as I have displayed that I have an understanding of the Equal Opportunities Act (2010) and The Disability Standards for Education (2005).

Values education is a very effective program that must be present in all schools. There are many benefits of teaching children core values. Values education is very beneficial as it teaches children appropriate attitudes and behaviours, this helps decrease behaviour problems in students as they are aware of how they are expected to act with people around them. Values education also promotes an inclusive, positive environment, where everyone has a sense of belonging and is free from discrimination. Positive learning environments improve student engagement, wellbeing and promote positive relationships amongst peers and colleagues. Teaching students about core values increases self-confidence and self-esteem. Students are able to be good responsible citizens that are able to make decisions about their lives. The National Framework for Values Education is a very effective framework that helps to improve value education in Australian schools (Department of Education, Science and Training, 2005). Within the framework, there is a vision to improve values education; eight guiding principles to support schools implement values education and a set of nine very effective values for Australian schools (Department of Education, Science and Training, 2005). I believe that the value of inclusion needs urgent improvement in your school, as students with a disability are certainly not being included. If core values were taught and demonstrated at your school, James and I would not be in the position we are in today.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Samantha Jones

Comment [JV4]: Values education is an effective program that should be present in all schools, as it teaches students about appropriate attitudes and behaviours.

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