

# ADAPTIVE EDUCATION

## Guiding Adolescents Towards Healthy Adulthood



Cornerstone has had a well-established and well-resourced Adaptive Education programme for a long time.

At Cornerstone our focus is primarily on the integration of students into the classroom therefore the majority of our support focus is classroom based. We also offer withdrawal support on a needs basis, including students being involved in focus classes in the areas of literacy and numeracy.

## WHAT IS ADAPTIVE EDUCATION?

Special Education at Cornerstone College is called Adaptive Education and encompasses the full spectrum of needs including students with diagnosed disabilities, students with specific learning difficulties and gifted and talented students. As well as assisting with transitions both into secondary school and from school to work.

Special Education is specially designed instruction to meet the unique learning needs of students who require individualised education programs. Adaptive Education can be delivered in a variety of settings based on the student's needs.

The Middle School Learning Centre, Paideia, includes a purpose-built Adaptive Education Centre with a kitchen, sensory room and meeting areas. Students in the Senior School are supported from this centre as well as through our ongoing use of flexible options particularly SACE flexible learning, external transition programs and VET programs.

## GIFTED AND TALENTED STUDENTS

Gifted Education aims to extend students who have been identified through the information gathering processes already described. They are invited to participate in a program aptly named 'STRETCH' - Students Requiring Extension Through Challenges.

Students may be extended by:

- In-class differentiation by the class teacher with assistance from Adaptive Education staff
- Participation in the 'STRETCH' programme using an online classroom - collaborating with peers and undertaking extension modules of work
- Invitation to participate in extra-curricular programmes eg. Tournament of Minds
- Special programmes run by the 'STRETCH' Coordinator
- Personalised extension projects to meet an individual's needs
- Accessing various external programmes as they arise eg. university invitations to special programmes, gifted and talented programmes, subject specific clubs etc.
- Acceleration – eg. participation in Extension Maths classes in their study
- Linking with a mentor in a specific area of interest



## TRANSITION

Cornerstone has a well-established Middle Years Transition Programme to support students transitioning to high school. This incorporates significant data collection, staff training, school visits, family meetings and pre-planning for students identified as requiring Adaptive Education support.

## IDENTIFICATION

The identification process has usually already begun once the student starts education in a high school setting. Handover of information from the primary school is essential in the transition process. The Transition Coordinator visits the primary school of identified students to observe them in their familiar setting to enable us to gain a better understanding of their learning needs. Extra transition, above the norm for the year level cohort, is offered to students identified as those who would benefit from additional time to settle into high school routines and orientate themselves with a new school setting. This could include:

- Extra school visits
- Further observations of the student in their primary school
- Family meetings
- Meetings with their current primary school teacher.

Students are identified by the Adaptive Education team as needing extra support by utilising a variety of sources: professional reports provided by parents, reviewing student records, previous school reports including grades, NAPLAN results and other test scores. They may also recommend further professional testing such as psychological, speech pathology, hearing or vision assessments. Parents will be invited to a meeting, ideally consisting of teachers and possibly the counsellor or member of the Senior Leadership Team, to discuss the student's needs.

Once students have started, further identification is possible.

- Parents can request help for their child either in person or in writing via email.
- Teachers can identify students needing help and request support from Adaptive Education staff.

Parent consent needs to be obtained for information to be gathered from outside agencies and external support to be sought for the student.



## SUPPORT

Support is offered in mainstream classes, by withdrawal and through the establishment of focus and life skill classes.

In-class support is offered to students as a non-intrusive method of support. A Learning Support Officer works in the class room, alongside the teacher to provide support for students. They unobtrusively check for understanding, help with breaking tasks into smaller steps and assist the teacher with relevant curriculum modification where necessary.

Focus classes are run in Maths and English to support students struggling specifically in those areas. These are supported by LSO staff in the management of resources, working with small groups and curriculum modification.

Life skills classes include cooking, vegetable garden, social skills, shopping and modified curriculum classes.