A BRIEF HISTORY

St. Patrick’s Special School opened in 1944 near St. Patrick’s Church, Grote Street, Adelaide to provide education for children with special learning needs. Two Dominican Sisters undertook a specialised course for the teaching of intellectually disabled children. The accommodation was modest and occupied one room, especially built on to the clubrooms next to St. Patrick’s Church.

After another move to West Terrace in 1951, the school moved to the Parish school buildings in Warwick Avenue, Dulwich (formerly St. Peter Claver’s Primary School) in 1969. The new facility consisted of three classrooms, hall, kitchen and spacious play area.

At this time the school catered for 15 pupils. By 1970 this had increased to 32, and in 1971 the school had an enrolment of 39 pupils. From the outset, although under the Catholic Education auspice, enrolments have always been interdenominational.


In 1982 a new complex was blessed and opened by Archbishop Gleeson and three years later, further renovations and extensions have enabled additional services to be offered at St. Patrick’s Special School.

Between 2007 - 2009 St Patrick’s has undergone major refurbishment. The school now offers modern and up to date facilities which contribute greatly to the quality of our education program.

ORIENTATION TO LEARNING

St. Patrick’s caters for students with intellectual disabilities aged 5-20 years. We offer a developmentally appropriate curriculum that encompasses the Birth - 5 learning outcomes of the South Australian Curriculum Standards and Accountability Framework (SACSA). We also draw on a range of our curriculum frameworks including Regency Park, SPEC, NSW Life Skills, Carolina Curriculum and Mt. Evelyn Curriculum

Each student’s learning is brought into focus by a specifically targeted Individual Education Plan (IEP) developed each semester in dialogue with parents, Allied Health and teaching staff and, where necessary, other relevant agency staff. This plan is structured around the following learning areas:

- Communication
- Social Skills
- Skills for Independent Living
- Sensory Motor skills.
- Work education (Senior secondary)

In the Senior years (16-20 years), a key focus for student learning is making a successful transition into an appropriate post school setting. Hence Work Education is included as a fifth learning area in each student’s IEP.

Student learning is also informed by a range of other educational plans including:

- Moving and Handling Plans
- Behaviour Education Plans
- Oral Eating and Drinking Plans.
- Health care Plans
These are developed in consultation with parents and relevant external agencies on the basis of individual need.

Student learning is planned, programmed, assessed and reported by the class teacher in consultation with Allied Health staff. In addition, a number of Education Support Officers support teachers and Allied Health staff in the implementation of a quality learning environment for students.

Assessment & reporting is ongoing and directed toward enhancing student learning. It is individualised, goal focused, descriptive of the development of specific skills and competencies, and strives to foster the involvement of students in understanding their own learning. Parents receive written reports about their son or daughter’s learning achievements in relation to the IEP at the end of each semester.

On graduation, students transition into either a Day Options program or a Business Enterprise Centre and are supported to do this successfully in their final years of schooling.

ALLIED HEALTH SERVICES

St. Patrick’s employs both an Occupational Therapist and Speech Pathologist on a full-time basis. Both therapists work across all levels of the school to provide an integrated multi-disciplinary service to all students. Therapy is conducted in small group and classroom settings to meet the specific needs of each student. Both therapists also collaborate with teaching staff to develop Individual learning plans In consultation with other staff, Allied Health staff are responsible for Moving and Handling Plans, & Oral, Eating and Drinking Plans.

**Occupational Therapy**

Occupational therapy is based on the guiding principles of maintaining and increasing skills, and adapting environments to meet the unique needs of St Patrick’s students so they can become as independent and functionally, emotionally, physically and developmentally capable as possible. Occupational Therapy uses student-centered, sensory integration, collaborative approaches within the classroom setting to ensure students have the best learning environments available for their educational needs.

**Sensory Room**

Our sensory room is a therapeutic environment which uses sensory integration principles to enhance student participation in the curriculum. Sensory integration is a normal, neurological, developmental process which begins in the womb and continues throughout one’s life. The Sensory Room at St Patrick’s focuses on exploration and play through the primary senses (touch, movement, proprioception, hearing, taste, and smell). This is achieved through specialised equipment, assessment and programming. The Sensory room provides a unique learning environment and most importantly addresses student’s individual sensory needs. All students at St Patrick’s benefit from a sensory room as sensory integration underpins the skills needed for learning such as social interaction, motor skill development, focusing and attending.

**Speech Pathology**

Speech Pathologists manage delay/ disorders in the fields of:

- Speech (articulation- the mechanics of sound, word, phrase, sentence production and alternatives to voice output)
- Language (understanding and producing language, attention, memory and problem solving, psycho-social aspects)
- Fluency (speech rhythm, prolongations, blocks, stuttering)
- Voice (pitch, vocal quality)
- Swallowing (Congenital, developmental or acquired dysfunction)
Because effective communication is essential to learning, working and enjoying relationships this is given very strong emphasis at St. Patrick’s. Our intention is to enable students to have the capacity to communicate utilising a raft of strategies. Whilst verbal communication is a priority, many of our students are pre-intentional communicators. Hence our Speech Pathologist collaborates with staff and families to facilitate communication and choice making through augmentative and alternative communication such as PECS (Picture Exchange Communication System), signing, communication boards and high tech. devices. The Speech Pathologist is also involved in oral eating and drinking care.

**BEHAVIOUR EDUCATION**

The school is committed to working closely with parents and relevant agencies to nurture and support positive relationships amongst students. Our approach to the behaviour education of students is informed by the characteristics of our students who typically exhibit a wide variety of cognitive and communicative patterns, significant impairments in communication and socialization, restricted and repetitive patterns of interest and activity, delayed or absent speech and language and unique, complex and challenging behaviours.

The school works proactively to educate students about their behaviour at every opportunity. We understand that all behaviour is an attempt to satisfy needs and we provide students with support to learn to meet their needs in socially appropriate ways.

**BUS TRANSPORT**

**Before and after school:**
Our school provides the service of three buses to transport students to and from school each day for those unable to use public transport. The route for these buses is restricted to a certain geographical area. Where possible, the older students will be encouraged to learn to catch public transport.

**During school hours:**
Three school buses are used throughout the day to transport students to and from the various settings used to implement their curriculum.

**DENTAL & IMMUNISATION**

- Free dental care is available from the Linden Park Dental Clinic Ph. 83798707
- The Eastern Health Authority (EHA) on behalf of the Local Council provides a School Immunisation Program at St Patrick’s Special School.

**INTEGRATION**

Some students will be involved in various integration activities with other schools. When considered appropriate, and in consultation with parents, some students may also attend a mainstream school on a part-time basis.

**PARENTS & FRIENDS**

Every effort is made to encourage open communication between parents and the school. We are conscious of the importance of parents and staff working closely together to meet the best interests of each student. Parents are encouraged to attend Parents and Friends Association meetings, and be involved in fundraising activities. Dates of meeting are advertised in the school newsletter.
PUPIL FREE DAYS

Unless otherwise specified, pupil free days occur on the following days for the purpose of staff professional learning.

Term 1: last day of term
Term 2: first & last day of term
Term 3: first & last day of term
Term 4: first day of term

SCHOOL FEES

The fees are determined annually by the School Board and are subject to CPI. The fee schedule per year for 2014 is:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tuition fees</td>
<td>$1,635</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bus fees (transport to and from school)</td>
<td>$1,284</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bus excursion fees</td>
<td>$ 261</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resource fee</td>
<td>$ 222</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ICT levy</td>
<td>$   75</td>
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<tr>
<td>Consumables</td>
<td>$   60</td>
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<tr>
<td>General excursion fees</td>
<td>$   75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enrichment day</td>
<td>$   45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voluntary donation for bus replacement (tax deductible)</td>
<td>$  200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Additional costs swimming, horseriding &amp; cooking (where applicable)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SCHOOL HOURS

School Office: 8:30 – 3:30 Monday – Friday.

Students are supervised from 8:30 - 3:10.
Class time is from 9:00 – 3:00

SCHOOL LUNCHES

Students may order their lunch once a week on a Friday. Lunches are organised with the local deli called ‘Millies’.

SCHOOL UNIFORM

Students are expected to wear the school uniform which is as follows:

Boy’s summer: Navy school shorts, school polo shirt and navy hat
Boy’s winter: Navy school track pants, school polo shirt, navy or white skivvy and school rugby top
Girl’s summer: Navy school skort or shorts, school polo shirt and navy hat
Girl’s winter: Navy school track pants, school polo shirt, navy or white skivvy and school rugby top

Footwear & bag: As best suited for the individual student.

*Uniforms are ordered through the school office.*