

Future Planning around our critical challenge is ... responding to special needs through a 'disability unit'

The Focus of Leadership

The Focus of the Change Team

School Plan: Disability Unit

<p>Our critical challenge is ...</p>	
<p>Can you describe the critical challenge or opportunity to King's ...</p>	<p>Over the last few years we have had 1 or 2 students each year whose learning needs fall outside of what 'classroom differentiation' and curriculum adjustments (such as assessment) can cater for, especially beyond Year 5 or 6. These students often need a tailored curriculum with a focus on 'skills for daily living' and learning goals specific for the student. At the same time, parents are reluctant to choose a more specialist setting as this involves a change of school and they have chosen King's for reasons of Christian education and all the 'good things' that occur. The challenge is to provide a better environment and more suitable programs and delivery so that students from Years 6 up, with a mild / moderate disability and/or social impairment, can better achieve the Ends through a disability unit.</p>
<p>Why?</p>	
<p>Moral Imperative – Why should we change? Why is this critical?</p>	<p>There is a need – students with a mild / moderate intellectual disability fall behind academic 'benchmarks'. This 'gap' is not rectified by the usual curriculum modifications. This becomes more obvious and critical beyond the primary years, eg beyond year 5 or 6.</p> <p>This 'gap' can also be compounded by social needs as students themselves find it difficult to meet social norms of their age group. Social isolation / reduced sense of belonging often result.</p> <p>Thus 'academic' and 'social' ends are compromised.</p> <p>Bridging this gap generally involves a different curriculum and a unit / base / special class setting where social needs are better met.</p> <p>This need is not confined to King's. Several of the local NGS would face similar issues in meeting needs of very small numbers of children. A unit of up to 20 children in a spread from Year 6 to Year 12 would provide the setting and throughput for a School to make provisions. Students from other schools would be able to join, indeed this is desirable.</p>
<p>Operational need – Why must we change?</p>	<p>We are not meeting this need as well as we could should there be a specialist setting. Teachers are not able, within a class of 28 or 29 to design and implement individualised curriculum in a thorough manner.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Honouring the commitment we make when we enrol these student that we will cater for their needs • It can appear to parents, when we suggest that their child find another setting, that we have an 'academic' agenda that does not think outside the box.. that we only concerned about results not kids. • Christian education for all....the 'whom so ever' • Social - most of these students feel safe at Kings and having to move schools at year 8 is quite threatening

Who?	
Sponsorship and governance – Who feels strongly about this? Who ‘should’ be involved?	Existing King’s parents feel strongly that King’s ‘should’ be able to look after their child through to Year 12. There is a shortage of ‘special school’ places and thus not many options for parents in this geographic area. Several staff would have a passion to work in this area and/or would be able to support the unit. The unit would be one of the departments along with JS, MS and SS and leadership would be carried by the Director of the unit, through to the Principal and thus the Board.
Champions – Who can make this happen?	
Where?	
Vision – Where do we want to be?	In 5 years a viable unit / special classes. Look and feel like a home – bathroom, kitchen, 2 learning areas, access to mainstream (where appropriate eg PE, Art etc), and to school facilities such as gardens / ovals / library. I can imagine the unit as a separate building or clear distinguished base, not in the middle of the school but not ‘out the back’ either. A separate ‘safe’ area where they can be at recess and lunch , however access to the mainstream areas if they wish
Reality – Where are we now?	We have some programs in place eg community access. We have some experience in running these at yrs 6/7 level going back to Adriana Bennett.
What?	
Blind spots – What are our options and priorities? What is going on under the surface?	Although a joint venture is an option to be explored, at this stage I imagine a King’s unit that, subject to numbers, can accept students from Year 6 or 7 from a variety of schools. Key decisions regarding development of criteria and application process. The requirements of the DDA need consideration, however the target group are those for whom the gap between their ability and age cohort is too great for the usual curriculum modifications to be effective.
Root causes – What is really behind this?	
How?	
Impact – How will it be? How do we make this happen?	A life-skills based focus in literacy, numeracy and science and general life skills such as laundry and cooking. Integration with mainstream in some areas where this is feasible and in keeping with individual education plans. Some community access to develop life skills. Literacy in the community approach at Year 11/12 - curriculum specifically developed for those with an intellectual disability. Community links for work opportunities – including church organisations / café/ op shops etc. I imagine a unit of ~ 160m2 (8m2 per student) accessible at lunch recess and within proximity of mainstream areas.

<p>Solutions – How will it work?</p>	<p>Students might be gathered into 2 groups depending on curriculum. In this sense a little like 2 ‘special classes’, with the unit as a home base and students where useful taking other classes in the School or at training organisations. A pedagogy that is based on individual learning styles and strengths</p> <p>Staffing of 1 teacher and 1 SSO per 8 – 10 students (DECD units have 1:10). (Total staffing costs ~ \$300,000 pa, operations ~ \$50,000 + loan repayments. Income ~ \$260,000 – \$280,000)</p>
<p>When?</p>	
<p>Planned delivery – When will change be sustainable?</p>	<p>A transition to full capacity over the next 5 years (?) Feasibility study, engagement with interested partners -> business model-> Board go-ahead ->communication and promotion.</p>
<p>Final deliverables – When will we finish?</p>	<p>Sustained programs, reputation, attractive environment, graduates with outcomes (vocational too). Successful evaluation.</p>