

SCHOOL SPORT VICTORIA

INCLUSION POLICY - STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

RATIONALE OF POLICY

School Sport Victoria (**SSV**) supports the right of ALL students to access the same opportunities to school sport as their peers. All schools and school sporting structures have a legal and a moral obligation to provide the same access, where appropriate, to school sport for all students regardless of gender identity, sex, disability, race or culture.

All students benefit socially, emotionally and physically by participating in sport and evidence shows that improvements in academic results occur when students actively participate in sport. Participation in school sport can be an introduction to ongoing participation in sport outside of, and after, a student leaves school. This can have lifelong positive mental and physical health outcomes.

This policy focuses on what you may need to consider when ensuring the inclusion of students living with a disability in schools sports.

AIM OF POLICY

The aim of this policy is to assist schools when:

- making decisions about the individuals and teams who will participate in SSV competitions; and
- running sporting events and activities at the local or inter-school level.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

SSV will work with State Sporting Organisations (**SSOs**) and the existing school sport structures to ensure that opportunities are provided for all students to play sport in settings where students living with a disability compete with abled bodied students and in settings where they compete against other students living with a disability.

SSV believes that the first level of entry to school sport is critical and must be inclusive. This level provides valuable integrated opportunities for all students to play sport with their peers. At primary school, this is at a District level and at secondary school, this is through Divisions. There are a number of ways in which adjustments can be made to support students living with a disability accessing school sports. For example, it may be reasonable for schools to make modifications to the rules at the first level of entry to improve inclusion for all students or for a student living with a disability to use modified sporting equipment. This can be done at a local level, and between schools, using a common sense approach to competition.

For a specific sports rules where modifications are necessary, please refer to the SSV website (www.ssv.vic.edu.au) and look for “Sport Rules – Primary School Competition or Secondary School Competition”.

If a school has any questions about the adjustments or supports that can be put in place for students, they should contact the SSV Operations Manager for advice.

SSV is also committed to providing opportunities for students living with a disability to compete in SSV run competitions and will work with the Special School Sports Associations, SSOs and the Australian Paralympic Committee to ensure that competition opportunities will exist for students living with a disability, and that there will be pathways between school and community sport.

Each SSV sport’s sub-committee will decide what competition opportunities should be set up for students living with a disability. The SSV Disability Advisory Committee will inform and support the sports specific sub-committees and SSV staff.

IMPLEMENTATION

1. This policy reflects current practice.
2. The policy can be found on the SSV website
3. All schools and all coordinators will be notified of any changes via the SSV website, Social Media and the SSV eBulletin

ENDORSEMENT

This policy was endorsed by the School Sport Victoria Board of Management on February 2018.

REVIEW

This policy is to be reviewed every two (2) years.