



## Statement of Philosophy



The Sycamore School was founded by Brisbane parents Cindy and Cameron Corrie, who set upon a journey to find a better future for their son who was diagnosed with autism. The search for an educational environment that celebrated their son, educated their son, and supported his needs began.

The idea of creating a unique educational experience for children on the autism spectrum came to them after years of research, community engagement and consultation, advice and support. They embarked on a journey that would change their lives, as well as the lives of many young people on the spectrum and their families in their local community. The culmination of that journey became a reality with The Sycamore School opening its doors to the ASD community on the 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2017.

## Vision

At The Sycamore School, we endeavour to improve the lives of people living with Autism Spectrum Disorder by providing holistic educational options and settings, as well as supporting their families, care networks, and community.

The Sycamore School Community Principles are: *Acceptance, Wellbeing, Diversity, Quality Teaching, Inclusivity, Safety, Respect and Community*. These Principles are effectively implemented through our actions which are founded on the following beliefs:

## Students

*We believe:*

- In the promise and potential of each student, respecting their individualism, as well as their unique and creative perspectives on the world.

*Therefore we:*

- ✓ Provide opportunities for students to reach their full potential by building on their personal interests, thoughts and ideas.
- ✓ Implement an inclusive approach to support a sense of belonging, high self-esteem and success.
- ✓ Support the social, emotional and educational wellbeing of each young person through evidence informed best practice, quality teaching and innovative pedagogical frameworks.
- ✓ Encourage each child to reach their full potential in accordance with their individual ability and teach them to strive for their best by creating settings which provide the specific environmental and educational adjustments.
- ✓ Support transitions into mainstream educational settings, community engagement, independent living, workforce participation and overall wellbeing prospects for their future.



## Parents and/or Care Givers



*We believe:*

- The most important resource for our school to support each student is their parent and/or care giver.
- Strong partnerships between families and staff are fostered through trust, respect and collaboration.
- In working closely with parents in a reciprocal relationship.

*Therefore we:*

- ✓ Are committed to open communication with families.
- ✓ Strive to have empathy and be responsive to family needs and provide support when required.
- ✓ Encourage and support families to be active and contributing members to the school.

## Staff

*We believe:*

- In employing staff who are vocationally committed to working for the best interests of children diagnosed with autism and their families.
- That each staff member brings fundamental, personal qualities to the school environment such as empathy, respect, warmth and a passion for learning.
- In the importance of creating an environment of collegiality where personal and professional contributions are valued, communication is open and confidentiality is maintained.

*Therefore we:*

- ✓ Provide opportunities for staff to share in decision making and to obtain feedback.
- ✓ Provide a safe and comfortable working environment with opportunities to support wellbeing.
- ✓ Provide ongoing professional development for staff.



As a community, we ensure the effective implementation of our Principles by always:



- ✓ Welcoming and including everyone.
- ✓ Working as a collective, toward a shared goal and vision.
- ✓ Communicating, collaborating and contributing.
- ✓ Celebrating, supporting, encouraging and inspiring.
- ✓ Fostering trust, honesty and transparency.
- ✓ Respecting and appreciating the perspectives of others.
- ✓ Reflecting, listening and improving.
- ✓ Leading by example every day.

## Enactment of School Philosophy and commitment to our school philosophy

In all documents, in all practice by students and staff, in work with the School Board and the community, in all teaching and learning programs, in all school initiatives, in all internal and external interactions, in all organisational structures and practices the vision of the school will sit at the centre and there will be expectations about all work aligning with the school vision.

In all work in the school, the question “Is this in line with the school vision, principles and beliefs?” will be a fundamental part of the practice of all who work in, with and for The Sycamore School.

***“Not everything that steps out of line,  
and thus ‘abnormal’ must  
necessarily be ‘inferior’”***

– Hans Asperger



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