

# Media Release

**The Hon James Merlino MP**  
Deputy Premier  
Minister for Education  
Minister for Emergency Services



Thursday, 18 October, 2018

## **MORE SUPPORT TO MAKE SCHOOLS INCLUSIVE FOR ALL STUDENTS**

More schools across Victoria will get a funding boost to build all-access play areas, sensory gardens and outdoor learning areas to support students with disabilities and additional needs, thanks to the Andrews Labor Government.

Minister for Education James Merlino today visited Specimen Hill College in Bendigo to announce a further 93 schools across the state will share in \$15 million in funding under the Labor Government's \$30 million Inclusive Schools Fund.

Specimen Hill Primary School is receiving \$200,000 to create an outdoor sensory area where children can play and learn in a natural setting featuring flowing water, timber, plants, textured pebbles and larger boulders, along with a frog pond.

The Inclusive Schools Fund is helping government schools better support the social and educational needs of young people with a disability.

Since it was established by the Labor Government in 2015, nearly 90 creative projects to build inclusive play spaces, outdoor learning areas, sensory gardens and calm spaces have been delivered.

The Inclusive Schools Fund is part of the Government's Special Needs Plan for Victorian Schools, which is ensuring that students with disabilities get the same opportunities as other students.

Inclusive education is about ensuring that all students, regardless of disabilities or other differences, are able to fully participate, learn, develop and succeed in Victorian government schools.

More information about these projects is available at: [www.schoolbuildings.vic.gov.au](http://www.schoolbuildings.vic.gov.au).

### **Quotes attributable to Minister for Education James Merlino**

*"This is about giving every child, every chance – regardless of their background or circumstances. That's what this funding will deliver."*

*"As we build the Education State, we're continuing to invest in schools to ensure students of all abilities can access a great education – no matter their circumstances."*

### **Quotes attributable to Member for Bendigo West Maree Edwards**

*"These projects are all about giving our primary schools the equipment and infrastructure they need to inspire a lifelong passion for learning for all of their students and to show that disability isn't a barrier to learning and achieving."*

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