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COLES PROVIDES A FULLY FUNCTIONING SUPERMARKET FOR CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES AT ST LUCY'S SCHOOL CAMPUS

As part of the ongoing commitment to providing opportunities for people living with disabilities, Coles has fitted out a fully functioning supermarket at St Lucy's School, an independent school for students with disabilities, to assist in teaching students practical life skills.

Located on its Wahroonga campus, the shop is designed to provide a guided work experience environment for senior students who will carry out a range of tasks such as stocking shelves, customer service and ensuring the shop is a fantastic environment for customers. Junior school students will be able to practice shopping for themselves or helping their families on supermarket visits in an authentic and familiar setting.

St Lucy's is an independent school for students with disabilities ranging from Kindergarten up until Year 12 and has a mission to provide an inspirational education for a life with purpose, by giving students the appropriate skills to have a successful, safe, and meaningful life after graduating.

Principal of St Lucy's School David Raphael said he was delighted for the school to have a mini supermarket for students and teachers to enjoy and learn.

"Coles at St Lucy's provides a safe environment to teach our students about safety in the workplace and to develop the important skills needed for effective communication, collaboration, and interpersonal relationships in the workplace and beyond," David said.

St Lucy's Coles is one of the innovative ways that Coles has found to help people with disabilities and is part of a wider initiative to make sure that the company is constantly championing accessibility and disability inclusion.

Coles Chief Marketing Officer and co-chair of the Coles Accessibility Steering Committee Lisa Ronson said helping Australians living with disabilities is one of its key priorities.

"Our team is so proud to be supporting the mini-store at St Lucy's and we think the program is fantastic to teach students valuable life and future employment skills. We at Coles are absolutely committed as an organisation to increasing the number of Australians we employ who are living with a disability," Lisa said.

Coles General Manager and fellow co-chair of the Coles Accessibility Steering Committee Martin Smithson said the supermarket is designed to provide the students with real-life practical skills.

"Gainful employment is a pathway to security and autonomy and as one of the country's largest employers, we know we have an important role to play. Coles is always on the lookout for ways that we can assist people with disabilities through providing employment opportunities through our partnerships with services like Disability Works Australia," Martin said.

Earlier this year, Coles was proud to be involved in the \$2.43 million RecruitAble pilot scheme in partnership with the federal government that seeks to create more job opportunities and inclusive workplaces. The RecruitAble pilot is a partnership between Get Skilled Access, founded by Australian of the Year Dylan Alcott AO, and national recruitment agency Randstad Australia.