



Program for Students with Disabilities Policy

(Ratified by School Council: May 2015)

PURPOSE:

- To promote the inclusion of students with moderate to severe disabilities within our school.
- To provide clear guidelines of how to support families of students with a disability.
- To assist staff to formulate Individualised Learning Plans and provide students with the opportunities to achieve success.
- To create an educational environment and curriculum that is inclusive and meaningful to all students.

GUIDELINES:

Under Department of Education and Training (DET) guidelines and current funding agreements, all government schools are eligible for support for students with moderate to severe disabilities, provided that the student meets the eligibility criteria under one of the following categories:

- severe behaviour disorder
- hearing impairment
- intellectual disability
- physical disability
- visual impairment
- severe language disorder with critical educational needs
- Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD).

All of the categories above fall under the title of “Program for Students with Disabilities (PSD)” and a student’s level of funding support is rated using a scale from Level1 to Level 5, with Level 5 being the high end of the scale.

A PSD student’s funding level is directly related to providing the school with funding to employ and pay the salary of a Learning Assistant (Integration Aide) to support the individualized learning needs of the student. The management of the Learning Assistant and their timetable allocations is to be managed by the school’s leadership, and it is encouraged that this is done in consultation with the student’s family.

Each student who is eligible and granted PSD funding is required to have a documented “Individualised Learning Plan (ILP)” which is shared which should be agreed upon in consultation with the student’s family. The duration of the ILP is generally for the period of one term, although in agreement with the family goals can go over a longer period of time.

The family of each student who is eligible and granted PSD funding is required to be offered at least one Student Support Group (SSG) meeting per term, at which the school and the family will discuss and assess the progress of the student against the goals outlined in their ILP. All parties attending the SSG are then required to sign and date the ILP, with a signed copy being provided to the family

and a signed copy being kept on the student's file at the school. Following this meeting, ILP goals for the next term should be formulated and agreed upon.

IMPLEMENTATION:

Eligibility of students for the PSD

If a teacher or family seek for a student to be assessed for their eligibility under the PSD, the following procedures apply:

- 1) The Assistant Principal and Principal are to be made aware of the concerns for the student's learning. Evidence based concerns are required for all cases and referrals are not to be made based on intuition.
- 2) The Assistant Principal will then discuss the student's case with the relevant Student Support Service Officers (SSSO's) being: Educational Psychologist, Speech Pathologist, Student Social and Welfare Officer. These SSSO's are allocated to the school by the DET and work collaboratively with the school.
- 3) If the SSSO and the Assistant Principal agree that there is sufficient data and evidence, the Assistant Principal will contact the family to discuss the student's learning needs.
- 4) The Assistant Principal will seek the written authority of the family for the student receive the support of the SSSO's in determining particular learning needs.
- 5) The Assistant Principal will seek from the family copies of reports from external health professionals in regards to the student's particular learning needs.
- 6) An assessment for eligibility will then be undertaken. The steps involved in each assessment vary dependent upon the particular learning needs of the student.
- 7) Evidence and data is collected and reports are written by the SSO's, with supporting documentation being provided by the classroom teacher and the Assistant Principal.
- 8) If the student is deemed to meet the eligibility criteria then a "PSD Funding Application" is led by the Assistant Principal.
- 9) An Educational Needs Questionnaire (ENQ) is held to review and consent to all information being provided in support of the PSD funding application. In attendance at the ENQ must be the family (parent), Assistant Principal and a DET Authorised Representative.
- 10) Relevant documentation will then be submitted by the Assistant Principal to the "Resources Coordination Group (RSG)" who are authorised by the DET in determining eligibility.
- 11) RSG will then review the student's eligibility against set criteria and determine the level of funding under the PSD (on a scale of 1-5).
- 12) DET will then advise the school of the outcome of the application.
- 13) The school will then advise the family of the funding outcome and determine how the funding is to be utilised to support the individual student.

Duration of PSD Funding

Once a student has been granted PSD funding, the funding level remains with the student for the entirety of their primary schooling, unless otherwise specifically mentioned as a condition of the student's PSD funding. During Year 6, the school is required to undertake a "Year 6-Year 7 Review" on behalf of the student, which determines the level of eligibility for PSD funding at secondary school level.

Individualised Learning Plans

All students on the PSD require a documented Individualised Learning Plan (ILP) as a condition of their PSD funding.

An ILP is a document which specifically details the following:

- 1) Individual Learning Goals for the student by curriculum area (eg: Literacy, Social-emotional)
- 2) Teaching strategies to be implemented to support the student
- 3) Outcome Goals and the duration of the ILP
- 4) Evaluation of the student's progress against the ILP

Student Support Group Meetings

A Student Support Group (SSG) Meeting is a meeting held for those people who are involved in supporting the student to achieve the goals detailed in their ILP. An SSG meeting can involve but is not limited to the following:

- Family (parents or guardians)
- Classroom teacher
- Assistant Principal
- Learning Assistant (Integration Aide)
- SSSO's or other educational support staff
- External health professionals (eg: occupational therapists, physiotherapists)

At the SSG the school and the family openly and transparently assess the progress of the student in relation to their ILP goals.

Throughout the term the parents of the PSD funded student and the classroom teacher will often communicate or meet in person to discuss the student's learning. These are not considered to be SSG meetings and are referred to as "parent meetings".

RELATED LEGISLATION:

Program for Students with Disabilities DET Guidelines

<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/teachers/teachingresources/diversity/pages/handbook.aspx>

Students with Disabilities Handbook and DET Schedule

<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/teachers/teachingresources/diversity/pages/handbook.aspx>

RELATED POLICIES:

- *Student Engagement and Wellbeing Policy*

POLICY EVALUATION:

Evaluation will be conducted every two years by the Educational Policies Subcommittee.

DUE DATE FOR REVIEW:

This policy is due to be reviewed in May 2017.