

NSW Department of Education Statement of Commitment to People with Disabilities

The policy outlines commitment to people with disabilities, education objectives based on the principle of “normalisation” and responsibilities at state, regional and school levels. It also articulates the rights of parents, caregivers and students.

1. Objectives - Policy statement

1.1 The NSW Department of Education and Communities will assist people with disabilities to gain the knowledge, skills and understanding they need to successfully participate as citizens by working with its staff and students to achieve the following goals:

1.1.1 Students, staff and customers with disabilities will be provided with the same opportunities as other people to take advantage of the range of education, training and employment opportunities provided by the Department.

1.1.2 The Department will report on its progress in developing and implementing policies and practices to improve access, participation and outcomes for people with disabilities.

1.1.3 The Department will strengthen strategic alliances and have a coordinated approach to the delivery of services for people with disabilities.

2. Audience and applicability

2.1 This policy applies to all staff employed in NSW Public Schools in both school and non-school based positions. It also applies to students who attend public schools and has implications for each school community.

3. Context

3.1 The policy complies with requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA, 1992) and the Disability Standards for Education 2005.

3.2 This policy has been developed to reflect commitments made by the NSW Department of Education and Communities within its Disability Action Plan.

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4. Responsibilities and delegations

4.1 *Director, Disability, Learning and Support*

4.1.1 approval of policy documents

4.2 *Policy Owner, Director, Disability, Learning and Support*

4.2.1 publication and currency of the policy and support material

4.2.2 notification to staff of any changes to this policy

4.3 *Policy Contact Person, Manager, Disability and Diversity Policy*

4.3.1 provision of advice on interpretation and implementation of the policy

4.3.2 management and oversight of the policy and its implementation

4.3.3 provision of advice and assistance to support staff on policy development, implementation and evaluation

4.3.4 monitoring, evaluation, review and reporting to the Director, Disability, Learning and Support on the implementation of the policy and supporting documents.

4.4 *Users*

4.4.1 Verification of the currency of DET policy documents by reference to the policy website. PD/2005/0232 is the unique identifier of this policy document. It is the responsibility of the user to verify

that this is the current and complete version of the document, located at <http://www.det.nsw.edu.au/policies>. Supporting documents should also be referred to in the implementation of this policy

5. Monitoring, evaluation and reporting requirements

5.1 The Director, Disability, Learning and Support will monitor the implementation of this policy and will report annually, or as required, to the Executive.

5.2 Principals are responsible for the implementation and monitoring of this policy in their schools.

5.3 Directors Public Schools NSW will support principals with the implementation of this policy.

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NSW Department of Education Assisting Students with Learning Difficulties Policy

This policy applies to all staff employed in Public Schools NSW, in school and non-school based positions. It also applies to students who attend public schools and has implications for each school community.

1. Objectives - Policy statement

1.1 In any one school there will be students who may experience difficulties with learning. These difficulties may vary in cause, nature, intensity and duration.

1.2 Learning difficulties may arise at any time throughout a student's school life. Students may experience difficulties in learning because of the ways in which they learn or the rates at which they learn.

1.3 Students experiencing difficulties in learning will have differing levels of educational need, which may require the provision of one or more educational support services over varying periods of time.

1.4 Prime responsibility for meeting the specific learning needs of students with difficulties in basic areas of learning lies with the school and the classroom teacher.

1.5 The school learning and support team plays a key role in ensuring that the specific learning needs of students experiencing difficulties in learning are met.

2. Audience and applicability

2.1 This policy applies to all staff employed in Public Schools NSW, in school and non-school based positions. It also applies to students who attend public schools and has implications for each school community.

3. Context

3.1 The policy complies with the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA, 1992) and the Disability Standards for Education 2005.

3.2 This policy reflects commitments made by the NSW Department of Education and Communities within its Disability Action Plan 2011-2015.

3.3 This policy reflects responsibilities of schools indicated within the Curriculum Planning and Programming, Assessing and Reporting to Parents K-12 Policy

3.4 This policy also reflects the key principles of operation for supporting students with learning difficulties, including those with disabilities.

4. Responsibilities and delegations

4.1 *Director, disability, learning and support*

4.1.1 approval of policy documents

4.2 *Policy owner, director, disability, learning and support*

4.2.1 publication and currency of the policy and support material

4.2.2 notification to staff of any changes to this policy

4.3 *Policy contact person; leader, support and development*

4.3.1 provision of advice on interpretation and implementation of the policy

4.4 *Leader, support and development*

4.4.1 management and oversight of the policy and its implementation

4.4.2 provision of advice and assistance to support staff on policy development, implementation and evaluation

4.4.3 monitoring, evaluation, review and reporting to the director, disability programs on the implementation of the policy and supporting documents

4.5 *Principals* are responsible for ensuring implementation of support for students experiencing difficulties in learning. School management plans include the use of learning and support resources to improve outcomes for students experiencing difficulties in learning.

4.6 *Teachers and support staff* are responsible for ensuring that students who experience difficulties in learning are assisted according to the policy statement and key principles underpinning support.

4.7 Verification of the currency of the department's policy documents by reference to the policy website. PD/2006/0342 is the unique identifier of this policy document. It is the responsibility of the user to verify that this is the current and complete version of the document, located at <http://www.det.nsw.edu.au/policies>. Supporting documents should also be referred to in the implementation of this policy.

5. Monitoring, evaluation and reporting requirements

5.1 The Director, Disability, Learning and Support will monitor the implementation of this policy and will report annually, or as required, to the Executive.

5.2 Principals are responsible for the implementation and monitoring of this policy in their schools.

5.3 Directors Public Schools NSW will support principals with the implementation of this policy.

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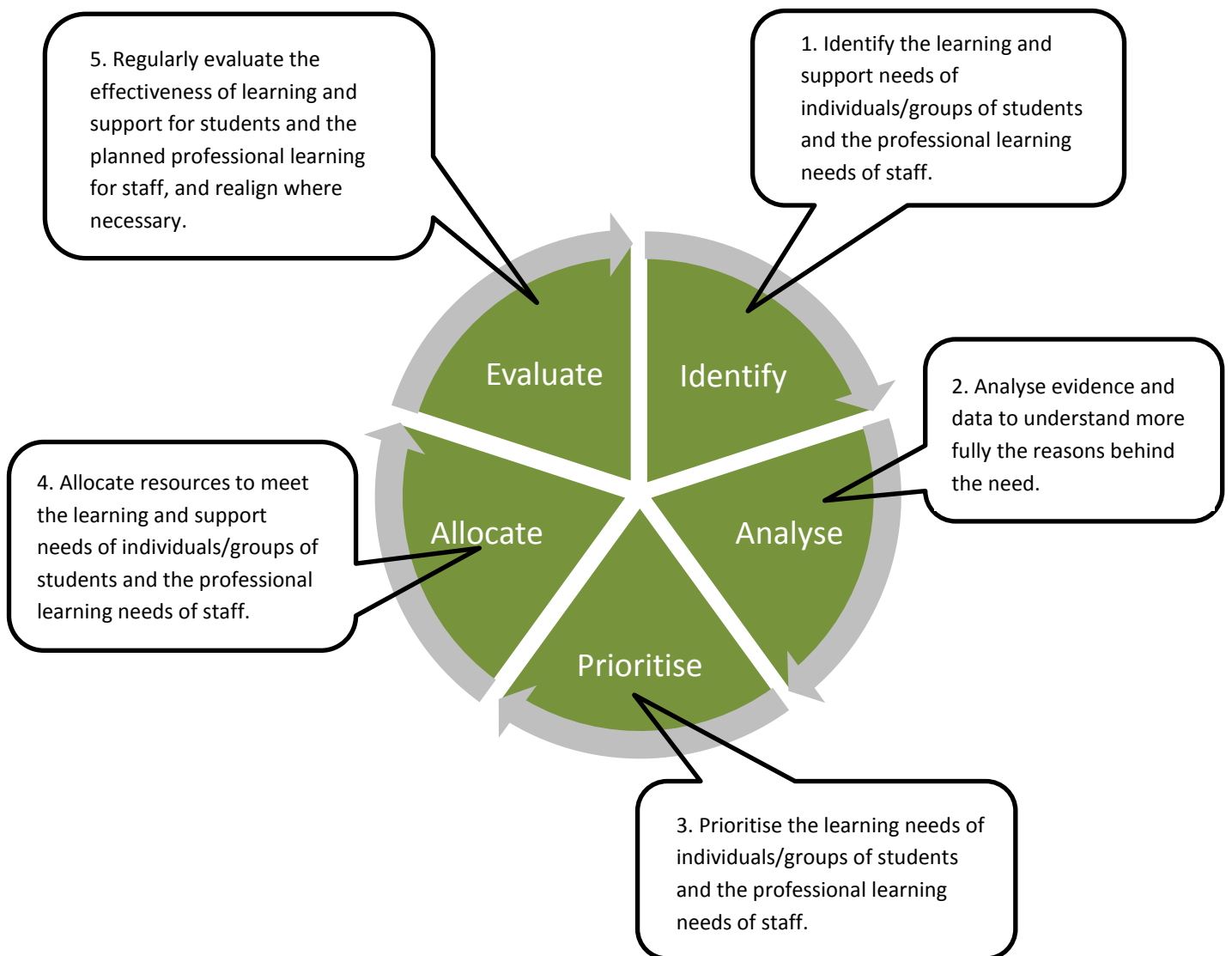
Supporting Students with Disabilities at Illaroo Road Public School

The primary responsibility for supporting the learning and support needs of students lies with the classroom teacher. The Learning and Support Team (LST) plays a key role in coordinating and planning support for students with disabilities and/or additional learning needs.

The Role of the Learning and Support Team (LST)

- To facilitate and coordinate a whole school continuum of support aimed at meeting the needs of all students
- To co-ordinate planning processes and resourcing for students with learning and support needs
- To design and implement the supports required to build teacher capacity to deliver adjustments that enable all students to access quality learning
- To develop collaborative partnerships with the school, parents/carers, other professionals and the wider school community
- To monitor and, if necessary, suggest recommendations for modifications to whole school systems and practices in relation to rewards and discipline

The LST supports students with learning needs, and their teachers, as follows:



Identification and Information Gathering

Students may have identified difficulties in one or more of the following areas:

- academic
- peer adjustment
- emotional
- behavioural
- physical
- attendance

When concerns are expressed by staff and/or parents and carers the following procedures should be followed **prior to** completing a referral for discussion by the Learning and Support Team as a whole.

1. Consult previous year's teacher and/or previous stage supervisor.
 - Is this new behaviour?
 - If not, what strategies were implemented to support this student?
 - Did you notice a pattern for this behaviour?
2. Trial any previously successful strategies for at least 2-3 weeks.

3. Discuss concerns with parents/carers in consultation with stage supervisor.
 - Has hearing and/or vision been checked?
 - Are you having the same issues/concerns at home?
 - Can you think of any possible reasons for the concerns?
 - Has there previously been any medical involvement?
 - Are any external support agencies eg. speech therapist, occupational therapist, counsellor, currently working with the student?

4. Record a summary of details in student's individual file on Sentral.

5. Discuss concerns with learning and support teacher and school counsellor.
 - Have you previously completed any assessments of this student?
 - Has the student been on any learning and support programs?
 - What data or previous assessment information do you have?

6. Check pupil record card for information, reports and previous classroom assessment data.

7. For academic, emotional or behavioural issues, collect any other relevant data, such as:
 - Peer observation (anecdotal notes, scatterplot etc.)
 - The relevant checklist from *Identifying Children with Special Needs* book (in AP K-2 office)

Prioritisation and Implementation

Using all the information gathered, class teachers should:

1. Discuss the collected information with the stage supervisor
2. Identify up to 3 priorities to focus on
3. Develop an individual education plan and/or support plan based on these priorities. The plan should include focus areas, goals, interventions (strategies) and personnel involved
4. Implement the plan for at least 3-5 weeks
5. At the end of the time frame, review progress in consultation with stage supervisor
6. If goals are achieved or significant progress towards achievement has been made, a revised plan should be developed and implemented as before
7. If significant concerns still exist a Learning and Support Team referral should be completed

Referral Process to the Learning Support Team

- Parents/carers must be contacted prior to a referral being made
- Class teacher completes the form (available in the staffroom) and gives it to the LST coordinator

Who Attends LST Meetings?

- LST coordinator (member of school executive team)
- Learning and support teachers
- Class teacher and/or stage supervisor
- School counsellor

- School chaplain (student welfare worker)
- Other interested teachers

What Happens at an LST Meeting?

- Meetings are held every Wednesday at 1.15pm
- Meeting agendas are communicated to staff on Wednesday mornings via the sign-on book
- Student needs are discussed and recommendations made regarding appropriate action.
Recommendations may include:
 - Counsellor referral
 - Application for funding support (long and short term) or support class placement
 - Individual learning and/or behaviour plan to be developed or modified as required
 - Student welfare worker referral
 - Progress review dates to be set for a future LST meeting
 - Recommendations for staff training

LST Committee roles:

Coordinator (executive member)

- Chair meetings
- Coordinate time, day and venue for meetings
- Collate referrals and prepare meeting agenda
- Communicate agenda to staff prior to meetings
- Set review dates and ensure they are placed on the appropriate agenda
- Oversee coordination of School Chaplain timetable
- Annually review integration funding support and allocate school learning support officer (SLSO) support as per allocation
- Liaise with learning and support teacher to allocate school funded SLSO support or other resources
- Assist with determining priorities for school counsellor's time

Minutes Taker

- Take minutes at the meetings
- Place minutes and accompanying documents in individual students' files on the server

Student Programs Coordinator (executive member)

- Co-ordinate timely access request applications for funding support and support class placement
- Maintain student tracking through the collation of RMPs, IEPs, RCBs and Nationally Consistent Collection of Data on School Students (NCCD) information
- Liaise with Reading Recovery teacher, learning and support teacher and SLSOs regarding student programs
- Attend review meetings as required

Learning and Support Teachers

- Coordinate Learning and Support programs
- Liaise with LST coordinator about allocation of SLSO support

- Support the Reading Recovery teacher
- Assess academic needs of new students to the school
- Liaise with external support personnel eg. speech therapist, occupational therapist

Stage Supervisors

- Oversee and assist teachers with the development of Individual Education Plans (IEP), Risk Management Plans (RMP) and Response to Challenging Behaviour Plans (RCB)
- Attend LST meetings when required
- Be present at parent meetings when required
- Organise an official handover of information about students with disabilities; to be undertaken at the end of each school year between class teachers
- Monitor and review progress of support plans

Class Teachers

- In consultation with the stage supervisor, develop IEPs, RMPs and RCBs as required
- Attend LST meetings as required
- Maintain contact with parents/carers
- Organise meetings with parents when needed
- Monitor and review progress of support plans
- Participate in the official handover of information about students with disabilities at the end of the school year
- Assist application coordinator in preparation of support applications

Other Team Members

- Attend LST meetings
- Conduct classroom observations to collect data
- Investigate support networks/outside agencies for parents and students
- Assist class teachers in locating or preparing appropriate resources

Role of School Counsellor

School counsellors work with students, parents/carers and teachers in a variety of ways. Their work includes:

- Assessing student learning and behaviour
- Identifying and addressing disabilities that affect student learning
- Assisting parents/carers to make informed decisions about their child's education
- Counselling students
- Liaising with other agencies concerned with the wellbeing of students
- Relaying information to teachers, with the agreement of parents/carers, to assist them in better meeting the needs of their student

