

Special Needs Policy

1. Definitions

- 1.1 DET – Department of Education and Training
- 1.2 PSD – Program for Students with Disabilities
- 1.3 SSG- Student Support Group. Students Support Group consists of the principal, student wellbeing coordinator, class teacher, Integration aide, parent /carer and other support agencies, as required
- 1.4 SSG Meeting – a Student Support Group meeting is scheduled each Term
- 1.5 ILP- Individual Learning Plan. An Individual Learning Plan is developed per Term and student progress and the ILP is monitored at each SSG meeting
- 1.6 SSSO – A Student Support Services Officer. DET provides government schools with an allocation of services, including a Speech Pathologist and a Psychologist. The allocation of time to each school is determined by DET
- 1.7 Students with Special Needs include:-
 - 1.7.1 those students who are deemed eligible for funding under the DET Program for Students with Disabilities The PSD program provides resources to schools for a defined student population of students with disabilities, with moderate to severe needs
 - 1.7.2 students who are not deemed eligible for targeted funding under the PSD program, but who are identified by the school as requiring additional support for other factors that may be related to temporary or long term family history, social/emotional issues, trauma and other concerns that have come to the attention of the school.

2. Purpose

- 2.1 Victorian, government schools are eligible for support for students with moderate to severe disabilities, provided that student meets the eligibility criteria under one of the following categories:
 - 2.1.1 severe behaviour disorder
 - 2.1.2 hearing impairment
 - 2.1.3 intellectual disability
 - 2.1.4 physical disability
 - 2.1.5 visual impairment
 - 2.1.6 severe language disorder with critical educational needs
 - 2.1.7 autism spectrum disorder
- 2.2 To support and improve the learning outcomes of students, identified with special needs.

- 2.3 To support the participation of students in an inclusive education system.
- 2.4 To support transitions for students, transitioning into, through and post school.
- 2.5 Students with special needs have a right to attend a mainstream, government school and to have their programs tailored to meet their individual requirements.

3. Guidelines

- 3.1 Students with special needs will be catered for, as per DET guidelines. <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/programs/needs/Pages/default.aspx>
- 3.2 The appraisal process for applications for funding under the PSD program will occur at the earliest opportunity in order to provide the maximum potential for applications to be successful, and to ensure a smooth transition for new students into our school setting.
- 3.3 The Student Support Group process will be fully explained to all concerned parties. (<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/health/Pages/studentsupportgroup.aspx>). As part of this process communication with relevant external support agencies and other appropriate consultants will be undertaken on a needs basis.
- 3.4 A Student Support Group will be established for students who are funded under the PSD program to facilitate curriculum planning and resource provision.
- 3.5 Curriculum programs will endeavour to be inclusive of all students.
- 3.6 Professional development relating to disabilities will be made available to all appropriate staff.
- 3.7 The school will consult with DET regarding modifications to the physical environment prior to enrolment, if necessary.

4. Implementation

- 4.1 The school follow the ***Program for Students With Disabilities – Guidelines for Schools 2016***, DET, State of Victoria. <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/programs/needs/Pages/disabilityprogram.aspx>
- 4.2 A Leading Teacher is responsible for the coordination of Student Wellbeing across the school, inclusive of the Program for Students with Disabilities. Duties include the coordination of applications for PSD funding, the coordination of Student Support Groups, the establishment of individual students' goals and strategies, the development and implementation of a Student Wellbeing program budget, the supervision and support of Integration Aides, including their daily work and the development of Individual Learning Plans, in consultation with class teachers.
- 4.3 The school will accommodate appropriate space for the services of a Speech Pathologist (fortnightly) and Psychologist (weekly) who will support students who have been formally referred to their services through the Student Wellbeing Coordinator and/or Principal. The referral process must include signed permission from parents/carers and the completion of forms for teachers and parents which are provided by the SSSOs.
- 4.4 The Student Wellbeing Coordinator will meet with the SSSOs at each of their scheduled visits to the school.
- 4.5 A Student Support Group meeting will be held once per Term and include, where mutually agreed, outside agencies who support the needs of the student/family. Minutes of the SSG meeting and the ILP will be forwarded to the parents and relevant agencies, in a timely manner.
- 4.6 The Staff Professional Learning Schedule will contain professional development in relation to students with special needs, as appropriate.

5. Evaluation:

5.1 This Policy will be reviewed in 2017 as part of the school's review cycle.

This policy was last ratified by School Council 20 April 2016