



# Learning and Support Guidelines

## Hunters Hill Public School

Hunters Hill Public School is a place of inclusivity. School staff work together with the community to foster an environment that enhances equitable educational opportunities, in which all students are valued and supported.

## Purpose of this Document

Personalised learning requires attention to the unique needs of all students of all abilities, acknowledging that each have different learning needs. This includes students who experience difficulties learning, those with behavioural difficulties, disabilities, or identified as being high potential and gifted. This resource provides guidance around personalised learning and support.

## Introduction & Rationale

Schools have responsibility for maximising the learning outcomes and wellbeing of all students and for providing access to a high-quality education that is free from discrimination. All children are entitled to quality education experiences. Students should feel that they are included in an environment of high expectation where they are both able and enabled to learn.

At the core of inclusive education is the human right to education for all, which is pronounced in the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* in 1948 (UNESCO). This resource supports inclusive education.

Inclusive education means that all students are welcomed by their school in age-appropriate settings and are supported to learn, contribute and participate in all aspects of school. Inclusive education is about how schools are developed and designed, including classrooms, programmes and activities so that all students learn and participate together. In order to create an inclusive environment, changes and modifications may need to be made to help a student or group of students participate on the same basis as other students. The changes or modifications made will reflect the assessed individual needs of the student and can be made in both the classroom and whole school setting.

Modifications are often referred to as adjustments to meet individual needs. Adjustments can be made to a range of areas to support an individual student, including but not limited to the way that teaching and learning is provided, changes to the classroom or school environment, the way that students' progress and achievements are assessed and reported to parents, the provision of personal care and planning to meet individual needs, as well as professional learning for teachers and support staff.

The legal responsibilities of educators who work with students with disability are outlined in the Disability Standards for Education 2005 (the Standards). The Standards seek to ensure that students with disability can access and participate in education on the same basis as other students. The Standards were formulated under the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* (DDA). The Standards clarify and elaborate the legal obligations of all education providers to students with disability under the DDA. The Standards also set out how education is to be made accessible to students with disability to enable them to participate in education on the same basis as students without disability, including the provision of 'reasonable adjustment' where necessary to enable this.

The Melbourne Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians (2008) is a commitment to action in education, and was agreed to by all Education Ministers. It states that all young Australians should be successful learners. For this to be achieved, educators need to provide personalised learning that aims to fulfil the diverse capabilities of each student.

Schools demonstrate respect and support for the learning, strengths and needs of students from diverse, linguistic, cultural, religious and socioeconomic backgrounds. Effective teachers plan how to best respond to the needs and interests of their students.

## Guiding Principles

Every student has their own aspirations, learning needs, strengths and interests and it is the responsibility of schools to respond to every student and their unique characteristics, with high expectations for achievement. Providing personalised learning and targeted support is one way they achieve this.

The principles underlying personalised learning and support involve:

### **Quality teaching and learning**

- All students can learn.
- Every child has a right to a high quality education.
- Effective teachers provide engaging and rigorous learning experiences for all students.
- A safe and stimulating environment is integral to enabling students to explore and build on their talents and achieve relevant learning outcomes.
- For students with disability and additional learning needs, reasonable adjustments should be made where required.

### **Consultation**

- Effective consultation requires meaningful participation by all contributors and should recognise the input of all participants; the student, their family or carer, school personnel, other professionals and other relevant people.
- The Disability Standards for Education 2005 state that, before the school makes an adjustment for a student, the student or the family/carer of the student must be consulted about the type of adjustments required.
- Consultation should be tailored to the needs of the student and their family or carer. It should involve consideration of learning needs and strengths, aspirations, cultural, social and religious diversity.
- Decision-making processes can include the student and people who support the student on a regular basis. This can include parents, carers, other family members, other professionals and relevant school staff. Decisions should be clearly explained to and understood by all people involved in this process.
- Families are able to make decisions about the nature of their involvement in the consultation process.

### **Collaborative practice and planning**

- Meeting the learning and support needs for all students is the responsibility of the school principal, teachers and the school community working together.
- Collaborative planning is enhanced by focusing on goals, strategies, learning needs and strengths, and achievement.
- Planning should be clear, timely and transparent for everyone involved.
- Decision-making processes should be inclusive and understood by the student and their family or carer, school staff and other relevant people.

## **Process**

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2008) is a global effort to promote the equal and active participation of all people with disability. Australia ratified this convention, which means that it is committed to promoting, protecting, and ensuring that people with disability are given full equality under the law. The process of personalised learning and support is in line with the Convention, and aims to ensure that effective personalised support measures are provided in learning environments that maximise academic and social development, consistent with the Convention's goal of full inclusion.

Personalised learning requires attention to the unique needs of all students of all abilities, acknowledging that each have different learning needs. This is particularly relevant for students with disability and additional learning needs. In addressing personalised learning and support, a process can be followed which involves the student's support networks, and which aims to build on the student's strengths.

The personalised learning and support process is informed by:

- Gathering information about the student's learning strengths and needs ;
- Considering the student's background, including their cultural and family context;
- Assessing the available resources within the school and school staff capability. This may lead to additional staff training, re-allocation of school resources, developing new programmes or systems;
- Identifying the student's goals and skills required for the future;
- Examining strategies for teaching;
- Determining timelines for reviewing goals and the planning process.

Below are four key steps in implementing personalised learning and support:

**1. Get to know the student**

- Get to know the student, their background, strengths, interests and goals.
- Conduct or gather assessments to identify the types of adjustments required to support the student. Assessment can relate to access, participation, behaviour support, medical needs, or learning supports.

**2. Consult**

- Engage with the student and their family/carer to identify the student's aspirations, goals, strengths and needs.
- Seek expert advice, where relevant, on the students' needs; including medical, personal, physical, communication, sensory and learning needs.
- Seek clarity in understanding current achievement levels to ensure high expectations in personal education outcomes.
- Ongoing consultation may be required as the students' needs change.

**3. Plan and implement personalised learning and individualised support measures**

- Identify options and select adjustments, interventions and other supports that will be provided to address the student's identified learning needs and build on their strengths.
- Consider the impact of the adjustments on the student, other students and the school.
- Design age-appropriate learning tasks, resources and learning materials.
- Seek any required equipment, assistive technology, or additional resources for the student's learning needs.
- Identify and complete professional learning if required.
- Select and implement appropriate teaching strategies to facilitate effective learning for the student.
- Embed differentiated classroom practice within teaching and learning programmes throughout the school.
- Determine a monitoring process and review timeframe.

**4. Evaluate the impact of personalised support measures provided to the student**

Support measures provided to the student should be evaluated by the team involved in the planning. The reviews can be discussed and agreed to by the planning members. It is important to review the support measures provided on a regular basis to ensure that the adjustments made are still relevant and required for the student to achieve high quality outcomes, or whether further support measures need to be incorporated.

If the student requires new adjustments, modifications to equipment, or new resources to support learning and participation, these should be discussed again with the planning team. The focus should always be on the student and how these support measures will assist the student to reach their goals.

*Ref: Planning for Personalised Learning and Support: A National Resource.*

## Context

Under the Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (DDA) and the Disability Standards for Education 2005 all Australian schools have obligations to ensure that students with disability are able to access and participate in education on the same basis as students without disability. All schools and teachers are expected to provide an inclusive education for all students. Learning and Support is provided in every school to cater for the needs of students with disability (diagnosed or undiagnosed) and the needs of students experiencing difficulties in learning, whether due to academic, behaviour or social issues.

Schools use their allocations of learning and support resources to personalise the learning for the individual needs of their students. Teaching and learning can be adjusted in many ways, based on every student's unique needs, to enable students with disability and additional learning and support needs to enjoy the same opportunities and choices in their education as their peers.

Adjustments are made in close consultation with students and their parents and carers and are regularly reviewed to assess their effectiveness and to identify any need for changes.

The first point of contact is the school's learning and support team. Learning and support teams include key personnel involved in supporting students with disability, and additional learning and support needs.

Our school community is enriched by its diversity which includes students with disability, those who identify as Aboriginal, and approximately 35% of our students are from a language background other than English. The Learning and Support Team facilitates a whole school approach to meeting the needs of every student under departmental and government policy.

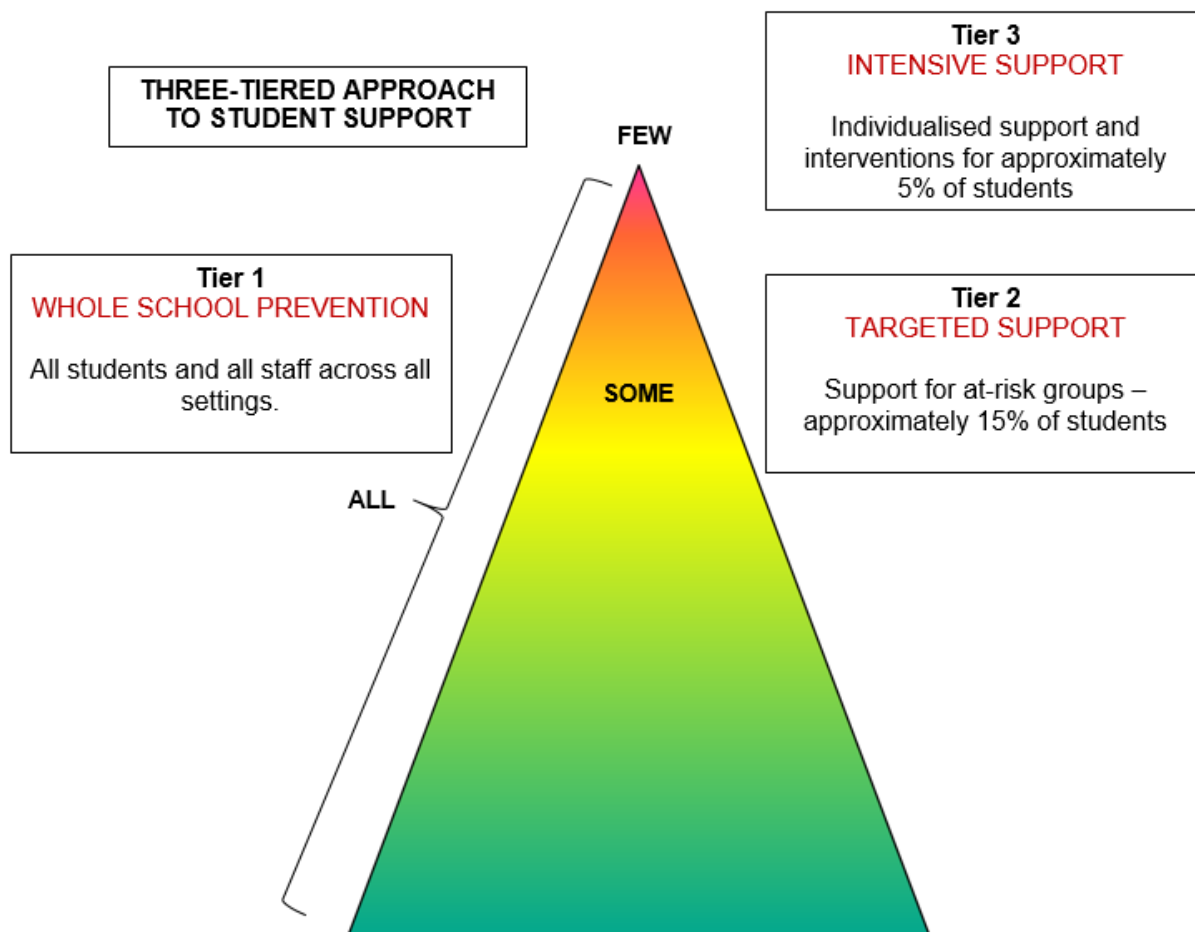
The Learning and Support Team (LST) at Hunters Hill Public School is a whole school planning and support mechanism. It is formed with the purpose of addressing the learning and support needs of students through the coordination, development, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of educational programs.

A prime function of the LST is to ensure that the needs of all students are being met. Using a three-tiered model of support addressing universal, targeted and intensive supports for teachers and students, teachers aim to provide a fully inclusive education.

The Learning and Support Team will:

- enable coordination of support;
- enhance collaboration and provide collegial support to school personnel and the wider community;
- ensure a whole-school and ongoing plan is implemented to meet the needs of students with additional learning and support needs;
- establish guidance and support systems for all staff in order that they can cater for students with additional learning and support needs;
- ensure that implemented programs are based on current research and best practice.

Three-tiered model of support:



## Learning and Support Team Members

In principle every teacher is a member of the Learning and Support Team. However, their participation level will vary depending on the students being supported and whether the current focus is a universal, targeted or intensive support.

The core members of the Learning and Support Team will include:

- the Principal;
- the Learning and Support Team Coordinator;
- the School Counsellor;
- a teacher representative of each stage within the school;
- a teacher representative of teacher support staff within the school, and the Learning and Support Teacher (LaST).

Other personnel may be invited to attend meetings as appropriate.

## Roles

The following roles specifically apply to members of the Learning and Support Team.

### Principal

- Ensures recommendations of Learning and Support Team are included in the School Plan.
- Oversees the organisation of learning and support in the school, prioritisation of support resources, and allocation of flexible funding.
- Determines and allocates teaching staff support roles.
- Determines school Learning and Support policy and procedures in collaboration with the Learning and Support Team Coordinator.

### Learning and Support Team Coordinator

- Develops meeting agendas and convenes regular meetings.
- Maintains LST documents (including meeting minutes) and student records.
- Distributes meeting minutes.
- Determines and allocates School Learning Support Officer (SLSO) roles.
- Supervises SLSO Performance and Development Plans (PDPs).
- Supports class teachers to develop Individual Education Plans (IEPs), Individual Behaviour Plans (IBPs) and risk assessments.
- Leads the LST to make decisions regarding how to best manage student needs, and assists and supports teachers to provide appropriate learning programs and make suitable adjustments.
- Ensure all students with a disability or identified as requiring learning assistance have an IEP.
- Facilitate ongoing and effective communication between all stakeholders.
- Schedules bi-annual review meetings with parents of students having an IEP.
- Arranges training and development (as needed).
- Facilitates the acquisition of student specific resources and equipment (as needed).
- Develops and facilitates transition to school programs (as needed).
- Assists in the development of school Learning and Support policy and procedures.

### School Counsellor

- Contributes to team meetings and activities.
- Provides specialist advice and recommendations.

- Provides additional assessment of students (as needed).
- Meets with students/parents (as needed).
- Consults with Educational Services and external agencies (as needed).

### **Classroom Teachers**

- Have primary responsibility for planning and implementing learning programs for all students in their class. Teachers are expected to make reasonable adjustments to cater for students with additional learning needs, developing and implementing IEPs as required.
- Refer students to the LST when programs are not meeting students' needs (following 'Procedure for supporting students with additional learning and support needs' – see below).
- Represent their stage on the LST for one term each year.
- Liaise with their LST representative and attend LST meetings if required.
- Establish relationship with student and family.
- Implement LST recommendations with support of stage/team LST representative member.

### **Stage/Team Teacher Representative**

- Represent stage/team members at LST meetings.
- Communicate any message from LST meeting to stage/team.
- Arrange for a replacement stage/team member to attend the meeting in any known absence.
- Liaise with LST re any stage/team learning and support concern.
- Assist with carrying out of student referral process.
- Support stage/team members to action any referral or post referral action items.

## **Procedures for Supporting Students with Additional Learning and Support Needs**

As in all schools, resources are limited by the allocation of staff, funds, availability of other resources and the number of students with additional needs. The classroom teacher can access a number of resources to support students, including the Learning and Support Team. The resources range from the least intensive support (adjustments to the class program – universal supports) to the most intensive (support from outside agencies may be included).

### **School Levels of Support**

#### **1. Adjustments to teaching and learning processes through quality teaching practice**

Students with additional learning and support needs are catered for by the class teacher within the regular class program. This will involve the teacher making reasonable adjustments. These adjustments could include:

- simplifying instructions
- prompting/cues
- pre-correction and corrective feedback
- grouping students with similar instructional need
- peer and/or parent tutor programs
- alternate expectations, teaching and learning materials/method, and/or workspace
- additional time
- visual or other physical aides
- opportunities provided for additional practice of skills.

#### **2. Collaborative problem solving with colleagues**

Classroom teacher meets with colleagues to collaboratively problem solve to cater for students with additional learning and support needs.

### 3. Support from school resources

Support from school resources is coordinated through the Learning and Support Team. Please see Learning and Support Team Referral Processes following.

### 4. Support from resources external to school

If a student has learning and support needs that cannot be met by school resources, the LST can seek support from Education Services. The school may also work with external specialist providers of support to students eg speech therapists, occupational therapists.

## **External Specialist Providers in School**

The principal has discretion to decide whether or not an external service provider can enter the school and how arrangements will be managed for the provider's activity with students, where access is agreed. Providers are required to meet all legal and policy requirements and enter into an agreement with the school.

Decisions should be made on a case-by-case basis considering the individual circumstances of the student or group of students concerned and the wider needs of the school. Any decision should take into account the educational needs and priorities of the student or group of students, including access to the curriculum, the impact on student's learning programs, the school's operational context and duty of care obligations towards all students and staff.

External providers do not have an automatic right of access.

Any request for access to a student by an external provider must come from the student's parent or carer in writing. External providers should only make a direct request to a school where they can demonstrate that they have parent or carer consent to request access to the student.

Where a student's parent or carer requests the delivery of externally funded services at school, a meeting should take place between school staff and the parent or carer to discuss service delivery arrangements. The meeting may also involve the service provider, if required.

An externally funded service delivered in school should support the student's participation in education and access to the curriculum. Where the service does not link with the student's learning needs or enhance access to education, the service should be delivered outside of school time.

Schools may withdraw external provider access to a school where it has been determined that the service being delivered is no longer in the student's educational interest. Schools should discuss the matter with the student's parents or carers prior to a decision to withdraw provider access.

## **Student Support Process**

Also see Learning and Support Team referral processes following.

If teachers have a student in their class whose learning/wellbeing they have concerns about the following steps should be taken. If the concern is resolved, there is no need to complete all steps.

1. Develop a good understanding of where the student is 'coming from' (their learning needs/abilities/health/home environment/concerns/interests/talents etc.)
2. Have a conversation with parents to make sure that they are aware of your concerns and also to find out if there is any information/explanation that may be assistive.
3. Liaise informally with your colleagues (eg for ideas, with the previous year's teacher) and try any suggestions.
4. Liaise formally with your supervisor and put some type of support mechanism in place.
5. Complete a referral to the learning and support team.

Any child protection concerns must be reported to the principal.



## Learning and Support Team Referral Process (Staff)

Teacher identifies a learning/wellbeing concern – academic, social or emotional.

Teacher ensures they have a full understanding of student's context and profile (eg learning needs, abilities, health, home environment, concerns. Interests, talents etc.)

Teacher documents and discusses concerns and observable behaviour concerns with parents and seeks any additional assistive information.

\*Communication is ongoing at each step.

Teacher documents and implements strategies/interventions to address concerns.

Develop IEP if required.

Teacher liaises informally with colleagues eg stage team, previous teacher/s, support staff, counsellor, or supervisor. Teacher documents and implements strategies/interventions to address concerns.

Develop or adjust IEP if required.

Teacher liaises formally with supervisor. Teacher documents and implements strategies/interventions to address concerns.

Develop or adjust IEP if required.

Teacher completed LST referral, forwarding to, and discussing with, stage/team LST representative to take to the next LST meeting.

Referral discussed by LST. Decision made about further action eg counsellor referral, LAST program, EALD support, behaviour support. LST liaison with CRT via team representative or coordinator. Strategies/interventions documented and implemented as decided.

## Learning and Support Team Referral Process (Parent/Caregiver)

Parent/caregiver makes request of CRT for counsellor intervention.

CRT discusses with counsellor.

CRT or counsellor contact parent and facilitate completion of parent counsellor referral form (including permission) if appropriate.

Completed referral brought to LST meeting by counsellor or stage/team representative.

Referral discussed by LST. Decision made about further action eg counsellor referral, LAST program, EALD support, behaviour support. LST (via team representative or coordinator) or counsellor liaison with CRT. Strategies/interventions documented and implemented as decided.

## Learning and Support Team Referral Process (Student)

Student makes request of CRT for counsellor intervention.

CRT discusses with counsellor.

CRT or counsellor contact parent and facilitate completion of parent counsellor referral form (including permission) if appropriate.

Completed referral brought to LST meeting by counsellor or stage/team representative. NB: Students aged 12 years do not require parental permission. In this case, CRT may complete referral on student's behalf.

Referral discussed by LST. Decision made about further action eg counsellor referral, LAST program, EALD support, behaviour support. LST (via team representative or coordinator) or counsellor liaison with CRT. Strategies/interventions documented and implemented as decided.

## Students Receiving Integration Funding Support

Integration Funding Support (IFS) is provided to students with a diagnosed disability and allocated externally following school submission of an Access Request. Students receiving IFS are supported to attend mainstream school.

Teachers of students receiving IFS are supported by the Learning and Support Team (LST). The LST has a collaborative role in the decision-making process around specific support needs or adjustments required for students with disabilities.

Approved uses of integration funding include:

- Related training and development activities (relief for classroom teachers and/or SLSOs);
- Additional teacher time;
- School Learning and Support Officer (SLSO) time;
- Transfer of duty (eg relief to visit other schools, relief for transition support);
- Program coordination/meeting time (relief for classroom teachers).

Funding can only be used to provide staff. The funding is not allocated for administrative purposes, to purchase resources or technology, to make properties modifications, or to provide therapy or clinical support.