

Merimbula Public School

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School Learning and Support Policy



RATIONALE:

It is recognised by the Department Of Education, and their employees, that quality teaching is fundamental to the achievement of students when addressing educational priorities. At times this quality teaching may require personalised learning and support to assist children with additional needs. The Department recognises that personalised learning and support is a process that supports a wide range of students with varied learning and support needs.

Personalised learning and support is underpinned by evidence of four key elements or areas of activity:

- The assessed individual education needs of the student;
- The provision of adjustments or support to meet the students' assessed needs;
- Monitoring and review of the impact of the adjustment or support being provided for the student;
- Consultation and collaboration – of teachers with parents, support staff and other professionals where required.

Merimbula Public School has developed a school learning and support policy, in consultation with school community members, in order to ensure that students have the opportunity to receive effective and equitable support to enhance their learning experience; whether the need be social, emotional, developmental or academic.

AIMS:

The aim of this policy is for students to be able to effectively engage in learning experiences with support and adjustments as required.

SPECIAL NOTES:

Assessed Individual Student Needs: Rigorous and holistic assessment of a student's learning and support needs is informed by analysis of data. Examples of data for assessing a student for learning may include:

- curriculum and extra-curricular activity assessments;
- knowledge of the student from their parents and carers;
- assessment of data specific to the individual student,

such as reading and numeracy, language, communication, social/emotional, behaviour, health care, attendance, and their personal and cultural context;

- profiles or assessments that identify a student's learning and support needs, such as a PLASST profile;
- documentation from medical practitioners, other medical specialists, other health or allied health professionals and therapists, such as a paediatrician, school counsellor or psychologist, speech pathologist, occupational therapist, audiologist.

Provision of Adjustments: Providing personalised adjustments based on the assessed needs of the student and in consultation with their parents or carers is supported by evidence of their implementation. Examples of evidence of adjustments may include:

- Adjustments to teaching and learning for individual students recorded on teachers' plans;
- Records of educational and social-emotional interventions provided for the student;
- Individualised or personalised plans that address specific learning and support needs of the student and records of their implementation, such as plans for individual student learning, communication, behaviour, health care and transition;
- Adjustments to learning materials such as the provision of learning materials in alternate formats, adjusted worksheets or reworded tasks;
- Environmental adjustments beyond those already in place in the school such as personalised learning spaces and use of sound field amplification systems;
- Records of professional learning for teachers and school staff that support them in meeting identified student needs;
- teacher professional learning to meet a student's individual needs.

Monitoring the Impact of Adjustments: Adjustments for a student are regularly monitored, periodically revised and adapted or changed where needed, to continue to meet the

assessed needs of the student. Examples of data that inform monitoring and review of the impact of assessments may include:

- Student progress data, including both formative and summative assessment;
- Progress or file notes kept by teachers, specialist staff, other professionals;
- Collection and review of specific data relevant to planned personalised adjustments or interventions, such as behaviour, health care, communication, attendance and learning achievement;
- Regular review and updating of health care plans in consultation with medical specialists;
- Records of meetings to review adjustments, with individual students, parents and carers, teachers, support staff and specialist staff.

Consultation and Collaboration:

Teachers and school staff work collaboratively to identify and respond to the additional learning and support needs of students. This includes consultation and collaborative planning between school staff and students and their parents or carers, as well as collaborative planning between teachers, support staff and specialist staff within and outside education where needed to address individual student needs. Examples of ways in which this collaboration is recorded may include:

- records of meetings held at school to plan for and review adjustments involving teachers, students, their parents and carers, other specialist staff and professionals, such as learning and support team meeting records;
- records of discussions and decisions about the provision of adjustments for the student;
- documented student plans signed by the student or their parents and carers;
- records of parent-teacher interviews;
- parent-teacher communication books.

This policy is consistent with legislation and reflects government and departmental policy, including the Disability Discrimination Act. It incorporates the principles of procedural fairness. It has been developed and endorsed by the Learning and Support Team (LST), in consultation with staff and the P&C, reflecting the changing needs of the school community. The policy has developed as a result of reflection on previous policies and practices within the school.

PROCESS:

Staff and/or parents, caregivers and agency advocates (ie in the instance of a child being in out of home care) have the opportunity to refer a child to the learning and support team and apply for additional support to be put in place for that child. Staff and the caregivers of the child are to work collaboratively in applying for support, outlining any adjustments that have already been made as well as support from previous school/s, teachers and/or outside agencies.

The school LST meets weekly to address referrals and offers staff support through attendance at Integration Meetings for students with funding support, those in support classes as well as students attending suspension resolution meetings.

Outcomes of LST Referral Meetings will be communicated to applicants, via a LST Referral Outcome Form to the classroom teacher and phone call to the parent/carer, as soon as practicable (within one week).

RESPONSIBILITIES OF STAFF:

Classroom Teacher: Each teacher holds primary responsibility for the learning of every student in the class.

Learning and Support Team/Principal: The school learning and support team, led by the Principal/delegate, plays a key role in ensuring that the specific needs of students with disability and additional learning and support needs are met.

The team:

- support teachers in identifying and responding to the additional learning needs of students;
- facilitates and coordinates a whole school approach to improving the learning outcomes of every student;
- coordinates planning processes and resourcing for students with disability and additional learning and support needs;
- designs and implements the supports required to build teacher capacity so that all students access quality learning;
- develops collaborative partnerships with the school, parents and carers, other professionals and the wider school community.

Every school has a learning and support team. The composition of teams may vary as they are made up of members according to the needs of the particular school and community in which they work.

Learning and Support Teacher: The learning and support teacher provides direct and timely specialist assistance to students in regular classes with disability and additional learning and support needs and their teachers. Their works emphasises: the needs of individual students; school priorities, and evidence-based programs to assist students with additional needs.

Learning and support teachers use a collaborative and consultative approach so that students themselves and their parents or carers are actively involved in decision-making.

School Learning Support Officer (SLSO): School learning support officers work under the direction and supervision of the classroom teacher. They provide assistance to students with disability and additional learning and support needs enrolled in special schools, specialist support classes in regular schools and regular classes. They can provide assistance with: school routines; classroom activities, and the care and management of students with disability and additional learning and support needs.

School Counsellor: School counsellors are qualified teachers who have a degree in psychology and post graduate qualifications in school counselling. They complement and enhance the work of teachers by: strengthening schools' student welfare provisions, and providing psychological assessments of students with specific needs.

EVALUATION: This policy will be evaluated by the Learning Support Team in consultation with staff and the community annually.