

Supporting All Students with Disability Focus

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

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TEACHING AND LEARNING

AUSTRALIAN CURRICULUM AND STUDENTS WITH DISABILITY DIFFERENTIATION

What is the Australian Curriculum?

The Australian Curriculum sets consistent national standards to improve learning outcomes for all young Australians. It sets out what students should be taught and achieve as they progress through school.

My child has a Learning Plan, how does this work with the Australian Curriculum?

For students with disability, their strengths, interests, needs and individual learning goals are linked to the curriculum and detailed in their Learning Plan.

What is differentiation?

Differentiation is based on knowing students well as individuals and in terms of where they are up to in their learning, then acting responsively to personalise learning to their needs.

Why do teachers need to use differentiation?

Differentiated practice helps ensure that every student is engaged and learning successfully. To differentiate, teachers can make adjustments to aspects of teaching and learning including; curriculum content and resources, teaching strategies, assessment and learning environments.

How is the Australian Curriculum used to support teaching and learning for students with disability?

Students with individual learning needs are supported within the Australian Curriculum. The Australian Curriculum website has information on this through the [Student Diversity](#) section.

Support practices are outlined to assist teachers make educational adjustments for all students.

I am worried about my child's learning and development, who should I contact?

You should speak with your child's teacher or principal.

What are the General Capabilities within the Australian Curriculum?

The General Capabilities within the Australian Curriculum identify essential skills for students from Prep to Year 10, and are sometimes used to link learning goals for students with disability. The progressions listed for the Literacy, Numeracy and Personal and Social Capabilities have been extended to be inclusive of all students.

How can I find out more about the General Capabilities within the Australian Curriculum?

See <http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/studentdiversity/using-the-general-capabilities>

EDUCATIONAL ADJUSTMENTS/PERSONALISING LEARNING

What is an Educational Adjustment?

Educational adjustment is when a change is made to a student's education programme so they get what they need to access schooling.

Why do we have Educational Adjustments?

Adjustments are the supports, accommodations and resources provided to minimise barriers and maximise wellbeing and learning outcomes for students with disability. Students without an identified disability may also require adjustments.

What types of support can my child access?

Supports will be allocated to meet the educational adjustments your child's teacher needs to make. These can include:

- differentiating the curriculum
- support teacher or teacher assistant support
- professional expertise in the areas of psychology, speech pathology, vision or deaf services
- assistive technology
- specialist equipment and resources.

How do I know the types of educational adjustments that have been made for my child?

Through your child's Learning Plan (LP). The LP describes important information and priority learning goals to be achieved by your child. It also defines the kinds of adjustments suited to optimise learning and how your child can best demonstrate their understandings.

What is differentiation?

It is a teaching approach. It is based on knowing students well as individuals and in terms of where they are up to in their learning, then acting responsively to personalise learning to their needs.

Why do teachers need to use differentiation?

Differentiated practice helps ensure that every student is engaged and learning successfully. To differentiate, teachers can make adjustments to aspects of teaching and learning including; curriculum content and resources, teaching strategies, assessment and learning environments.

Do Tasmanian Government schools recognise that some students are gifted?

It is recognised that some students, including gifted and highly able students, require significant adjustments to their learning programme if they are to be engaged and challenged. Just like any group of learners, gifted students have different strengths and needs across learning, social and emotional domains.

My child is gifted, how will their education be personalised to their needs?

To enable schools to support gifted and highly able students, the department provides a professional learning programme for teachers as well as extended learning opportunities for students. Through its eLearning programmes, the department provides a range of extended online learning courses for students called the Centre for Extended Learning Opportunities (CELO) Online.

How can I get more information on what extended learning opportunities are available for my child?

For more information, see the infosheet about [CELO Online](#).

I am worried about my child's learning and development, who should I contact?

You should speak with your child's teacher or principal.

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LEARNING PLANS (LP)

What is a Learning Plan (LP)?

An LP contains important information and priority learning goals for students with disability and students who require significant changes to their education programme. It is developed for students with support needs to assist them with their education.

LP's are documents which should reflect the students' needs and as the needs change the document should be updated to reflect the changing needs.

How do LP's work?

School staff will help you if your child requires a Learning Plan. This plan is written specifically for your child to address their academic and personal needs. All staff working with your child at school will use the plan. Your input to the planning process is very important and regular reviews will be conducted to ensure the plan is current and relevant.

Who is involved in developing the LP?

It is a collaboration with school teachers, specialist staff, and the child's parents including the student wherever possible.

Which students have a Learning Plan?

All students who are provided with funding and those who require curriculum differentiation and adjustments to the learning programme must have a Learning Plan.

Is there an accountability process on LPs, who does this?

Yes. This is managed through the school principal and department's Disability Programs Team.

I am worried about my child's learning and development, who should I contact?

You should speak with your child's teacher or principal.

Where can I find out more information on Learning Plans?

See <https://www.education.tas.gov.au/documentcentre/Documents/Learning-Plan-Procedure.pdf>

PROFESSIONAL LEARNING FOR SCHOOL STAFF TO SUPPORT STUDENTS WITH A SUPPORT NEED

Is professional learning offered for school staff to support students with a support need?

Yes. The department's Professional Learning Institute (PLI) provides a range of programmes for school staff in this area.

What are some of the programmes available for school teachers?

The *Differentiated Classroom Practice* downloadable programme provides practical classroom strategies that enable effective and rigorous learning for all students.

Support Teachers attend professional learning session once every school term.

For more information on relevant programmes for teachers please visit the Professional Learning Institute website <http://pli.education.tas.gov.au>

What early childhood professional learning is available?

There is a programme focused on Early Childhood Intervention Services (ECIS) – *Supporting Children with Additional Needs in the Classroom (Kindergarten)*. It enables participants to develop responsive and appropriate educational programmes for children with additional needs in Kindergarten. It is aligned to the Early Years Learning Framework.

Is there any professional learning for school teachers in managing challenging behaviour?

Yes. There is a programme for *Building Respectful Schools – Restorative Practices*. This approaches the management of conflict and tensions, by focusing upon repairing harm and strengthening relationships. It offers a way to achieve positive outcomes for young people, parents, caregivers and their communities in the wake of harmful incidents.

Are Support Teachers provided with professional learning?

Support Teachers are required to meet once every school term in their regions for professional learning sessions. The sessions have a strong focus on building networks with colleagues from other schools and professional support staff who also participate in these sessions. Support Staff such as Speech and Language Pathologists, Autism Consultants, Physical Impairment Co-ordinators, Deaf and Hearing Impaired Service staff, Vision Services staff and members of the Respectful Schools Support Team.

What sort of things do the Support Teachers focus on at their professional learning sessions?

- Inclusive practice
- Differentiation using the Australian Curriculum
- Reporting on achievement of learning goals
- Online resources that assist Support Teachers in their role
- How best to use professional reports prepared by School Psychologists and Speech and Language Pathologists
- Collaboration with other teachers and leaders
- Legislative requirements relating to disability and policy.

How do staff learn more about their obligations outlined in the Disability Standards for Education?

All school staff are required to meet their obligations as outlined in the *Disability Standards for Education* in their work. Online, interactive professional learning modules are available for all staff at <http://dse.theeducationinstitute.edu.au/> (the registration key is **tas-det**).

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SPECIAL SUPPORTS

AUTISM

How are students with Autism supported in Tasmanian Government schools?

Students with Autism are supported through the work of Autism Consultants, School Psychologists and Speech Pathologists in particular, as well as their teachers and teacher assistants. Their learning needs are met through the development and implementation of appropriate personalised learning plans.

My child has been identified as having a diagnosis of severe Autism, how much funding will their school get to support their learning?

On top of the allocation the school receives for each student enrolled at the school, the amount of extra funding received for students identified with severe autism is \$25,364.

Extra teacher staffing is also provided to the school to support personalising teaching and learning programmes for students at 0.2 FTE (one day a week) or the equivalent of \$20,767.

My child has a diagnosis of severe Autism, how will the school use the funding they are provided to help support them?

Below is an example of some of the supports that may be put in place to personalise a student's programme:

- Teacher assistant time
- Assistive technology – iPad and apps to support communication
- Professional learning for their teacher and teacher assistant
- Motor skills group
- Speech therapy programme
- Sensory programme

What do Autism Consultants do?

Autism Consultants are qualified teachers with specific expertise in working with children on the Autism Spectrum. They provide:

- Support and assistance to families and schools.
- Input into planning for individual students and support appropriate curriculum differentiation.
- Professional learning to support the capacity building of staff in schools

How many Autism Consultants work across the state?

6.5 Full Time Equivalent (FTE) staff.

What does the Tasmanian Autism Diagnostic Services (TADS) provide?

TADS is a community service providing comprehensive diagnostic assessments for children and young people thought to have an autism spectrum disorder (ASD). The service provides a report including treatment and programming suggestions and recommendations for referral to appropriate agencies and service providers where required.

Are there any support groups to help parents and carers of children on the Autism Spectrum?

Yes. Autism Tasmania (a government funded, not for profit organisation) provides information, support and practical help to people on the autism spectrum and their parents and carers through its statewide Autism Tasmania Information Team.

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I am worried about my child's learning and development, who should I contact?

You should speak with your child's teacher or principal.

SPECIALIST SUPPORT STAFF

Who are the professional support staff available in Tasmanian Government schools?

In Tasmanian Government schools there are professional staff that support the emotional wellbeing of students.

Student support staff, include support teachers, school psychologists, speech and language pathologists, social workers, and chaplains. These staff can work with you and your child to resolve problems and refer you to other professional help when required.

School Psychologists

Who are school psychologists?

School psychologists are registered psychologists who work across schools throughout the state.

What do school psychologists do?

They work with students, staff and parents to achieve the best outcomes for students' educational achievement and personal wellbeing through assessments, counselling and case management.

They offer support for concerns such as underachievement, poor social coping skills, anxiety, depression, grief and loss, and trauma impact.

I would like my child to see a school psychologist, who should I contact?

You should speak with your child's teacher or principal.

http://www.education.tas.gov.au/About_us/publications/school-brochures/Pages/School-Psychologists.aspx

Speech and Language Pathologists

Who are speech and language pathologists?

Speech and language pathologists are qualified and skilled in assessing, diagnosing and managing speech, language and feeding disorders and difficulties.

What do speech and language pathologists do?

They work with students, parents, teachers and support staff to help students overcome development delays or disorders, which affect their ability to communicate.

I would like my child to see a speech and language pathologist, who should I contact?

You should speak with your child's teacher or principal.

<https://www.education.tas.gov.au/documentcentre/Documents/Infosheet-SupportingStudents-School-Speech-Pathologists.pdf>

Social Workers

Who are social workers?

Social workers are professional practitioners who provide confidential counselling and support to students and their families around a range of issues.

What do social workers do?

Social workers focus on issues including mental health difficulties, stress management, attendance issues, grief counselling and conflict resolution. They also provide assistance for families/students at risk of harm (from self or from others) such as suicide, self-harm, child protection issues or risk of homelessness.

What are some of the professional tasks they undertake?

- Early intervention programmes including counselling, casework and group work.
- Prioritising service delivery based on need.
- Responding to critical incidents or crises.
- Home/school liaison with students, parents and school staff.
- Mediation between home, school and/or other agencies.
- Referral to, and liaison with, other community agencies.
- Provision of information and resources to students, parents, teachers and other agencies.

What statutory duties do social workers have?

- Liaison with Child and Family Services and Tasmania Police when dealing with safety and legal issues.
- Supporting families and students around attendance and employment issues.

I would like my child to see a social worker, who should I contact?

Social work services can be accessed directly by families or students by asking for contact details at their school office, or through a referral from school staff.

Support for Vision Impaired Students

My child has a vision impairment. How will their school and the Department support my child's learning?

Vision Services (VS) provides support to Tasmanian children and students (0 -18) who are blind or have low vision at home, or within their government school. The nature of support varies, depending on your child's visual profile and additional learning needs. Support may include direct teaching time from a specialist vision resource teacher, orientation and mobility specialist support, access to adaptive technology and technology specialists, involvement in student and family cluster events, allocation of teacher assistant time if required, and support from the Vision Resource Unit for preparation and production of adapted learning resources.

Who are the Vision Services Team?

- The VS Team include teachers with postgraduate specialist qualifications, an Orientation and Mobility VI/Specialist Teacher, Technology Specialists and Braille Transcribers.

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What do the Vision Services Team do?

Vision Services will assist your child to use their sensory skills (visual, auditory, tactile and kinaesthetic) to maximum effect so that they can access the curriculum, and enjoy all learning experiences.

An emphasis in all Vision Services programs is on provision of tools and strategies to maximise functional use of vision and access to learning opportunities. This involves consideration of adjustments to curriculum, environment and instruction. In addition, Vision Services focus on the development of disability-specific skills and capabilities known as the Expanded Core Curriculum (for example, development of social skills and self-advocacy, Braille literacy and communication, long cane skills, leisure and recreation and so forth).

Who Does Vision Services work with?

VS has developed partnerships with a range of specialist service providers such as the Royal Hobart Low Vision Clinic, the Launceston Eye Hospital, Early Childhood Intervention Service, Special Schools, and agencies such as Vision Australia, and Guide Dogs Tasmania (students transitioning to adult services). These partnerships assist students, families and schools to access high quality programs and support.

What assistive technologies are provided to assist students?

Students receive a comprehensive assessment of technology needs which enables provision of a range of technology options for different purposes. Technology is constantly changing and an extensive technology library is provided to ensure up to date equipment is available to suit individual student needs. The range of technology includes braille equipment (such as Braille Notes and Mountbatten Brailers), iPads, laptops and specialist software such as JAWS and Zoom Text.

How is support provided in the classroom?

Depending on your child's visual profile and specific educational needs it may be helpful to have the direct 1:1 support of a vision resource teacher on a regular basis. In this instance, the Vision Teacher works collaboratively with the class teacher to develop personalised programs that suit your child. In other cases, students or children may benefit from consultative support which assists everyone to understand your child's learning needs, and the ways in which adjustments can enable access to the curriculum. Other strands of support from the VS team may be provided on a needs basis.

How do Teacher Assistants work with students who are blind or have low vision?

Teacher Assistants are guided by the student's LP in addition to class teacher and specialist teacher advice. Many children/students who are blind or have low vision require additional reinforcement of learning experiences in order to develop concepts. For children with normal vision, much early learning is gained incidentally. For children who are blind or have low vision the Teacher Assistant role ensures that learning experiences are not fragmented and there is opportunity for additional time to reinforce concepts, to ensure safe participation in practical curriculum activities and to assist in implementing specialist programs.

What is O&M?

Orientation, put simply, involves using the senses to work out where you are in any given environment. Orientation enables a person who is vision impaired to work out where they are, where they are going and how they are going to get there.

Mobility is defined as one's physical ability to move through the environment in a safe and efficient manner.

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Orientation and mobility skills are used on daily basis, throughout the lifetime of a person who is vision impaired. The gradual acquisition of O&M skills throughout a child's life is focused on enabling the child who is vision impaired to engage in age appropriate levels of independence within the home, school and community. The O&M instructor's role is to work in partnership with families to achieve this goal.

How does the VS Orientation and Mobility VS Teacher provide support?

The type of O&M support is determined by the needs identified by families, VS teacher's, and schools. The program considers the student's vision profile, age and general functioning level. The VS Teacher (O&M) will contact you to organise an assessment of your child's current O&M functioning and develop a plan with you and the school. The O&M support maybe ongoing involvement, blocks of O&M sessions or a consultative support depending on your child's needs. Such support can occur in the family home, school environment or in the community.

Support for Deaf and Hearing Impaired Students

My child has a hearing impairment, how will their school and the department support their learning?

Students with hearing impairments receive supports based on the nature of the impairment and their individual requirements. It may include teacher of the deaf visits and support, Auslan interpreters (if the child is an Auslan user) and/or teacher assistant time.

Which area of the Government provides this service?

These services are managed by the Department of Education through the State Support Service Team.

What type of support is available for my child who has a loss of hearing?

This services provides statewide specialist educational support to children from birth to 18 years of age. The service provides:

- Expert professional advice
- Monitoring and reporting of children's progress
- Individual support for children
- Auslan interpreting support in schools
- Collaborative support for stakeholders
- Professional learning.

What support staff work in this service?

This service has qualified Teachers of the Deaf, Auslan Interpreters and Teacher Assistants with signing skills and Deaf Tutors.

When can my child start receiving support from the Vision Services team?

This service is available to children and their families from birth to Year 12.

Will my child work with this service through their school?

Yes. Staff work with schools and relevant agencies to support students with hearing loss and their families in home, school and community settings.

What is the support designed to do?

- Meet the individual needs of children and their families
- Ensure equity of access to the curriculum
- Provide ongoing direct support to classroom teachers
- Assist with transition throughout their school years
- Develop children's social connections.

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Who can make referrals?

- Family members
- Teachers
- Medical/health professionals associated with the Universal Newborn Hearing Screening
- Australian Hearing

What costs are associated with this service?

There is no cost to parents of children aged 0-4, or those enrolled in Government schools.

I would like my child to get support from the Deaf and Hearing Impaired service who should I contact?

You should speak with your child's teacher or principal or contact the State Coordinator of Deaf and Hearing Impaired Services on (03) 6339 4913.

Support for Physically Impaired Students

My child has been identified as having a severe physical disability, how much funding will their school get to support their learning?

On top of the allocation the school receives for each student enrolled at the school, the amount of extra funding received for students identified with a severe physical disability is \$20,888.

Extra teacher staffing is also provided to the school to support personalising teaching and learning programmes for students at 0.2 FTE (one day a week) or the equivalent of \$20,767.

What specialist support staff are available to assist my child with their physical disability?

Physical Impairment Coordinators provide support to schools in educational support and management of students with physical impairment.

What do the tasks of a Physical Impairment Coordinator include?

- Providing assistance and advice to classroom teachers and Principals on the implementation of appropriate programmes and procedures for students with Physical Impairment.
- Coordinating Assistive Technology and Manual Handling resources for students.
- Providing advice to parents and professional staff on department and other agency supports available.
- Organising professional development for all staff involved with working with students with a physical disability.

Respectful Schools Support Team

What is the 'Respectful Schools Support Team'?

The Respectful Schools Support Team (RSST) provides extra specialist services in each Learning Service.

What is the role of the 'Respectful Schools Support Team'?

The role of the Respectful Schools Support Team (RSST) is to develop positive behaviour approaches and build staff capacity in relation to:

- classroom teachers, school leaders and school based staff incorporating the Respectful Schools and Workplaces Framework across all schools
- developing the use of whole school positive behaviour support approaches
- building staff capacity to make educational adjustments to the Australian Curriculum for all students
- building inclusive school cultures and communities to meet the diverse needs of all learners.

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Safe Homes, Safe Families Team

Who are the Safe Homes, Safe Families Team?

This team consists of six professional support staff (three social workers and three psychologist in each region of the state) as part of the Tasmanian Government's Action Plan to respond to family violence. The staff will support children in schools and child and family centres.

The staff are based in three child and family centres across the state, Bridgewater, East Devonport and Ravenswood.

Student Wellbeing Team

Who are the Student Wellbeing Team?

This team consists of 8 staff, 2 Senior Principals (one at each Learning Service) and 6 experienced social workers, 1 attached to each network of schools. The staff focus on supporting children impacted by abuse and neglect and/or family violence to engage positively in education.

The student wellbeing team works closely with other government agencies and non-government organisations in relation to student wellbeing and family needs.

SUPPORT TEACHERS IN SCHOOLS

Who are Support Teachers?

Support Teachers are teachers with special skills who support school and classroom teachers to improve outcomes for students with disability or additional support needs.

Does my school have a Support Teacher?

Yes. All schools receive a Support Teacher staffing allocation which ranges from one day a week to more according to the need of the school.

What do schools use their Support Teacher resource for?

The support staff allocation is provided to schools to:

- Help optimise the educational opportunities, engagement and learning outcomes for students with the highest educational needs.
- Enhance collaboration with other professional support staff to ensure expertise from a range of services is provided.
- Ensure learners have access to a relevant curriculum and effective instruction within a positive inclusive learning environment.

Who do Support Teachers work with to help support students?

Support Teachers regularly meet with specialist support staff, parents, school staff and other service providers to develop, implement and evaluate Learning Plans/personalising learning for students with additional support needs.

How are Support Teachers given the training they need for this role?

Support Teachers are required to meet once every school term in their regions.

Professional learning sessions have a strong focus on building networks with colleagues from other schools and professional support staff who also participate in these sessions, including Speech and Language Pathologists, Autism Consultants, Physical Impairment Coordinators, Deaf and Hearing Impaired Service staff, Vision Services staff and members of the Respectful Schools Support Team.

What sort of things do the Support Teachers focus on at their professional learning sessions?

- Inclusive practice
- Differentiation using the Australian Curriculum
- Reporting on achievement of learning goals
- Online resources, information and tools to assist Support Teachers in their role
- How best to use professional reports prepared by School Psychologists and Speech and Language Pathologists
- Collaboration with others on their ideas and areas of expertise
- Legislative requirements relating to disability and policy.

TEACHER ASSISTANTS (TAs)

Who are Teacher Assistants (TAs)?

Teacher Assistants work with classroom teachers and specialist teachers to support the learning and social, emotional needs of children, often on a one-to-one basis with a particular child or with a small group of children.

What do Teacher Assistants do?

The main duties of a Teacher Assistant include:

- Assisting teachers and students both inside and outside the classroom.
- Assisting with the supervision of small groups or individual students on activities, as directed by the teacher both on and off campus.
- Preparing teaching resources and materials to support learning programmes including individual student education and behaviour programmes.
- Assisting students with physical and mobility challenges by lifting, positioning, exercising and/or transferring from or to transportation, as specified in their LP.
- Assisting with personal hygiene, toileting and feeding requirements as required by each individual student.
- Undertaking specific therapy tasks with individual students under the guidance of the teacher or nominated professional.
- Assisting students with intellectual disabilities with the use of learning aides.
- Providing administrative assistance to students, staff and teachers.
- Maintaining stores and equipment.

OTHER SUPPORT SERVICES

What support services does the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) provide to assist schools?

StGiles Society is contracted by DHHS to provide a wide range of services in the South and North of the state for people with disability, this includes students in schools. For example, occupational therapists and physiotherapists from StGiles support students **access** all components of the learning programme. This includes the prescription of modified seating for students.

North West Area Health Service provides a similar service in the North West of Tasmania.

Is there a service that assists schools and families with liaison and mediation to help children with disability?

Yes. Life without Barriers.

How can the Life without Barriers service help me?

They provide care and support services across Australia in urban, rural and remote locations. The Department of Education contracts Life without Barriers staff to work across the state in support of families and schools.

Can families contact Life without Barriers directly?

Yes. Families can make direct contact with the mediation and liaison officers. Schools and Learning Services can also approach the officers for assistance with mediation when it is required. Families and schools are encouraged to find flexible solutions.

Where can I find out more information and contact details for Life without Barriers?

See <http://www.lwb.org.au/>

Is there a service that assist schools and families with physiotherapy to help children with disability?

Yes. Paediatric and Neurodevelopmental Assessment and Therapy (P.A.N.D.A) in the South of the state.

StGiles Society in the North of the state

North West Area Health Service in the North West of the state.

What do P.A.N.D.A do?

P.A.N.D.A provide therapy services as part of educational plans and work closely with teaching staff to integrate sensory motor outcomes into daily school activities.

Where can I find out more information and contact details for P.A.N.D.A?

See <http://www.pandatherapy.com.au/index.php/education/consultancy>

Where can I find out more information and contact details for St Giles Society?

http://www.dhhs.tas.gov.au/service_information/services_files/st_giles_society

Where can I find out more information and contact details for North West Area Health Service?

<https://www.dhhs.tas.gov.au/tho/nw>

WELLBEING

CHALLENGING BEHAVIOUR

What do schools have in place to manage challenging behaviour?

Schools, in consultation with their school communities, develop policies to address bullying, including cyber bullying, and to put in place school-wide approaches to support respectful and positive behaviour.

Is there a national resource to help build safe schools?

To support schools in providing safe schools, the Australian Government has worked with Education Service Australia to deliver the *National Safe Schools Hub* – a one-stop shop of resources to help build safe and supportive learning environments.

How are schools supported to manage students with challenging behaviour?

The department is supporting the important work schools already do in this area by:

- Providing the *Respectful Schools, Respectful Behaviour* resource (staff access only) to all teachers.
- Providing professional learning based on the *National Safe Schools Framework*.
- Developing digital support material.
- Providing the statewide *Respectful Schools Support Team*.

How can I help my child who is having behavioural issues at school?

If you feel or have been told that your child is having difficulties it is important to discuss your concerns with school staff and ask for help when you need it.

Talking and listening to your child at the end of their school day will help you find out what they have done at school, any positive experiences and also any difficulties they may be experiencing.

I am having trouble talking to my child about their behaviour, what should I do?

When talking with your child:

- try not to criticise or lecture
- try not to overreact but listen and share your ideas
- try to treat them with the same courtesy and respect that you show adults
- remember that talking face-to-face sometimes doesn't work – so try to make the most of other times, for example when you're side-by-side while in the car.

Also, remember to speak with your child's teacher about any concerns you have about their behaviour.

My child is being bullied at school what should I do?

If you know or think that your child is being bullied, harassed or discriminated against:

- encourage your child to talk about what is happening
- write down when, where and with whom problems seem to be happening
- make an appointment to see your child's teacher or the school principal to discuss the matter
- ask about the school's policies in this area
- keep in contact with the school until you are happy that the problem has been sorted out.

Where can I find out more information about how behaviour is managed in Tasmanian Government schools?

The department's Student Behaviour brochure:

https://www.education.tas.gov.au/About_us/publications/school-brochures/Pages/Discipline.aspx

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SCHOOL HEALTH NURSE PROGRAMME

What is the School Health Nurse Programme?

This is a programme which focuses on supporting schools to create a physical and social environment that promotes health and wellbeing, and assists to improve the health and education outcomes for children and young people in Tasmania.

How many School Nurses are there?

There are currently 20 full-time nurses working in State government schools. Each nurse is allocated a number of schools within their region.

Will there be different nurses for primary and secondary schools?

Yes. There are Primary School Nurses and Secondary School Nurses.

What is the focus in primary schools?

- Vision and hearing checks
- Health assessments
- Providing advice and information to students, parents and school staff on child health, physical activity and nutrition
- Assisting schools with management processes for medication and consistency of care for students with medical conditions
- Addressing medical issues that may be impacting learning.

What is the focus in secondary schools?

- Promotion of good health and wellbeing
- Positive parenting for teenagers with babies
- Sexual health and relationships
- Addictions and risk behaviours
- Body image, physical activity and nutrition
- Mental health.

Will all schools be provided with this support?

No. Schools will be selected that have the greatest need for community health assistance.

SUICIDE PREVENTION

I am concerned about my child's state of mind, who can I talk to?

Please contact your child's school through their teacher or school principal, they will assist in arranging the availability of a social worker.

What resources are recommended for schools?

MindMatters and *KidsMatter* provide excellent resources including tools and resources to support professional learning.

KidsMatter Primary and *MindMatters* are federally funded mental health promotion, prevention and early intervention initiatives for primary and secondary schools. Broadly, both are flexible, whole-school approaches aimed at improving student mental health and wellbeing that can be tailored to meet school and community contexts.

Where can I find more information on these resources?

<http://www.mindmatters.edu.au/> and <https://www.kidsmatter.edu.au/>

Who are Headspace?

Headspace is funded by the Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing under the Youth Mental Health Initiative Programme. Headspace provides mental health, drug and alcohol, physical health and education and vocational support to young people aged between 12 and 25.

For more information visit www.headspace.org.au

SUSPENSIONS AND OTHER DISCIPLINARY SANCTIONS

How can I help my child who is having behavioural issues at school?

If you feel or have been told that your child is having difficulties it is important to discuss your concerns with school staff and ask for help when you need it.

Talking and listening to your child at the end of their school day will help you find out what they have done at school, any positive experiences and also any difficulties they may be experiencing.

I am having trouble talking to my child about their behaviour, what should I do?

When talking with your child:

- try not to criticise or lecture
- try not to overreact but listen and share your ideas
- try to treat them with the same courtesy and respect that you show adults
- remember that talking face-to-face sometimes doesn't work – so try to make the most of other times, for example when you're side-by-side while in the car.

Also, remember to speak with your child's teacher about any concerns you have about their behaviour.

What is unacceptable behaviour?

- refusal to participate in the education programme
- disobedience of instructions which regulate the conduct of students
- behaviour which is likely to impede significantly the learning of the other students of that school
- behaviour which is detrimental to the health, safety or welfare of the staff or other students of that school
- causes or is likely to cause damage
- is likely to bring that school into disrepute
- any other behaviour that the Secretary determines.

My child has been suspended, what does this mean?

Suspension is a disciplinary measure involving the temporary full-time or part-time withdrawal of a student's right to attend school for a period of up to 1 to 10 school days or less. Under the *Education Act 1994*, a principal has the authority to suspend a student.

What is an exclusion from school?

Exclusion is a disciplinary measure involving temporary full-time or part-time withdrawal of a student's right to attend school for a period of greater than two weeks, on the authority of the Secretary (which is delegated to the General Manager Learning Services).

What is an expulsion from school?

Expulsion is a consequence reserved for serious behavioural issues. It is a disciplinary sanction involving the full-time withdrawal of a student's right to attend a particular state school, on the authority of the Secretary. The Secretary has the responsibility to facilitate the child's enrolment at another state school.

What is a prohibition from school?

Prohibition is the permanent full-time withdrawal of a student's right to attend any state school, on the authority of the Secretary.

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What if I am not sure if my child's behaviour warrants suspension?

It is the school principal's responsibility to determine whether to suspend a student in any specific circumstances.

If you have any concerns or queries about your child's suspension, you should contact the school principal to discuss your child, your concerns, and the reasons and grounds for the suspension.

Where can I find out more information about how behaviour is managed in Tasmanian Government schools?

The department's Student Behaviour brochure:

https://www.education.tas.gov.au/About_us/publications/school-brochures/Pages/Discipline.aspx

INITIATIVES AND PROGRAMS

DISABILITY LEGISLATION

What legislation guides our work with students and people with a disability?

The two main pieces of legislation that guide our work with students and people with disability are the *Disability Discrimination Act, 1992* (DDA) and the *Disability Standards for Education, 2005* (DSE).

What does the *Disability Discrimination Act, 1992* (DDA) do?

The DDA provides protection for everyone in Australia against discrimination based on disability. Disability discrimination happens when people with a disability or their associates are treated less fairly than people without a disability. A brief guide to the DDA can be found at:

<https://www.humanrights.gov.au/our-work/disability-rights/guides/brief-guide-disability-discrimination-act>

What is the *Disability Standards for Education, 2005* (DSE)?

The Disability Standards for Education (the Standards) are part of the national disability anti-discrimination legislation as it applies to education.

Who do the *Disability Standards for Education* apply to?

The Standards apply to all education providers in Australia: early childhood services, government and non-government schools, universities and TAFE colleges.

What do the Standards do?

The Standards set out a range of obligations that education providers must meet to make sure that students with disability are able to access and participate in education and training on the same basis as other students.

How will the Standards personalise learning for my child?

The Standards require that reasonable adjustments be provided where needed for a student with disability to ensure they can participate in educational programmes on the same basis as other students. This is a requirement regardless of whether individual support funding is available for a student.

Where can I get more information on disability legislation?

[*Disability Discrimination Act 1992* \(Cth\)](#)

[*Disability Standards for Education 2005* \(Cth\)](#)

INCLUSION

What is an inclusive school?

An inclusive school is a place where everyone belongs, is accepted, supports and is supported by their peers and other members of the school community while having their educational needs met.

What is inclusive learning?

Inclusive learning enables all students with disability to access appropriate teaching and learning programmes within the Australian Curriculum on the same basis as their peers.

Who is involved in ensuring a school is inclusive of all?

While principals in inclusive schools act as leaders, mediators, coaches, and emotional supporters to those involved, it is fundamentally a team effort. Parents, community members, school staff, educators, and students themselves must contribute to the goal of having an inclusive school.

What does an inclusive school community look like?

An inclusive school community builds partnerships with parents, families, local businesses and community organisations (including allied health, family support, counselling and rehabilitation services) to improve opportunities and outcomes for students.

How do schools include all students?

School leaders ensure their school creates and maintains a school climate in which all students and families feel a sense of identity and belonging.

My child has a disability and is going to a new school, who can I talk to?

The school principal and other school staff will be able to talk to you regularly to plan for your child's learning needs throughout their time at the school. Staff will be able clearly outline what support and funding the school provides for your child to personalise their learning.

What is the department's commitment to inclusion?

The department is committed to enabling all students to achieve quality outcomes through their participation in an inclusive, high quality education system that is responsive to their needs through appropriate access and participation in the Australian Curriculum.

I am worried about my child's learning and development, who should I contact?

You should speak with your child's teacher or principal.

NATIONALLY CONSISTENT COLLECTION OF DATA (NCCD)

What is the Nationally Consistent Collection of Data (NCCD) on School Students with Disability?

The Australian, and state and territory governments have agreed on a new approach to collecting data on school students with disability. This is called the Nationally Consistent Collection of Data (NCCD) on School Students with Disability.

What does the NCCD on School Students with Disability do?

The NCCD provides information about the number of students with disability in schools from Prep to Year 12, where they are located and the level of learning adjustments they receive to be able to access the curriculum.

Why is this work important?

The nationally consistent collection of data on students with disability is based around the existing obligations that schools have to students under the Commonwealth *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* and the *Disability Standards for Education 2005*. It seeks to count the number of students who are supported under these obligations based on the professional judgement of teachers and their understanding and knowledge of their students.

What are the four levels of adjustments provided to the student?

- Support provided within quality differentiated teaching practice
- Supplementary adjustments
- Substantial adjustments
- Extensive adjustments

How often does the collection occur?

The NCCD collection happens annually and is due for completion in August each year.

Does the collection occur in non-government schools as well?

Yes. Catholic and independent schools also participate in the collection.

What is the role of the school teacher with the collection?

Teachers use their professional judgement to determine:

- which of their students are being provided with a reasonable adjustment because of disability, as defined in the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* (the DDA) and the *Disability Standards for Education 2005*
- the level of adjustment that students with disability are being provided with, in both classroom and whole of school contexts
- the broad category of disability under which each student best fits.

What consultation are schools required to do?

Evidence is required at the school to demonstrate that a student has been provided with an educational adjustment for a period of ten weeks or longer to meet specific needs associated with the disability and that the students' parents or carers have been consulted in relation to the nature of the educational adjustment.

Are students in senior secondary education (Years 11 and 12) included within the NCCD?

Yes. Students are counted in the year they attend at the time of collection.

Where can I get more information on the NCCD?

See <http://www.education.gov.au/nationally-consistent-collection-data-students-disability-guidelines>
<http://www.esa.edu.au/>

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NATIONAL DISABILITY INSURANCE SCHEME (NDIS)

What is the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS)?

The National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) is a new way of providing individualised support for people with permanent and significant disability, and people with severe and persistent mental illness in limited circumstances.

Who is the target population?

In Tasmania from 1 July 2016 the target population was people aged 12-24 years of age. From July 1, 2017 the target population is people aged 4 years to 11 years of age.

How will this be rolled out?

The NDIS is being rolled out in stages because it's a significant change to supports for people with disability.

How will the NDIS support people?

For people eligible for the NDIS a care plan is developed that outlines and funds the reasonable and necessary supports needed to enable the achievement of the person's goals.

Where can I find out more information on how to access the NDIS in Tasmania?

www.ndis.gov.au

<https://www.education.tas.gov.au/intranet/EYS/StudentsWithDisability/Pages/NDIS.aspx>

TRANSITION

My child has a disability and is about to go from Year 6 to Year 7, how will the high school know how to support them?

Important information from primary school is passed on to a student's the high school to help with their planning ready to start Year 7 as smoothly as possible.

If your child has a physical disability, the high school may also make building modifications, including ramps and disabled toilet facilities, during the school holidays ready for your child to start.

My child has a disability and is about to go from Year 10 to Year 11, how will the college know how to support them?

Important information from high school is passed on to a student's college to help with their planning ready to start Year 11 as smoothly as possible. As part of the transition there should be discussions with your child and the high school about his goals and aspirations. This information will be captured in a Transition Plan.

Are there any apps that can help with storing and sharing information on my child's disability?

Yes. The Knowme app which has been developed through TASCARE Society for Children. This application allows parents, carers and people with disabilities themselves to record and share the information they would like new and existing carers and supporters to know.

Where can I find out more about the Knowme app?

See <https://knowme.net.au/about/>

SCHOOLS AND SERVICES

EARLY YEARS SERVICES

How many Tasmanian Government centres for early years children are there?

There are four Early Childhood Intervention Services (ECIS) centres (birth to school entry) located across the state. Contact details are below:

Hobart: Phone: 6231 1625

Launceston: Phone: 6344 1729

Devonport: Phone: 6224 3111

Burnie: Phone: 6430 4200

Who can I speak with if I think my child has a disability?

If you think your child has a disability, you should consult your family doctor, paediatrician or other professional with expertise in this area. If your child is already enrolled in school you should speak with their teacher, the school psychologist and principal.

Will my child need to go undergo any assessments?

Your child may need to undergo an assessment to ascertain a diagnosis and to identify their specific needs.

Who will help with my child's learning?

If your child is found to have a disability, a support team will be established. The support team includes yourself and may include your child's teacher, principal, school psychologist, medical practitioners and specialist service providers.

Together, you will determine the support services and programmes that are right for your child, ensuring they receive the best education and support available, tailored to their unique needs.

What is a Child and Family Centre?

Child and Family Centres are places where you and your child can go to have fun, be supported and have access to health services.

Where are the Child and Family Centres?

There are 12 Child and Family Centres across the state. For information on where they are located please see: https://www.education.tas.gov.au/About_us/publications/school-brochures/Pages/Child-Family-Centres.aspx

What is Launching into Learning?

Launching into Learning is a program where you and your child can form relationships with your local school and other families. It is for children before they start Kindergarten and is available in all Tasmanian Government schools and in Child and Family Centres.

What is Learning in Families Together (LIFT)?

Learning in Families Together (LIFT) is a new initiative that will build parent confidence and skills to support their children's literacy and numeracy learning at home. It will encourage collaboration between home, school and the community to help lift the literacy and numeracy learning outcomes for all children.

Whilst encouraging family engagement in children's learning is a valued practice in all schools, LIFT will be resourced and implemented from Term 1 2016 in 80 Tasmanian Government schools across the state and is for families with children in Kindergarten to Year 2.

Where can I find more information?

Please contact your local government school.

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SPECIAL SCHOOLS

How many Tasmanian Government special schools for students with disability are there?

There are three special schools for students with disability and four Early Child Intervention Service (ECIS) schools.

How are enrolments for special schools considered?

- On parental request
- For students with significant, identifiable disability which includes a moderate to profound intellectual disability. These students will all have evidence of extensive or substantial levels of adjustment to their learning program. The student's intellectual disability may or may not be accompanied by severe physical disability, severe health impairment or moderate to severe autism
- When the Placement Committee agrees special school placement is the most appropriate school enrolment.

What is the Placement Committee and who is on it?

A Placement Committee is established for each special school and includes the following core educational professionals and other staff as appropriate:

- Operations Manager (or nominee)
- Manager Disability Programs
- Special School Principal.

What is the process for enrolling my child in a special school?

Please contact your local school principal. For more information please see the department's [Special Schools Guidelines](#)

Where are the special schools in Tasmania and how do I contact them?

- Southern Support School – 223 Clarence Street, Howrah – (03) 6165 6200
<https://education.tas.edu.au/southernupportschool/SitePages/Home.aspx>
- Northern Support School
 - St. George's Campus – 40A Ravenswood Rd, Ravenswood – (03) 6339 1453
 - Newstead Heights Campus – 65 Amy Rd, Newstead, Launceston – (03) 6344 3917

<https://education.tas.edu.au/northernupportschool/Pages/Home.aspx>

- School of Special Education North West
 - Burnie Campus – 41-43 Mooreville Road, Burnie – (03) 6433 3870
 - Devonport Campus – 113 Middle Road, Miandetta – (03) 6424 5554

<http://education.tas.edu.au/schoolofspecialed/Pages/Home.aspx>

FUNDING SUPPORT

SEVERE DISABILITY REGISTER (SDR) FUNDING

What is the Severe Disability Register (SDR)?

The Severe Disability Register is a register of students who meet the eligibility criteria for additional funding to their school. The criteria can be found at:

<https://www.education.tas.gov.au/documentcentre/Documents/Register-of-Students-with-Severe-Disabilities.pdf>

What are the disability categories included on the register and what amounts are funded to schools?

On top of the allocation the school receives for each student enrolled at the school, the amount of extra funding received by disability category in 2017 is below:

- Intellectual Disability – \$20,888
- Autism Spectrum Disorder – \$25,364
- Physical Disability – \$20,888
- Physical/ Medical Disability – \$11,936
- Psychiatric Disability – \$19,396
- Multiple Disability – \$26,856
- Full personal care – \$41,030
- Blind and vision impairment – supports are provided through the relevant State Coordinator
- Deaf and hearing impairment – supports are provided through the relevant State Coordinator

Extra teacher staffing (called Support Teachers) are also provided to the school to support personalising teaching and learning programmes for these students at 0.2 FTE (one day a week) or the equivalent of \$19,500.

What is the process for including students on the Severe Disability Register (SDR)?

The Severe Disability Register (SDR) Moderation Committee. The Committee apply the eligibility criteria to information about the student. The criteria can be found at:

<https://www.education.tas.gov.au/documentcentre/Documents/Register-of-Students-with-Severe-Disabilities.pdf>

Are there certain factors that automatically qualify a students for inclusion on the Severe Disability Register (SDR)?

It should be noted that no one single factor automatically qualifies a student for inclusion on the Severe Disability Register.

How often does the Committee meet to consider applications?

The Severe Disability Register (SDR) Moderation Committee meets once a year to consider applications that will inform funding for the following year.

How are financial resources provided to support the student?

Students who meet eligibility criteria are supported through the allocation of individual financial resource into the School's Resource Package (SRP).

How does the school use the funding to assist the student?

Schools use the funding to provide resources, technology and transport to special events and in many cases teacher assistant support for the classroom teacher. For more information please contact your child's principal.

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Which year levels are considered in the application processes?

Students are supported through the SDR in all years (Prep to Year 12) with new students considered during the Kindergarten to Prep transition.

What happens to students moving from non-government schools or from interstate?

These students may be eligible for support. Documentation must be forwarded to the Manager State Support Services in these cases.

My child is transferring to a different government school next year, will they still get the same amount of funding?

Yes. Government schools receive the same amount of additional funding for students on the Severe Disability Register (SDR) no matter which school they attend.

My child is transferring to a different government school during the year, will they still get the same amount of funding?

If your child changes Government schools during the year, the school transfers the remainder of the funding to the new school during the year.

I am worried about my child's learning and development, who should I contact?

Please contact your child's teacher or principal.

STUDENTS WHO REQUIRE ADDITIONAL SUPPORT

What supports are there for students with need not on the Severe Disability Register (SDR) or within the 55-70* IQ range?

All schools can utilise resources within their School Resource Package (SRP) to personalise programmes for students within a range of needs.

This includes the support teacher at the school and specialist expertise from Learning Services, which may include Speech and Language Pathologists, Social Workers, Autism Consultants, Physical Impairment Coordinators and School Psychologists.

** In the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-5) intellectual disability is considered to be approximately two standard deviations or more below the population, which equals an IQ score of 70 or below.*

What support do schools receive where students have needs but not at the level of severity of the SDR?

All schools are responsible for the educational provision of all students within their school population, with a range of additional needs. With the allocation of a minimum of 0.2 FTE (one day a week) Support Teacher to each school there is a designated teacher to support classroom teachers meet the learning needs of these students.

There are resources allocated to schools for each enrolment.

I am worried about my child's learning and development, who should I contact?

You should speak with your child's teacher or principal.

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SUPPORTING STUDENTS WITH AN INTELLECTUAL DISABILITY

My child has been identified as having a severe intellectual disability, how much funding will their school get to support their learning?

On top of the allocation the school receives for each student enrolled at the school, the amount of extra funding received for students identified with a severe intellectual disability is \$20,888.

Extra teacher staffing is also provided to the school to support personalising teaching and learning programmes for students at 0.2 FTE (one day a week) or the equivalent of \$20,767.

My child is not eligible for the Severe Disability Register (SDR) but has a mild to moderate intellectual disability, how will they be supported?

There are a number of students who are not eligible for inclusion on the Severe Disability Register (SDR) but who have mild to moderate intellectual disability. The Department of Education recently introduced targeted funding for students based on an assessed intellectual capacity IQ score between 55 and 70.

These students require support to personalise their learning through a Learning Plan and may receive extra funding.

How much do schools receive to help support students who have been assessed at this level?

On top of the allocation the school receives for each student enrolled at the school, the amount of extra funding received is \$5,000.

How do schools use this funding to support the student's learning?

Some examples of how a school might use this funding to personalise the student's learning programme include:

- Assistive technology – iPad and apps to develop and practice reading skills both at school and at home
- A small group numeracy programme with peers focusing on developing basic skills.
- Teacher Assistant time – small group sessions weekly, developing reading literacy independence through a one-to-one programme

What do schools need to provide for the assessment?

A current psychological assessment and a current Learning Plan documenting the educational adjustments that are being provided for the student must be available on the department's online Student Support System.

Do schools receive this funding for the student only once?

No. Schools receive \$5,000 each year for the student. If the student transfers to another Government school, the funding will follow the student.

What supports are there for students with need not on the SDR or within the 55-70* IQ range?

All schools can utilise resources within their School Resource Package (SRP) to personalise programmes for students within a range of needs.

This includes the Support Teacher at the school and specialist expertise from Learning Services, which may include Speech and Language Pathologists, Social Workers, Autism Consultants, Physical Impairment Coordinators and School Psychologists.

** In the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-5) intellectual disability is considered to be approximately two standard deviations or more below the population, which equals an IQ score of 70 or below.*

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Are students within 55-70 IQ range exempt from NAPLAN testing?

No. There are currently students on the Severe Disability Register (SDR) who undertake NAPLAN assessment. Where a school or family seeks exemption from NAPLAN for a student a decision is made on the basis of individual circumstance based on the level of adjustments through the LP. This decision is to be confirmed through the same NAPLAN exemption processes that currently exist on a case by case basis.

I am worried about my child's learning and development, who should I contact?

You should speak with your child's teacher or principal.