

DIOCESE OF MAITLAND-NEWCASTLE
CATHOLIC SCHOOLS OFFICE
Teaching & Learning Services – Student Support Unit

Guidelines for Enrolment of Students with Disabilities and / or Special Needs

2008

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

These Guidelines have been prepared with support and assistance from Diocese of Broken Bay staff. We acknowledge them with thanks.

ENROLMENT GUIDELINES FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITY / SPECIAL NEEDS

Purpose

The purpose of these guidelines is to provide procedural fairness and clarity when enrolling Students with Disability in Diocesan Systemic Schools.

Guiding principles

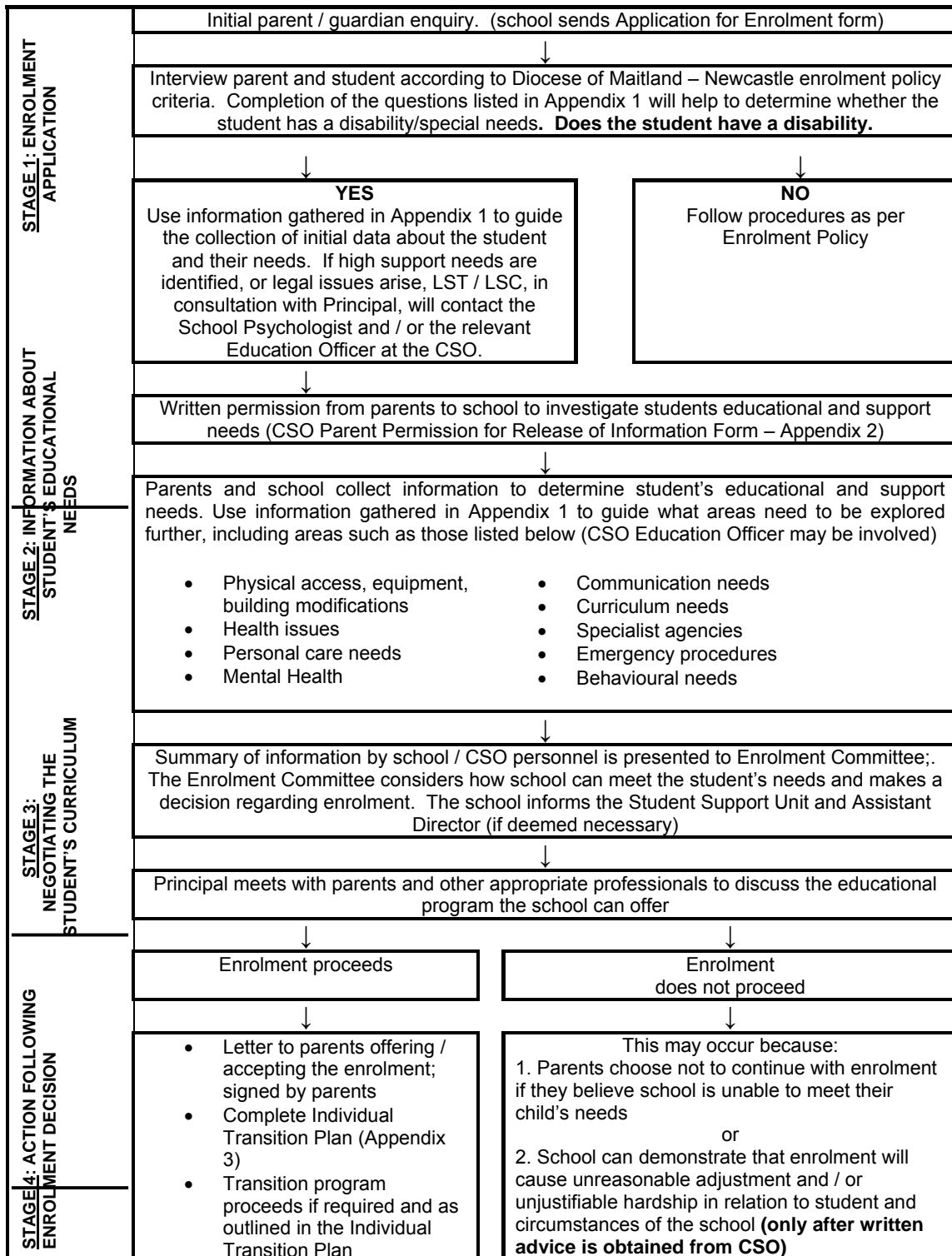
The following principles inform these guidelines:

- Diocesan Systemic Schools are open to the enrolment of children from all Catholic families that commit themselves to the school and the parish.
- The time of enrolment is an opportunity for open dialogue, reflection and mutual discernment about the individual circumstances and spiritual journey of the student in the context of family and the religious purposes of the school in the life of the parish.
- The appropriate education of students with disability is based upon curriculum needs rather than the description of disability. Disability alone does not necessarily determine enrolment, placement or special educational provisions.
- The degree to which a disability affects the student's learning depends on the learning environment and the student's ability to interact with that environment.
- Parents/guardians and their advocates are recognised as significant participants in negotiating and planning their child's education.
- Procedural fairness requires transparency of process, equal access to information and clear, open communication.

The following documentation should be read in conjunction with these guidelines:

- Diocesan Enrolment Policy
- Enrolment Policy and Procedures Summary
- Disability Discrimination Act 1992 and the Disability Standards for Education 2005

FLOW CHART: ENROLMENT GUIDELINES AND TRANSITION FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITY



STAGE I - ENROLMENT APPLICATION

Policy and Criteria

- The Diocesan Enrolment Policy applies to all students.
- Schools are to consider all applications for enrolment using the Diocese's documented enrolment criteria.
- The Diocesan Enrolment Policy and criteria underpin the enrolment process. Schools are required to develop a policy that is inclusive of all students.

Application Process

Schools will need to:

- provide each prospective applicant with an application for enrolment form following an expression of interest.
- ensure that the application form contains questions about the student's learning needs and provides enough space for detailed answers. Parents/guardians should be prepared to meet requests for information about the nature or existence of the student's disabilities, and be expected to take the initiative in providing this information and evidence to the school.
- conduct an initial interview with the parents/guardians and the prospective student at an early stage to determine whether the applicant meets the standard enrolment criteria. Completion of the questions listed in Appendix 1 will help to determine whether the student has a disability/special needs. Staff required to attend the initial interview **may** include the following staff: Principal, Assistant Principal, Learning Support Teacher (LST), Learning Support Coordinator (LSC), Education Officer (CSO), Professional Officer (Psychologist).
- explain the next stage of the enrolment process if the parents have indicated that the student has special educational needs. This involves gathering as much information as possible about the student's needs by filling in the questions listed in Appendix 1. When this occurs it is important that all the needs of the student, and the potential implications of the student's enrolment, are discussed fully with the parents/guardians and as much information as possible obtained from the parents/guardians. The following procedure should be followed by school:

In cases where the parents indicate, prior to or during an initial interview, that their child has been diagnosed with a disability, or has special needs, the Principal, together with the LST, LSC, and / or Psychologist will review documentation and determine whether additional support is required from CSO personnel.

In the event that a student's support needs are found to be high, or in the event that a legal issue over the appropriateness of the enrolment arises, the LST or LSC will contact the relevant Education Officer to discuss details. The Education Officer will provide guidance to the school in relation to the next steps, which will involve one of the following options:

1. **The Education Officer will provide direct assistance and support to the LST or LSC in collecting information and determining the student's educational and support needs. The LST or LSC will coordinate the information gathering process and will be responsible for liaison with school staff, parents, and other agencies as needed.**

OR

2. **The LST or LSC will be responsible for collecting information to determine the student's educational and support needs. The LST or LSC will be responsible for liaison with school staff, parents, and other agencies. The Education Officer will remain available for further consultation throughout the process should additional support or assistance be required.**

Points to Remember

- A positive and constructive attitude to the enrolment procedure should be emphasised, as well as a collaborative approach with parents/guardians, to determine if the student has special educational and support needs. Parents/guardians should be involved in the process of determining the outcome of the application for enrolment and should be fully informed throughout the process.
- It is important that all staff involved in the processing of applications for enrolment receive appropriate professional development and training in relation to the legislation (including their obligations under the Disability Discrimination Act), and the school's enrolment procedures and Diocesan policies.
- Schools should document each step of the enrolment process.

STAGE 2 - INFORMATION ABOUT STUDENT'S EDUCATIONAL AND SUPPORT NEEDS

Schools need to determine the resources required to meet the needs of the student. Specific information should be obtained about the student's history such as their development, medical and academic/learning details.

Parent permission

- It is essential that the CSO Parent Release of Information form (Appendix 2) is signed by parents, authorising access to information from all sources about the student. It is the school's responsibility to gain the parent/guardians' written permission.
- Schools must comply with the Privacy (Private Sector) Amendment Act 2004.

Documentation

- Information on the student's needs and advice from independent specialists can be obtained from appropriate disability agencies, previous schools and the medical and allied health professionals involved.
- The collation of this information will help ascertain the student's need for:
 - physical access: equipment, building modifications
 - personal care
 - health care management: medication, emergency procedures
 - communication
 - specific teaching strategies
 - behaviour management.
- A list of issues or questions for completion is set out in Appendix 1, to guide schools as they establish a clear picture of the student's needs and the resources available.
- Visit the student's current educational setting - e.g. preschool or school - to collect information and reports on the student's learning situation and to determine the extent of support provided by other agencies.
- Document all meetings, investigations and conversations at all stages of the enrolment process.
- The school may choose to collate this information on the proformas contained within the Individual Transition Plan (Appendix 3).

Points to Remember

- The process of collecting information about a student's learning needs and developing an Individual Transition Plan may be an extended one (occasionally up to 18 months), depending on the extent of the prospective student's disabilities and the entry point to the school.
- Parents/guardians/advocates and the school should work collaboratively to collect data to determine the student's educational needs. It is important that parents/guardians are involved as fully as possible in the data collection process to ensure a thorough, comprehensive, and well-documented examination of the student's needs.

STAGE 3 - NEGOTIATING THE STUDENT'S CURRICULUM

Preliminary assessment

- Based on the information gathered, the Enrolment Committee should make a preliminary assessment of the student's curriculum and social/behaviour support needs and the school's ability to meet those needs. This should include advice from the LST, LSC, and / or CSO Student Support Unit staff.
- The Enrolment Committee is to consider the educational needs of the student and the program that can be offered based on consideration of:
 - the curriculum, health and personal care needs of the student
 - advice from professionals and agencies supporting the student.

Meeting

- Parents/guardians should be fully informed of the outcome of the information collection process.
- The Enrolment Committee should meet the parents/guardians to discuss the outcomes of the process and to present the reasonable adjustments that will be made. This discussion could involve any of the following:
 - student, if appropriate
 - CSO Student Support staff
 - agency representatives (e.g. Autism Association)
 - advocate
 - interpreter
- It may include explanation of alternative placements within the Catholic School system

Points to Remember

- The Enrolment Committee has the key responsibility in deciding whether an application will become a confirmed enrolment.
- The information collected and presented to parents provides the basis for the development of an Individual Transition Plan for a confirmed student enrolment.
- Parents/guardians should be involved in the process of determining the outcome of the application for enrolment and must be fully informed of all decisions and outcomes of each stage of the enrolment process.
- Schools are to document each step in the enrolment process.
- CSO Education Officers are available to assist schools with the enrolment process.
- Refer to Capital Funding Guidelines if alterations to buildings or transition support are required.

STAGE 4 - FOLLOWING ENROLMENT DECISION

Action

- On confirmation of enrolment, Principals should:
 - confirm in writing to parents what support the school can offer the student in order to embrace the curriculum and participate in school life successfully. Parents/guardians should be encouraged to sign an Individual Transition Plan.
 - inform CSO if alterations to buildings or transition support are required.
 - record details of the student's educational needs, issues and curriculum in the Individual Transition Plan (Appendix 3).
 - consult individual staff members regarding the potential work issues that may impact on them whilst teaching a student with disability.
 - inform whole staff about the student's needs, details of their disability/ behaviour / learning outcomes and inservice / training to be organised. This information may be provided by the school-based LST, LSC, TLF, and other agencies and professionals involved with the student. Privacy legislation needs to be adhered to.
 - make contact with relevant agencies to confirm their involvement. Agency agreements as provided in the Individual Transition Plan can be used to document details of this support.
 - develop a transition or orientation program as required.

- The enrolment may not proceed if:
 - parents choose not to continue with the enrolment.
 - the system can demonstrate that the enrolment relies upon adjustments that are considered unreasonable or will cause unjustifiable hardship in relation to the student and the circumstances of the school.

Points to Remember

- Declined enrolments on the basis of demonstrated unreasonable adjustment and / or unjustifiable hardship can only occur with written advice from the Catholic Schools Office.
- In transition to school and on some other occasions, a small number of students with disability may only attend school part- time. It is important to remember that full-time attendance at school between the ages of six and fifteen years is compulsory. Any variations to this on the basis of a student's disability should be negotiated with the full participation of the parents and agreed to in an Individual Transition Plan.
- For OH&S (staff) and duty of care (students) reasons, some students may require an Individual Behaviour Management Plan (IBMP) incorporated into the Individual Transition Plan.
- Some students may also require an Individual Health Management Plan.

Changes in student's needs and/or circumstances

A student's needs and/or circumstances may change or become apparent after enrolment. There are several ways in which this could occur — for instance:

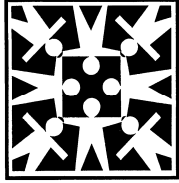
- There may be a reassessment of the student's learning difficulties and behaviour leading to a new diagnosis of the student's disability.
- The student's condition may deteriorate.
- The student may have been enrolled with a disability but may subsequently manifest a learning difficulty.
- The student may acquire a disability, e.g. head injury, resulting in different educational/behavioural support.

In each of these cases, the school needs to make a 'reasonably proportionate response' to the circumstances, which may include:

- full consultation with parents/guardians and experts to develop strategies.
- involvement of CSO Education Officers.
- training of teachers and learning support assistants who are involved with the student.
- assessment of additional costs for extra support/adjustments.
- assessment of effect upon other students and/or teachers.
- implementation of the school's Behaviour Management Plan.

Points to Remember

- All strategies and actions should be documented. It is recommended that the parents/guardians, school and experts work collaboratively to address the student's needs.
- If it becomes apparent that a parent/guardian has failed to disclose accurate information about the student's disability, the school may need to seek further advice and support from CSO personnel.



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APPENDIX 1

QUESTIONS FOR THE ENROLMENT PROCESS – STAGE 1 & 2

Questions for the enrolment process in stages 1 & 2. These questions provide a guide for schools in obtaining preliminary information about the student’s educational needs prior to enrolment. Please ask ALL questions. Circle the correct responses.

Student Name: **D.O.B :**

School Applying To:

Date of Meeting:

In attendance:

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Notes taken by:

Educational Needs

Does your child have a known disability? YES NO
 For example: physical, intellectual, hearing, vision or emotional?

Name of disability:

Diagnosed by:

Date of diagnosis:

Report for the school: YES NO
(If yes, please provide a copy of most recent report)

Hearing and Vision

Have your child's eyes been tested? YES NO

By whom?

Is written information available to assist the school? YES NO

Is there a history of sight problems? YES NO

Does your child need to wear glasses, have vision aids, scribes, tutors, etc? YES NO

Has your child had a hearing test? YES NO

By whom:

Is written information available to assist the school? YES NO

Is there a history of hearing or ear problems? YES NO

Does your child need aids or acoustic considerations in the classroom? YES NO

Support

Does your child receive support from others? YES NO

For example: psychologist, physiotherapist, occupational therapist, speech pathologist, Pathways, Down Syndrome Society, ASPECT, Kids In The Valley, Kaleidoscope etc?

Agency/Professional	Contact Person	Phone Number	Frequency of Visits	Will this support be on-going?

Will these agencies provide financial or consultancy support in school? YES NO

Are the reports from these agencies available? YES NO
(If yes, please provide copies of most recent reports)

Curriculum issues

What type of support did your child receive in his/her previous setting/school?

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Does your child require particular supervision or management:

- to and from school? YES NO
- in the classroom? YES NO
- moving between classrooms? YES NO
- in the playground? YES NO
- for participating in sport? YES NO

Will your child require particular arrangements to participate in sports, games, camps and excursions? YES NO

What are the patterns of school attendance in his/her previous setting/school?

.....

What are the OH&S and duty of care issues for your child and others?

.....

Medical / Health / Disability issues

Is your child entitled to receive a Child Disability Allowance? YES NO

Has your child had a recent visit to the doctor? YES NO

Name of Doctor:

Does your child have any health issues? YES NO

If yes, give details:

Does your child require a Health Care Plan and/or Emergency Action Plan? YES NO

Is your child on any regular prescribed medication? For example: epilepsy, ADD, asthma, allergies? YES NO

Name of medication:

Mobility

Who will transport your child to school?

Are there any issues that need to be addressed by the school?

- Access to the classrooms, e.g. ramps: YES NO
- Access to the playground: YES NO
- Access to toilet facilities: YES NO
- Access to general school facilities, e.g. library: YES NO

Other:

Communication

Is your child from a Language Background other than English?

yes NO

Is your child from an Indigenous background?

YES NO

Can your child communicate effectively?

YES NO

Can your child communicate basic desires, e.g. toilet, drink?

YES NO

Does your child need any assistance to enhance communication?

- Sign language: YES NO
- Makaton: YES NO
- Message boards/visual aides: YES NO

Other:

Does your child require devices for effective communication?

For example: computer technology, hearing aids, acoustic considerations, glasses, vision aids, scribes, tutors?

YES NO

Independence

Can your child manage personal care needs independently?

For example: toileting, dressing, eating

YES NO

Are there any particular requirements:

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Behaviour

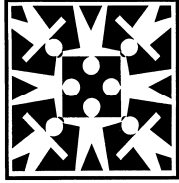
Does your child demonstrate any challenging behaviours?

YES NO

Describe details:

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NB. The Education Legislation Amendment Act 2006 provides for collection or information in regard to this at Schedule 1.



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**RECORD OF EARLY INTERVENTION AND PRESCHOOL/DAYCARE
SERVICES FOR KINDERGARTEN ENROLMENTS ONLY**

Child's Name: **D.O.B :**

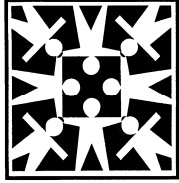
School Applying To:

Early Intervention Centre/Service Information

Name of Centre/Service Provider:						
Address:						
Contact Person Name:						
Contact Phone Number:						
Days Attended: <i>(Please circle)</i>	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	

Preschool/Daycare Centre Information

Name of Preschool/Centre:						
Address:						
Contact Person Name:						
Contact Phone Number:						
Days Attended: <i>(Please circle)</i>	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	



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APPENDIX 2

PARENT PERMISSION FORM FOR RELEASE OF INFORMATION

I / We give permission for confidential information to be requested by / released to
personnel from the following school/centre:

[School/Centre Name and Suburb]

and / or to personnel from the Catholic Schools Office, Maitland-Newcastle Diocese
concerning my / our son / daughter:

[Name of son / daughter]

[Date of birth]

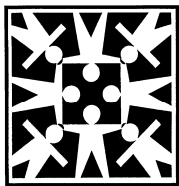
If you wish to limit the above release in any way, please give details below:

Name and Address of Parent / Guardian: _____

Signature/s: _____

[Parent / Guardian]

Date: _____



INDIVIDUAL TRANSITION PLAN

The Individual Transition Plan is divided into three parts:

- **Part A** outlines basic background information about the student and their specific special needs/disability.
- **Part B** provides a basis for the comprehensive collection of information about the needs of a student with a disability and is designed to document curriculum adjustments and issues such as behaviour management and liaison with other agencies and review meetings once the student is enrolled in the school.
- **Part C** refers to the development of Health Care Plans for students with health support needs in conjunction with Individual Transition Plans. A general Health Care Plan pro-forma is provided.

The following plan may be modified to suit individual school requirements.

Transition Meeting Date:

Present:

.....

PART A - STUDENT INFORMATION

School Information

School:

Phone number:

Contact Person:

Student Information

Student Name:

Address: Postcode:

Gender: **Female** **Male**

Date of Birth: Grade Level:

Name/s of Parents/Guardians:

Telephones: Home:

Work:

Mobile:

Language at Home:

Carer Allowance: **Yes** **No**

Disability Support Pension: **Yes** **No**

Travel Entitlement: **Yes** **No**

Enrolled for: days Shared Enrolment:

Shared School: Foster Care:

Other Information

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Disability Details

SWD Commonwealth Category:

Level of Need: **Low** **Moderate** **High**

Disability Description:

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PART B- CURRICULUM ADJUSTMENTS

Support Information: Resource Requirements

• **Building Modifications** (Indicate if these may be needed with Yes or No)

Ramps

Taps

Rails

Toilets

Doors

Other _____

• **Equipment** (Indicate if these may be needed with Yes or No)

Word Processor

Chair Lift

Communication Devices

Slope Desk

Switches

FM Unit

Hoists

Toilet Aids

Chair

Change Tables

Walking Frame

Wheel-chair

Standing Frame

Other _____

• **Capital Grant Required** (Please circle)

YES

NO

If YES, please complete an application as per the guidelines set out in the 'Grants for Capital and Equipment Projects for Students with Disabilities' document and forward to the C.S.O.

• **Specialist Programs** (Indicate if these may be needed with Yes or No)

Mobility Orientation Communication

Behaviour Personal Care Other _____

Agency Information

• **History of Student's Previous Support**

Year/Date:	Year/Date:
Agency/School:	Agency/School:
Contact Name/Telephone:	Contact Name/Telephone:
Support Offered:	Support Offered:

Year/Date:	Year/Date:
Agency/School:	Agency/School:
Contact Name/Telephone:	Contact Name/Telephone:
Support Offered:	Support Offered:

• **Specialist Agencies** (fill in hours of support currently received if applicable)

Area Health (Kaleidoscope) ASPECT (Autism Association) Down Syndrome Society

Pathways (Spastic Centre) Kids In The Valley Early Intervention Service

Other _____

• **Recent Assessments** (medical, psychological, speech etc)

Date	Conducted By	Type	Phone Number	Copy of Report Received (Yes/No)

• **Curriculum Modification** (indicate hours of support received in current setting if applicable)

Learning Support Teacher Learning Support Assistants Camp/Excursion Support

Tutor-Home Tutor-School Volunteer Support

Specific teaching strategies:

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.....

Other Considerations

Will there need to be any related plans and provisions for this child/student?

YES

NO

- Curriculum** *e.g. negotiated curriculum plan; part-time attendance; flexible assessment to accommodate interrupted attendance, planning for physical activity, camps, excursions, laboratory work etc*

Please specify:

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.....

- Behaviour** *e.g. behaviour plan, safety issues, psychologist/psychiatrist input, emotional issues*

Please specify:

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.....

- Environment** *e.g. minimising risk such as allergens, or other risk factors; special provisions for emergency evacuation*

Please specify:

.....

- Communication** *e.g. communication book within school or between home and school, visual aides, makaton signing, LBOTE/Indigenous background, hearing and vision considerations*

Please specify:

.....
.....

- Siblings/peers** *e.g. any planned support for siblings/peers*

Please specify:

.....

- Other**

Please specify:

.....

Transition Support Team Action Plan

Student's Name: D.O.B:

School: Grade:

Action To Be Taken	By Whom	By When

Date: Signed:

PART C- HEALTH CARE PLAN

A Health Care Plan is a document that has been developed to assist schools, in partnership with parents/guardians and health professionals, to plan health support for students. The Health Care Plan is used in conjunction with the Individual Transition Plan. Schools should obtain or develop a Health Care Plan for students with health needs.

School Health Support Plan (Confidential)

To be completed by the Principal with the family and others as indicated below, for a child/student who requires individual health and personal care support in school, preschool or childcare.

This plan should be based on written health care advice from a health professional. It will involve risk assessment for staff in planning for the child or student.

Child/Student Name: (please print)

Date of Birth:

Medic Alert Number: (if relevant)

Review Date:

• **First Aid**

Is there any individual First Aid requirement, other than a basic First Aid response?

YES

NO

If so, consider if required and attach as relevant:

Y/N	First Aid Requirement	Attached
	Instructions from the child's/student's doctor	
	Training of willing and available personnel (including back-up)	
	Emergency action plan, including excursions/camps	
	Ambulance access	
	Issues for other students (e.g. education sessions, supervision during an emergency)	

• **Personal Care**

Is there a predictable need for additional support with daily living tasks?

YES

NO

- Personal hygiene
- Continence care (catheter and stoma care should be undertaken by a therapist or nurse)
- Transfers and positioning
- Meal times
- Dressing
- Toileting

If so, consider if required and attach as relevant:

Y/N	Personal Care Requirements	Attached
	Health care plan, written by the treating health professional (e.g. doctor, therapist, nurse)	
	Duty statement for any worker employed specifically for these duties	
	Training arrangements for workers	
	Health Service Provider Details	

If a care/health worker is involved, write down and attach as relevant:

Y/N	Health Care Worker Details	Attached
	Service provider details, and their contact information	
	How, when and where this support will occur	
	Any staff involvement (e.g. assistance with two person lifts)	

You may need to consider the following points when detailing the support required:

- **Hygiene** (e.g. soap dispenser, mirror, disposal systems, changing facility, cleaning arrangement)
- **Storage** (e.g. of daily and spare aids)
- **Equipment** (e.g. shelf, cupboard, change table, hoist)
- **Facilities** (e.g. two-way locking on doors)

• ***Routine Supervision for Health-related Safety***

Does this child/student need additional supervision for health-related safety?

YES

NO

If so, consider if required and attach as relevant:

Y/N	Health/Safety Requirement	Attached
	Instructions from the child/student's doctor	
	Medication plan — identify responsibilities for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • delivery, storage, supervision, record keeping • off-site activities • reminding, if necessary 	
	Health service provider details	

If a care/health worker is involved, write down who this is, the contact staff member and how, when and where they will provide support.

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