

ASCERTAINMENT PROCEDURES FOR THE ENROLMENT OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

DIOCESE OF WAGGA WAGGA



“All children and young persons are learners with the potential to achieve.
This will occur best in an environment that is inclusive, welcoming and
friendly and where there is shared responsibility by all members of the
school community.”

(Tasmanian CEC 2002)



Ascertainment Procedures for the Enrolment of Students with Disabilities.

Purpose of Ascertainment

The Process of Ascertainment is used to provide a reliable and formal way of identifying new students with disabilities who may require special educational support.

This process assists in the forward planning to ascertain and gauge the level of specialist support needed and to provide quality programs for those students identified as having Special Needs.

Principles Of Ascertainment

Ascertainment is based on the educational requirements arising from a disability or special need.

The process is the same across all disability areas, however the type and level of support will vary.

The process relies on collaboration, consultation and team decision making.

Parents and caregivers are an important part of the process.

The Principal receives and directs all referrals in consultation with the Education Officer Special Services.

Focus Areas

For Students to qualify for support as a *Student With Disabilities* they must have an intellectual, sensory, physical, social/emotional, language, or multiple disability.

The student must have been formally assessed as having a disability by a person with the relevant qualifications.

The degree of disability must be sufficient to satisfy the criteria for enrolment in the government special education services or programs in the State.

The student must be provided with a special education program or service or program in respect of the disability.

On the rare occasion where there is evidence that a student has a significant disorder or malfunction that is not adequately described by one or more of the previous criteria and the condition is impacting greatly on the educational outcomes, the Education Officer Special Services will consider all available documentation and make a determination on a case by case basis.

The following students are not classified as students with disabilities:

- A student whose impairment is a specific learning difficulty only.
- A student with a behaviour difficulty.
- A student who has a medical condition.

While the student may not qualify for funding as a student with a disability they would be given support as a student with special needs through the services offered by the Learning Support Centers and the Education Officers Student Support Services.

Please refer to the Funding Table for *Students With Disabilities* at the back of this booklet for detailed information regarding Category, Level of Need, Documentation and Relevant Professionals.

When initial contact is made with the school the following steps should be followed:

- The Principal arranges an interview with the parents and the child. (The Principal may request for the Education Officer Special Services to be present.)
- The Principal may be notified by the CSO/Special Services if an “Early Childhood Transition Form” or a “Transition To High School Form” is received
- The Principal requests relevant reports, documentation and assessments.
- A diary of all conversations/meetings regarding enrolment should be kept.
- Parents are asked to sign a release of information form (included in the Ascertainment Process Form Page 2).
- The Education Officer Special Services will contact appropriate personnel who are familiar with the child (Pre-school, Early Intervention, Therapist, Psychologist etc) and speak with them regarding the child’s proposed needs in the school environment.
- If possible the child is observed in Pre- school or School setting.
- Interview is held with Education Officer, prospective class teacher and other relevant school staff to discuss all information gathered.
- Interview held with parents to discuss progress of application.
- Ascertainment Support Meeting held to determine what is required to assist the student to access the curriculum and to support their social and physical needs.
- A decision is made concerning the enrolment of the child in consultation with the Principal, Parents, Education Officer and in the case of a child with moderate to high needs, the School Consultant and the Director.

Application For Funding

Funding for Students with Disabilities is allocated yearly, with application for the following school year closing in September.

Bridging Funding can be applied for when students are enrolled and have missed the funding allocation and who meet the Level 3 or Level 4 on the Funding Eligibility Criteria Form (please refer to Section 3.2)

The Application Forms, Guidelines and closing dates for funding, can be found on the CSO Intranet Site. The Education Officers Special Needs will also have this information.

Funding is also available for Capital Grants and Students with Severe Disabilities. These applications and closing dates are available on the CSO Intranet Site.

The Education Officer will assist with applications and with the writing of Individual Teaching and Learning Programs

Level of Assistance

The level and type of assistance provided to the student will be determined on a needs basis using all the information available.

This decision will be made by the Special Education Advisory Committee at the Funding meeting.

The level of funding will be reviewed on an annual basis.

Flow Chart: Enrolment Guidelines and Support for Students with Disabilities

Stage 1 Enrolment Application

Initial parent/carer enquiry
(Principal sends application for enrolment form)

Principal contacts Education Officer or Service Leader Learning Support to arrange Initial Meeting with parents and student

Meeting to discuss enrolment with parent/carer and student to determine needs and support required

Written permission from parents for the CSO / School to investigate the student's needs.

Stage 2 Information About Student's Educational Needs

Education Officer and School Staff arrange to visit student's current support setting eg Preschool / Day-care / present School

Parents, CSO / School collect information to determine the student's educational needs regarding:

- Physical access, equipment
- Building modifications
- Health issues
- Personal care needs
- Communication needs
- Curriculum access
- Specialist agencies
- Emergency procedures

Summary of information by school personnel.
Consideration of how the school can meet the student's needs.

Stage 3 Negotiating the Student's Curriculum

Principal & Education Officer meet with parents/carer and other relevant/appropriate professionals to discuss the educational program and supports the school can offer the student.

ENROLMENT PROCEEDS

ENROLMENT DOES NOT PROCEED

Stage 4 Action Following Enrolment Decision

- Enrolment proceeds
- Letter to parents stating what the school can offer and accepting the enrolment: signed by parents.
- Complete Student Support Plan.
- Transition orientation program proceeds if required, and as outlined in the Student Support Plan.
- Enrolment is reviewed regularly to ensure school continues to meet the student's educational needs.

This may occur because:

- Parent choose not to continue with the enrolment if they believe the school is unable to adequately meet their son's/daughter's needs.

or

- the school can demonstrate that the enrolment will cause unjustifiable hardship in relation to the student and the circumstances of the school