

## RATIONALE

At Barton Primary School the integration of students with disabilities into school is seen as a basic right. We are committed to ensuring that students have equal access to education.

The Student Engagement Policy outlines the school's responsibilities under the Equal Opportunity Act 1995 and The Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006. Every member of the school community has a right to fully participate in an educational environment that is safe, supportive and inclusive. Everyone deserves to be treated with respect and dignity.

Barton Primary School follows the guidelines as an education provider and make more explicit the obligations on schools and the rights of students under the Disability Discrimination Act 1992. The standards cover enrolment, participation, curriculum development, student support services, and harassment and victimisation.

Under Department of Education and Training (DET) guidelines and current funding agreements, all government schools are eligible for support for students with moderate to severe disabilities, provided that the student meets the eligibility criteria under one of the following categories:

- Severe Behaviour Disorder
- Hearing Impairment
- Intellectual Disability
- Physical Disability
- Visual Impairment
- Severe Language Disorder with Critical Educational Needs
- Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)
- Medical

All of the categories above fall under the title of "Program for Students with Disabilities (PSD)" and a student's level of funding support is rated using a scale from Level 1 to Level 5, with Level 5 being the high end of the scale.

A PSD student's funding level is directly related to providing the school with funding to support the individualized learning needs of the student. The management of the funding allocation is to be managed by the school's leadership, and it is encouraged that this is done in consultation with the student's family.

## AIMS

At Barton Primary School we

- Promote the inclusion of students with moderate to severe disabilities within our school
- Provide clear guidelines of how to support families of students with a disability
- Create an educational environment and curriculum that is inclusive and meaningful to all students

## IMPLEMENTATION

At Barton Primary School we must make 'reasonable adjustments' to accommodate students with a disability. An adjustment is a measure or action taken to assist a student with a disability to participate in education and training on the same basis as other students. An adjustment is reasonable if it does this while taking into account the student's learning needs and balancing the interests of all parties affected, including those of the student with the disability, the education provider, staff and other students.

In determining whether an adjustment is reasonable, an education provider should take into account information about:

- the nature of the student's disability;
- his or her preferred adjustment;
- any adjustments that have been provided previously;
- any recommended or alternative adjustments.

This information might come from the student, an associate of the student, independent experts, or a combination of these people.

The implementation of this policy also includes:

- Eligibility of students for PSD is managed by the Assistant Principal following the stepped events articulated in the supporting guidelines (See Appendix 1)
- The duration of funding is determined by DET and will require a year 6/7 review for continued eligibility into secondary school
- Assist staff to formulate Individualised Learning Plans and provide students with the opportunities to achieve success
- Student Support Group meetings held termly as directed by DET
- The Assistant Principal will facilitate the planning of programs for students funded through the Program for Students with Disabilities. This should include the class teacher and Integration Aide.

## APPROVED:

Ratified by School Council: on 13<sup>th</sup> December 2017



## EVALUATION

This policy will be reviewed every three years as part of the school's three-year review cycle.

## APPENDIX 1

### GUIDELINES SUPPORTING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROGRAM FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES POLICY

#### Eligibility of students for the PSD

The Assistant Principal will act as the coordinator for the Program for Students with Disabilities.

If a teacher or family seek for a student to be assessed for their eligibility under the PSD, the following procedures apply:

- 1) The Assistant Principal and Principal are to be made aware of the concerns for the student's learning. Evidence based concerns are required for all cases and the referral process must be followed
- 2) The Assistant Principal will then discuss the student's case with the relevant Student Support Service Officers (SSSO's) being: Educational Psychologist, Speech Pathologist, Student Social and Welfare Officer. These SSSO's are allocated to the school by the DET and work collaboratively with the school
- 3) If the SSSO and the Assistant Principal agree that there is sufficient data and evidence, the Assistant Principal will contact the family to discuss the student's learning needs
- 4) The Assistant Principal will seek the written authority of the family for the student to receive the support of the SSSO's in determining particular learning needs
- 5) The Assistant Principal will seek from the family. copies of reports from external health professionals in regards to the student's particular learning needs
- 6) An assessment for eligibility will then be undertaken. The steps involved in each assessment vary dependent upon the particular learning needs of the student
- 7) Evidence and data is collected and reports are written by the SSSO's, with supporting documentation being provided by the classroom teacher and the Assistant Principal
- 8) If the student is deemed to meet the eligibility criteria then a "PSD Funding Application" is led by the Assistant Principal
- 9) An Educational Needs Questionnaire (ENQ) is held to review and consent to all information being provided in support of the PSD funding application. In attendance at the ENQ must be the family (parent), Assistant Principal and a DET Authorised Representative
- 10) Relevant documentation will then be submitted by the Assistant Principal to the "Resources Coordination Group (RSG)" who are authorised by the DET in determining eligibility
- 11) RSG will then review the student's eligibility against set criteria and determine the level of funding under the PSD (on a scale of 1-5)
- 12) DET will then advise the school of the outcome of the application
- 13) The school will then advise the family of the funding outcome and determine how the funding is to be utilised to support the individual student.

#### Duration of PSD Funding

Once a student has been granted PSD funding, the funding level remains with the student for the entirety of their primary schooling, unless otherwise specifically mentioned as a condition of the student's PSD funding. During Year 6, the school is required to undertake a "Year 6-Year 7 Review" on behalf of the student, which determines the level of eligibility for PSD funding at secondary school level.

## **Individualised Learning Plans**

All students on the PSD require a documented Individualised Learning Plan (ILP) as a condition of their PSD funding. An ILP is a document which specifically details the following:

- 1) Entry skill level for the goal being set
- 2) Individual Learning Goals for the student by curriculum area (eg: Literacy, Social-emotional)
- 3) Implementation strategies to support the student
- 4) The Actual Performance of the student in attempting to achieve the set goals
- 5) Evaluation of the student's progress against the ILP

## **Student Support Group Meetings**

A Student Support Group (SSG) Meeting is a meeting held for those people who are involved in supporting the student to achieve the goals detailed in their ILP. An SSG meeting can involve but is not limited to the following:

- Family (parents or guardians)
- Classroom teacher
- Assistant Principal
- Integration Aide
- SSSO's or other educational support staff
- External health professionals (eg: occupational therapists, physiotherapists)

At the SSG the school and the family openly and transparently assess the progress of the student in relation to their ILP goals. Throughout the term the parents of the PSD funded student and the classroom teacher will often communicate or meet in person to discuss the student's learning. These are not considered to be SSG meetings and are referred to as "parent meetings".

## **Classroom Teachers and Integration Aides**

The Assistant Principal will facilitate the planning of programs for students funded through the Program for Students with Disabilities. This should include the class teacher and Integration Aide.

Where practicable, the Integration Aides work under the guidance of the class teacher in the classroom. This ensures that the learning program for the student with a disability reflects that of the classroom.

The Assistant Principal and teaching staff assigned to the student are responsible for the implementation of the educational programs for students with disabilities. This will include staff

professional development, program planning, student evaluation and in-school coordination of all Integration Aides.

Students with disabilities will require a curriculum that:

- is broad and comprehensive and enables access to the Victorian Curriculum
- is relevant to the student's physical, intellectual and social/emotional needs
- is part of the continuum of learning for life;
- offers opportunities, challenges and choices;
- encourages independence while recognising the inter-dependence of members of the community;
- values individual learning styles and preferred learning styles;
- provides for different rates of learning;
- enhances the student's self-esteem, worth, identity and dignity;
- provides a range of opportunities for individualised and group learning of skills, knowledge and attitudes;
- provides a broad range of experiences, processes and approaches;
- is realistic, achievable and has clearly stated goals;
- anticipates the student's future needs.

Funded students with similar needs may be grouped together in classes to maximise resourcing and to allow for more efficient and effective communication between all Integration Aides.

Integration Aides produce fortnightly reports on their students which are reviewed by the classroom teacher and Integration Manager. These reports are included as part of minutes of meetings.

All Integration Aides will be actively encouraged to attend Professional Development activities.

