

Diocese of Townsville

Catholic
Education



"Schools play a vital role in promoting the intellectual, physical, social, emotional, moral, spiritual and aesthetic development and wellbeing of young Australians, and in ensuring the nation's ongoing economic prosperity and social cohesion. Schools share this responsibility with students, parents, carers, families, the community, business and other education and training providers"

(The Melbourne Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians MCEECDYA 2008).

STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

GUIDANCE COUNSELLORS • SPEECH LANGUAGE PATHOLOGISTS • ADVISORY VISITING SPECIALISTS

Information and guidelines for access to the Student Support Services in Catholic schools in the Townsville diocese.

Student Support Service staff focus on the relations and interactions between students and their school environment to reduce the effects of personal, emotional, developmental, environmental and institutional barriers that may impede student academic and life success.

Student Support Service staff support and foster the pastoral care of students, educational equality, equity, access and academic success. Their aim is to assist in the development of students and to ensure that all students are happy, confident and successful learners who will use their knowledge and their gifts for the good of all.

Townsville Catholic Education Office is committed to building communities of learning that provide a safe, nurturing and academically challenging environment for all students.

GUIDANCE COUNSELLORS

The Guidance Counsellors are dedicated to providing counselling, student support, classroom support and assessment services to Catholic schools across the Townsville Diocese.

Through collaboration with the Catholic Education Office, school leadership personnel, teachers, parents and students the following services may be available:

- Support to school staff to assist with planning and programming strategies for students who require significant adjustments to their learning.
- Support in management of students with disabilities - this may include seeking external assistance and access to the Townsville Catholic Education Office Education Adjustment Program.
- Developing behaviour support strategies for students in collaboration with school staff and parents.
- Facilitating counselling to students with personal, social and emotional needs.
- Liaising with health professionals to meet student needs which may include referral to external agencies for additional support and mental health assessment.
- Facilitating and administering appropriate assessments.
- Providing professional development to staff regarding student health and wellbeing and classroom support.
- Providing parent information regarding student educational needs and wellbeing.
- Assistance with school planning in relation to important student transitions, key pastoral issues and development over their schooling.

SERVICES WILL NOT BE AVAILABLE FOR:

- Neuropsychological assessments.
- Requested assessments that are not a requirement or priority for the school.
- Family therapy.



ELIGIBILITY FOR SERVICES:

- All students who have been identified as requiring psychoeducational assessment and classroom support by the school where necessary pre-referral planning, intervention and monitoring have occurred.
- All students enrolled in primary school (P-6) who have been identified as requiring counselling by the school and who have completed the necessary Student Support Services referral.
- All students enrolled in a secondary school (7-12) are eligible to access counselling support; however the type of ongoing support will vary depending on student need and capacity of staff. The Guidance Counsellor will determine the student's capacity to give consent to participate in counselling. Therefore students may be able to self-refer and provide consent for counselling without parental knowledge.
- The Guidance Counsellor can provide psychoeducational assessment for students where the concern is identified by the school.
- The provision of Guidance Counsellor services may be at the discretion of the School Principal - giving due regard to priority of student need and service availability in collaboration with the Guidance Counsellor.

HOW TO ACCESS GUIDANCE COUNSELLOR SERVICES:

- Access to assessment and classroom support services is via a formal Student Support Services referral which requires teacher and classroom planning, intervention and monitoring before proceeding.
- Parents/Carers will be required to provide informed consent for any formal assessment services.
- In primary schools, parents/carers will be required to provide informed consent for counselling services to be provided to their son or daughter.
- Each secondary school will have a process to enable students to access counselling supports without formal referral.

SPEECH LANGUAGE PATHOLOGISTS

The Speech Language Pathologists (SLPs) are dedicated to providing specialist support in the areas of communication and literacy development for students, parents and staff of our Catholic schools.

Speech Language Pathology services are provided in two specialty areas:

Early Years Oral Language

Provides support and education to the school community around the importance of oral language development in Prep-Year 2 and the necessary tools for school staff to continue to enrich the oral language development of students.

Students with Disability

Provides individualised support and assessments to students who have been verified with or are suspected of having a Speech-Language Impairment (SLI) or other verified disability.

Speech Language Pathology services may also include:

- Screening of student skills in the areas of speech, language, fluency (stuttering) and/or literacy development with provision of recommendations and reporting.
- Formal speech and language assessment and reporting.
- Development and monitoring of individualised intervention programs and goal setting.
- Professional development opportunities for staff and information session for parents.
- Advisory service to schools around the use and implementation of whole class and small group programs for literacy / language / speech development.
- Determine students' eligibility for verification under the category of a Speech-Language Impairment as defined in the Education Adjustment Program.
- Consultation and collaboration on Townsville Catholic Education Office initiatives including: pilot projects, data collection and advisory committees.

SERVICES WILL NOT BE AVAILABLE FOR:

- Students who require individual therapy. However Speech Language Pathologists may be involved in the modelling of school based programs for students and school staff.



ELIGIBILITY FOR SERVICES:

- A screening service is available for Prep-Year 2 students who present with difficulties in the areas of speech, language, fluency (stuttering) and/or literacy development.
- Students who require assessment and/or classroom support where necessary pre-referral planning, intervention and monitoring have occurred.
- All students who have a verified disability of Speech-Language Impairment, Autism Spectrum Disorder, Hearing Impairment, Intellectual Disability, Physical Impairment, Social Emotional Disorder or Vision Impairment.
- The SLP can provide assessment and classroom support for eligible students where the concern is identified by the school.
- The provision of SLP services may be at the discretion of the School Principal - giving due regard to priority of student need and service availability in collaboration with the SLP.

HOW TO ACCESS SPEECH LANGUAGE PATHOLOGY SERVICES:

- Access to the SLP - Early Years Oral Language service: including screening of students in Prep-Year 2 is via a SLP Early Years Referral which is completed by the classroom teacher.
- Access to the SLP - Students with Disability service is via a formal Student Support Services Referral.
- Parents/Carers will be required to give informed consent for services to be provided. Students must have both their hearing and vision tested prior to a referral being accepted.

ADVISORY VISITING SPECIALISTS

The *Advisory Visiting Specialists* play a key role in the delivery of quality education to students with disability whose education support needs have been verified through the Education Adjustment Program or identified as requiring significant education adjustment in the areas of:

- Physical Impairment
- Vision Impairment
- Hearing Impairment

Our Advisory Visiting Specialists include a qualified Occupational Therapist who oversees service provision for students with a physical or vision impairment and a qualified Specialist Teacher who oversees service provision to students with a hearing impairment.

HEARING IMPAIRMENT

SERVICES PROVIDED:

- Provide direct support to students identified with hearing impairment and assist the school team to understand the educational implications.
- Provide support to teachers through:
 - Specialist advice relating to curriculum, learning environment, resources and specialised equipment.
 - Implementation of flexible approach to learning activities.
 - Participation in educational planning to support educational outcomes.
- Providing professional development to staff regarding hearing impairment and classroom support.
- Advocate for the supply and maintenance of equipment.
- Monitor and evaluate the use of recommended equipment and provide ongoing training to staff.

SERVICES WILL NOT BE AVAILABLE FOR:

- Audiological assessment (this is role of an Audiologist).
- Students who have been identified with Central Auditory Processing Disorder without a hearing impairment.
- Hearing device and equipment purchases.

ELIGIBILITY FOR SERVICES:

- Any student with a hearing impairment with evidence of hearing loss greater than 20dB at any one frequency, identified by an audiologist or ENT Specialist.
- Hearing impairments may include:
 - a sensorineural hearing loss and/or
 - a permanent conductive hearing loss and/or
 - a fluctuating conductive hearing loss (demonstrating a history of persistent hearing loss or middle ear pathology).
- Evidence that the hearing impairment impacts on participation and engagement in curriculum, expanded core curriculum and learning environment.

PHYSICAL IMPAIRMENT & VISION IMPAIRMENT

SERVICES PROVIDED:

- Identification of educational needs and providing direct support to a student verified with physical disability or vision impairment.
- Providing support to teachers through:
 - Specialist advice regarding curriculum, adjustments to the physical environment, resources and specialised equipment.
 - Implementation of a flexible approach to service delivery.
 - Participation in educational planning to support educational outcomes.
- Provide specific information and assist the school team to understand the educational implications of the disabilities.
- Advocate for the supply of equipment; including sourcing of potential funding options.
- Monitor and evaluate the use of recommended equipment and provide ongoing training to staff.

SERVICES WILL NOT BE AVAILABLE FOR:

- Students who require general Occupational Therapy assessment or intervention who are not verified with a physical impairment or a vision impairment.
- Students who require vision assessment or screening.

ELIGIBILITY FOR SERVICES:

- Students with diagnosed or suspected physical impairment.
- Students diagnosed with a vision impairment involving the ocular components and/or the visual cortex and/or the functions and structures adjoining the eye with:
 - a visual acuity of $\leq 6/18$, according to the Snellen Chart, best corrected and/or
 - a visual field loss and/or
 - significant fluctuating visual access.
- Evidence that the impairment impacts on participation and engagement in curriculum, expanded core curriculum and learning environment.

HOW TO ACCESS THE ADVISORY VISITING SPECIALIST SERVICES:

- Access to the service is via a formal Student Support Services Referral.
- Parents/Carers are required to give informed consent for advisory services to be provided in relation to their son or daughter.

CONTACT US

For further information contact: Townsville Catholic Education Office

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