

# Learning Support Policy and Guidelines



## Policy Statement

Kamaroi's responsibilities in relation to learning support will be adhered to in accordance with legislative requirements related to student welfare. The School will monitor student needs and provide support that is relevant to those needs.

## Legislative Framework

The School's responsibilities in relation to learning support will be adhered to in accordance with legislative requirements of the Education Act (1990), the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* and Disability Standards 2005 and other relevant legislation.

## Our approach

At Kamaroi we refer to "special needs" as a comprehensive term encompassing:

- **LEARNING SUPPORT** - This is support offered to students who have a physical, intellectual, sensory, mental, autistic spectrum disorder related disability or a range of other learning difficulties.
- **GIFTED AND TALENTED** - This support is offered to students who need extension beyond classroom activities or age appropriate stage levels. It also may relate to students that have a special talent in a specific area.

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## 1. LEARNING SUPPORT

Kamaroi's approach to a child with developmental/learning support needs recognises that a child often requires early intervention on a number of levels to be effectively supported. In the Kindergarten year the primary emphasis at school is Extra Lesson based developmental intervention rather than specific, skills-based remediation. Recommendation from Kindy for assessments outside school may also occur. Developmental movement work can continue through the primary years, but is mainly focused in the K-3 classes.

Early intervention/developmentally based support is paid for by parents and involves:

- Magic of Movement group sessions
- Individual Extra Lesson Sessions

These are provided by Trained Extra Lesson Teacher who conducts these sessions on the Kamaroi Site. Parents are invoiced each term directly by the Extra Lesson Teacher.

This provides focus upon specific remediation in literacy and numeracy work and may parallel ongoing developmental support (building faculty and skills capacity) so academic remediation may be more successfully integrated.

## Class Teachers

It is the role of all teachers and support staff along with Learning support team to help to facilitate a holistic learning environment appropriate to the specific needs of individual students in all years. The area of Special Needs is viewed as a whole-school, cross-curricular responsibility.

A priority is for all students to experience success in academic, social, personal and interpersonal situations. The main responsibility for the learning needs of all students is the individual classroom

teacher. Learning support is intended to complement existing classroom programs, as well as targeting individual learning needs. Learning support staff may be provided to assist the classroom teachers by providing focused support and direction as required.

The inclusion of students with disabilities within the classroom necessitates provision of support services for both students and teachers. This support is maintained to enable quality teaching and learning to take place accommodating the needs of identified students.

The whole staff, together with the assistance of the learning support personnel, including assistants, aims:

- To foster a secure, safe, caring and accepting school environment for all students with additional needs by maintaining a personal model of professionalism.
- To allow all students every opportunity to gain access to the curriculum and develop the skills necessary for the development of self-concept and self-esteem.
- To maintain a caring network between the learning support staff, other teachers, and the general school community, assisting students with special educational needs, to develop in social, emotional and academic aspects of their education.
- To promote an inclusive environment in the classroom that strives for acceptance of uniqueness and differences of each student.

### **Learning Support Team**

The Learning Support team includes the Learning Support Teacher, Principal, Chaplain, Director of Wellbeing, Assistants, and external contractor for Extra Lesson. Some, or all of the team may contribute for each referred student based on:

- Consultations with the classroom teachers
- Teacher observations from the classroom
- In class observations
- Parent interviews and feedback
- Intervention screening
- Specialist reports
- Social/emotional/behavioral needs

### **Learning Support Team Approach**

The Learning Support Team maintains a global view of the learning support needs across the school and prioritizes resources accordingly.

The Learning support team may:

- Offer support to students and teachers within an inclusive classroom setting.
- Include parents and carers in individual sessions to provide them with skills to support children at home
- May provide 1:1 or small group work for additional repetition or modification of tasks eg reading m revision, sight words, spelling, MultiLit
- Compare student test results and monitor ongoing progress
- Provide input and guidance to teachers based on data
- Work collaboratively with teachers, parents and the school community to design and implement appropriate programs.
- Withdraw students or student groups to allow for the development of literacy or other skills
- Assist with advice and preparation of differentiated work tasks / assessments.
- May assist or provide input into the preparation of Student Support Plans (SSP) for each student with additional needs in consultation with parents, students and relevant specialists.
- Liaise with classroom teachers regarding administration of standardised testing for identification and tracking purposes.
- Correlate and analyse results of individual, small or large group testing.

- Brief staff so that they develop the skills and knowledge needed to work with students with special needs.
- May assist to facilitate access to the Special Provisions for assessments in NAPLAN
- Collaborate with the range of other personnel, including external speech-language pathologist, educational psychologists
- Consult with personnel from other relevant agencies.

### **Identifying students with Special Needs**

The process of identification aims to:

- be inclusive and school-wide
- be culturally fair
- encourage input from caregivers and students.

Students with Special Needs are identified a number of ways, including:

- Enrolment forms ask parents to identify any special needs' issues that pertain to their child. This information is passed-on to the teacher/s who monitors the student who may also require further assessment.
- Information gathered as part of formalised assessment is considered by the classroom teachers and the Learning Support team.
- Formal and informal procedures will be used to assess the needs of the individual student and the level of Learning Support intervention that may be required.
- Utilising outside medical and learning professional assessments
- Testing occurs regularly in all year levels and include:
  - National Literacy and Numeracy Progressions
  - PM Reader Running records
  - Spelling - Dalwood
  - PAT Maths and Comprehension
  - LIEN/LIN Maths testing
  - Summative Tests
  - teacher-constructed tests / curriculum-based assessments
  - teacher observations
  - work samples

Teachers who believe that a student may have a learning difficulty / disability refer the student to the learning support staff.

The learning support staff may investigate further and consult with the teacher. If necessary, and following discussion with the parent, a referral may be given for an appropriate professional for further assessment.

If the assessment(s) confirms a disability the student may be offered support. The formulation of a Student Support Plan is determined by the individual student's level needs with identified disabilities.

### **Evaluations or Students Receiving Support**

The Learning Support program is evaluated continuously throughout the year. Monitoring of individual students may involve a combination of:

- observation
- formal testing / re-administering standardised tests
- collection and analysis of work samples
- individual communication with students / parents / teachers
- anecdotal records
- formal evaluation of SSP's

## Learning Support Provision

Kamaroi may provide support in the following ways:

- Reading and Maths groups for Classes 4, 5 & 6 once per week
- Small group sessions in phonics for Classes 3 & 4
- Individual sessions for Class 2 children and other children with high needs
- Specialist learning support by teacher to supporting the work of the literacy/numeracy learning as needed.
- For Social/Emotional support, Kamaroi's Chaplain sees individual children, small groups as well as taking whole class sessions.
- The Director of Wellbeing works closely with the Chaplain and teachers in supporting students with social/emotional and behavioural needs.
- Extra Lesson Teacher who conducts session with groups of children and individual sessions.
- Classroom assistance to target specific learning strategies

## Procedure Overview

The Kindergarten or Class Teacher following a review of enrolment information and or other ways that suggests a child requires additional support and he/she will normally initiate action. The class teacher will communicate with parents, Learning Support teachers and possibly external therapists, subject to the constraints of confidentiality.

1. Teacher maintains records
2. If applicable the teacher fills in a referral form for a child identified as needing support see appendix 1
3. Referral form goes to the Learning Support Team before the end of the term (Week 8). If a teacher has an urgent referral it can be given to the Learning Support team anytime in the term.
4. Learning Support Team looks at all the referrals and prioritises the list of children.
5. Before the end of the term, the timetables are adjusted to accommodate any new children.
6. Class teachers are given the new timetable at the beginning of each term.
7. Referrals cover literacy and numeracy support, Eurythmy Therapy, Magic of Movement, Extra Lesson

**The parent** is also encouraged to initiate action from any prior awareness of the child's difficulties, a family history or an older sibling's needs relevant to the younger child's needs.

**The Principal and Learning Support Team** will give collegiate assistance to the Class Teacher. The Principal in consultation with relevant key personnel will establish which children in the school have the greatest priority for the in-school learning support work, using the learning support by classes document which is updated on a termly basis and as appropriate an SSP's will be developed.

**The Learning Support Teachers** will work within their job description to assist particular children directly; to coordinate between teachers, parents, and others where appropriate; and to provide input to teachers and to the school.

## Specifics

When a child does not appear to have age appropriate development or have achieved the expected skills (as indicated through observation, developmental and academic assessment strategies), the teacher will discuss this with the parents. The school will recommend a school based developmental program or remedial academic support or social/emotional or behavioral support where it is deemed appropriate, and / or recommend further assessment for parents to follow up outside of school.

Our multi-disciplinary approach to learning support at Kamaroi encourages parents to share reports from other specialists with relevant teachers at school, picture building the child's needs in partnership, so they can be met as effectively as possible. The school may also enlist the support of Association of Independent

Schools consultants, or other independent consultants for advice and visits to the school. These consultants also provide support to teachers in creating / monitoring learning plans for individual students.

Parents obtain external assessment/s and engage providers for on-going therapy as appropriate for their child's needs.

## **Roles**

### **1. Learning Support team**

As the development of skills is often based on practice, the amount provided by the Learning Support team will normally be a part of the overall picture. Learning Support staff will endeavour to provide both class teacher with activities and suggestions, which can be followed through in class. The Class teacher may pass on additional suggestions to parents for activities that may take place at home. The child may also be having some assistance external to the school. The role of the learning support staff includes teaching and administering, coordinating and monitoring the child's progress, liaising with and supporting teachers.

### **2. The Role of the Parents**

The degree of success of developmental, literacy and other remedial work is directly connected to the commitment of parents to consistently following through; doing the exercises and homework provided by the class teacher or learning support teacher with the child.

Parents can assist the school and the child greatly, by keeping the class teacher informed of the child's progress at home, and of any assistance being sought outside the school. Home and school working in partnership to meet each child's individual needs and monitor progress is strongly encouraged.

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## **2. GIFTED and TALENTED**

Giftedness has been defined as “exceptional competence in one or more domains of ability”, and talent as “exceptional performance in one or more fields of human activity” (Gagne, 1985, p 111). Giftedness is outstanding potential to achieve, while talent is seen as outstanding performance.

Students identified as ‘gifted and talented’ are valued and their special ability or abilities are acknowledged as they are encouraged to pursue new challenges. Kamaroi endeavours to provide appropriate support for gifted students taking into account the social, emotional and educational well-being of the students concerned. At Kamaroi the classroom teachers are responsible for providing support, enrichment and extension for the ‘gifted and talented’ student. The support may be supplemented by the Learning Support team and Specialist Teacher programs.

## **Aims**

- Identify students of exceptional ability so that sound educational planning and practices can take place to support their needs.
- Provide a learning environment where gifted and talented students are encouraged and supported by teachers who understand their needs
- Maintain a school culture that acknowledges and celebrates the many facets of student performance or achievement.
- Provide a diverse and differentiated curriculum, catering for a wide range of abilities, preferred learning styles.

## Identification

A multi-dimensional approach to identification that includes both subjective and objective means of measurement will be used to reduce the chance of underachieving gifted students being overlooked in the identification process. We:

- Encourage teachers to be familiar with the characteristics of gifted underachievers.
- Use previous assessments or observations to examine a pattern of achievement.
- Use screening tools such as:
  - National Literacy and Numeracy Progressions
  - Summative Tests
  - NAPLAN
  - teacher-constructed tests / curriculum-based assessments
  - teacher observations
  - work samples

The process of identification aims to:

- apply school-wide
- use multiple identification criteria
- be inclusive & culturally fair
- recognise degrees & types of giftedness and talent
- promote differentiation
- encourage input from caregivers and students.

## Implementation

- Teachers support the identification and implementation of support and programs which may include extension programs
  - Where possible, professional development will be provided for staff in relation to gifted education and differentiation.
  - Provide for students with giftedness through our reading and mathematics groups
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<p>Related Documentation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assessment &amp; Reporting Policy &amp; Guidelines</li> <li>• Enrolment Policy including Guidelines for enrolment of a child with special needs</li> <li>• Disability Discrimination Act 1992</li> <li>• Disability standards 2005</li> <li>• Nationally Consistent Collection of data for Students with Disabilities</li> <li>• <a href="http://www.schooldisabilitydatapl.edu.au/">www.schooldisabilitydatapl.edu.au/</a></li> <li>• Pastoral care Policy &amp; Guidelines</li> <li>• Student Safety &amp; Welfare Policy &amp; Guidelines</li> </ul>

<b>Document Distribution</b>
Kamaroi School Website
Staff via Complispace and Meetings
Referenced in Parent Handbook

Version	Date	Notes
1.0	2007	Document Created
2.0	October 2009	Minor changes
3.0	March 2011	Minor – change ED to principal. Addition of social emotional coordinator
4.0	August 2014	Reviewed in the light of <i>Nationally Consistent Collection of Data for Students with Disabilities</i> requirements and procedures
4.1	March 2016	Slight changes to policy regarding staff movement Rebranded addition of Document Distribution Box and footers added
4.2	June 2016	Extra lesson program added. Slight changes to procedures and guidelines
4.3	Nov 2016	Slight changes to set up of learning support team
5.0	2017	Change BOSTES to NESA. Updating of procedure for referral to learning support addition of forms
6.0	May 2021	Significant update including addition of Gifted and Talented. Adjustments made to more accurately reflect current practices, titles and responsibilities.