Goulburn East Public School

Learning and Support Policy

Objectives - Policy statement

1. In any one school there will be students who may experience difficulties with learning. These difficulties may vary in cause, nature, intensity and duration.
2. Learning difficulties may arise at any time throughout a student’s school life. Students may experience difficulties in learning because of the ways in which they learn or the rates at which they learn.
3. Students experiencing difficulties in learning will have differing levels of educational need, which may require the provision of one or more educational support services over varying periods of time.
4. Prime responsibility for meeting the specific learning needs of students with difficulties in basic areas of learning lies with the school and the classroom teacher.
5. The school learning support team plays a key role in ensuring that the specific learning needs of students experiencing difficulties in learning are met.

Principles: Assisting Students with Learning Difficulties

Key principles underpinning support for students experiencing difficulties in learning, regardless of the cause:

• Students with specific learning needs are entitled to acquire the knowledge, skills, understandings, values and recognised credentials that enable them to participate in a changing society

• The Department, through its state offices, regions and schools, is responsible for the quality development and delivery of inclusive education and training for students with learning difficulties

• Students experiencing difficulties in learning may need accommodations and learning adjustments to enable them to access and participate in learning on the same basis as other students

• The equitable allocation of resources based on need is essential to meet the additional educational needs of students with difficulties in learning.

Key Principles for the effective operation of services supporting students with learning difficulties:

• A whole school commitment is essential to meeting the needs of students experiencing difficulties in learning

• School learning support teams assist schools and teachers to meet the specific learning needs of their students

• The school community, learning assistance personnel and other professionals work collaboratively to support students with learning difficulties

• Coordination and monitoring of learning assistance services and student learning outcomes within a quality teaching framework is essential
• Ongoing professional learning assists class teachers, executive and support staff to build their capacity to meet the specific learning needs of students

• School Learning Support Teachers (SLSTs) work within policy guidelines to assist schools to provide for students experiencing difficulties in basic areas of learning

• An emphasis on early identification of students experiencing difficulties in learning and early intervention at all stages of learning is most effective

• The establishment of transition processes between settings assists schools to ensure continuity in student learning with appropriate support.

Planning is necessary to ensure that the best use is made of the additional support and that learning outcomes are being achieved and students with disabilities are actively participating in all class and school activities. To achieve this, the Principal has the capacity to determine the most effective support “package” for each student using the funding provided and other resources and services.

Approved uses include:
• Professional learning (training and development activities)
• Additional teacher time
• SLSO time
• Teacher release for program coordination / division time

The Principal will have final approval in how support funds are expended, who is employed to support students (SLSO’s etc) and their employment status / organisation.

**The Learning Assistance Program (LAP)**

The Learning Assistance Program supports students experiencing difficulties in learning in regular classes, regardless of the cause. It includes support for students with significant learning difficulties, mild intellectual disabilities and language disorders. The Principal will have final approval in how LAP funds are expended.

**Student Learning Support Officer (SLSO)**

SLSO allocations are based on the amount of Integration Funding and Learning and Support Funding that a school receives.

While allocations are made on behalf of individual students, there is some flexibility available to the Principal in how funds are expended. The Principal has responsibility for determining the most appropriate ways of using the total annual funding allocated to the school to make the adjustments required to address the identified needs of the targeted students.

An SLSO is required to assist teachers in school and community settings in:

• the implementation of individual education programs and individual transition programs;
• providing opportunities for students to develop personal, social, independent living and pre-vocational skills;
• providing daily personal health care according to the level of need;
• helping with eating and drinking;
• supervision of students on excursion;
• physical support of students with severe and/or multiple, physical and/or intellectual disabilities, including lifting, moving students, therapy, administering medicine, minor maintenance of electronic equipment used by students;
• being part of a multi-disciplinary team developing IEPs.
Administrative duties include:

- operating audio-visual aids, computers, and other teaching equipment;
- minor duplicating/recording;
- minor clerical duties.

A SLSO can be called upon to undertake other related duties as determined by the Principal or his delegate.

It is imperative that a SLSO is not looked upon as a ‘teacher’ for a particular student/s by staff, students or parents. The Principal is any SLSO’s direct supervisor and will address concerns/issues with him/her. The Principal will determine allocation of SLSO timetabling and allocated students/classes.

**School Learning and Support Teacher (SLST)**

Goulburn East PS has a SLST allocation of 0.3. This sets limitations on programs.

The *School Learning and Support Teacher* (SLST) has a role within whole school initiatives to improve outcomes for students with learning difficulties and those students identified to the Learning Support Team.

The SLST’s role at Goulburn East PS as a member of the school learning support team is to:

- identify and assess students experiencing difficulties in learning
- plan, implement, monitor and evaluate programs for students with learning difficulties
- build the capacity of teachers to support students with a diverse range of learning needs.

In working collaboratively with classroom teachers the SLST may provide support through:

- team teaching
- consultancy and training and development with other teachers
- withdrawal for assessment
- withdrawal of students for **short term intensive instruction** and monitoring of progress support for peer tutoring and other programs

The Principal will determine allocation of SLST timetabling and allocated students/classes.

**The School Counsellor**

Goulburn East PS is serviced by a school counsellor 1 day per fortnight.

The school counsellor complements and enhances the work of teachers by strengthening student welfare provisions and providing counselling and psychological assessment where and when appropriate. Their collaboration with teachers in classrooms is designed to improve student learning outcomes.

The school counsellor works in collaboration with teachers to improve student learning and behaviour.

The school counsellor supports other school-based staff working with students by:

- Participating in the work of the Learning Support Team
- Counselling students
- Assessing students’ needs as a component of the appraisal process
- Referring students or their families to other agencies concerned with the welfare and health of students
- Providing advice and reports at appraisal and formal review meetings.
GEPS Student Learning Support Flow Chart

1. Concern for student and/or students

2. Class teacher to speak with parent and/or parents

3. Class teacher to complete Referral to School Counsellor (Part A)
   
   These are located in AP Office on pin board
   Please note that parents will be reading all documents- please use honesty and discretion

4. Parent/s to complete and sign Part B

5. Give completed referral to Principal

6. LST Discussion and Recommendation

   LST meets on Thursday mornings every 2nd week
   The LST will determine if the issue is:

   Behaviour?
   Ears / Eyes checked?
   School Counsellor?
   Speech?
   SLST case load?

Bede Darcey (Principal), GEPS teaching staff and GEPS Learning Support Team
July, 2012

To be evaluated July, 2014
Goulburn East Public School Referral to School Learning Support Team and School Counsellor
Please use this form for all students, K-6. Teachers to complete Part A. Parents to complete Part B.

PART A (Classroom Teacher information)
Reason for referral (please be specific)

Relevant background information
(Academic performance, language skills, behaviour, social skills attendance)

Students Strengths

Strategies that have been implemented thus far

Name: ____________________           Signature: ________________________         Date:___________________

PART B (Parent information)
Privacy notice: This information is being obtained to assist the school in providing support for your child. It may, as appropriate, be provided to other members of school staff involved in supporting your child. Provision of this information is voluntary. It will be stored securely. You may correct any personal information at any time by contacting the school.

Previous assessments
(by doctor, psychologist, speech therapist- if yes, please identify who, and attach reports if possible)

Is there anything you would like the School learning support and/or school counsellor to know?

I have read the Privacy Notice and give permission for the school learning support team to:
    1. Carry out the assessment and counselling as required    YES / NO
    2. Contact the authors of the reports I have provided    YES / NO
    3. Exchange information with support agencies and staff    YES / NO

Name: ____________________           Signature: ________________________         Date:___________________