

**DRUMMOYNE PUBLIC SCHOOL**  
**Guidelines for Therapy Provision**

Drummoyne Public School supports the individual needs of all students and is committed to working collaboratively with families and external agencies. Strong and positive relationships with all key stakeholders is beneficial in providing the utmost support for students at our school. This document serves as guidelines for school staff, parents, carers and service providers working with students in the provision of therapy services at Drummoyne Public School.

**THERAPY SERVICES AT DRUMMOYNE PS**

Staff at Drummoyne Public School are responsible for the development and implementation of student learning programs, incorporating curriculum outcomes. Staff are responsible for ensuring learning goals are collaboratively constructed with parents/carers and are reflective of the educational learning needs of the student. Where necessary, these goals are represented in a Personalised Learning and Support Plan. The approval and delivery of therapy services in the school is appropriate when there is a clear link between the therapy service and goals indicated in the Personalised Learning and Support plan. The school values the positive relationships between each therapy service provider in the effective provision of these services in our school. Decisions around whether to provide school access to externally funded providers will be based on whether it is in the best educational interests of the student for the service to be provided at the school, and if there is an appropriate space, time and supervision to meet the school's duty of care towards all students and staff.

Drummoyne Public School supports the Department and the NDIS Operational Guidelines including the recommendation that "NDIS funded...therapy services should generally not be delivered at school...nor should children or young people be taken out of school to receive these supports". This enables our experienced staff to focus on teaching all students and ensures that students do not miss out on important learning time. However, we also acknowledge that in some cases, it may be beneficial for students to receive the services at school.

**ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF EDUCATION AND THERAPY PROVIDERS**

The role of the school in relation to therapy services is to liaise with families to facilitate any reasonable request for such a service taking place during school hours which will lead to improved educational outcomes for the student.

The role of the therapist when working in schools is to contribute to positive educational outcomes for students in a planned, collaborative and cohesive manner ensuring that the focus is on the agreed educational goals.

**GUIDING PRINCIPLES**

- Student safety, wellbeing and educational development is to be the priority for any therapy service provided in the school setting.
- Students are best served when both school staff and visiting therapists have a clear understanding of the specific purpose for each visit to the school.
- Schools are ultimately responsible for student educational outcomes. The decision as to whether a therapy service is to operate within the school is entirely at the discretion of the Principal.

- Therapy service providers are responsible and accountable to the student and parents for the service they provide. School staff will not "sign-off" on any service conducted in the school as the agreement is between the parent and service provider.
- A collaborative approach between teachers, therapists, families and carers is in the best interest of the student and will assist in achieving positive educational outcomes.
- At the beginning of the school year staff aim to create safe learning environments with established timetables, routines and programs along with getting to know their new students. Taking this into consideration, the best educational interests of the students at this time is to engage and focus on their school learning environment and for this reason requests for externally funded service providers will be considered from Term 1 Week 4 onwards.
- Externally funded service providers are asked to negotiate the best times to visit with the classroom teacher through the coordinator of the Learning Support Team. Once these dates and times are set for the term, a change of time will need to be negotiated with the school.
- Due to the needs of all students in the classroom, therapists will be limited to one person visiting the identified student at a time.
- Session times are limited to a maximum of 60 minutes to support all students to engage in their regular class program.
- At all times, the teacher is responsible for the students' learning program and the students remain under the duty of care of the classroom teacher whilst on school grounds.

### **GUIDING PRACTICES FOR RELATIONSHIPS**

- The delivery of therapy services in schools will be planned and documented in partnership with the school and family or carers. In this way, all stakeholders have a clear understanding of their roles and can resolve any issues collaboratively.
- The student's educational goals are developed within the school setting through a Personalised Learning and Support Plan process where needed. Therapy services delivered in schools should link to a student's plan.
- We encourage and support collegial discussions between staff and therapists. However, class time is for teaching. Service providers are asked to seek a mutually appropriate time for discussion and consultation.
- Effective relationships between therapists and teachers will aim to be responsive and have the flexibility required to meet educational goals where resources and priorities change.
- A high standard of confidentiality is to be maintained where information is shared between stakeholders. Information pertaining to students in the school will be held with confidence by school staff and visiting service providers. Reports will only mention the names of the student receiving therapy without any reference to any other student in the class.
- Any concerns in relation to students or staff should be immediately brought to the attention of the Principal.

### **REVIEW OF SERVICES**

The school welcomes the provision of therapy for students during school time. Even so, we acknowledge that not all proposed activities and lessons are conducive to being provided in the classroom context as some sessions may have the potential to be disruptive to other learners. The classroom teacher and their supervisors will review the suitability of a therapy session being conducted during school hours as the need arises and, at least, at the end of each school term.