



**CATHOLIC EDUCATION**  
OFFICE OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA

## **PROCEDURES FOR THE PROVISION OF THERAPY IN CATHOLIC SCHOOLS**

Schools are increasingly being requested to support therapy intervention for students with disability. While Catholic schools recognise the valuable contribution provided by specialist services to enhance outcomes for students with disability there are a number of issues to be considered.

With the introduction of the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) or MyWay there has also been an increase in the requests by parents, for therapy funded by NDIS, on school sites. If parents/carers request therapy support onsite for their child, the procedures for provision of therapy in schools remain the same.

Under the School Education Act 1999 (WA), the principal has ultimate responsibility for the education programs provided by the school. Acceptance and utilisation of therapy services as well as the incorporation of recommendations in a student's Individualised Plan is at the discretion of the principal.

Private therapy services arranged by parents should generally be provided outside school hours and not on school premises. This is to maintain the integrity of the school program. It must be noted that schools are education providers not therapy providers. If therapy is to be conducted during school hours' parents should write a letter of explanation to the principal explaining the student's absence.

If parents believe it would be beneficial for the student/s to receive therapy services during school hours on school premises, they must seek permission from the principal. They must discuss with the principal:

- the purpose and benefits of the intervention;
- the nature of the intervention (e.g. student observation, one to one therapy, small group work);
- who is to deliver the services;
- when the services would be delivered.

Before the principal gives permission they must:

- consider how the intervention contributes to the Individual Plan of the student/s;
- make an on-balance decision regarding the benefits of the intervention versus the loss of educational time;
- consider the potential impact on other students;
- consider the capacity of the school to provide appropriate space for the intervention;
- ensure an appropriate time frame is established for review of the permission.

In regard to external agency personnel or private therapists visiting or working in Catholic schools the following procedures should be followed:

- contact the principal in the first instance for permission to visit;

- detail the specific purpose of the visit;
- show evidence that they have parent/ caregiver permission to visit every child they work with;
- arrange specific dates and times with the principal well ahead of the intended visit;
- provide identification and evidence of agency authorisation;
- provide a current National Police History Check as issued by the Department of Education Western Australia or Working with Children check;
- access a copy and comply with the school's Code of Conduct.

After principal permission has been given for the therapeutic intervention all visitors are expected to:

- advise the front office of their arrival in the school and record their name and the time prior to going to a classroom and again when they leave the school premises;
- remain as unobtrusive as possible within the classroom;
- obtain parent permission beforehand for every student they work with;
- interact only with the student for whom permission has been granted to visit;
- if required, organise a post visit time convenient with the teacher to discuss issues regarding the visit as teachers are generally not in a position to discuss a student's needs or progress in class time;
- all observations, information and documentation pertaining to school visits must be treated as confidential by all parties concerned.

Should you have any queries please contact Jacqueline Reid 6380 5316 or email [Jacqueline.Reid@cewa.edu.au](mailto:Jacqueline.Reid@cewa.edu.au).

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