

# ST. JOSEPHS PRIMARY SCHOOL PORT MACQUARIE



Name of Document: Guidelines for Access to the School Playground and Classrooms by Health Professionals

Date: February 2022

## OUR VISION

*"ONE IN CHRIST"*

## OUR MISSION

At St. Joseph's Primary we will

- give witness to Christian values
- respect the dignity and sacredness of each student
- work with the parents to build up within the child an awareness of the presence of God
- endeavour to discern and fully develop the potential of each student
- foster a love for learning
- create a happy, accepting and enriching environment

**St. Joseph's Primary School**

**Port Macquarie**

**Guidelines for Access to the School Playground and Classrooms  
by Health Professionals**

**Statement of Belief:**

St Joseph's Primary School is committed to providing quality education for all students and as such acknowledges the contribution health professionals make in ensuring the specific needs of individual students are met. Working in collaboration with health professionals is a positive approach towards establishing "best practice" principles within the school.

**Rationale:**

Guided by the philosophy of inclusion and in adherence to the Disability Standards in Education, St Joseph's Primary School endeavours to provide an education program that is focused on the growth of the whole person.

In order to provide appropriate support to students with disabilities, staff members at St Joseph's Primary School will work in collaboration with health professionals to ensure the needs of individual students are met.

Staff members acknowledge the need for various health professionals to observe individual students within the school environment in order to gain a thorough understanding of the student's needs. Such observations can provide a strong foundation from which collaborative approaches in education are formed.

**Background:**

On occasions there will be requests for some students to be observed by health professionals in the school setting. This may include observations made by:

- Psychologists
- Speech Pathologists
- Occupational Therapists
- Physiotherapists
- Behaviour Therapists
- Counsellors

All health professionals entering the school will abide by the following protocols.

**Implementation and School Protocol:**

Parental consent must be gained in writing and sent to the school prior to any health professional entering the premises to observe a student.

If the health professional is self-employed, he/she must provide the school with a Child Protection Certificate of Self Employment. The school also needs to cite the 3<sup>rd</sup> Party Liability Insurance Policy of the Private Therapist.

If the health professional works for a Community Service Agency, he/she must provide a statement from their employer stating that he/she isn't a prohibited person.

The health professional will provide evidence to the school of his/her qualifications, expertise and/or experience.

The school may conduct referee checks prior to the health professional's first visit.

All health professionals entering the school shall abide by the school's "Visitor Safety" and "Child Protection Guidelines" as explained by a school representative prior to the first visit.

The health professional must contact the school and arrange a time for the visit that is mutually suitable for the classroom teacher, the student and the health professional.

In arranging visits to classrooms, the health professional must indicate in writing the purpose of the visit, the expected duration of the visit and the outcomes he/she hopes to achieve as a result of the visit.

Due to the number of health professionals requesting access to classrooms, observations will be limited to one visit per health professional, per semester per child. Eg: If a Speech Pathologist, a Psychologist and an Occupational Therapist are providing services for a particular student each one of these health professionals may observe the student in the school setting twice each year.

In some circumstances, the health professional may feel it necessary to visit the school more frequently. In this instance the health professional is asked to provide an explanation of the need to make more frequent observations and arrange with the Leader of Inclusion and classroom teacher, suitable times to undertake such observations.

After each visit, the health professional is asked to provide a written (preferably typed) report to the school with recommendations for the individual student. As teachers have a commitment to other students in the class, informal discussions or feedback sessions cannot take place during class time or whilst the teacher is engaged in playground duty.

If a face-to-face meeting is required following the visit, the health professional is asked to contact the school and arrange a suitable time to meet with the class teacher. A typed copy (supplied by the health professional) of points to address, as discussed at such meetings, would be appreciated by staff members.

Health professionals must keep confidential any personal information obtained about other students, teachers or staff while observing a particular student in a classroom.

As the needs of all students are at the centre of the school's commitments, any health professionals who are currently providing regular therapy services to students during school hours, will continue to do so as planned. These arrangements will be reviewed annually.

## **NDIS-funded or Private therapy provision**

The NDIS will fund specialist therapy supports similar to those previously funded by NSW Ageing Disability and Home Care. Where therapy is included in an NDIS plan, families will choose therapy services from a range of non-government and private providers.

The NDIS plan should be implemented to not impact on school attendance or access to curriculum. NDIS-funded functional supports, such as therapy services, should generally not be delivered at school where not related to supporting the child or young person's attendance or participation at school. Nor should children or young people be taken out of school to receive these supports.

Providers, whose therapy services are accessed through an NDIS plan, may seek to deliver their services to students during school time or on school premises. Schools may choose to facilitate this delivery where it integrates with the delivery of curriculum and educational supports as parts of reasonable adjustment for the student, taking account of the operational requirements and educational objectives and priorities of the school.

It remains at the principal's discretion to decide what services are delivered in schools or on school grounds, taking into consideration the educational needs and priorities for students and the school.

Reference: Department of Education NSW:

<https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/disability-learning-and-support/resources/external-providers#Information0>



## St Joseph's Primary School, Port Macquarie NSW, 2444

### Attachment

#### Excerpts from Disability Standards in Education (Commonwealth of Australia, 2005)

Standards relevant to the provision and allocation of the Additional Needs Therapy Budget

##### *Standards for participation (5.2)*

Relevant standards include:

5.2.1. The education provider must take reasonable steps to ensure that the student is able to participate in the courses or programs provided by the educational institution, and use the facilities and services provided by it, on the same basis as a student without a disability, and without experiencing discrimination

##### *Standards for curriculum development, accreditation and delivery (6.2)*

Relevant standards include:

6.2.1. The education provider must take reasonable steps to ensure that the course or program is designed in such a way that the student is, or any student with a disability is, able to participate in the learning experiences (including the assessment and certification requirements) of the course or program, and any relevant supplementary course or program, on the same basis as a student without a disability, and without experiencing discrimination.

##### *Standards for student support services (7.2)*

Relevant standards include:

7.2.2 If a specialised support service is necessary for the student to be able to participate in the activities for which he or she is enrolled, and is of a kind that is provided by the education provider, the provider must take reasonable steps to ensure that the student has access to the service (but may arrange for it to be provided by another person or agency).

7.2.3 If a specialised support service is necessary for the student to be able to participate in the activities for which he or she is enrolled, and is of a kind that is not provided by the provider, the provider must take reasonable steps to facilitate the provision of the service to the student by another person or agency

#### **Reference:**

Department of Education, Skills and Employment 2020 Review of the [Disability Standards for Education 2005](#).

[Disability Standards for Education  
Review Document](#)