

NSW Outline of School Support for Students with Low Vision.



Government Schools

The following was prepared by the AFA with information from the Education NSW site, July 2019.

<https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/disability-learning-and-support>

Overview

Each Education Region has a School Services Officer (Assistant Principal Vision) who leads a team to oversee the provision of support for students in Government schools. There is no longer a support unit, but Itinerant Support Teachers - Vision (ISTV's) in the region team work from a base school, visiting students in their own mainstream government school. Decisions are made by the learning and support team at the child's school (includes parents), supported by the School Services Office in the region.

Disability Criteria - Vision

Students must have a current diagnosed vision impairment, which details a permanent vision loss that is **6/24** or less in the better eye corrected, or less than 20 degrees field of vision. Applications are made through the school (or kindergarten transition) with a report which indicates that the student requires additional support to access the curriculum in alternative formats or with significant modification of materials. There must also be information on the student's ability to access the physical environment and daily living, orientation, mobility and social skills.

Ref: click on the following link and then check your downloads.

<https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/disability-learning-and-support/programs-and-services/integration-funding-support>

Learning and support resources

Every regular NSW public school has a learning and support resources package that gives the school a specialist teacher and an allocation of flexible funding as part of the school budget. School principals are able to make informed decisions about how to best use their allocated resources to provide support where and when it is needed. Students with vision from 6/24 plus are generally supported and funded this way (and if they are not coping, those with 6/18 to 6/24 may also be considered).

The Integration Funding Support program

Those with vision of 6/24 plus who are not coping with the above support, may qualify for Integration Funding Support. The Integration Funding Support program is only considered when a school learning and support team finds that extra support is required because:

- a student has moderate or high support needs. (AFA note: especially if they are 6/60 plus)
- a student needs additional resources to personalise learning and support
- extra time with a teacher and/or school learning support officer is the most appropriate resource.

Funding is used to:

- provide additional teachers and school learning support officers to implement personalised learning and support for students in their own classrooms
- assist classroom teachers by providing relief for them to undertake professional learning and to liaise with parents or carers and other school staff.

Who is eligible - The Integration Funding Support program helps students who:

T: 1300 22 16 19 albinismaustralia.org



Albinism Fellowship of Australia

- are school-aged
- are enrolled in a regular class in a NSW public school
- have a moderate to severe intellectual disability, physical disability, mental health disorder, autism spectrum disorder, hearing and/or vision impairment as defined by the department's disability criteria
- need adjustments to access learning opportunities and school experiences
- have moderate to high learning and support needs requiring additional resources to those available in school to personalise learning and support.

<https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/disability-learning-and-support/programs-and-services/integration-funding-support>

Disability and Learning – Personalised Learning and Support:

Ref: <https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/disability-learning-and-support/personalised-support-for-learning/personalised-learning-And-support>

Four key elements of Personalised Learning and Support:

- Assessment of student needs (including advice from parents)
- Provision of adjustments or support to meet student needs (in consultation with parents) “Individualised or personalised plans that address specific learning and support needs of the student and records of their implementation, such as plans for individual student learning, communication, behaviour, health care and transition.”
- Monitoring or review of impact of adjustments/supports
- Consultation and collaboration of teachers, parents and support staff etc.

Personalised learning – examples of adjustments

- “Individualised or personalised plans that address specific learning and support needs of the student and records of their implementation, such as plans for individual student learning, communication, behaviour, health care and transition”
- “Adjustments to learning materials such as the provision of learning materials in alternate formats, adjusted worksheets or reworded tasks”
- “Environmental adjustments beyond those already in place in the school such as personalised learning spaces and use of sound field amplification systems”. This would also include blinds to reduce glare in classrooms, marking edges of steps, highlighting paint on poles etc.

Consultation and Collaboration

Teachers and school staff work collaboratively to identify and respond to the additional learning and support needs of students. This includes consultation and collaborative planning between school staff and students and their parents or carers, as well as collaborative planning between teachers, support staff and specialist staff within and outside education where needed to address individual student needs. Examples of ways in which this collaboration is recorded may include:

- records of meetings held at school to plan for and review adjustments involving teachers, students, their parents and carers, other specialist staff and professionals, such as learning and support team meeting records
- records of discussions and decisions about the provision of adjustments for the student
- documented student plans signed by the student or their parents and carers
- records of parent-teacher interviews
- parent-teacher communication books.

<https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/disability-learning-and-support/personalised-support-for-learning/personalised-learning-And-support>

Disability and Learning – Roles and responsibilities: List of all staff in school and region and their responsibilities for teaching / overseeing students with disabilities.

<https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/disability-learning-and-support/personalised-support-for-learning/roles-and-responsibilities>

Independent Schools

Independent schools are required to use the same disability criteria and meet the same standards of disability education as public schools in NSW. Schools in the independent sector buy in teacher services, supported by the Royal Institute for Deaf Blind Children (RIDBC), who supply consultants and visiting teachers to both city and remote areas. Contact your local school or RIDBC for more information.

Catholic Schools

Catholic schools are required to use the same disability criteria and meet the same standards of disability education as public schools in NSW. Support is organised through the individual dioceses. The 11 regionally based dioceses vary in the way they operate. Contact the local Catholic education office or school for more information.

Royal Institute for Deaf and Blind Children (RIDBC)

Based in NSW, this is a non-government provider of education, therapy for children and adults with vision loss, their families, and the professionals who support them. They provide professional development for teachers and low vision information for parents of children in all education sectors.

<https://www.ridbc.org.au/>