



EAST PRESTON ISLAMIC COLLEGE

LEARNING

SUPPORT

POLICY

INTRODUCTION

This policy describes the roles, responsibilities and procedures relating to the Learning Support at East Preston Islamic College (EPIC).

RESPONSIBILITIES

The Principal carries overall responsibility for the quality of teaching, assessment, reporting, professional development, collection of data and the implementation of reasonable adjustments to meet the needs of students with disabilities.

The Principal and Vice Principal are responsible for ensuring that all staff members are aware of the school's legal obligations arising from the Disability Discrimination Act and the Disability Standards for Education. Regular Professional Development for all staff is integral to meeting this responsibility.

Teachers are responsible to know their students and how they learn. Teachers observe students closely and carry out ongoing assessments - formative and summative, formal and informal - to inform their teaching. Teachers share questions and concerns with colleagues and consult with Learning Support staff as required, implementing negotiated support in the classroom. Teachers are required to meet the National Professional Standards for Teachers.

Teachers are responsible for differentiating curriculum content, teaching style, learning activities and assessment requirements to seek to meet the needs of all students. For some students this happens in the shape of an Individual Learning Plan (ILP). Teachers keep clear and thorough records of adjustments made and outcomes achieved. Teachers provide written reports at mid-year and end-of-year indicating the developments that have been facilitated by the Learning Support Team. Teachers also communicate with parents through informal conversations, emails, diary / communication book entries and scheduled interviews.

Learning Support Coordinator is responsible for liaising with administration staff during the enrolment process, for undertaking ongoing observations and assessments, supporting parents/ caregivers and teachers with the development and implementation of ILP's, communicating with external professionals, managing data collection relating to students with a disability and accessing and allocating resources to support these students. The process of implementing ILP's may include provision of support directly to students, by the coordinator themselves or by Integration Aides.

Parents and caregivers are responsible for their child's learning at home. They are experts on their own child, and it is their responsibility to be advocates for their child. They are responsible for communicating observations or circumstances pertinent to their child's learning to appropriate school staff. Parents participate in the process of developing ILP's and support any agreements made.

RELATIONSHIP

Learning Support services will be most effective if parents/guardians, teachers, Learning Support staff and the student themselves collaboratively build an understanding of the student's needs. In order to achieve this, we strive to ensure that:

There is clear, thorough and ongoing communication between school staff - teachers, Learning Support Coordinator, Aides and Administration staff - and parents/ caregivers.

Parents/ caregivers and students where appropriate, participate in the devising and reviewing of Individual Learning Plans (ILP's).

Before implementing a Learning Support strategy that involves withdrawal from the classroom setting or individual support within the classroom, parents are consulted, provided with an offer and asked for approval.

Student development that is facilitated by Learning Support is reported on via mid-year and end of year reports

Learning Support Coordinators take advice as appropriate from external professionals and agencies. Teachers and Learning Support staff strive to adapt and make specific strategies.

LEARNING SUPPORT COORDINATOR

The learning support coordinator's role covers the whole school from Foundation to Year 12. The coordinator works collaboratively with teachers, parents/ caregivers and external agencies in meeting students' support needs.

Enrolment / Transition Support

Learning Support coordinator is involved with information gathering when a student with additional learning needs or disability seeks enrolment. This may include speaking to teachers or support staff at the student's current school, reviewing recent reports from the school and outside professionals and/ or undertaking individual assessments. The Learning Support Coordinator will be involved in all enrolment interviews relating to students with identified additional needs or disabilities, to enable a thorough assessment to be made, of the adjustments required for the child to participate in the school curriculum.

Once an agreement to enrol has been made, the Learning Support Coordinator may be involved in developing and implementing a Transition Plan. Before the student commences, a temporary ILP will be developed in consultation with parents/ caregivers and the class teacher/ guardian.

This plan will be implemented for a specified time while the school and the student become familiar with each other. The ILP will be reviewed at an agreed time, and modified as required.

Assessment

Learning support coordinator undertakes classroom and playground observation on request of the school. They carry out individual academic and developmental assessments, within their areas of expertise (eg Extra Lesson), as well as group / class testing as required.

When a need for a specialist assessment is indicated, the Learning Support Coordinator refers and/ or liaises with external agencies and professionals - eg psychologists, occupational therapists and speech pathologists - to facilitate testing. This is generally undertaken at parents'/ caregivers' expense.

Student Support

As part of their ILP, students may receive direct support in a variety of forms, e.g. -

- Individual support - in class, in the playground, during transitions, on excursions/ camps;
- Extra Lesson program - 1:1 sessions with follow up exercises to be undertaken at home;
- Individual, group or in-class support in specific lessons - eg language/ maths practice lessons;

- Organisational support;
- Additional Work Experience.

Teacher Support

Learning Support Coordinators support class and specialist teachers in a variety of ways:

- Support with differentiating curriculum content, teaching style, learning activities and assessment requirements to meet the needs of their students;
- Coordination of the development and implementation of ILP's;
- Analysis of assessment data relevant to the whole class and individual students;
- Attendance at parent interviews/ meetings and parent-teacher nights (at class teacher/ guardian request);
- Organisation of Professional Development opportunities - both in-school and by external agencies;
- Leading professional learning of teachers and aides;
- Co-teaching on request;
- Providing whole class sessions on disability awareness (at class teacher/ guardian request);
- Creation and/ or provision of resources from the Learning Support library;
- Sharing information about students in a clear and timely manner.

Parent/ Caregiver Support

Learning Support Coordinator will generally establish a relationship with the parents/ caregivers of students with particular learning needs or disabilities through the enrolment process and/ or through the process of establishing their ILP. The coordinator will then maintain contact with the parents/guardians, complementing the relationship with the class teacher/ caregiver and ensuring that a shared understanding of the students' needs is carried by all those involved in their education.

Learning Support Coordinator may provide support through:

- phone or email conversations;
- attendance at parent teacher interviews or meetings (at class teacher/caregiver request);
- recommending and providing resources for home use;
- preparation and debrief for camps and excursions;
- recommendation of external assessment and support agencies.

Integration Aides

All Integration Aides who are employed to support particular children and/ or to enable ILP's to be implemented are directed by the teachers and supported in their work by the Learning Support Coordinator.

REASONABLE ADJUSTMENTS AND INDIVIDUAL SUPPORT PLANS

Identifying and Responding to Specific Needs

Each student's individual support needs may be different.

A collaborative approach is the key to effectively meeting each student's needs. Class teachers, learning support staff and parents work as a team, around and with the student to identify and respond to the student's needs. Any member of the team can ask for the group to convene to share observations and questions which may prompt intervention: eg parents might approach the class teacher or the Learning Support Coordinator with concerns about their child, or a teacher might approach a parent to instigate a meeting.

For students with disabilities or learning needs that require adjustments to be made to curriculum content, teaching style, learning activities or assessment requirements, learning support staff and teachers will work together to create an ILP, with input from parents/ caregivers. In the Primary school, this process will be managed by the Class Teacher, and in the High School by the Learning Support Coordinator. New ILP's must be completed and signed by all parties, by the beginning of week 6 (term 1). Those involved will take into account their own observations as well as assessment results obtained from standardised, benchmark or other classroom testing and diagnoses by other professionals. The specific adjustments needed to enable the student to fully participate in the education provided by the school will be identified, implemented and reviewed as necessary.

Where a particular program is indicated and is available through the school, all requests for access to the service must be addressed to the Learning Support Team. The approach to providing access to the particular program will be clear, transparent and non- discriminatory, as stipulated in the guidelines.

Maintaining Timely and Accurate Records

Some students with a diagnosed and documented disability may not require any personalised adjustments beyond the resources and services available for all students at the school. If this is the case, it will be noted in the student's ILP. Other students may receive focussed support from an aide in specific lessons - e.g. language or mathematics lessons, while still others may require considerable individual support that entails alternative activities away from the class or even away from the school.

All adjustments that are made in recognition of a student's disability or special learning needs will be noted in their ILP. These adjustments will vary according to the specific need that has been identified, and may for example be required only at specific times or in specific lessons. Parents/ Caregivers of all students with ILP's will be invited to meet with the Learning Support Coordinator and the class teacher at least once per semester to review the implementation of the ILP.

Additional Support Services

The school is required to make adjustments which are reasonable given the needs of all students. Where outside agencies are involved in working with students at school, Learning Support staff will liaise with them according to the protocols attached to this policy. Where students receive additional support services at school or outside school, we will strive to work towards a unified approach to maximize the students' learning development.

Breaches of This Policy

The School expects that any employees who become aware of a breach of these policies will advise the Vice Principal without delay to enable remedial action to be taken.