



# Nuwarra Public School

## Guidelines for Therapy Provision

Nuwarra Public School supports the individual needs of all students and recognises the valuable contributions provided by specialist services. Strong and positive relationships with all key stakeholders is beneficial in providing the utmost support for students at our school. From time to time, we receive requests for externally funded service providers to deliver services within the school setting. This document serves as a guideline for school staff parents/ carers and service providers working with students in the provision of therapy services at Nuwarra Public School.

### Therapy Services at Nuwarra Public School

#### Summary

1. All requests for access to a student by an external provider funded by NDIS (or any other scheme) must come from the student's parent/ carer in writing.
2. All requests for the delivery of an externally funded service will be considered against the needs of the student or group of students who are the intended service recipients, other students in the school and the operational requirements of the school.
3. If approved, provider **MUST** meet all NSW Department of Education policy requirements and enter into an agreement with Nuwarra Public School.
4. All service provider staff will undergo all school induction processes prior to commencing any services.

The staff at Nuwarra 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. 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 classroom. 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, if there is appropriate space, time, supervision and in the school's duty of care towards all staff and students.

Nuwarra Public School supports the Department and the NDIS Operational Guidelines recommendations 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 allows our highly experienced staff to focus on teaching all students and ensured that students do not miss out on important learning time. However, we also realise that in some cases, it may be suitable for these services to be provided at school.

### Roles and Responsibilities of education and therapy organisations

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

## Guiding Principals

- Student safety, wellbeing and educational development is 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 classroom.
- Schools are ultimately responsible for student educational outcomes. The decision as to whether a therapy service is to operate within a 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/ carer 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.
- Counselling sessions are best held outside of school hours; however, the school understands that there might be extenuating circumstances where this will need to be reviewed. If this is the case, counselling visits may be approved.
- Session times are limited to a maximum of 45 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 MUST 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 arising issues in a collaborative manner.
- The students’ educational goals are developed within the school setting through a Personalised Learning and Support Plan (PLaSP). Therapy services delivered in our school 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 will need to seek a mutually appropriate time for discussion and consultation.
- Effective relationships between therapists and teachers are responsive and have the flexibility required to meet educational goals where resources and priorities change.
- A high standard of confidentiality is maintained where information is shared between stakeholders. Reports will only mention names of the student receiving therapy without any reference to any other student in the class.
- Any concerns regarding students or staff should be immediately brought to the attention of the principal.

## Review of services

The LST and classroom teacher will review the suitability of therapy sessions being conducted during school hours and the impact on student learning at the end of each semester, and or as the need arises, with parents and therapists.