



ST PIUS X CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL EXTERNAL CONSULTANTS - CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

Dated: June 2010 Revised March 2014 Review 2017

RATIONALE

Schools recognise the valuable contributions provided by specialist services. A number of students with disabilities in Catholic schools are eligible for specialised assistance provided by various government funded support agencies / organisations. Acceptance and utilisation of these services as well as the incorporation of their recommendations in an individual student's Individual Education Plan (IEP) is at the discretion of the principal. **Under the Western Australian School Education Act (2000) the principal has ultimate responsibility for the education programs provided by the school and the school is responsible for all aspects of a student's program and care during school hours.** While parent and/or specialist input is welcome, neither parents nor therapists have responsibility for developing educational programs. Program development and implementation are the responsibility of the class teacher.

While many parents choose to utilise private services, it is not always possible for schools to accommodate the various programs and procedures recommended by some private therapists within educational programs provided by the school. It must be noted that schools are education providers not therapy providers.

Private therapy services arranged by parents must normally be provided outside school hours and not on school premises, as they may have many implications including, public liability, confidentiality, educational implications and space requirements. If therapy is to be conducted outside of school premises, during school hours, parents must notify the principal in writing, stating the purpose, provider and location of the therapy. Principals will respond in writing acknowledging the request whilst considering the Duty of Care requirements and impact on the overall educational program.

Parents wishing external agency personnel visits to the school are firstly required to discuss the purpose of the visit with the principal and seek principal approval for the possibility of a visit. In regard to external agency personnel or private therapists visiting or working in Catholic schools, the following procedures are those that all are required to follow.

All external service personnel intending to visit a Catholic school must:

- 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 a child
- arrange specific dates and times with the principal well ahead of the intended visit
- provide identification and evidence of agency authorisation
- provide the school with Working with Children Card
- have professional indemnity insurance if they are a private therapist working on school grounds to the minimum value of \$10,000,000.

After principal permission has been given for the visit and times and dates have been agreed, all visitors are expected to:

- advise the front office of their arrival in the school and sign the visitor's register (where a Visitor's Badge will be given) prior to going to a classroom and again when they leave the school premises.
- **Visitors must not go directly to classrooms.**
- remain as unobtrusive as possible within the classroom with priority of room use existing with the school
- obtain parent permission beforehand for each student if small group work is intended
- refer only to the child for whom permission has been given to visit, not the teaching staff or other students
- if required organise a post visit time convenient with the teacher and parent 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 and schools with permission of parents should retain a copy of the reports from the therapists.

CATHOLIC EDUCATION WA APPROVED AGENCIES

While the following list is not exhaustive, specialist personnel from government funded agencies/ organisations such as those detailed below have been approved to provide advice and specialised assistance through visits in school hours to students with disabilities in Catholic schools:

- Visiting Teachers from the Department of Education & Training Vision Education Service (VES) from the Centre for Inclusive Schooling;
- Visiting teachers from the Western Australian Institute of Deaf Education (WAIDE);
- Specialist staff from the Telethon Speech and Hearing Centre of Western Australia;
- Orientation and Mobility officers from the Institute of the Blind;
- Occupational, speech and physio therapists from government funded agencies such as Therapy Focus, The Centre for Cerebral Palsy, Autism Association, Rocky Bay, Disability Services Commission and regional hospitals;
- Staff from Hospital School Services;
- Nursing personnel from Silver Chain, Princess Margaret Hospital, regional hospitals and government health services, and
- Children & Adolescents Mental Health Services (CAMHS) staff.