

Specialised Learning Programs for Students with ASD

Specialised Learning Programs (SLP) for students with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) support the individual needs of students with ASD from Kindergarten to Year 12 who are at risk of disengagement, underachievement and/or significant difficulties with adaptive behaviour. The programs target students who do not have an intellectual disability with a focus on year level or near year level academic engagement and achievement, organisational skills, social cognition development, positive peer relationships and emotional self-regulation.

Enrolment

Enrolment of students within the program is the responsibility of the host school. The programs have a limited number of places and students are assessed on eligibility and suitability for the program. A position within the mainstream class must be available for a position to be offered. In the Primary SLP there are between 22 – 25 students. In the secondary program there are between 15- 18 students. Students enter the program when positions become available which can occur at any stage throughout the school year. Students transition out of the program back to their local mainstream school when exit criteria has been demonstrated and the local school is supported to ensure this transition is successful and sustained. Students entering the SLP in kindergarten begin at the start of the school year with observations and assessment of eligibility and suitability occurring the year before.

Structure

Every student accessing an SLP has a position within the mainstream class/es of the school which they can integrate into when they are ready. The SLP have homerooms that the students spend time in when necessary. The amount of time that the students spend in the homeroom and mainstream will vary considerably. Some students may need to spend all of their school day in the homeroom with the specialist staff and then start their integration into mainstream slowly through strength areas such as math or sport. Other students may only come into the homerooms for specific lessons on self regulation or social skills. Always individual need, driven by the outcome of successful mainstream inclusion, will determine the structure of each individual student's experience within the SLP.

Staffing

Every school has a Program Coordinator to oversee the SLP. Specialist teachers and trained education assistants provide evidence-based programs in homerooms and additional support to staff who have students with ASD in mainstream classrooms. Each student's individual program is based on their unique profile and needs across all educational settings.

Pedagogy

All staff are trained before their commencement working in the SLP in Evidence Based Practices (EBP) for students with ASD. Intervention strategies and programs employed are embedded with the philosophy of contemporary Applied Behaviour Analysis (ABA) approaches. Program staff will also employ evidence-based methodologies and intervention strategies that effectively meet the unique needs of the individual students including Positive Behaviour Support (PBS); Explicit Instruction (EI); Social and Emotional Learning (SEL); Functional Behaviour Analysis (FBA); Independent Scheduling; Reinforcement (R+); Prompting (PP) and Visual Supports (VS). Data collection is a key component of every program to enable an individualized approach. All staff commit to ongoing specialised training to ensure they remain informed of current research and evidenced based practice.

Specialised Learning Programs for Students with ASD - Locations

The SLP has been established in 18 mainstream public schools between 2017 and 2023.

Primary

Alkimos Primary School (2019)
Cooinda Primary School (2018)
Cooloongup Primary School (2019)
Gosnells primary School (2017)
Heathridge Primary School (2018)
Marangaroo Primary School (2018)
North Mandurah Primary School (2019)
Samson Primary School (2018)
Hampton Park Primary School (2023)

Secondary

Alkimos College (2020)
Ashdale College (2019)
Baldivis College (2020)
Coodanup College (2020)
Eaton Community College (2019)
Fremantle College (2019)
Ocean Reef Senior High School (2019)
Southern River College (2019)
Hampton Senior High School (2023)

This content has been prepared by the School of Special Educational Needs: Disability (SSEND). For further information and support, see SSEND's One Classroom website at oneclassroom.wa.edu.au