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Competency Framework For Education Assistants (Special Needs)

***Practice and Professional
Learning
2008***

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1. INTRODUCTION

The Competency Framework for Education Assistants (Special Needs) (EASN), is part of the Department's continuing promotion of best practice to maximise outcomes for students with disabilities. The Department recognises that education assistants are highly dedicated and make a significant contribution to improving outcomes for students with disabilities.

The Framework articulates professional practice for EASN who work in Western Australian public schools and outlines the varying roles and responsibilities they may undertake when applying their professional knowledge, skills and understandings to their specific working context.

The Framework establishes agreed dimensions of effective professional practice and offers a common reference point for professional learning and performance management. Professional learning is seen as a key means of ensuring that education assistants have the skills, knowledge and understandings necessary to support high quality education.

The Framework was developed in consultation with EASN and a representative group of educators and policy makers. It provides a valuable tool for increasing confidence in public education by emphasising the need for EASN to be life-long learners who engage in ongoing professional learning during the course of their careers.

JOHN BRIGG

A/ DIRECTOR, INCLUSIVE EDUCATION STANDARDS DIRECTORATE

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2. KEY FEATURES OF THE FRAMEWORK

The Framework allows education assistants (special needs) to:

- reflect on their professional effectiveness;
- determine and prioritise areas for professional growth;
- identify professional learning opportunities; and
- engage in personal and career development planning.

The Competency Framework for Education Assistants (Special Needs) is a resource for informing staff, administrators, agencies and tertiary institutions of the range of skills, knowledge and understanding for education assistants (special needs). Potential uses include:

- a reference for performance management processes in schools;
- a guide for the learning support team in assessing the teaching and learning adjustments to support students;
- a resource for District Office Committees in assessing applications for Level increase;
- a resource for the development of training programs for education assistants; and
- a resource to enhance communication between stakeholders.

Central Office, district education offices, school and program administrators and teachers have roles and responsibilities with respect to education assistants (special needs). Roles and responsibilities become more individualised and specific as they move from the centre out to classrooms and programs.

Each eligibility group has some common needs and some unique intervention strategies that will require specific training of all participants in the instructional team including the education assistant (special needs).

Feature 1

The framework describes professional practice for EASN who support students with disabilities in the full range of education settings.

Feature 2

The competencies describe standards for the six dimensions of performance. Effective support of students by instructional teams including EASN requires successful integration of these dimensions through self-assessment, reflection and training.

Feature 3

The described competencies are not intended to be restrictive; they are intended to support reflection and on-going learning.

Feature 4

EASN undertake roles and responsibilities in accordance with their classification level which includes contributing as an effective and collaborative team member along with parents, teachers, therapists, parents/carers, colleagues and other members of the school community.

Feature 5

EASN strive to support improved outcomes for students by valuing and supporting inclusive education, student dignity and independence. Through on-going learning education assistants (special needs) gain the skills, knowledge and understandings to support quality education outcomes.

Feature 6

There are essential attributes and skills that all EASN should have to be effective.

Feature 7

The actions of effective education assistants (special needs) and all employees/school staff are guided by Department values. These values are:

- learning - a positive approach to learning is taken for ourselves and others;
- excellence - reflecting high expectations for students and ourselves;
- equity - when the different circumstances and needs of others are recognized; and
- care - fostering a relationship based on trust, mutual respect and acceptance of responsibility.

The Department also promotes ethical practices and appropriate standards of conduct and behaviour through its 2004 Staff Conduct Policy.

3. LEVELS OF SUPERVISION AND GUIDANCE

All staff have a duty of care for all students, as outlined in the Department's *Duty of Care for Students Policy 2003*.

DUTY OF CARE FOR STUDENTS POLICY

1. POLICY

- 1.1 *Teaching staff owe a duty to take reasonable care for the safety and welfare of students whilst students are involved in school activities or are present for the purposes of a school activity. The duty is to take such measures as are reasonable in all the circumstances to protect students from risks of harm that reasonably ought to be foreseen. This requires not only protection from known hazards, but also protection from harm that could foreseeably arise and against which preventative measures can be taken.*
- 1.2 *In discharging their duty of care responsibilities, teaching staff must exercise their professional judgement to achieve a balance between ensuring that students do not face an unreasonable risk of harm and encouraging students' independence and maximising learning opportunities.*
- 1.3 *When non-teaching staff, volunteers and external providers agree to perform tasks that require them to personally care for students (in the absence of a member of the teaching staff), they will also owe a duty to take such measures as are reasonable in all the circumstances to protect students from risks of harm that reasonably ought to be foreseen' (page 2).*

In the first instance, duty of care rests with the teacher. Duty of care relates to student health and well-being; duty of care also applies to students' educational outcomes. While a teacher may delegate duty of care to other staff in relation to student health and well-being, responsibility for educational programs and student outcomes rests with the designated class or program teacher.

The *Duty of Care for Students* policy must be considered when determining what is meant by 'under teacher direction, under general guidance and under limited guidance' in the Job Description Form (JDF) for Levels 1, 2 and 3 education assistants (special needs). This policy and related risk management factors should be considered when determining the allocation of roles and responsibilities to an education assistant (special needs).

Supervision and guidance

When the class teacher is determining the amount of supervision and guidance required by different levels of education assistants (special needs), it is important to remember that Levels 1, 2 and 3 each encompass three increments or steps. Level 2.1 education assistants are likely to

require more supervision and guidance during their first year of work, than those at Level 2.3 in their third year of employment. However, if the Level 2.3 education assistant has just moved schools or started working with a new student and/or teacher/program, the induction process should ensure that the education assistant has the necessary knowledge and understandings to fulfil allocated roles and responsibilities.

‘Under limited guidance’ may be interpreted in different ways by different people. For example, when a child is learning to ride a bike, an adult may run along with the bike, holding it upright until the child begins to pedal; this is a lot of guidance. In time, the bike-rider will need less or limited guidance; for example:

- An older child can ride his bike, but may need an adult’s visual supervision for road-crossing.
- A high school student may need a reminder to put on his helmet before setting off to school.
- An adult may need the shopkeeper to explain the gearing system on a new mountain bike.

In this way, the level of guidance goes from direct, visual supervision, a reminder of a well-known and understood process to a brief explanation of a new process; all three examples require less guidance than that required by the young child learning to ride a bike.

Level 1: What does ‘under teacher direction’ mean?

‘Under teacher direction’ identifies the class or program teacher’s responsibility for assigning roles and responsibilities to the Level 1 education assistant. ‘Under teacher direction’ means that the education assistant will be provided with clear and explicit instructions about what to do and how to do it, and given assistance as needed.

A Level 1 education assistant is required to help students with toileting, showering, etc., as in accordance with the JDF, which means the student and education assistant may not be under the teacher’s visual supervision. Bearing in mind risk management, it is expected that the education assistant has the necessary experience and training and relevant duty of care issues (distance from the classroom, presence of other staff nearby, an emergency buzzer in the change room, etc) are reviewed prior to asking the education assistant to undertake any roles outside the classroom, even if they are listed in the Level 1 JDF.

Level 2: What does ‘under general guidance’ mean?

The Level 2 JDF indicates that guidance may be provided by the class teacher, as well as therapists or other appropriately qualified persons in relation to specialised programs for individual students. ‘General guidance’ means that the teacher/therapist or other appropriately qualified person will provide clear instructions and advice about what the education assistant is expected to do and the desired student outcomes. The Level 2 education assistant must have the necessary experience and training, but should be able to undertake roles and responsibilities without

modelling or exact step-by-step directions from the teacher/therapist or other appropriately qualified person.

A Level 2 education assistant will be required to help students with daily living skills outside the classroom. Bearing in mind risk management, it is expected that the education assistant has the necessary experience and training and relevant duty of care issues are reviewed prior to asking the education assistant to undertake any roles outside the classroom, even if they are listed in the Level 2 JDF.

Level 3: What does ‘under limited guidance’ mean?

The Level 3 JDF indicates that guidance may be provided by the teacher, therapists/ psychologists or other qualified persons in relation to specialised educational and behavioural programs for individual students. ‘Limited guidance’ means that an education assistant will be given clear information and recommendations and the focus will be on desired student outcomes rather than exactly what the assistant is meant to do. The Level 3 education assistant must have the necessary experience and training, but should be able to make small changes to programs and routines without immediate directions from the teacher/therapist, psychologist or appropriately qualified person.

A Level 3 education assistant may be required to support students outside the classroom and off the school site. Bearing in mind the factors outlined on page 12, it is expected that the education assistant has the necessary experience and training and relevant duty of care issues are reviewed prior to asking the education assistant to undertake any roles outside the classroom or off the school site, even if they are listed in the Level 3 JDF.

Levels 2 and 3: What is meant by ‘achieved at a higher competency’ than that reached by Level 1 and Level 2 education assistants (special needs)?

In general, ‘achieved at a higher competency’ means the education assistant:

- has had more formal training, professional learning, hands-on experience and/or work-based learning related to the task or responsibility than Level 1 or Level 2 education assistants; and
- has demonstrated the application of their knowledge, understandings and skills at a level of competency sufficient to serve as a model of best practice for Level 1 or Level 2 education assistants.

4. JOB REQUIREMENTS AND THE SIX STANDARDS OF THE FRAMEWORK FOR PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE

The JDF for each level provides a series of job requirements for education assistants (special needs). The JDFs for Levels 2 and 3 also include job requirements in Schedule A, which reiterate the job requirements from the previous one or two levels.

The Framework groups the job requirements from the JDF for each level under six standards or dimensions: communication and collaborative partnerships, learning, student self-management, supporting students at risk, supporting student behaviour and administrative tasks/managing resources. These six standards are relevant to all levels; however, how those dimensions are applied varies from level to level. The Framework provides information, outlines factors for consideration and provides examples of how roles and responsibilities may be determined at each level.

The JDF lists job requirements for EASN's. At level 1 these are fulfilled **under teacher direction**; at Level 2 **under general guidance**; and Level 3 **under limited guidance**. As such, Level 2 and 3 EASN's will fulfil the job requirements of lower level EASN's at a **higher level of competency**. These job requirements have been grouped under six standards of the Framework for Professional Practice.

SIX STANDARDS OF THE FRAMEWORK

STANDARD 1 COMMUNICATION AND COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIPS

Level 1

- Provide information to parents on the education system and relevant school procedures, e.g. school enrolment procedures.

Level 2

- Under teacher direction, provide feedback to caregiver/parent as to student progress.

Level 3

- Provide information to parents on the education system and relevant school procedures and school policies.

STANDARD 2

LEARNING

Level 1

- Assist teacher in the delivery of planned education programs, including the operation of computers and, under teacher direction, implement individual student or small group programs (Documented Plans) or demonstrations.
- Assist with the preparation and maintenance of the learning environment by maintaining equipment, materials and resources for use in classes, displays and demonstrations, and assist the teacher with clean and safe storage of items after classes and activities.

Level 2

- Under teacher direction, assist in the implementation of specialised education programs such as occupational therapy, speech therapy and physiotherapy programs.
- When required, provide feedback on education and therapy programs and participate in the evaluation process relating to the achievement of goals in special education.

STANDARD 3**STUDENT SELF-MANAGEMENT****Level 1**

- Assist the teacher in the preparation and distribution of food for students and assist students with food preparation, eating and (where necessary) feeding.
- Assist with arrival and departure of students, including vehicular access (entry and exit) and buses.
- Assist the teacher by moving students, and when required, by changing students from one piece of equipment to another.
- Assist students undressing, bathing, showering, toileting, and dressing and where necessary, clean soiled clothing and areas.

Level 2

- Assist the teacher or therapist to understand when there is communication difficulty between them and a student.

Level 3

- Assist with training students in the acquisition of self management, e.g. life skills.

STANDARD 4**SUPPORTING STUDENTS AT RISK****Level 1**

- Assist the teacher with the general care and well being of students, including attending to students with minor illnesses, e.g. colds, or students in need of minor first aid.

Level 2

- Ensure the safe and hygienic storage and handling of foodstuffs and food preparation utensils.

Level 3

- Provide support and advice to schools and teachers on the management program of students at risk under supervision of the class teacher.

STANDARD 5**SUPPORTING STUDENT BEHAVIOUR****Level 1**

- Assist the teacher with the care and supervision of students in out-of-class activities and on school excursions.

Level 3

- Design and implement behaviour management plans (Documented Plans) in consultation with teachers, parents, the school psychologist and relevant professional.
- Provide appropriate physical restraint and removal of students where appropriate.
- Maintain records regarding implementation of behaviour management plans (Documented Plans) in order to assess how educational programs fit in with the overall educational outcomes of the student.

STANDARD 6**ADMINISTRATIVE TASKS/ MANAGING RESOURCES****Level 1**

- Provide administrative support and may in accordance with school policy be required to collect monies from students where appropriate.
- Assist with the management of resources by maintaining and updating inventory lists, monitoring stock levels and requirements, and reporting these to the teacher.

Level 2

- Collect resources and administrative documents.
- Manage classroom resources or storeroom by maintaining and updating inventory lists, monitoring stock levels and requirements, and submit requisitions to the teacher for approval.

5. KEY GENERIC COMPETENCIES

5.1 INCLUSIVE PRACTICE

The unintended risk for students receiving a high degree of support is that they may become overly dependent and isolated from their peers. Isolation of the education assistant (special needs) from colleagues and the school community in general can also become an issue. In many situations the education assistant (special needs) is confronted with challenges that require the on-going social and emotional support of other staff along with access to professional learning.

There are several important strategies that can help ensure inclusive outcomes that foster student socialisation and development towards independence. Teachers and administrators can be supportive of the education assistant (special needs) by providing clear and agreed communication about planning between the teacher, education assistant and parent/carer; and full inclusion of the education assistant in all aspects of school life including a range of planning and review systems:

- access to appropriate, quality professional learning through performance management processes;
- scheduling parts of the school day with other students rather than being focused on a particular special needs student;
- a range of education assistants supporting the student over the duration of their schooling whenever possible;
- regular and direct communication with parents or carers;
- student participation in the full range of curriculum and class activities;
- student peers empowered to work and develop friendships with the special needs student;
- communication systems for the student to enable them to readily express themselves to a range of people across a range of settings;
- student access to structured social interaction in a range of settings; and
- educational experiences for the student that include reasonable risks just as occurs for the typically developing student.

5.2 SUPPORTING EFFECTIVE INSTRUCTION

In supporting student learning to achieve outcomes the EASN should have an understanding of the minimal essential features of effective instruction. These pointers are universal to all interventions for students with special needs regardless of their diagnosis or place of enrolment.

As an important part of the instruction the education assistant (special needs) needs to incorporate the following key features of effective intervention into his/her repertoire:

- support the student to follow the teacher's (or therapist's) instruction
- instruction is explicit and direct;
- break the teaching of skills into small achievable steps;
- frequently reinforce at each of the small steps to shape learning behaviour;
- link the small steps together to build changes in learning or behaviour;
- collect data frequently to determine the effectiveness of the teaching;
- analyse the data to determine if and when errors in learning are occurring;
- link, practise and reinforce Documented Plan targets across all programs;
- focus on positives only – avoid negatives or focusing on what the student is doing 'wrong';
- use the student's strengths as the starting point for changing areas of weakness;
- regularly review the frequency and types of prompts used to avoid student prompt dependency;
- build a positive relationship with the student based on consistency in all aspects (though not predictable monotony); and
- provide structures and consequences in all activities.

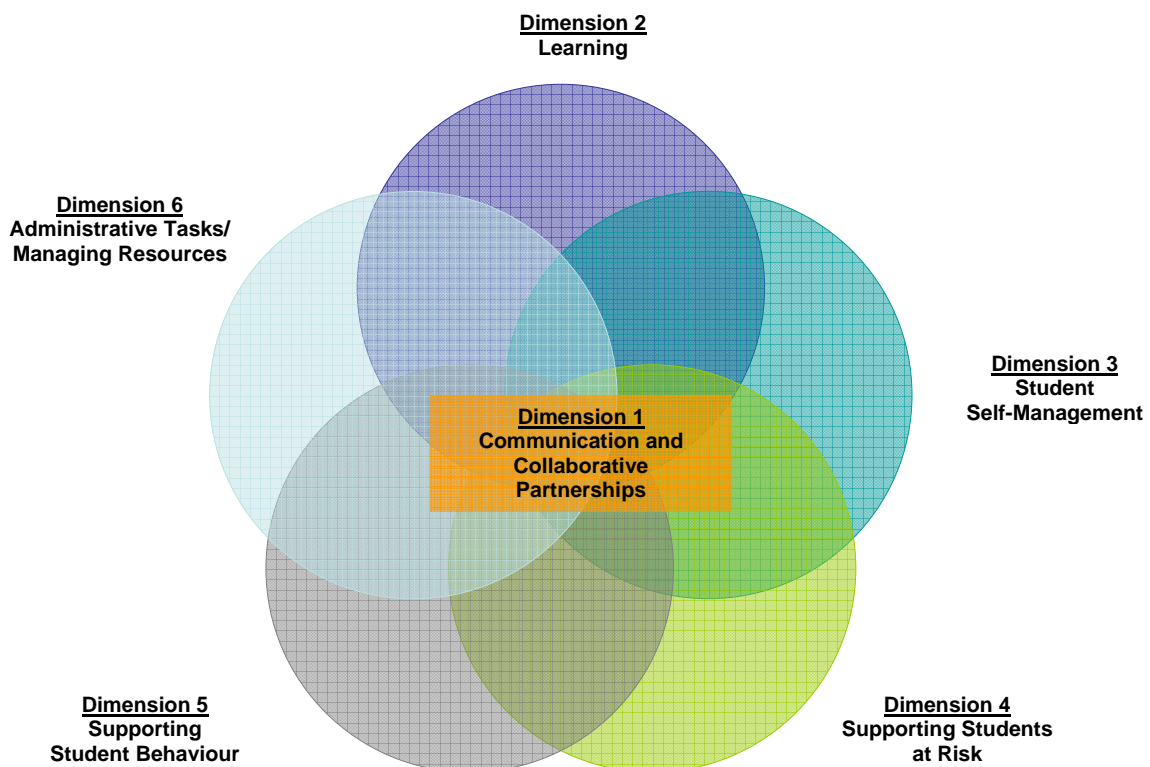
All education assistants (special needs) Level 3 require specific knowledge and a high level of competence in the areas of:

- communication and language acquisition;
- social skill development and training;
- behaviour management; and
- applications of technology to support learning.

6. SIX DIMENSIONS FOR SUPPORTING EDUCATIONAL OUTCOMES

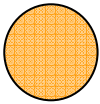
The Framework consists of six dimensions: communication, learning, student self-management, managing students at risk, managing student behaviour and administrative tasks/resource management.

These six dimensions encompass the varying roles and responsibilities fulfilled by education assistants (special needs) and are relevant to Levels 1, 2 and 3. However, the application of these dimensions varies from level to level.



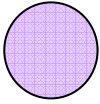
Overview of Six Dimensions for Supporting Educational Outcomes

Communication has a significant impact on areas of professional practice. Communication underpins learning and instruction, affects relations between students, staff, parents and other community members, enables effective behaviour management and change and is a part of many administrative tasks and the management of resources. For this reason, communication is covered first in the Framework.



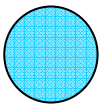
DIMENSION 1: COMMUNICATION AND COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIPS

Communication and collaborative partnerships underpin all learning and instruction, enable effective behaviour management, and are part of many administrative tasks including the management of resources. Improving the language skills of targeted students is frequently a major goal of Documented Plans.



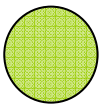
DIMENSION 2: LEARNING

An education assistant (special needs) is a key member of the instructional team in a classroom or program and is a part of the overall learning community of a school. All education assistants (special needs), irrespective of level, should be involved in the cycle of professional practice that includes development, understanding, relevant professional learning, implementation, observation, recording and feedback as part of the school's planning and programs.



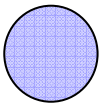
DIMENSION 3: STUDENT SELF-MANAGEMENT

The ultimate goal of education is to prepare students to be independent and productive adults. However, student self-management goals should not be confined to an expectation that each student will be able to do each task in its entirety or independently. Not all students will achieve full independence; some will need support in adulthood.



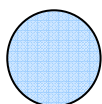
DIMENSION 4: SUPPORTING STUDENTS AT RISK

Students are not at risk because of their ability. Ability may impact on potential; risk factors that hinder potential are the same for all students, irrespective of ability. Risk may arise from health and family issues, absenteeism, inappropriate educational programs and communication difficulties. Risks may be temporary (e.g. surgery) or longer term (e.g. non-English speaking background).



DIMENSION 5: SUPPORTING STUDENT BEHAVIOUR

Behaviour management planning is a part of wider school planning to maximise students' academic, social and behaviour outcomes. Supporting student behaviour is about developing positive relationships and appropriate programs to enhance students' resiliency, skills and attitudes that lead to positive behaviours and to maximise student outcomes. Safety of staff and other students must be planned for and supported when challenging behaviours occur.



DIMENSION 6: ADMINISTRATIVE TASKS/MANAGING RESOURCES

At times, an education assistant (special needs) will support the whole class, allowing the teacher time to work directly with the student/s requiring teaching and learning adjustments. An education assistant (special needs) may need to undertake a variety of administrative tasks, resource management and resource development to support curriculum delivery.

7.1 FRAMEWORKS FOR PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE: COMMUNICATION

Level	Roles and responsibilities	Examples
1	<p>Under teacher direction, the education assistant is expected to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Follow school, class/program and individual communication policies/plans (Documented Plans) and raise any concerns with the teacher; • Identify own need for professional learning and ask for help; • Follow written or oral instructions when working 1:1 or with small groups; • Prepare and maintain materials to support students' communication; • Give routine information in communication books or to parents, as asked by the teacher. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Model the sign 'help' and help the student to imitate the sign; • Write a reminder about the next day's outing in each student's communication book, when asked by the teacher; • Wait, without prompting, until a student hands over the correct exchange card, as required by the picture communication system. • Refer a parent to the teacher when asked about the child's progress; • Check the batteries in electronic communication devices each afternoon and recharge the batteries when needed. • Direct student's attention to pictorial schedule.
2	<p>Under general guidance, the education assistant is expected to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Follow and give feedback on school, class/program and individual communication policies/plans (Documented Plans); • Identify own need for and possible professional learning opportunities; • Work 1:1 with students' on their individualised communication programs (Documented Plans); • Create new materials to support students' communication programs; • Give routine information in communication books or to parents, as asked by the teacher. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discontinue an individual signing session after the student has made three consecutive errors, as per the student's communication plan; • Thank a parent on behalf of the teacher and students for a birthday cake, after taking the student to the parent's car, at the teacher's request; • Alert the speech pathologist that a student has difficulty finding certain symbols on his 'Go Talker' and suggest using colour cues to help; • Take the initiative to attend three ½ hour sessions to learn how to use symbol support systems.
3	<p>Under limited guidance, the education assistant is expected to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contribute to the development of, implement and give feedback on school, class/program and individual communication policies/plans (Documented Plans); • Identify own and others' need for and access professional learning; • Use communication plans to teach individual/group communication skills; • Identify the need for new/different materials to support student communication programs; • Explain current communication plans to relief staff in the classroom; • Communicate with parents/carers, staff, students as per policies/plans. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Run a toy sharing lesson using picture communication with 22 students, recording their requests; • Remind a therapist that the class has an outing tomorrow and will miss a hydrotherapy session; • Contribute information and feedback at planning and case review meetings; • Fill in a 'record of communication' form after a conversation with a parent who seemed concerned about the student's progress, and give the record to the teacher as soon as possible; • Give positive feedback to a parent about a student's behaviour, at the teacher's request.

7.2 FRAMEWORKS FOR PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE: LEARNING

Level	Roles and responsibilities	Examples
1	<p>Under teacher direction, the education assistant is expected to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Follow class, small group and individual educational programs (Documented Plans) and raise any concerns with the teacher; • Identify own need for professional learning and ask for help; • Follow instructions when working 1:1 or with students on the computer; • Organise teaching and learning materials as requested; • Help students learn class routines and learning behaviours. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Follow the same routine and use the same cues every morning to help students learn how to unpack their bags and put away their belongings; • Read articles about curriculum initiatives in School Matters; • Set out paint, clean brushes, paper, paint smocks and other needed materials before class; • Run 'how to use the mouse' programs with young students on a 1:1 basis; • Work with a student using a hand brace and modified pencil during printing sessions.
2	<p>Under general guidance, the education assistant is expected to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Follow and give feedback on class and small group programs and students' Documented Plans; • Identify own need for and possible professional learning opportunities; • Help with and provide feedback on speech, occupational therapy and physiotherapy programs; • Implement programs using computer/digital technologies; • Help to maintain a positive, well-organised learning environment; • Help students learn school routines, e.g. assemblies, library, canteen. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attend a workshop on dysphagia after the enrolment of a new student; • Alert the teacher, physio and school nurse when a student's AFOs leave red marks on his legs; • Work 1:1 to teach students to use a digital camera to record their artworks; • Regularly praise the students being worked with and report positive achievements to the teacher; • Accompany two students to sessions with the teacher librarian. • Read the Documented Plans Framework 2007.
3	<p>Under limited guidance, the education assistant is expected to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contribute to the development and implementation of class and small group programs and students' Documented Plans and give feedback; • Identify own and others' need for and access professional learning; • Help with and provide feedback on speech, occupational therapy and physiotherapy programs; • Implement programs using computer and digital technologies; • Contribute to the creation of a positive, inclusive learning environment; • Support students' participation in planned transition programs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accompany a student to day-long Structured Work-based Learning placements, after accepting duty of care; • Take a small group of students around SciTech during a class excursion, following the learning plan set by the teacher; • Carry out explicit teaching sessions with individual students, while recording each response; • Work 1:1 with a student using single-switch cause and effect software; • Suggest a layout for a class mural based on the term's theme of frogs; • Support students during Year 7 transition visits to local high schools.

7.3 FRAMEWORKS FOR PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE: STUDENT SELF-MANAGEMENT

Level	Roles and responsibilities	Examples
1	<p>Under teacher direction, the education assistant is expected to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Follow students' health care, activity of daily living, self-care, communication and transition plans and raise any concerns with the teacher; • Identify own need for professional learning and ask for help; • Follow instructions when helping students with self-management skills; • Assist students during arrivals, departures and transitions at school; • Use highly structured work skills activities with students in class; • Accompany teacher and students during life skills/transition programs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feed students, following their mealtime management plans, support students in activity of daily living e.g. PEG feeding after required training; • Work 1:1 with students on basic tasks in the school workshop; • Meet students at the bus and take them to class; • Help students find their shopping items each week during class outings; • Wait to see if a student washes his hands, before reminding him; • Alert the teacher and school nurse when a student feels feverish; • Provide duty of care in situation where they may be the most immediate adult e.g. administer epipen; • Attend a school-based session on hoist use after school.
2	<p>Under general guidance, the education assistant is expected to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Follow and give feedback on students' health care, self-care, communication and transition plans; • Identify own need for and possible professional learning opportunities; • Follow self-management teaching plans to work 1:1 or with small groups; • Facilitate student independence when moving around the school. • Use highly structured work skills activities with students on-site; • Follow and give feedback about on-site life skills and transition programs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Go with one or two students to the office to photocopy the newsletter, as a part of their work skills program; • Ask to attend a protective behaviours workshop with the class teacher; • Provide the teacher with information about a student's participation in a music session with the regular Year 3 class next door; • Work 1:1 with students with autism using the TEACCH© program, by following visual work schedules and coded work tasks; • Assist a student learning to use a spoon, according to the occupational therapy plan.
3	<p>Under limited guidance, the education assistant is expected to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contribute to the development of, implement and give feedback on students' individual health care, activity of daily living self-care and transition plans (Documented Plans); • Identify own and others' need for and access professional learning; • Help students develop greater independence in self-management through direct teaching of skills; • Support and help others to understand students' communication; • Support students at Structured Work-based Learning placements; • Support students in life skills and transition programs on and off site. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify changes that will help a student achieve partial independence; • Show new/relief staff how to use an alternative communication device; • Model standing back and allowing a student to work as independently as possible, while speaking to a student in an age-appropriate manner; • Take an active role in workshops and other professional learning; • Work with a small group of students using money skills activities; • Position a student in a standing frame, after appropriate training; • Provide transport training to and from work, after accepting duty of care.

7.4 FRAMEWORKS FOR PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE: SUPPORTING STUDENTS AT RISK

Level	Roles and responsibilities	Examples
1	<p>Under teacher direction, the education assistant is expected to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Follow individual and school risk management and education plans (Documented Plans) and raise any concerns with the teacher; • Identify own need for professional learning and ask for help; • Attend to students' minor health needs after required training; • Maintain the classroom/learning environment to minimise risks. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Follow instructions to use a standing frame with a student, after training • Read the Department's HIV/AIDS and Hepatitis Policy and use best practice with regard to hygiene procedures; • Record the reading after a student tests his/her blood sugar levels; • Check that each student has a signed permission slip for an outing; • Undertaking training in Anaphalaxis management; • Provide 1:1 practice sessions to help a student become numerate.
2	<p>Under general guidance, the education assistant is expected to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Follow and give feedback on individual and school risk management and education plans (Documented Plans); • Identify own need for and possible professional learning opportunities; • Provide day-to-day information on risk issues to relief staff, when asked; • Attend to students' minor health needs, after required training; • Identify risks and implement strategies to maintain a safe classroom/learning environment and minimise risks. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undertake basic First Aid training; • Supervise a student's use of his asthma puffer, after training; • Record soiled and wet nappies/day and alert the teacher when there is an apparent change in the student's habits; • Each morning check students' reading records to see if they have completed their homework and alert the teacher to any problems; • Explain and model the process to a relief education assistants while using a hoist to change a student for swimming.
3	<p>Under limited guidance, the education assistant is expected to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contribute to the development of, implement and give feedback on individual and school risk management and education plans (Documented Plans); • Identify own and others' need for and access professional learning; • Provide information about individual and school-based risk management plans (Documented Plans) to relief staff in the classroom, when asked; • Attend to students' health needs, after training and model best practice for others, up to but not including interventions that require training; • Identify potential risks and possible solutions to minimise risks and maximise student outcomes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suggest changes to activities/the classroom to enable or improve a student access to the curriculum and participation in activities; • Model using an FM transmitter with students with hearing-impairments; • Take an active role in and contribute to professional learning activities; • Give stoma or tube feeds, after appropriate training; • Be trained to administer rectal Valium or an Epipen; • Identify signs of distress and suggest ways in which student's discomfort could be reduced; • Monitor student during a seizure and record the duration and other relevant information.

7.5 FRAMEWORKS FOR PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE: SUPPORTING STUDENT BEHAVIOUR		
Level	Roles and responsibilities	Examples
1	<p>Under teacher direction, the education assistant is expected to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Follow school BMIS policy and IBMP plans and raise any concerns with the teacher; Identify own need for professional learning and ask for help; Supervise students with the teacher at school and on excursions. Assist the teacher to restrain a student when needed, after training. Use positive reinforcement and messages to facilitate improved student behaviour. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Alert the teacher when a student seems disinterested in a toy previously thought to be a positive reinforcer; Give a student a thumbs up sign each time he finishes a maths problem, while working 1:1; Walk with two students identified as needing extra supervision during a trip to a local park; Do up a student's lap belt on a potty chair, as per the signed-off Documented Plan;
2	<p>Under general guidance, the education assistant is expected to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Follow and give feedback on school BMIS and IBMP policies/plans; Identify own need for and possible professional learning opportunities; Use restraint with a student according to Documented Plan, after training; Provide day-to-day information about IBMPs to relief staff, when asked; Use different rates of positive reinforcement for different tasks with different students, reflecting the individual needs of students. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Restrain a student about to attack another student as per the student's signed-off IBMP, when asked by teacher and after appropriate training; Make up a series of 'star charts' to use with small groups for on-task behaviour; Show a relief teacher how the class token economy works; Record data related to off-task behaviour, prior to review of student's Documented Plan.
3	<p>Under limited guidance, the education assistant is expected to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contribute to the development of, implement and give feedback on school BMIS policy and BMP plans; Identify own and others' need for and access professional learning; Model best practice for others, up to but not including restraint procedures that must be taught by trained professionals; Provide information about BMIS and BM policies/plans to relief staff in the classroom, when asked to do so by the teacher. Use planned ignoring, redirection and distraction with positive reinforcement strategies to strengthen positive student behaviour. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify effective positive reinforcers and suggest changes to avoid behavioural triggers, e.g. use a bell, not a siren when recess is over; Model to a new education assistant in the class the use of proximal reinforcement and gestural/visual cues to keep students on task; Complete a checklist to identify the function of a student's negative behaviours, e.g. task avoidance, attention-seeking, communication; Recognise a student's signs of anxiety and take the student for a walk to 'cool down', as per the IBMP; Apply PART© training when required, as per the student's signed-off IBMP and after appropriate training.

7.6 FRAMEWORKS FOR PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE: ADMINISTRATIVE TASKS/MANAGING RESOURCES		
Level	Roles and responsibilities	Examples
1	<p>Under teacher direction, the education assistant is expected to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Follow school and class resource management plans and raise any concerns with the teacher; Identify own need for professional learning and ask for help; Maintain resources in the classroom or associated with the program; Make new resources following explicit instructions; Obtain and record required information for inventories and resource management. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Record the make, model and serial number of the new class microwave; Ask a colleague to demonstrate downloading photos from a digital camera; Make a chart of the months of the year; Soak stiff brushes, throw out unused scraps of paper and tidy the art shelves at the end of each term; Check off students' supplies at the start of the year, to monitor which students brought all the required items, and those who did not.
2	<p>Under general guidance, the education assistant is expected to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Follow and give feedback on school and class resource management plans; Identify own need for and possible professional learning opportunities; Make and maintain resources in the classroom or associated with the program; Make new resources to meet a stated purpose; Obtain and record required information for inventories, resource management and excursions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collect and check the train timetables for an excursion to the Perth Mint; Design and make a chart to record student heights and weights at the start and end of each term; Attend a course on how to use PowerPoint to make talking books; Run off, laminate and attach Velcro to new symbols (from symbol support system) as required for students' communication files; Regularly check on cooking supplies and let the teacher know when they are running low; Create a list of all the switch-adapted toys in the classroom.
3	<p>Under limited guidance, the education assistant is expected to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contribute to the development of, implement and give feedback on school and class resource management plans; Identify own and others' need for and access professional learning; Design, create, modify and update resources as required; Identify new resources to make or buy to meet a particular need; Obtain and record required information for inventories, resource management, excursions and purchasing. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Manage the resources for a specific program, e.g. keep an inventory, identify needed replacements and suggest new purchases for music; Run a session on use of a digital camera for interested staff; Be an elected member of the school's Finance Committee; Find age-appropriate materials at the correct ability level for students; Update VET materials to meet TAFE requirements; Obtain a statement of insurance coverage and evacuation plan prior to an excursion to a store.

**RISK MANAGEMENT FACTORS FOR SCHOOL PERSONNEL TO CONSIDER
PRIOR TO ALLOCATING TASKS AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

Do the conditions fulfil the duty of the school to take such measures as are reasonable in all the circumstances to protect students from risks of harm that reasonably ought to be foreseen?

Factors	Examples
Who? Does everyone agree?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who are the students: are they very young or post-compulsory, are they fairly independent or do they have high support needs? Are there behavioural issues? • Does the administration feel the teacher has the required knowledge and experience to allocate the task or responsibility to the education assistant (e.g. graduate versus Level 3 teacher)? • Does the teacher believe the education assistant has the required skills, knowledge and attitude? • Does the education assistant feel he/she has the required skills, training and confidence?
How many?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One student or a small group of students? The impact of increasing numbers of students increases with the distance from the class. • How many other staff and/or volunteers will be with the education assistant and students?
Where?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will the education assistant and student(s) be on-site, (such as accompanying the student to the canteen)? Or is the task off-site, (such as walking with the student to the corner shop to buy eggs for cooking)? • The risks increase with the distance from the class.
When? How often? How long?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is it the start of the year, when staff and students are just getting to know each other? • Is the task familiar or unfamiliar, repeated several times daily (e.g. using the toilet), once a day (e.g. going to the lunch shed) or once a week (e.g. going to the local shop)? • Will the task last for 20 minutes (working 1:1 with a student) or a whole day (accompanying a student to work experience)?
Why?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is it in the student's best interest? Is an education assistant with little or no experience with assistive technology the best person to provide individualised teaching sessions? Would it be better for the more knowledgeable (at this point in time) teacher to work with the student while the education assistant supervises the rest of the class during handwriting?
What support is available?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If a problem arises, will the education assistant be able to get help? Consider the differences between a trip to a local shopping centre with security guards and first aid support versus a walk in the bush to collect leaves and gumnuts for an art project.
Do parents know and have they given permission when required?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents should be told when an education assistant regularly takes on individual or small group teaching tasks with their students; this is best discussed as a part of Documented Plans planning. The role of the education assistant should be identified in the Documented Plan. • Parent permission must be given before an education assistant is identified as having an integral role in behaviour management duties, as stated in the students' Documented Plan (e.g. supervision in 'time-out'). • Parent permission must be given before an education assistant will be responsible for students off-site (e.g. work experience, community access, transport training).
Is it appropriate?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will the student be off-site for a lengthy period of time and possibly need to use a toilet? Male education assistants should not toilet female students. • Does the student need help or specialised equipment that won't be available?

9. PROFESSIONAL LEARNING EXAMPLES

9.1 STUDENT COMMUNICATION

Education assistants (special needs) have knowledge of the *Education Support Package* which is a useful source for planning communication priorities and for selecting appropriate intervention strategies which may include:

- Applied Behaviour Analysis principles and aligned instructional strategies, including direct instruction/explicit teaching, task analysis, shaping and changing behaviour using reinforcement, task scheduling, skill maintenance and generalisation, mastery learning, data collection and analysis;
- individual speech therapy programs, e.g. articulation (e.g. Nuffield Program), use of social language, signing systems, Australian sign language (Auslan);
- adaptive and alternative communication programs, e.g. picture communication systems, social stories, visual symbol support systems, Remnants Conversation Books;
- communication technology, e.g. voice output communication devices (VOCAs), Soundfield System, notetakers; and
- assistive technology, e.g. audiological aides, Braille keyboards, Row-Column Scanner, software (grid software, word prediction software).

9.2 LEARNING

The *Education Support Package* is a useful reference in the development of Documented Plans and should be referred to for informing planning, identifying pointers of skill development and for selecting appropriate intervention strategies which may include:

- Applied Behaviour Analysis principles and aligned instructional strategies including, direct instruction/explicit teaching, task analysis, reinforcement, task scheduling, skill generalisation, mastery learning and data collection and analysis;
- study and work skills e.g. library use, TEACCH® program for structured work routines, Vocational Education and Training (VET), structured workplace learning and individual occupational therapy programs, Certificate IV Assessment and Work Place Training;
- small student group support and instruction;
- selection and use of a variety of information technology e.g. internet and software; and
- use of a variety of assistive technology including accessing computer assisted learning.

9.3 SELF MANAGEMENT

The *Education Support Package* is a useful reference in the development of Documented Plans and should be referred to for informing planning, identifying pointers of skill development and for selecting appropriate intervention strategies which may include:

- Applied Behaviour Analysis principles and aligned instructional strategies including, direct instruction/explicit teaching, task analysis, reinforcement, task scheduling, skill generalisation, mastery learning and data collection and analysis;
- school, class and individual health/care/activity of daily living and transition policies/plans/ Documented Plans;
- individual occupational and physiotherapy programs integrated with other programs (especially communication);
- self care programs, e.g. dysphagia, toilet training programs, meal time management including PEG feeding;
- supporting students in activities of daily living e.g. PEG feeding or catheterisation;
- safety programs, e.g. Working Safe;
- independent living programs, e.g. community access, recreation, social/emotional well-being programs, sexuality education, social skills, protective behaviours;
- task differentiation strategies, e.g. worksheet adjustments, modified sports; and
- mobility equipment e.g. manual handling plans, stair climbers.

9.4 SUPPORTING STUDENTS AT RISK

- School, class and individual health and emergency care policies and plans
- Individual mealtime management, occupational and physiotherapy programs, e.g. strategies to avoid choking, positioning in wheelchair to maintain spinal health, use of hand splints to avoid skeletal deformities, hydrotherapy to maintain student health
- Courses related to safety, e.g. manual handling, Manutension for back care, universal hygiene precautions, use of Oxyviva
- Basic First Aid and use of health monitoring equipment, e.g. glucose testing equipment.

9.5 SUPPORTING STUDENT BEHAVIOUR

- Applied Behaviour Analysis principles and aligned instructional strategies including, direct instruction/explicit teaching, task analysis, reinforcement, task scheduling, skill generalisation, mastery learning and data collection and analysis;
- School, class and individual behaviour management plans (Documented Plans), risk and emergency management policies and plans;

- Reinforcement strategies, e.g. selection and maintenance of reinforcers, token economies, social stories, cognitive picture rehearsal; choice-making;
- Department of Education and Training policy and guidelines related to use of restraint;
- Department of Education and Training *Behaviour Management in Schools Policy*; and
- Related practices.
- uses knowledge of the student/s learning style to select resources to maximise student involvement; and
- uses computers and related technology to create or modify resources.

9.6 ADMINISTRATIVE TASKS/MANAGING RESOURCES

- School and class resource management plans;
- Asset register and inventory requirements;
- Computer hardware and software e.g. standard equipment as well as modified keyboards, touch screens, specialised software, Power Point (or other), switching programs
- Assistive technology, e.g. page magnifiers, page turners;
- Symbol support systems, e.g. Writing with Symbols;
- Office task including photocopying and use of fax;
- Digital technology, e.g. video digital cameras, CD burner; data projector, interactive white board;
- Use of different means of reporting, e.g. construction of portfolios, use of video and photographic evidence for student portfolios; and
- Resource development using a range of technology e.g. making tactile books, compiling Remnant Conversation Books.

10. PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT, DISPOSITION AND ATTITUDE

While it is difficult to quantify professional conduct, disposition and attitude there are agreed upon behaviours and values that are essential for all Department staff.

10.1 CONDUCT

- The Department document *Staff Conduct: Standards of Conduct and Integrity (2004)* outlines the behaviour expected of all staff. Staff practises some sections of the standards on a daily basis. They are part of department policies and manuals. Other sections relate to staff values and guiding principles. The standards' effectiveness depends on the commitment of each staff member to apply its principles. The standards are not a set of rules; they provide guidance and direction in sourcing further information on dealing with ethical issues. It is important for all staff to understand these standards, apply them and make them work. (Department of Education and Training Western Australia, 2004d).
- The standards are available from: <http://policies.det.wa.edu.au>
- Code of Conduct for EASN's as follows:

CODE OF CONDUCT	
Guiding principles	What they mean
1. Act with fairness and equity.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that the same opportunities apply to all and rules are applied without discrimination.
2. Act with integrity and honesty.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make consistent and just decisions using transparent processes.
3. Be just and demonstrate leadership.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lead by example. Help others reach their potential and consider the possible impact of decisions on clients, colleagues and the wider community.
4. Manage resources efficiently and effectively.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use the Department's resources responsibly and wisely.
5. Obey lawful orders and be accountable.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support lawful decisions without bias and take responsibility for actions and quality of work.
6. Treat others with respect and courtesy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Behave in a professional manner in all respects. Be courteous, considerate and culturally sensitive in dealings with staff, clients and stakeholders.

10.2 DISPOSITION AND ATTITUDE

A disposition may be defined as 'the particular type of character which a person naturally has', while an attitude may be defined as 'a feeling or opinion about something or someone, or a way of behaving that is caused by this' (Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary, 2005). While difficult to quantify, dispositions and attitudes are evident in an individual's behaviours. There are agreed upon dispositions and attitudes that are essential for all Department staff, especially those working with students who require teaching and learning adjustments.

Dispositions and Attitudes	What they mean
1. Values diverse beliefs, values, traditions, cultures and abilities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Verbal and nonverbal communication and all interactions are respectful of individual differences and diversity.
2. Believes all students can learn.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive reinforcement and constructive feedback used to support student learning. • Students of all ability levels willingly supported, after appropriate professional learning.
3. Understands that teaching and learning adjustments are needed to meet the needs of diverse students.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flexible and open to change. • Committed to on-going professional learning. • Creative in the use of resources and strategies.
4. Values student independence and the 'dignity of risk'.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Varying prompt levels and cues used to support student learning without doing the whole task for the student. • Student's age, not developmental level, reflected in adult's speech and interactions.
5. Supports the development of positive self-esteem and confidence in all students.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sarcasm is not used. • What the student should do (e.g. get dressed quickly) is said, rather than what the student shouldn't do (e.g. don't fool around in the change room).
6. Recognises the role of collaboration and flexibility in planning.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to work effectively with different staff, teaching styles and learning activities. • Information and ideas provided during class team meetings and wider school meetings.
7. Respects confidentiality.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paperwork with student details kept in a secure place. • Informal discussions about students and their families avoided in the staffroom and outside the school.

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12. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Competency Framework for Education Assistants (Special Needs) Practice and professional Learning 2007 is based on the work of two representatives working parties in 2005 managed by Judy Gardner Principal Kensington Secondary School and Jeff Innes Principal Kim Beazley School as part of their work with the Inclusive Education Standards Directorate in 2005.

The working party members were:

- Lyn Beard (Principal, Rockingham Lakes Primary School; WAPPA representative)
- Shelley Blakers (Consultant Principal, Speech & Language)
- John Brigg (Manager, Inclusive Education)
- John Charlton (Principal Sir David Brand School; WAESPAA representative)
- KarenLee Clark (Senior Consultant, Schools Plus, Inclusive Education)
- Dianne Dumont (Education Assistant, Caversham Primary School)
- Lisa Gannon (Teacher, North West Metropolitan Language Development Centre)
- Jan Gilbert (Team Leader, Centre for Inclusive Schooling)
- Pauline Harte (Visiting Teacher, Centre for Inclusive Schooling)
- Tina Howorth (Teacher, Endeavour Primary School)
- Elizabeth McAdam (Labour Relations Officer, Industrial Relations)
- John Masters (WASSEA)
- Dale Powell (Education Assistant, Hillcrest Autism Unit)
- Eleanor Wilkins (Education Assistant, Cannington Community Education Support Centre)
- Steve Wells (Student Services Area Manager)

APPENDIX I CONFIDENTIALITY - SAMPLE POLICY

SOMEWHERE PRIMARY SCHOOL

CONFIDENTIALITY DECLARATION – EMPLOYEES AND SCHOOL VOLUNTEERS/VISITORS



As an employee or helper in our school we greatly appreciate and value the assistance that you provide.

When undertaking the various roles or jobs at the school, we ask you to be aware of the following policy regarding confidentiality.

- All children's classroom work, records, minutes of meetings and any discussion, information received from other parties, results, content of notes or letters from parents/carers and behaviour are highly confidential. This information must not be discussed or referred to with any other person except when speaking with the teacher or colleagues about the role or support you might be providing in the classroom.
- Events and serious incidents do occur from time to time in school. The circumstances or these situations and the actions taken by the school are best explained to the parents and the community by the school administration. If you are concerned by what you see or hear in the school we appreciate you discussing this with the staff member you are working with and/or the principal/deputy principal. False or misguided information can seriously affect the school community and it is important that the school handles incidents in a considered and careful manner.
- You may be informed by a student or have access to information about a child's health background or family situation, which is of a sensitive nature. This is privileged information and must not be shared with any other person outside the school. If you feel the information you receive has the potential to place a child at risk you have an obligation to discuss the matter with the teacher/line manager.

Confidentiality is a requirement of all staff under the Code of Conduct of DET

Information is to be relayed to the line manager only. Education assistants must promptly pass all written or verbal information to the class teacher.

Education Assistants should not respond to requests or disclosures without first referring to the class teacher who holds responsibility for all communication.

Thank you,

Principal



SOMEWHERE PRIMARY SCHOOL

CONFIDENTIALITY FORM

I _____ have read the school's policy (above) on classroom helper and visitors' confidentiality and understand the need for confidentiality when working with the children in the school.

Signed: _____

Date: _____

APPENDIX II PLANNING FOR COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIPS SAMPLE SCHOOL POLICY AND GUIDELINES

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Somewhere Primary School commits considerable department, school and federal resources to improve outcomes for students, including those with disabilities or diverse needs.

The school embraces Australia's National Goals for Schooling which include:

- students with disabilities or diverse needs have equitable access to, and opportunities in, schooling so that their learning outcomes improve
- students should attain the skills of literacy and numeracy, such that every student is able to communicate at an appropriate level
- the learning outcomes of educationally disadvantaged students improve and, over time, match those of other students

To assist students who have been identified as having special needs or those at educational risk in literacy, significant resources have been committed by the school in employing additional education assistants across the school. This significantly reduces the adult to student ratio and allows teachers and/or education assistants to work with students in individual or small groups to reinforce critical skills students require.

Allocation is based on student need within each class and considerations are given to a number of factors including the proportion of students identified as being at educational risk and whether the class has other allocations of assistant time such as that provided for students with special needs.

OUR BELIEFS

The education assistant works to support the quality of education for students under the direction of the class teacher, the Learning Support Coordinator and the SAER Coordinator. This should be clearly specified and understood by all teachers and education assistants.

- Education assistants should encourage independence at all times. Not only when working on a one to one basis but also, when working with a small group of students and whole class situations.
- Education assistants can alternate intervening with particular students and being a general resource for the whole class. Assistants who are fully engaged with the aims, content, strategies and intended outcomes for a lesson are likely to be more effective than those who are required only to concentrate on individual students.
- Withdrawal of a student for any physical supervision/routine must be negotiated with the the class teacher
- As a member of the learning team, an education assistant is in a good position to observe student performance and to provide the teacher with valuable feedback on what works for students, what obstacles to learning they encounter, and the effectiveness of classroom processes and organisation.

EFFECTIVE PRACTICE

Effective practice in relation to education assistants involves contributions that:

- foster the participation of students in the social and academic processes of the school;
- seek to enable students to become more independent learners, and
- support the improvement of students learning outcomes.

TEACHER – EDUCATION ASSISTANT PARTNERSHIP

The strategy will be most effective when it is considered to be a team which shares

- same messages
- same strategies
- same goals
- agreed class rules e.g. entry to room, marking work, equipment use.

Good communication is essential for quality outcomes. The education assistant needs to know:

- What will happen in the lesson?
- How can they support this student?
- What differentiation they can offer?
- What expertise they can offer or need to acquire.

The educator assistant needs to know:

- what are the shared goals?
- who does what?
- Managing student behaviour management– methods, roles,
- Teaching methods and roles e.g. Role during class teaching, question time, group work, written tasks, reading
- Information about the group e.g. their character, ability, strengths, individual needs etc.

When a new topic starts the education assistant needs to:

- Look at materials
- Understand teaching methodology
- Understand the goals
- Know what help groups or individuals may need.

Other issues

- Feedback is very important as it plays a crucial part in the communication between the teacher/students and education assistant.
- The teacher needs to bare in mind the education assistant when any meetings or training takes place in school and would it be applicable to them. Would the school/teacher/student and education assistant benefit from this the professional learning.

SHARED APPROACH TO PLANNING

The teacher and education assistant need to :

- identify a time/frequency for planning
- who needs to be involved in the planning

The class teacher brings written planning ideas to the meeting, which will include:

- lesson outcomes
- content of lesson
- pages of books to be used
- resources to be used.

The teacher and education assistant go through plans in order to identify the expectations of them in supporting the learning activity. This includes

- Teaching approaches to be used
- Need for any pre-teaching
- Teaching points of more complex materials
- Need for any in-class support
- Opportunities for small group work.

STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

In the case of students with special needs, the SAER coordinator/Learning Support Coordinator/class teacher/educator assistant and any other people concerned may meet to analyse the best way to adapt materials depending on information received at previous meetings with the class teacher.

The education assistant adapts materials under teacher direction to ensure materials are given to student by the teacher at the same time as other students.

APPENDIX III SECTOR ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES WITH RESPECT TO EDUCATION ASSISTANTS (EAs)					
Sector	Policy	Inclusive Education	Resource Use	Human Resources Labour Relations	Professional Learning
Central Office	Develop a policy framework within which all staff operate.	Develop and implement Building Inclusive Schools and Classrooms (BIS/BIC) to facilitate inclusive education.	Develop and implement processes to support identified students.	Determine required entry-level skills and criteria for promotion for education assistants.	Develop and provide relevant professional learning for education assistants through Statewide Specialist Services.
District Office	Monitor implementation of Department policies through School Review processes.	Support and monitor implementation of BIS/BIC to facilitate inclusive education.	Monitor allocation of resources to support identified students.	Manage redeployment processes.	Develop, provide and monitor participation in professional learning via School Review processes.
School or Program Administrators	Develop and monitor implementation of Department, school and individual policies/plans.	Implement BIS/BIC to facilitate an inclusive culture, inclusive policies and practices.	Ensure education assistant's role is focused on maximising outcomes for all students.	Appointment, induction and performance manage education assistants.	Identify need for, support participation in, and provide relevant professional learning.
Class or Program Teacher	Implement Department, district, school, class and individual policies/plans.	Implement policies and practices to develop an inclusive learning environment.	Ensure education assistant's role supports all students, rather than create 1-1 instructional, social or behavioural relationships, student over-reliance on one adult, loss of confidence or interest in other social relationships, cue dependency or isolation from others.	Participate in induction and performance management processes for educations.	Identify need for, support participation in and provide relevant professional learning.

APPENDIX IV

Performance Management Self Reflection
Competency Framework for Education Assistant (Special Needs) Level 3
Under limited guidance from the teacher and to a high level of competence

i) COMMUNICATION AND COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIPS

Practises ethical and professional standards of conduct, including confidentiality.

Effectively communicates with colleagues, follows instructions, and uses problem solving and other skills that will enable the education assistant (special needs) to work as an effective member of the learning team.

Facilitates the development of student communication skills through knowledge of extensive strategies and techniques that cater for a diverse range of education needs.

Some indicators are:

- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Complies with the requirements of school communication policy <input type="checkbox"/> Implements the school communication policy in acknowledging different roles and responsibilities <input type="checkbox"/> Adjusts communication to reflect deep understanding of how cultural diversity, lifestyles and values impact on student learning <input type="checkbox"/> Advocates appropriately for students across a range of settings | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates active listening skills <input type="checkbox"/> Selects the appropriate communication strategy for parents, teacher, therapist and other team members <input type="checkbox"/> Models appropriate and effective communication styles <input type="checkbox"/> Selects from a range of techniques or strategies for problem solving and negotiation <input type="checkbox"/> Contributes information and provide feedback at Documented Plan and case review meetings <input type="checkbox"/> Uses appropriate educational terminology effectively to inform others <input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates self-evaluation and reflection as it pertains to working as an effective member of the instructional team. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Develops rapport with student/s and their peers <input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates knowledge of language acquisition and communication development <input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates understanding of learning and the range of communication styles of students <input type="checkbox"/> Selects from various assistive technologies in consultation with teacher and therapists <input type="checkbox"/> Uses diverse and highly specific strategies for improving student communication |
|---|---|--|

Performance Management Self Reflection
Competency Framework for Education Assistant (Special Needs) Level 3
Under limited guidance from the teacher and to a high level of competence

ii) LEARNING

Facilitates an inclusive, supportive, stimulating and positive learning environment.

Some indicators are:

- Structures the learning environment to suit student needs using appropriate resources
- Uses developmentally and age appropriate strategies, equipment and technology
- Implements supports with reference to the Documented Plan
- Uses a variety of instructional techniques linked to the Documented Plan
- Enhances student engagement with their peers
- Promotes independence and self-advocacy in students by scaffolding prompts
- Provides appropriate reinforcements using a range of resources

Assists in developing instructional opportunities using appropriate strategies and techniques to improve learning outcomes.

- Understand the principles of outcomes-based education
- Refers to the Education Support Package for information on task analysis and instruction techniques linked to outcomes
- Develops task analysis for informing systematic teaching, monitoring and acquisition of skills
- Modifies curriculum, learn activities and assessment tasks to suit the needs of the student/s
- Provides suitable assistive technology to meet individual student needs
- Supports the student/s to remain on-task and engaged in a range of setting

Implements programs, monitors outcomes and reports on student progress

- Supports small groups to engage with modified curriculum
- Selects from a variety of reporting mechanisms such as student work samples, checklists, photographs and observation records
- Varies the prompts according to a hierarchy and/or student needs
Uses observations and evaluates data to recommend changes to specific student programs

Identifies need for own professional learning and engages in continual improvement.

- Maintains knowledge of current and relevant departmental policies and procedures
- Uses self-reflection, seeks feedback and participates in professional learning
- Demonstrates a commitment to ongoing learning in relation to the specific needs of the student/s by developing a range of skills to support student instruction

Performance Management Self Reflection
Competency Framework for Education Assistant (Special Needs) Level 3
Under limited guidance from the teacher and to a high level of competence

iii) STUDENT SELF MANAGEMENT

Enables the student/s to develop greater Independence in self-management through direct teaching skills

Implements social skills and wellbeing programs for the student/s in a range of settings, inside and outside the school

Supervises and assists students in life skill, transition and structural work place learning.

Some indicators are:

- | | | |
|--|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Refers to and adheres to the student/s health care / activity of daily living plan/s | <input type="checkbox"/> Identifies specific social needs of the student/s for specific environments | <input type="checkbox"/> Makes judgments and maintain records of the level or intensity of support needed for the student/s |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Uses a range of supports to assist student independence | <input type="checkbox"/> Responds to indicators of individual students health and wellbeing issues | <input type="checkbox"/> Analyses student data over time to make recommendations to class teacher |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Uses procedures from manual handling plans to lift and transfer students | <input type="checkbox"/> Implements strategies to assist the student/s to learn age appropriate social skills | <input type="checkbox"/> Liaise and negotiate with key personnel at school and the work place |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Models universal hygiene procedures for preventing cross infection | <input type="checkbox"/> Plans and implements strategies for the student/s to learn protective behaviours | <input type="checkbox"/> Records student progress using various recording techniques |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Plans and implements strategies for the student/s to acquire appropriate self-management skills | <input type="checkbox"/> Provides feedback to teachers or recommends program modifications | <input type="checkbox"/> Problem-solves to support the student in a range of settings |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Assists students to set goals and identify the skills needed to obtain the goal | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Monitors progress and recommends further adaptation to enhance independence | | |

Performance Management Self Reflection
Competency Framework for Education Assistant (Special Needs) Level 3
Under limited guidance from the teacher and to a high level of competence

iv) SUPPORTING STUDENTS AT RISK

Contributes to the identification of students at educational risk and implementation of strategies to enhance learning outcomes for these students

Demonstrates comprehensive knowledge and implementation of complex health/hygiene issues and procedures relating to each student.

Some indicators are:

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Contributes to the development and gives feedback on the implementation of the student/s risk management plan/s (Documented Plan/s) | <input type="checkbox"/> Contributes to the development, implementation and feedback on the student/s risk management plans (Documented Plans) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Provides relevant information regarding individual risk management plans (Documented Plans) to relief staff | <input type="checkbox"/> Provides information about student risk management plans (Documented Plans) to relief staff |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Uses effective and agreed risk management strategies | <input type="checkbox"/> Attends to students health needs (often training others) in accordance with student health policy |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Refers to and responds to risk factors effecting the student/s achievement of outcomes | <input type="checkbox"/> Discusses potential health and hygiene issues and offers possible solutions |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Provides a range of teaching and learning adjustments to engage and progress student learning | <input type="checkbox"/> Models appropriate management of student health issues with dignity |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Plans for smooth transition between activities and environments/settings | <input type="checkbox"/> Uses required lifting and transferring techniques according to manual handling plans |

Performance Management Self Reflection
Competency Framework for Education Assistant (Special Needs) Level 3
Under limited guidance from the teacher and to a high level of competence

v) SUPPORTING STUDENT BEHAVIOUR

Demonstrates knowledge and understanding of the principles of behaviour and relevant intervention strategies for improving the student/s participation

Demonstrates knowledge and understanding of all school and department related policies and the impact on managing student behaviour

Some indicators are:

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Actively seeks information regarding the student/s | <input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates a set of share values by following schools and Department policies for communication, risk management, excursions, and behaviour management |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Collaborates in designing and implementing individual behaviour management plans (Documented Plans) | <input type="checkbox"/> Reinforces the rights of responsibilities of students, staff, parents and community |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Effectively applies the principles of best practice for managing student behaviour | <input type="checkbox"/> Models the desired social skills and behaviours |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Maintains records to provide detailed feedback and reporting relating to behaviour management plans (Documented Plans) | <input type="checkbox"/> Applies crisis intervention strategies in accordance with school planning |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Uses and modifies a range of reinforces to promote positive behaviour implements restraint strategies as required and approved | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Provides direction and information to relief staff regarding individual student behaviours | |

Performance Management Self Reflection
Competency Framework for Education Assistant (Special Needs) Level 3
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vi) ADMINISTRATIVE TASKS/MANAGING RESOURCES

Plans effectively to prepare for the full range of curriculum related activities to support the class teacher.

Designs, creates and modifies resources to suit individual student needs

Contributes to the development and implementation and review of classroom and school resource management.

Some indicators are:

- Plans and prepares out-of-school activities with regard to the full range of relevant policies and procedures
- Maintains records and monitors the return of appropriate documentation such as medical data forms

- Uses the appropriate communication for parents, teacher, therapist
- Selects and adapts instructional materials according to the student/s needs
- Investigates potentially suitable resources
Evaluates and responds to current and future resource requirements to meet a specific need
- Assists student/s to access of media including video and digital equipment
- Uses knowledge of the student/s learning style to select resources to maximise student involvements

- Updates the resources for a variety of students and/or programs
- Orders equipment to renew stock items and obtain new resources
- Compiles information for inventories, resource management and purchasing
- Liaises with technology support, library staff and teachers

APPENDIX V DISABILITY DISCRIMINATION ACT (DDA) STANDARDS FOR EDUCATION

In July 2005, the Commonwealth Government Attorney-General implemented the DDA Standards for Education. The landmark legislation was developed to provide additional guidance to education authorities and parents of students with disabilities in interpreting the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992*.

Background

The DDA Standards for Education were developed over the last decade and involved extensive consultation with a wide range of stakeholders, including school communities and parents/ advocates of students with disabilities.

The Standards places obligations on education authorities to uphold the rights, opportunities and entitlements of students with disabilities as they do in relation to other students.

The Standards cover five areas:

- Enrolment
- Participation
- Curriculum development, accreditation and delivery
- Student support services
- Elimination of harassment and victimisation.

Each area includes a statement on the rights of students with disabilities (and prospective students) and the legal obligations of service providers.

Each area sets out minimal compliance measures to show that schools are meeting their obligations in relation to the education of students with disabilities. Nothing in the Standards prevent schools from developing additional measures that extend beyond those specified in the Standards.

Many of the recommendations in the final report of the Review of Educational Services for Students with Disabilities in Government Schools have been drafted within the DDA Standards for Education in mind.

Key Terminology

The Standards introduce several key terms to clarify education authorities legal obligations in relation to the education of students with disabilities. These include the terms are: 'reasonable adjustments', 'unjustifiable hardship' and 'on the same basis as'.

Reasonable adjustment

Any action or adjustment is reasonable if it is based on a considered judgment of what is appropriate in a given situation. Judgments about whether actions or adjustments are reasonable should include consideration of all relevant factors. These factors include:

- The appropriateness of the action or adjustment for identified students in specific situations
- The effect of the student's disability on their education or training
- The effectiveness of the adjustment or action in achieving equality for the student
- The impact of the appropriate actions on other students and staff.

Judgments about what is reasonable in any given situation will change over time.

The term *student requiring teaching and learning adjustments* has been accepted by the Department to describe those students who require educational modifications or accommodations in order to access and participate in schooling. While some students with disabilities are not handicapped by their condition and will not require program modifications, some students will require:

- more explicit teaching strategies
- access to alternative modes of communication
- flexible seating, lighting and acoustic classroom arrangements
- building modifications
- adjustments to school policies and procedures
- provision of specialist assistive technologies
- supplementary education assistant support
- their classroom teacher to have access to additional school based support such as Learning Support Coordinators, Getting it Right specialists or Visiting Teachers from the districts or Statewide Specialist Services.

On the same basis as

The term 'on the same basis as' means enabling students with disabilities to participate equitably in education and ensuring that their educational needs are met. The *School Education Act 1999* acknowledges that students with disabilities must be able to participate in the full range of educational opportunities, even if it means treating them differently. The Act also recognises that some students need a greater share of resources than others in order to achieve higher educational outcomes.

Example of 'on the same basis as'

- The allocation of additional student weightings in the staffing formulae for designated groups of students with disabilities; or
- The provision of specialist resources (for example, education assistants or visiting teacher support).

Key

- The DDA Standards for Education provide clarity in the area of students with a disability and issues of potential discrimination.
- Processes need to be put in place to manage enrolment and participation of individual students with an identified disability
 - the emphasis in selection to enrolment is on parent choice and the provision of clean and transparent information to parents / care givers
 - the relevant supports from districts and CIS, VIS and WAIDE need to be engaged to determine the type and level of reasonable adjustments that need to be made for a student with a disability.
- In relation to participation and achievement of students with a disability, collaboration and forward planning are key issues.