

## **INTEGRATION POLICY**

### **Rationale**

- The Northern School for Autism (NSA) will support mainstream integration programs for students when a need is identified. NSA will support schools in which NSA students are dual enrolled.

### **Aims**

- To promote inclusion and ensure each student accesses the most appropriate educational program.
- To provide students with the opportunity to participate in educational programs within a mainstream school.
- To provide students with support to ensure their integration program is a positive experience.
- To promote transition to full time mainstream school placements for students whose needs are best met in a mainstream setting.
- To ensure that programs are implemented successfully
- To ensure the best educational outcomes for each student.

### **Implementation**

- When parents/carers would like to proceed with an integration program for their child, the parent/carer must contact the chosen mainstream school directly and inform NSA of their intentions. A tour of the mainstream school should be organised by the parent/carer. At NSA the relevant teacher will complete the "Mainstream Readiness" assessment. This form includes the following information:
  - the goal of the integration program,
  - the commencement date,
  - the suggested time fraction and the transition plan,
  - the level of support required for the student.
- Please refer to the 'Integration Flowchart' for further information about processes and protocols.

### **Support from NSA**

- NSA will invite mainstream teachers/personnel to SSG meeting/s. At SSG meetings the Individual Learning Plan will be discussed. SSG meetings are held in the final week of each school term.
- Staff members from mainstream schools are invited to visit NSA to observe students in class and view the relevant teaching strategies.
- NSA staff members are available via telephone conferences or email.
- NSA offers a professional learning program for staff working in mainstream schools who teach students with autism.
- All members of the Student Support Group (SSG) are invited to have input into decision making.
- NSA will support and advise mainstream school teachers responsible for students on dual placements.

### **Important Information**

- Parents/carers are responsible for transporting their child to and from mainstream schools for integration.
- Students must attend NSA a minimum of three days per week to access the school bus.
- Integration programs may or may not lead to full time transition to mainstream school.
- If the mainstream school does not run classes on a designated integration day then the NSA student may be able to attend NSA by prior arrangement with the class-group teacher. NSA requests a week's notice.
- If an integration program is unsuccessful or if issues arise, parents/carers will need to inform NSA as soon as possible.
- If the integration program leads to full time enrolment at a mainstream school, students must formally exit from NSA. Re-enrolment will be subject to the availability of places as per the Enrolment Policy.

- Mainstream schools need to ensure time fraction changes correspond with PSDMS time lines to receive the correct level of termly funding. All funding is via the SRP.

### **Evaluation**

These guidelines are reviewed annually.

This policy was ratified by NSA School Council on 30 October 2014

This update was ratified on 26 March 2015

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## Integration Flowchart – Reservoir Campus

This flowchart is designed to support parents/carers understand how integration programs are coordinated and to outline the particular responsibilities of the school and families.

1. As the legal guardians of students, parents/carers are primarily responsible for arranging integration/dual enrolment for their child. It may be parents/carers who initially decide to pursue a dual placement, at other times the classroom teacher may suggest a student is ready to commence at a mainstream school.
2. If NSA staff form the view that a student is ready for integration they will inform the family/ carers of that student at an SSG.
3. If a parent/carer forms the view that they would like their child to commence integration they are asked to inform the school at their earliest convenience.
4. When parents/carers decide to pursue a dual placement they need to visit local schools to arrange a tour and then chose a school for their child to attend.
5. Most students commence at mainstream schools for visits, increasing to half and then full days – usually up to 2 days per week. The arrangements vary as integration programs are individualised to meet the needs of each student.
6. When parents/carers have selected a school they are asked to inform the classroom teacher at NSA. The classroom teacher informs the Leading Teacher, Campus Principal and the Enrolment Coordinator in a group email.
7. The classroom teacher prepares the Mainstream Readiness Checklist (MRC) in consultation with the Leading Teacher in charge of their class (PLT Leader). This is emailed to the Enrolment Coordinator with a current student profile, ILP and report with the name of the intended school and contact person.
8. The Enrolment Coordinator then forwards the following documentation to the mainstream contact:
  - a. the MRC,
  - b. the current student profile,
  - c. the current ILP,
  - d. the most recent report,
  - e. the NSA Integration Policy,
  - f. NSA Network PD information.
9. The Enrolment Coordinator liaises with the mainstream school regarding the level of consultation required for the student to begin mainstream.
10. An SSG, preferably at NSA, will be arranged. Staff members from the mainstream school are also invited to attend NSA to observe the student and speak with NSA staff about specific strategies and supports.
11. Once integration commences, classroom teachers are then responsible for maintaining ongoing communication with mainstream schools and inviting mainstream staff to the termly SSG's at NSA. They should support the mainstream staff by providing information about individual strategies and visuals particular to the student. A letter is sent to invite mainstream staff to attend SSG's by individual class teachers.
12. The Enrolment Coordinator is responsible for maintaining the data bank in regard to integration programs for all students including time fraction information, for this reason, teachers are required to inform the Enrolment Coordinator, Leading Teacher and Campus Principal in the event of a time fraction increase. The Enrolment Coordinator contacts mainstream schools termly to discuss progress and time fractions.
13. Funding arrangements are managed centrally via SRP/PSD funding processes – the school does not participate in school to school invoicing/payments. Time fraction changes should be agreed upon in advance and ideally prior to the commencement of each term so time fractions and associated funding are accurate.
14. If students transition to another setting full time the Enrolment Coordinator and administration team must be informed ASAP.

**Please note:** Catholic primary schools need to apply for funding for students. These applications must be in by October of each year (the end of Term 3). In order to apply for funding, parents need to provide the school with a current letter from the child's paediatrician confirming the autism diagnosis and also explaining briefly the impact this has on their learning at school. A copy of the child's original diagnosis report is also required. Other reports needed for the funding application are professional reports, such as speech therapy reports, occupational therapy reports, psychological reports and early intervention reports.

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