



NDIS Funded Therapy Policy



Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand the information in this policy, please contact 93708906

BACKGROUND

Ascot Vale Heights School (AVHS) currently has 110 students attending the school. Each of these students could be in receipt of funding through the NDIS for a variety of allied therapy input. The therapies funded by the National Disability Insurance Scheme are related to the student's functional whole-of-life support needs, and not for educational purposes. The responsibility for therapy for educational attainment remains with the education system. On this basis, AVHS employs therapists and access therapy from Student Support Services to provide educational supports. This policy is based on information from the Victorian Department of Education and Training.

There is a difference between what is funded by the NDIS and what the school's responsibility is. Generally speaking:

- **Schools** are responsible for personalising learning and support for students with disabilities **that primarily relate to their education**. This includes teaching, learning assistance and aids, school building modifications and transport between school activities. This is in line with relevant anti-discrimination laws.
- **NDIS** will fund supports that a child needs which **relate to the functional impact of their disability on regular activities that are a part of daily living**. These supports are not primarily related to the child's schooling.

PURPOSE

This policy aims to clarify Ascot Vale Heights School's responsibility regarding allowing NDIS funded therapists to operate within the school. It will:

- Ensure that AVHS staff and families have a clear understanding of the role of school based and NDIS therapists
- Provide a clear framework and reasoning for decision making regarding NDIS funded therapists visiting AVHS for assessment or therapy purposes
- Support school-based therapy staff to continue to assist in the making of 'reasonable adjustments' to help students to attain their educational goals as required by the Department of Education and Training.

OBJECTIVE

- To ensure that AVHS meets its responsibilities in supporting students with their educational attainment.

- To ensure clarity regarding NDIS therapists attending AVHS to assess or work with students
- To establish clear guidelines for and information sharing with external therapists.

SCOPE

The Principal, as the delegate of the Minister, has the right to permit or refuse entry onto Victorian Government School premises. This policy applies to:

- all staff, including casual relief staff, contractors and volunteers
- all external therapists funded through student NDIS packages

POLICY

School based therapist report writing and provision:

- AVHS will provide copied versions of any information/reports that the school has previously obtained from educational or allied health professionals to parents to assist them in providing supporting evidence for NDIS planning.
- The school will not, however, arrange for or pay for new assessments to be completed for the sole purpose of NDIS funding which does not directly benefit the child and schooling

NDIS therapist school visits:

- In general, NDIS therapists will not be permitted to provide therapy to students on an individual basis in the school during the school day.
- Observations within the class from NDIS therapists may occur on a once per week basis provided that these occur without disruption to the class and that NDIS therapy goals correlate with the school environment. Written requests must be provided to the principal in advance. Once principal approval has been given, the observation must be scheduled with at least 48 hours notice.
- There must be at least 48 hours notice to the school therapists and teachers prior to any requested school visit to observe a student. This request for observation should also include the goals and expected impact on therapy for the observational visit.
- School teachers and therapists may indicate a better time if the one requested by the NDIS therapist is not suitable.
- Collaboration with school therapists and teachers is expected for issues directly relating to overlapping with school therapist roles and responsibilities. It is expected that school and NDIS therapists are working with like goals and approaches as discussed with parents and class staff (as to not contradict one another's work).
- Communication and collaboration with school therapists by NDIS therapists will need to be planned and succinct given the volume of correspondence from NDIS therapists. NDIS therapists should communicate with school-based therapists via email only, or as negotiated in a timely manner.
- NDIS therapists will provide school therapists and teachers with copies of their reports, programs and recommendations as appropriate.
- The Principal has the discretion to permit NDIS funded therapists to work in the school in particular circumstances where they deem it necessary to maximise outcomes for students. In making such a decision consideration will be given to the relative benefits of an external therapist providing therapy versus the anticipated impact on student learning, disruption to classes, ability to provide supervision, the availability of an appropriate space to work in and timing of such requests.
- All requests for NDIS therapists to complete observations at school will require the completion of the request form by the NDIS therapist in collaboration with the student's family.

- Following consideration of individual requests from parents for NDIS funded therapists to work in the school the Principal will provide a written response of their decision and will articulate reasons for granting or refusing NDIS funded therapy in school during school hours
- Where the Principal approves a NDIS funded therapist to work with students during school hours, they must then be satisfied that appropriate checks have been put in place to allow access in a manner that is compatible with the school's Duty of Care. This will include:
 - Working With Children or Criminal History check
 - NDIS Worker Screening Check
 - Evidence of appropriate qualifications
 - Evidence of insurance and NDIS registration
 - Documentation regarding licence to use school premises and information sharing
 - Compliance with Child Safe Standards
- The school will provide NDIS funded therapists with information as necessary once parental permission is provided and will offer observational/therapy visits
- NDIS therapists are welcome to be part of a student's Student Support group. Approval to attend a student's Student Support group must be given by the principal. The Student Support Group is the formal process for school staff to communicate with NDIS therapists as per information from the Victorian Department of Education and Training.

COMMUNICATION

This policy will be communicated to our school community in the following ways:

- Available publicly on our school's website
- Reminders in our school newsletter
- Included in staff induction processes
- Discussed at parent information nights/sessions
- Hard copy available from school administration upon request

RELATED POLICIES

NDIS Funded Therapy in Schools

RELEVANT LEGISLATION

- Education and Training Reform Act 2006 (Vic)
- Education and Training Reform Regulations 2017 (Vic)

POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Policy last reviewed	18/02/2022
Approved by	Principal
Next scheduled review date	February 2025

This policy is written in accordance with the Child Protection Reporting Policy and Education and Training Reform Act, Child Safe Standards, Managing the Risk of Child Abuse in Schools, Ministerial Order No. 870. Ascot Vale Heights School will work to ensure a safe and secure environment is provided for all students, staff, school community and visitors to the school. We will do this by ensuring the highest standards in care and supervision, having a zero tolerance approach to child abuse and by clear and sound staff practices that place safety at the heart of all decisions.