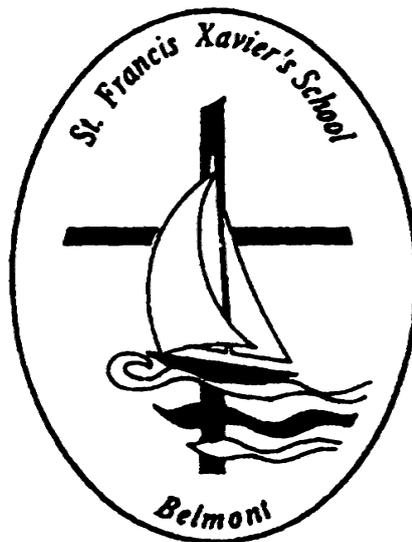

LEARNING SUPPORT PLAN



Let Your Light Shine

2016
to be reviewed in
2019

RATIONALE

Saint Francis Xavier's Catholic Primary School is an inclusive school and aims to meet the needs of all its students. Saint Francis Xavier's Catholic Primary School has a responsibility to provide a range of opportunities that enable each student to experience success and to develop to his/her full potential. The Learning Support program is designed to allow for the enhancement of learning in those students experiencing difficulty, and for students with gifts and talents that set them apart from their peer group.

Inclusion is a way of thinking and acting that allows every individual to feel accepted, valued and safe. An inclusive community consciously evolves to meet the changing needs of its members. The school community of Saint Francis Xavier's Catholic Primary School embraces inclusion as a means of enhancing the well-being of every member of the community. By working together, we strengthen our capacity to provide the foundation for a richer future for us all.

St Francis Xavier's Catholic Primary School has embraced the Salamanca Statement, adopted by UNESCO in 1994, as its framework for action in the area of developing inclusive school communities.

"The fundamental principle of the inclusive school is that all children should learn together, wherever possible, regardless of any difficulties or differences they may have. Inclusive schools must recognise and respond to the diverse learning needs of their students, accommodating both the different styles and rates of learning and ensuring quality education to all through appropriate curricula, organisational arrangements, teaching strategies, resource use and partnerships with their communities. There should be a continuum of support and services to match the continuum of Learning Support encountered in every school."

"The Catholic school.... is a school for all.... it sets out to be a school for the human person and of human persons. The person of each individual human being, in his or her material and spiritual needs, is at the heart of Christ's teaching."

p 11, 18 From *The Catholic School on the Threshold of the Third Millennium* Congregation for Catholic Education 1999.

For the purpose of this policy the term Learning Support refers to the support offered to those students who have additional needs.

1 St Francis Xavier's Catholic Primary School through this Learning Support Policy:

- recognises its responsibility for meeting the educational needs of all students
- strives for the development of a school that is inclusive
- aims to provide equity, access and participation for all students
- supports a collaborative approach with all stakeholders
- values the significant contribution made by all staff

2 This policy reflects the Schools' Strategic Vision, especially those ideals which:

- promote the active partnership of home, parish and school and recognises the family as the primary focus of the educational process
- recognise the individuality and dignity of each young person and foster the development of each one's unique potential and spirituality
- develop a challenging, authentic and inclusive educational environment that encourages lifelong learning
- reflect gospel values of justice, truth, peace, forgiveness, love, reconciliation and service

Aims

- To give the opportunity for all students across a wide range of fields to achieve their full potential.
- To assist staff to identify, cater for and continually monitor students with additional needs and exceptional abilities.
- To assist staff to plan programs for all students with additional needs and exceptional abilities thus enhancing student participation and engagement.
- To foster an inclusive environment where students with additional needs and exceptional abilities are accepted by others and supported.

Guidelines

- Teachers will identify students' individual needs, and cater for mixed abilities within the school.
- Identification may involve assessment, observation and recording of concerns, consultation with teachers, parents and Learning Support Teacher/ Learning Support Team.
- The process of referral and testing will be carried out according to the Learning Support Flowchart on appendix 1.
- The expertise of all staff will be drawn on to ensure maximum benefits for all students.
- Staff are encouraged and supported to participate in ongoing professional development.
- All students will be encouraged to develop an appreciation of the value of excellence and achievement.
- Specific resources will be provided both for staff professional development and the education of students with additional needs and exceptional abilities.
- Personalised Plans will be formed in consultation with parents, classroom teacher, the learning support teacher and other necessary professionals (Speech Therapist, Child Psychologist, Occupational Therapist).
- Programs for students will be formally reviewed each semester.
- Projected lists for Students with Disability funding will be completed and returned to the Catholic Schools Office in Term Three of each year for term one funding for the following year. The projection form will be completed by the Learning Support Teacher.
- Applications for Students with Disabilities funding will be submitted by the end of Term One using the Catholic Education Commissions online funding tool. The PP will be completed by the Learning Support Teacher in collaboration with the class teacher.
- The Learning Support Teacher will be responsible for submitting a Request for Validation form and collecting the required paperwork for any newly enrolled students with a diagnosed disability or for current enrolments who are newly diagnosed between terms two and four.
- Learning Support is a regular agenda item in General Staff Meetings. Any staff may add addenda items under this heading to allow for information to be distributed and discussed concerning individual students, intervention programs or concerns on a regular basis.
- The program's implementation may include: Support in the classroom and playground, small group or individual withdrawal for specific intervention programs, adjustments to assessments or curriculum and/or therapy support.
- Students are given the opportunity to participate in a variety of enrichment activities. Students will be selected using a school based criteria to determine eligibility for programs offered.

Implementation

1. Learning Support Team

A. Membership may consist of the -

Learning Support Teacher
School Counsellor
Principal/Assistant principal

Classroom Teachers and Learning Support Assistants may attend meetings as required

B. Function-

Definition: - The Learning Support Team is an informal and interdisciplinary group that uses a systematic processes to address the academic, social and emotional needs of the school community to enhance inclusion.

A Learning Support Team:

- works in collaborative partnerships to achieve appropriate educational outcomes for all students
- makes decisions regarding the use of funding from the Supplementary Funding Package allocated by the Catholic Education Office each November for the following year
- works in collaborative partnerships to achieve appropriate social and educational outcomes for whole school matters E.g. NAPLAN, specific year level or KLA concerns
- meets as required (before school, lunch, after school, during school time)
- accepts referrals through a prescribed process
- uses joint problem solving processes to improve student outcomes
- ongoing support given to teachers, students and parents as required
- maintains comprehensive records including minutes of meetings
- devises an action plan for each referral including teaching and learning adjustments
- provides feedback as stated in the action plan to interested parties/ referring teachers

C. Roles and Responsibilities

- Principal/Assistant Principal has a pivotal role in modelling inclusive attitudes behaviour and language within the school community.
- Learning Support Teacher co-ordinates meetings, assists with planning, shares specific knowledge and accesses external agencies, provides assessments and recommendations
- Classroom Teacher provides information regarding the students current level of performance, the adjustments already in place and any current concerns
- Other professionals share their expertise related to the student's identified individual needs.

D. Meetings

Students with Disabilities (NSW State Criteria)

- One Personalised Planning Meeting (PP) or Transition Plan Meeting is held in each semester.
- The Learning Support Team meet in accordance with Diocesan guidelines.

Students with Additional Support Needs

- The LST will meet with interested parties to discuss issues surrounding students with additional needs. These may include behavioural, extension, emotional, learning difficulties or any other deemed need. The learning support teacher may meet with parents/ carers, classroom teachers, school counsellor or external services as required. Minutes will be recorded and filed in the student's record file.
- Reports/minutes of meetings will be forwarded to attendees.

2. Learning Support Teacher

A. Role Description- The Learning Support Teacher (LST) has a major role in the function of the school. The primary role of the Learning Support Teacher is to assist Class Teachers to identify individual student needs and to design, develop, implement, monitor and evaluate curricula plans and programs for identified students. They assist in the coordination of the school Learning Support Team and act as the primary point of contact for Catholic Schools Office- Education Officers (Student Support Unit) and external service providers. They have the responsibility of organising, conducting, minuting and providing the follow-up for Personalised Plan meetings and student reviews.

B. Duties and Responsibilities- The Learning Support Teacher will:

- Provide support for class teachers with concerns about individual students or classroom management issues.
- Receive specialist's reports and discuss action to be taken.
- Coordinate the assessment process.
- Organise funding applications via the CEC funding tool by the due date, in the final week of Term One.
- Organise meetings and reviews.
- Coordinate and liaise with teacher assistants.
- Liaise with specialists.
- Coordinate professional development for staff.
- Review Personalised plans
- Meet formally and informally with parents of children who are receiving funding or are not funded but have an identified need.

- Distribute and monitor allocated funds.

C. Accountability- In consultation with the Principal and Assistant Principal, the LST must ensure:

- That all Diocesan Accountability Forms are a true and accurate account of dispersal of funds. E.g. Wellbeing, Literacy/Numeracy, Students with Additional Needs...
- That two PP meetings are held each year and all consent forms, reports and records are stored and archived appropriately.
- That resources are targeted to students with the greatest need.
- That resources are used to support effective instructional approaches.
- That resources are not consumed in administrative procedures.
- That there is a process for measuring student growth and tracking development.

3. Classroom Teacher

A. Responsibilities

- Complete PP with the assistance of the LST
- Monitor PP and review regularly in consultation with LST
- Ensure that the agreed focus areas are targeted in classroom practices
- Liaise with parents of children with additional needs regularly throughout the year
- Utilise relevant resources for children with specific learning needs
- Identify and cater for children with exceptional abilities
- Carry out any appropriate actions as a result of meetings
- Monitor and direct the LSA's who are working within the classroom.
- Casual relief teachers are informed about specific learning and behavioural needs of all children

B. Programming

Teachers will ensure that

- Class programs include any adjustments being made for individual students.
- They utilise all possible resources to assist the child in their development.
- Their program includes a specific timetable for the learning support assistant
- Their program includes a class profile of children's learning needs.
- Monitor programs implemented by Learning Support Assistants within their classroom.

4. Learning Support Assistant

A. Role Description- The Learning Support Assistant is responsible to the school Principal or their delegate, and either the Learning Support Teacher and is supported by the Catholic Schools Office Student Support Unit. Responsibility for enabling the learning of students with identified special needs lies with the Class Teacher. Under the supervision and direction of the Class Teacher, a Learning Support Assistant is responsible for providing support and assistance in school routines; classroom activities; and the care and management of students with special needs.

While Learning Support Assistants may take part in curriculum planning meetings and their ideas are valued, they are not responsible for designing, developing, fully implementing or evaluating a student's program. They are primarily employed as a 'resource' for a learning support program to provide an additional pair of hands for the Class Teacher.

B. Responsibilities

- providing students with special needs with additional services and support that supplement the work of the teacher;
- enriching the experiences of students with special needs beyond what would be possible to provide without this additional level of assistance;
- providing one-to-one or small group support;
- relieving professional staff members of non-direct student contact duties, such as photocopying, preparing teacher selected materials, and assisting with student health care needs;
- actively contributing to and maintaining the Catholicity of the school and the ethos and mission;

Depending on individual student support needs, Learning Support Assistants may be required to assist in the implementation of special programs for specific curricula needs, mobility or personal hygiene and health care needs. With Principal approval, this may involve assisting with:

- social skills programs;
- protective behaviour programs;
- toileting and personal hygiene needs;
- therapy programs, daily living skills and associated activities;
- work-based programs;
- travel training.

5. Referral Process

To refer a student, teachers will follow the process outlined in the flowchart in Appendix One.

Reflective Materials

- St Francis Xavier's Programming Policy
- St Francis Xavier's Reporting and Assessment Policy
- St Francis Xavier's Enrolment Policy
- St Francis Xavier's Special Education Policy
- Disability Discrimination Law, NSW 2004
- Catholic Schools Office Special Education policies and practices.

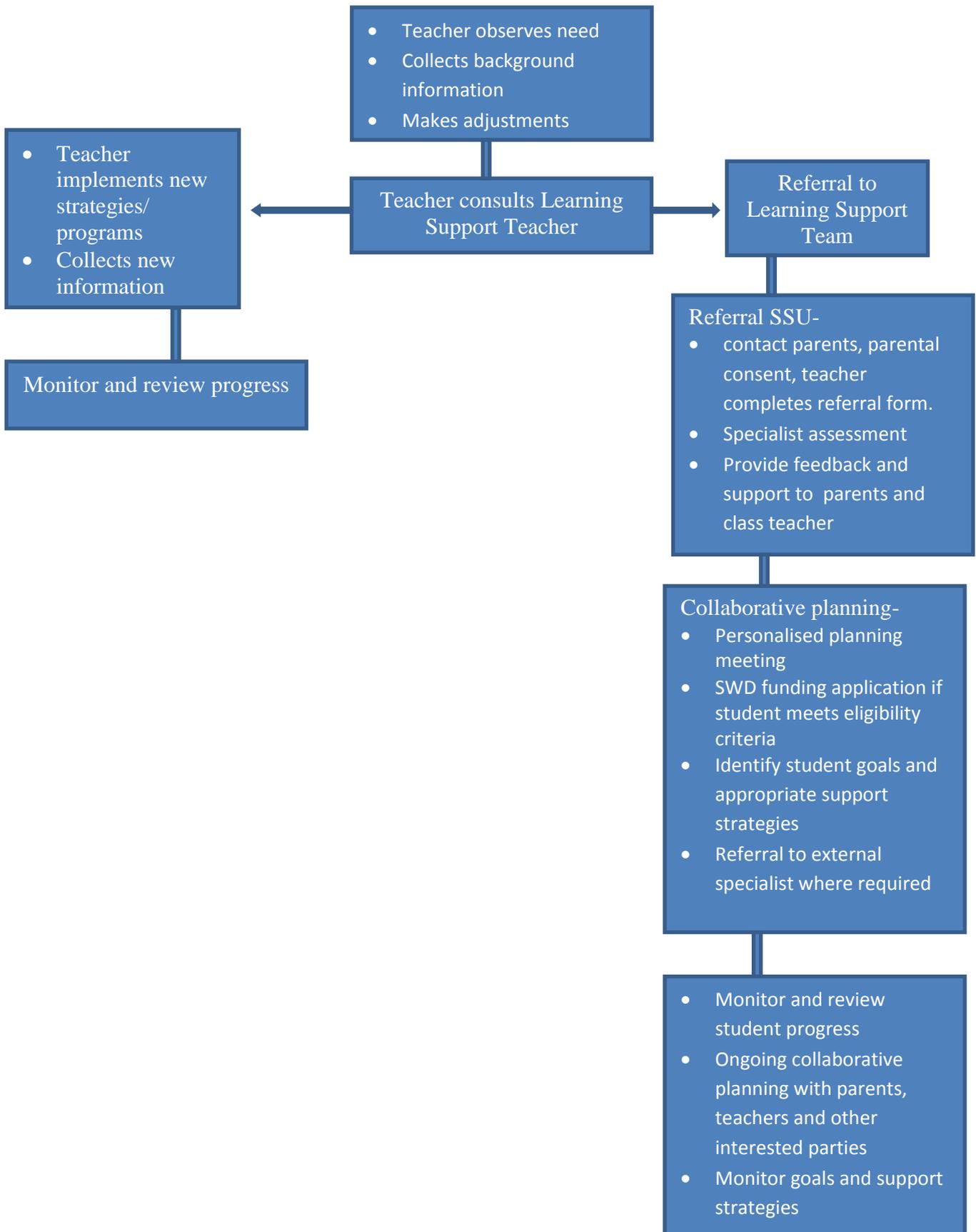
BUDGET

The Learning Support Package will be used to employ Learning Support Assistants, purchase teaching and special education resources, provide opportunities for focused teacher professional development and release from face to face teaching to plan for students individual needs. Allocation of this funding will be undertaken in accordance with this Learning Support Policy.

EVALUATION

This policy is to be reviewed every three years or as required by CSO or Board of Studies amendments. The Assistant Principal is responsible for the co-ordination of policy reviews.

Learning Support Flowchart



APPENDIX 2

Legislation

Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) and Disability Standards for Education 2005

What is the Disability Discrimination Act 1992?

The objectives of the *Disability Discrimination Act* are to:

- eliminate, as far as possible, discrimination against people on the basis of disability.
- ensure that people who have disabilities have the same rights under the law as those in the community who do not have disabilities.
- promote the principle that people with disabilities have the same rights as others in the community.

The *Disability Standards for Education 2005* has been formulated by the federal government under paragraph 31 of the DDA and, as such, carry the same legal force as the Act itself. Under the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* and the *Disability Standards for Education 2005* schools and education authorities hold the obligation to ensure that:

- students with disability can participate in education and training without discrimination,
- students with disability have opportunities to access the school curriculum and achieve educational outcomes in the same manner as students without disability.
- decisions are made on the basis of the prospective student's ability to meet the essential requirements of the educational program and avoid assumptions about what the student may or may not be able to achieve because of a disability. These decisions should be made upon the basis of full consultation with all interested parties and experts in the area of the particular disability.

Who does the Disability Discrimination Act and the Disability Standards for Education protect?

- The Act's definition of disability is broader than that used in State and Commonwealth definitions of funding for education. It includes a wide range of impairments, both existing and implied, as well as possible future disabilities that are categorised as physical, intellectual, psychiatric, sensory, neurological, learning disabilities, or other disabilities.
- The Act and the Standards cover discrimination against a person because of a physical disfigurement or a disease-causing organism, such as HIV virus.
- The Act and the Standards also apply to carers and associates of people with disabilities who may experience some kind of discrimination as a result of their support role to a person with a disability, or who may have a disability themselves.

Areas of Discrimination

In the school context, the Act provides protection against discrimination in education in the following areas:

- Admission — refusal to accept an enrolment for a student with disability, or accepting a student on less favourable terms or conditions than students without disability.
- Access to benefits — denying or limiting access to opportunities because of disability, e.g. to certain parts of the curriculum; expelling a student on the grounds of disability; or subjecting a student with disability to any other detriment.
- Harassment and victimisation — humiliating comments or actions about a student's disability, and comments and actions which create a hostile environment for a student with disability and bullying because a complaint is made by a student with disability.

Types of Discrimination

Discrimination in these areas may be either direct or indirect and may be considered unlawful, whether intended or not.

Direct discrimination occurs when a person with a disability (or his/her carer) is treated less favourably than a person without a disability in the same or similar circumstances. Refusing to consider or process an enrolment application from a student with disability to attend a school because of that disability is an example of direct discrimination.

Indirect discrimination may occur where the application of a general condition or requirement for a wide group may unreasonably disadvantage or exclude a person with a disability. For example, expelling a student with an intellectual disability who is unable to control his behaviour by applying the school's behavioural management policy in a rigid and inflexible way.

Reasonable Adjustment

- If a prospective student with disability meets the standard entry requirements of the school, then the school is required to make reasonable adjustments in consultation with the student and his or her associates in order to allow the student to undertake the educational program offered by the school or training authority.
- Reasonable adjustments may include administrative, teaching practice, resource and facilities or procedural modifications, depending on the needs of the student. It is important that each student's needs be assessed independently in determining whether or not to accept an application for enrolment, including obtaining the advice of experts in the field of the particular disability and negotiations with the student's parents/guardians.
- The Act does not obligate a school or education authority to put into place an unreasonable adjustment. A school or education authority may put into place an alternative adjustment if that adjustment meets the same ends as the adjustment considered to be unreasonable but with less disruption to all concerned.
- Reasonable adjustments must be made for the benefit of the student with disability during the full extent of the student's enrolment at a school or training authority.

Unjustifiable Hardship

- While the Act requires a school to consider all requests to meet a prospective student's needs, it does not require schools to accommodate a prospective student where, to do so, would require more than reasonable adjustment and cause unjustifiable hardship to the school.
- Unjustifiable hardship must be determined by an individual assessment of the circumstances relating to a student's situation. Schools need to consider all options for making necessary accommodation, including cost and health and safety issues.
- Unjustifiable hardship is a provision under the Act that is available only at the time of enrolment of a student with disability.

Disability Action Plan A Disability Action Plan:

- is one proactive approach to complying with the Act.
- enables a school/system to progressively implement changes, improvements and modifications to its environment or procedures over time in order to eliminate or remove discriminatory practices and conditions.
- outlines a school's commitment to meeting its obligations and responsibilities under the DDA by identifying practices or conditions which might result in discrimination against persons with disability.

Where a school intends to formulate a Disability Action Plan and subsequently lodge it with the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission, the Student Support Unit of the Catholic Schools Office must be consulted with and involved in the process. *Disability Complaints Process*

The Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission (HREOC) administers federal laws relating to human rights infringements and administration.

Formal complaints of discrimination based on disability can be made in writing to HREOC. The complaint will be investigated by the Disability Discrimination Commissioner. This investigation may lead to settlement of the complaint or dismissal of the complaint. Failure to conciliate may result in the complaint being withdrawn, or the complainant may make an application to the Federal Court within 28 days to have the matter heard and receive a legal determination and an enforceable order.