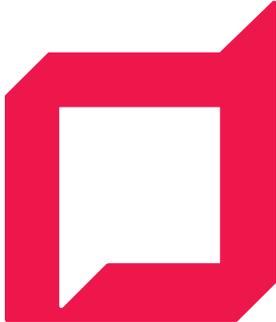# Students with Disabilities Handbook 2013

Independent **Schools** Victoria

Privacy Notice

Independent Schools Victoria protects the privacy of students, along with the confidentiality and security of personal information provided, in compliance with the Privacy Act 1988, the Health Records Act 2001 and other relevant Acts.

Independent Schools Victoria collects personal information when a school applies for additional resources to support a student. This information is collected to enable Independent Schools Victoria to determine the level of additional resources to be provided to the school after eligibility has been established. Independent Schools Victoria collects student information only from the school. A copy of all documentation is held by the school.

The information provided is used primarily to assess the educational resourcing and services required by the student. Information may be used by Independent Schools Victoria in conjunction with other educational bodies for research and analysis purposes, with the aim of improving resourcing and services for students with disabilities. In such cases the information will be de-identified except with the written consent of the parents and the school. It is not disclosed to anyone else without the written consent of the parents. There may be some occasions when Independent Schools Victoria is required by law to disclose information about a student. In most circumstances, Independent Schools Victoria will let the parents know, wherever possible in advance, if it is required to do this.

All information provided to Independent Schools Victoria about a student is kept secure and treated as confidential.

Content

Close of Application and
Funding Application Timeline

Friday 7 September 2012	Applications due to Independent Schools Victoria
October 2012	All applications acknowledged to school contact person
October 2012	Schools notified by letter to principal of any documentation missing from applications. Schools will have two weeks from the date of the letter to provide documentation
November 2012	Principals notified of incomplete applications unable to be processed
December 2012	Notification to schools of eligible students
Friday 22 February 2013	New enrolment applications due
Friday 22 February 2013	Confirmation of enrolments due
Thursday 28 March 2013	Special School applications due
April 2013	Final eligibility and funding allocations notified to schools

Please post **ONE** set of complete applications to:

Funding Applications Manager, Student Services
40 Rosslyn Street
West Melbourne, VIC, 3003

Closing Dates:
Round 1: Friday 7 September 2012

Round 2: New Enrolments Term 4 2012 and Term 1 2013
Friday 22 February 2013

Special Schools: Thursday 28 March 2013

This information booklet is available on the Independent Schools Victoria website at **http://www.independentschools.vic.edu.au/swd**

Planning for Students with
Additional Learning Needs

Disability Standards for Education 2005

Education providers must comply with the *Disability Standards for Education 2005* (the Standards) under the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* (Cth) (the Act). The Standards give students and prospective students with disability the right to education and training opportunities on the same basis as students without a disability. This includes the right to comparable access, services and facilities, and the right to participate in education and training without discrimination and without harassment and victimisation.

An education provider must make 'reasonable adjustments' to accommodate a student with disability. An adjustment is a measure or action taken to assist a student with disability to participate in education and training on the same basis as other students. An adjustment is reasonable if it does this while taking into account the student's learning needs and balancing the interests of all parties affected, including those of the student with the disability, the education provider, staff and other students.

The Standards cover:
- Enrolment
- Participation
- Curriculum development
- Student support services
- Harassment and victimisation.

The Act and the Standards do not require changes to be made if this would impose unjustifiable hardship on a person or organisation.

Program Support Group

Schools need to work with families to ensure that effective planning occurs for all students with additional needs, and particularly for students with disabilities. They have valuable information to exchange concerning the student and the learning process. Schools are advised to establish processes that facilitate discussion and involve parents and caregivers in decision making about education planning for the student. They should ensure that parents and caregivers are fully informed about the student's school program, and are involved in processes to evaluate the program.

A Program Support Group is effective for planning and evaluating a student's program, and it is strongly recommended that such a group be established for any student who requires ongoing monitoring and support, including a student with a disability.

The Program Support Group represents a partnership in the educational planning process between the parents and caregivers, the student and the school. The application for funding should be prepared in consultation with the Program Support Group.

Purpose

The function of the Program Support Group is to provide a forum for the discussion of the student's needs and to ensure that those most concerned for the student work together to provide support for the student, share information, establish educational goals and monitor progress. It is the forum in which the student's broad educational program is planned and evaluated.

The group will:
- Ensure that those with the most knowledge of and responsibility for the student establish shared goals for the student's educational future.
- Plan to increase the participation of the student in the education programs and social life of the school.
- Provide ongoing support for teachers, parents and the student in program planning and direction.
- Provide regular monitoring and evaluation of the student's progress.

Membership

It is recommended that the Program Support Group comprise of:
- Chair: Principal or nominee
- Parent/guardian or caregiver of the student
- Parent advocate if requested by the parent
- Class teacher (primary), or teacher(s) nominated as having responsibility for the student (post primary)
- Support education staff
- Student where appropriate.

From time to time, it may be appropriate to invite other personnel who have relevant expertise and/or information to attend Program Support Group meetings to assist in the identification of the educational objectives for the student, provide support in the development of educational programs, and help determine appropriate strategies to implement the agreed programs.

It may be appropriate to invite:
- School counsellor or student welfare coordinator
- Aide
- Teachers who have taught the student previously
- Preschool teacher or early intervention staff
- Medical practitioner
- Social worker
- Speech pathologist
- Physiotherapist
- Occupational therapist
- Curriculum, faculty and/or department coordinators.

If required, interpreters in languages other than English, including sign language, should be present at the Program Support Group Meeting as an aid to communication.

Responsibilities

In order to achieve its aims, the Program Support Group should:
- Identify the educational and social objectives for the student.
- Discuss adjustments to the school program.
- Develop an Individual Education Program to meet the established objectives.
- Identify ways in which this program may be implemented.
- Provide advice to the principal concerning the needs of the student and the types of resources required to meet these needs.
- Review and evaluate the student's program on a regular basis as determined by the group, and at other times if requested by any member of the group.
- The Program Support Group does not plan day to day lessons and teaching. These are the responsibility of the class teacher.

Procedures

Meetings should be scheduled regularly: in most cases once a term. They should be held at times that enable all members to be present.

Information shared at meetings is confidential and should only be shared with those who need to know and deal directly with the student. Parent consent should be obtained if information needs to be distributed about a student.

Teachers should be informed of decisions that affect their teaching or classroom management.

The principal should ensure that accurate records of advice and decisions are kept. Outcomes of all meetings should be made available to all members.

Monitoring and Evaluation of Student Progress

It is important that the individual education plan for the student is monitored and evaluated. This enables progress to be measured, program effectiveness to be assessed and new goals developed.

Documentation

It is recommended that schools keep accurate records of all meetings and decisions regarding special needs students. This includes minutes of formal Program Support Group meetings, but should also include any other meetings between staff and the parents, telephone conversations and informal meetings that are relevant to the student's program or progress. It is useful for a school to have records that are as complete as possible.

Guidelines for Applications for 2013 Funding

Australian Government Funding for Students with Disabilities

The **Australian Government** provides funding to improve the educational outcomes of disadvantaged children, assist with the inclusion of students with disabilities and impairments into regular school settings and to support the needs of students with disabilities to enable them to fully access the curriculum and improve participation and outcomes. Independent schools make application for supplementary funding for programs to support students with disabilities and impairments through Independent Schools Victoria. Students in mainstream or special Independent schools who have a disability that impacts on their ability to access schooling may be eligible for funding under the program for Students with Disabilities if they meet the eligibility requirements of one of the following **seven categories:**

- Intellectual Disability
- Severe Language Disorder
- Severe Emotional Disorder
- Autism Spectrum Disorder
- Physical Disability / Chronic Health Impairment
- Vision Impairment
- Hearing Impairment.

Australian Government funding is to be used to contribute to the school's program in the following areas:

- Student Support for support teachers, aides, counsellors, resources
- Therapy by a physiotherapist or occupational therapist
- Minor Capital Works and/or Equipment to a total of $30,000.

Eligibility: Disability Funding

Detailed criteria are listed from page 9.

- To be eligible for support funding through the Australian Government Program
  - a student must be assessed by a person with relevant qualifications as having a disability as defined by the criteria for the different categories listed in this booklet

AND
  - The student must also have demonstrated educational needs. Thus the impact of the disability on the student's access to education is considered.

- Schools are asked to apply in the area in which the most severe disability impacts on the child. However, a school may wish to demonstrate that a student has more than one disability, and consideration will be given to this in the establishment of a level of funding. For very few students the Eligibility Panel may decide to assign a Multiple Disability category.

State Support Services Funding

The **Victorian State Government** provides limited funds for the provision of specialised services to support students with demonstrated needs. Independent schools are able to apply for funding so that they can engage specialists to provide:

- Visiting teacher service for:
  - physically disabled/health impaired students
  - hearing impaired students
  - vision impaired students.
- Speech therapy.

Eligibility: State Support Services

To be eligible under the Victorian State Support Services program, a student must be assessed by a person with relevant qualifications as requiring services to support learning and access to schooling, or to develop particular skills.

General Guidelines

Online School Summary Sheet

The School Summary Sheet listing all applications for funding and requests for the continuation of funding for currently funded students will be completed online. Information will be sent to schools in August 2012.

Hard Copy Applications

- The front page of the applications must be signed by the Approved Authority who is usually the Principal.
- A hard copy of each application for school support, therapy, visiting teacher service or minor capital works or equipment must be submitted to Independent Schools Victoria by the due date.
- It is the responsibility of the school in which the student will be enrolled in 2013 to submit the application for the student.
- Information and assessment reports may be provided by the parents or the previous school.
- Schools are advised to seek written consent from parents if they are requesting information from a previous school.

New Enrolments

- Applications for students enrolled for the following year should be lodged by the due date: Friday 7 September 2012.
- However, it is recognised that for a variety of reasons some students may be enrolled at a school following the closing date for applications, which is Friday 7 September 2012. Applications for new enrolments that occur in Term 4 or early in the following year will be accepted in a **second round of applications.** Schools will be asked for the enrolment date on such applications. A New Enrolment Application Cover Sheet is included in the package of application forms. The closing date for such enrolments will be Friday 22 February 2013.
- Late applications cannot be accepted for students **who are attending a school in 2012 prior to the commencement of Term 4 but who were not assessed until Term 4 2012 or Term 1 2013.** It is expected that schools will organise assessments so that applications can be submitted before the September closing date.

Ongoing funding

- Students who have been approved as eligible for Australian Government support funding for a disability will normally not require reassessment for four years unless there are exceptional circumstances. Schools are advised of the reassessment year.

- For students not due for reassessment, schools are required to indicate each year on the school summary sheet that funding is requested for the following year. Funding will not be allocated if ongoing previously funded students are not listed on the school summary sheet as **requesting funding.**

- Funding for occupational therapy, physiotherapy, speech therapy and visiting teacher services is not ongoing. Annual applications are required.

Reassessment dates for student support for a disability

- Reassessment dates are published in the printout notifying schools of eligible students. The reassessment year is the year in which assessments are completed for applications for funding for the following year. Hence, reassessment dates of 2012 mean that assessments are done in 2012 for applications for funding for 2013.

- In the reassessment year, if further funding is requested, a school must submit a new application for the following year with up to date documentation of the disability.

Emergency Applications

- Emergency applications will be accepted for urgent situations involving serious health issues, or transfer of a severely disabled student.

- Schools should contact Independent Schools Victoria to discuss the student and to request an Emergency Application form at any point of the year.

- Funding of emergency applications is always subject to the availability of funds.

Year 12 Students

- **Any student entering Year 12** in the year for which funding is requested, and due for reassessment, **will not require new testing or documentation for Australian Government salary support.** The funding level at which they were funded for the previous year will be maintained for their Year 12.

- However, schools are reminded that **applications for physiotherapy and occupational therapy are annual applications,** as are applications for State Support Services funding.

- Schools are also reminded that such students may require reassessment for an application for special provision for VCE examinations.

Student Transfers

- If a newly enrolled student has been previously funded in an Independent school in Victoria, please contact Independent Schools Victoria as it may be possible to transfer the funding. It is not sufficient for the previous school to notify that the student has left. The new school where the student is currently enrolled must notify Independent Schools Victoria and request a transfer of funding.

- Funding cannot be transferred between education sectors, and so students previously funded in government or Catholic schools need to apply and establish eligibility through Independent Schools Victoria.

Documentation

Documentation regarding assessment of the disability and/or impairment must be **no more than two years old** at the time of application. For 2013 applications, the two years will be taken from 1 September 2010.

Please note assessments for Physiotherapy and Occupational Therapy, Articulation, Voice and Fluency Disorder must be undertaken annually. For 2013 applications the 12 months will be taken from 1 September 2011.

Applications must be accompanied by all necessary documentation. Incomplete applications should not be submitted and will not be processed. Schools must not assume that they can add missing documentation at a later date.

Special Schools

Applications for students in special schools follow the same process as all other applications. Applications must be submitted for individual students with relevant documentation to establish the disability. Applications for students enrolled in special schools will be due in March 2013.

Appeal Process

An appeal process exists for any application deemed ineligible. After consultation with the parents, the Principal may wish to lodge an appeal with Independent Schools Victoria. The Principal must write to the Manager, Student Services at Independent Schools Victoria and substantiate the request for further consideration by providing additional documentation that was not included in the application and outlining the grounds for reconsideration of the application.

Application
Instructions

Application forms may be downloaded from the Independent Schools Victoria website **www.independentschools.vic. edu.au/swd**

Please note that the school's SWD username and password is required.

Applications should be completed and a hard copy sent to Independent Schools Victoria. All submissions from schools will be acknowledged within two weeks. If an acknowledgement is not received, please contact Independent Schools Victoria on 9825 7200.

Online School Summary Sheet

For 2013, the School Summary Sheet will be completed online. Schools will list all applications for Australian Government funding including requests for the continuation of funding for students currently funded for a disability. All applications for State Support Services will also be listed. Information will be sent to schools in August 2012.

Applications

The front page of the applications (one per school) must be signed by the Approved Authority, who is usually the Principal.

Australian Government Funding

New Students and Reassessed Students with Disabilities

Students with a reassessment year of **2012** must be reassessed and new documentation must be provided with their application form.

New and Reassessment Student Information forms for each student will include:

- Student information with parent signature
- Educational Needs
- Educational Plan
- A checklist of required documentation is provided on the application forms for each disability. All required documentation, and any further documentation from relevant professionals, should be attached.

Therapy: Occupational Therapy and Physiotherapy

Application Forms include:

- Teacher Report
- Therapist Report
- Paediatrician report **with recommendation for therapy.**

Note that the report from the paediatrician must be no more than two years old.

Minor Capital Works and Equipment

Application forms include:

- Minor Capital Works and Equipment Application Form
- Report endorsing need for works or equipment from relevant professional
- Commercial quotations for works or equipment.

State Support Services Funding

Applications

- Annual applications must be made for **ALL** students including previously funded and new students.
- Funding for speech therapy is open to students from Prep to Year 4 for a maximum of three years.
- Students entering Year 12 in 2013 must submit an application for State Support Services funding. It is not possible to roll over **State** funding for these students.

Documentation

- Supporting documentation from a relevant professional to establish the eligibility for the service and also the level of severity.

Application forms

- Request for Access to State Support Services 2013 forms for each student for whom funding is requested.
- Forms and documentation as required for each service.

Australian Government Funding for Students with a Disability
Intellectual Disability

All criteria must be met

General intellectual functioning, which is demonstrated by a full scale score of two standard deviations or more below the mean score on a standardised individual test of general intelligence

AND

Significant deficits in adaptive behaviour established by a composite score of two standard deviations or more below the mean on an approved standardised test of adaptive behaviour

AND

A history and evidence of an ongoing problem with an expectation of continuation during the school years.

Evidence

- A written report including assessment by a registered psychologist clearly indicating that the student meets criteria for intellectual disability

- In cases where a student has multiple disabilities, including an intellectual disability, a statement from a paediatrician in addition to the psychologist report.
- Education plan provided by the school.

Assessments and Tests

Intellectual Functioning

- *Wechsler Preschool and Primary Scale of Intelligence – Australian Standardisation (WPPSI – III Australian) 2004*
  Age Range: 2 years 6 months to 7 years 3 months

- *Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children – Fourth Edition Australian Standardisation (WISC – IV Australian) 2003*
  Age Range: 6 years to 16 years 11 months

- Wechsler Adult Intelligence Scale- fourth Edition Australian Language Adapted Edition (WAIS IV Australian) 2008
  Age Range 16 years to 90 years 11 months

Adaptive Behaviour

- Vineland Adaptive Behaviour Scale second Edition (VABS-II) – Teacher Rating Form Age Range – 3 years to 21 years 11 months

- Where no teacher is available to complete the Teacher Rating Form, the VABS-II Survey Interview Form may be used. The Survey Interview Form should be administered with the parent/guardian and accompanied by the reasons that the Teacher Rating Form was not used

NOTE: Should a more recent edition of any of the above tests become available it is recommended that the later edition is used.

Australian Government Funding for Students with a Disability
Severe Language Disorder

Severe Language disorder (SLD) is a specific developmental disorder in which the child's ability to understand and/or use spoken language (based on individual assessment of receptive and expressive language) is markedly below the appropriate level for his/her mental age (based on assessment of nonverbal intellectual capacity). The diagnosis of SLD is an exclusionary process where (in accordance with DSM IV and WHO ICD-10 criteria), evidence should be provided excluding the following conditions:

- Hearing impairment or other sensory deficit
- Asperger's Syndrome
- Intellectual Disability
- A speech-motor deficit
- Autism Spectrum Disorder
- Pervasive Developmental Disorder
- Acquired Aphasia
- Severe environmental deprivation (e.g. as a result of family dysfunction or mental health issues).

Cultural linguistic factors and exposure to adverse environmental factors (e.g. war, extreme poverty) must be considered when making a differential diagnosis of SLD.

All criteria must be met

A score of two or more standard deviations below the mean for the student's age in expressive, receptive and/or total language skills on two of the recommended tests

AND

The severity of the disorder cannot be accounted for by any of the conditions recorded above

AND

A history of an ongoing problem with an expectation of continuation during school years

AND

A score at/or above minus one standard deviation from the mean on one comprehensive intellectual test (performance subtest only).

Evidence

- Assessments and documentation must be from a:
  – Speech Pathologist – Registered Psychologist – Audiologist
- Where students are exposed to more than 1 language evidence of development and use in both L1 and L2 must be provided.
- Evidence must be provided that hearing has been tested and is not the major factor in the Severe Language Disorder
- Evidence must be provided to exclude social-emotional factors in the student's background and social-emotional factors relating to conditions in the student (e.g. ASD, PDD-NOS, Asperger's Syndrome)

- An education plan must also be provided by the school.

Reassessment
Students in secondary schools in 2013 who have previously received LNSLN funding (in the Independent sector), under the category of Severe Language Disorder will not be required to have a full reassessment.
Evidence
A speech pathology report including:
1. only one test of language
2. a statement of evidence excluding ASD, Asperger's, PDD, etc.

Assessments and Tests
Language

- *Preschool Language Scale – Fourth Edition, Australian Language Adapted (PLS-4) PsychCorp 2002*
  Age Range: 0 to 6 years 11 months

- *Reynell Developmental Language Scales III (RDLS-III) NFER* – Nelson 1997
  Age Range: 15 months to 7 years 6 months

- Reynell Developmental Language Scales IV – GL Assessment 2011
  Age Range: 2 years to 7 years 5 months

- *Test of Early Language Development (Third Edition) (TELD-3)* PsychCorp 1999
  Age Range: 2 years to 7 years 11 months

- *Clinical Evaluation of Language Fundamentals – Preschool-2 (CELF P-2)* Pearson 2004 Australian Standardised Edition preferred (CELF-P2 Australia and New Zealand 2006)
  Age Range: 3 years 0 months to 6 years 11 months

- *Clinical Evaluation of Language Fundamentals – 4 (Fourth Edition) (CELF-4)* 2003 Australian Standardised Edition preferred (CELF-4 Australian) Pearson 2006
  Age Range: 5 years to 21 years

- *Test of Language Development 4 (Primary) Fourth Edition (TOLD-P:4)* Pearson 2008
  Age Range: 4 years 0 months to 8 years 11 months

- *Test of Language Development 4 (Intermediate) Fourth Edition (TOLD-1:4)* Pearson 2008
  Age Range: 8 years to 17 years 11 months

Please note that the TOAL 3 will be accepted for assessments completed for 2013 funding. The TOAL 4 will be required for assessments completed for 2014 funding.

- *Test of Adolescent and Adult Language (TOAL-3)* Pro-Ed 1994
  Age Range: 12 years to 24 years

- *Test of Adolescent and Adult Language Fourth Edition (TOAL-4)* Pro-Ed 2007
  Age Range: 12 years to 24 years 11 months

Intellectual Functioning

- *Wechsler Preschool and Primary Scale of Intelligence – Australian Standardisation (WPPSI – III Australian) 2004*
  Age Range: 2 years 6 months to 7 years 3 months

- *Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children – Fourth Edition Australian Standardisation (WISC – IV Australian) 2003*
  Age Range: 6 years to 16 years 11 months

- Wechsler Adult Intelligence Scale – fourth Edition Australian Language Adapted Edition (WAIS IV Australian) 2008
  Age Range 16 years to 90 years 11 months

- (WAIS III acceptable for assessments completed prior to 2011 – all assessments undertaken in 2011 will require WAIS IV)

NOTE: Should a more recent edition of any of the above tests become available it is recommended that the later edition is used.

Australian Government Funding for Students with a Disability
Severe Emotional Disorder

Severe Emotional Disorder is a funding category not a formal diagnosis. This category provides an umbrella for a wide range of disorders including Schizophrenia and Psychotic Disorders, Mood Disorders, Anxiety Disorders, Disruptive Behaviour Disorders, Eating Disorders and a range of other formal diagnostic categories.

All criteria must be met

1. Student displays disturbed behaviour to a point where special support in a withdrawal group or special class/unit is required
   AND
2. Student displays behaviour that is so deviant and with such frequency and severity that they require regular psychological or psychiatric treatment
   AND
3. The severe behaviour cannot be accounted for by intellectual disability, sensory (vision, hearing), physical and/or health issues, autism spectrum disorder or severe language disorder.
   AND
4. A history and evidence of an ongoing problem with an expectation of continuation during the school years.

Evidence

Each of the criteria should be addressed in:

- Recent behavioural assessment/statement of the diagnosis from a psychiatrist
- The psychiatrist should outline their ongoing involvement with the student in regular treatment
- Education plan provided by the school
  OR

- A recent report from a registered psychologist including a clear statement of diagnosis according to DSM IV criteria and the results of assessment
- The psychologist should outline their ongoing involvement with the student in regular treatment
- Education plan provided by the school.

Assessments and Tests

Assessments may include:

- *Child Behaviour Checklist – Teacher Report Form (CBCL –TRF)* Achenbach, 1991

- *Behaviour Assessment Scale for Children* Reynolds and Kamphaus, 1992
- Clinical assessment by a psychiatrist

NOTE: Should a more recent edition of any of the above tests become available it is recommended that the later edition is used.

Australian Government Funding for Students with a Disability
Autism Spectrum Disorder

All criteria must be met

1. A diagnosis of Autism Spectrum Disorder
   AND
2. Significant deficits in **adaptive behaviour** established by a composite score of two standard deviations or more below the mean on an approved standardised test of adaptive behaviour
   AND
   Significant deficits in language skills established by a comprehensive speech pathology assessment demonstrating language skills equivalent to a composite score of two standard deviations or more below the mean.
   AND
3. History and evidence of an **ongoing problem** with the expectation of continuation during the school years.

Evidence

- Evidence provided by a multidisciplinary team of professionals with experience and knowledge in the assessment of autism spectrum disorder
- The multidisciplinary diagnosis will include a report from the psychiatrist / paediatrician and concurring reports from a psychologist (including a comprehensive Vineland report) a speech pathologist (including a comprehensive language / pragmatic language assessment).
- Education plan provided by the school.

Reassessment

- 'Reassessment' means of the same category. If applying under a different category then New Assessment criteria apply
- Students due for reassessment for approval for continued funding under Autism Spectrum Disorder will not be required to have a full reassessment.

Evidence

- A student requesting a renewal of the current level of funding will require a psychologist report including reassessments using:
- *Vineland Adaptive Behaviour Scale.*
- Any student requesting a review of the level of funding will also require language assessment using one approved language test.

Autism Spectrum Disorder – Supplementary Guidelines for Speech Pathologists

A number of students with Autism Spectrum Disorder perform on a standardised test in a way that does not reflect their true language difficulties.

In 2012, Independent Schools Victoria is providing Speech Pathologists with the opportunity to present an assessment of the student's functional or pragmatic language in order to provide a complete picture of the student's language skills or abilities in the context of the classroom. These students may be considered to have met the language requirement.

In order to meet the language eligibility criterion of the Autism Spectrum Disorder category, the student's functional or pragmatic language deficit must be assessed. It must fall within the severe range of difficulty.

Functional or pragmatic language competence is a dynamic, context-dependent set of skills and abilities. This area of assessment can be difficult to quantify and as such, an assessment of the student's pragmatic language skills should contain a number of elements. An assessment of pragmatic language must include:

1. Pragmatic Checklists and Standardized Assessments

- One of CELF-4 Pragmatic Profile

or

- Pragmatics Profile (Dewart & Summers)

AND

- One of Children's Communication Checklist – Second Edition (CCC-2)

or

- Test of Pragmatic Language – Second Edition (TOPL-2)

AND

2. Classroom Observation

AND

3. Interviews with Teachers/Parents

All reports must contain any test scores and interpretation of these results and a synthesis of information collected from checklists, interviews and observations to demonstrate:

- the extent of the student's pragmatic difficulties
- the severity of these difficulties in comparison with age peers
- how the severity of this functional language disorder affects the student's ability to access the learning of the classroom.

In order to meet the language eligibility criteria for ASD funding, there must be evidence for, and a cohesive case presented that shows the student's expressive and receptive oral language skills are functionally within the severe language impairment range in the context of the classroom.

Assessments and Tests

Autism
Results of structured autism assessments such as:
- Autism Diagnostic Interview (ADI)
- Autism Diagnostic Observation Schedule (ADOS)
- Childhood Autism Rating Scale (CARS)
- Autism Behaviour Checklist.

Adaptive Behaviour:
- Vineland Adaptive Behaviour Scale second Edition (VABS-II) – Teacher Rating Form
  Age Range – 3 years to 21 years 11 months
  Where no teacher is available to complete the Teacher Rating Form, the VABS-II Survey Interview Form may be used. The Survey Interview Form should be administered with the parent/guardian and accompanied by the reasons that the Teacher Rating Form was not used.

Intellectual Functioning
It is recommended that a cognitive assessment be undertaken. Although a cognitive assessment is not a formal requirement for eligibility under the Autism Spectrum Disorder category, cognitive functioning is an important variable that contributes to the accurate diagnosis.

- *Wechsler Preschool and Primary Scale of Intelligence – Australian Standardisation (WPPSI – III Australian) 2004*
  Age Range: 2 years 6 months to 7 years 3 months
- *Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children – Fourth Edition Australian Standardisation (WISC – IV Australian) 2003*
  Age Range: 6 years to 16 years 11 months
- Wechsler Adult Intelligence Scale- fourth Edition Australian Language Adapted Edition (WAIS IV Australian) 2008
  Age Range 16 years to 90 years 11 months

Language
- *Preschool Language Scale – Fourth Edition, Australian Language Adapted (PLS-4) PsychCorp 2002*
  Age Range: 0 to 6 years 11 months
- *Reynell Developmental Language Scales III (RDLS-III) NFER* – Nelson 1997
  Age Range: 15 months to 7 years 6 months
- Reynell Developmental Language Scales IV – GL Assessment 2011
  Age Range: 2 years to 7 years 5 months
- *Test of Early Language Development (Third Edition) (TELD-3)* PsychCorp 1999
  Age Range: 2 years to 7 years 11 months
- *Clinical Evaluation of Language Fundamentals – Preschool-2 (CELF P-2)*
  Pearson 2004 Australian Standardised Edition preferred (CELF-P2 Australia and New Zealand 2006)
  Age Range: 3 years 0 months to 6 years 11 months
- *Clinical Evaluation of Language Fundamentals – 4 (Fourth Edition) (CELF-4)*
  2003 Australian Standardised Edition preferred (CELF-4 Australian) Pearson 2006
  Age Range: 5 years to 21 years
- *Test of Language Development 4 (Primary) Fourth Edition (TOLD-P:4)* Pearson 2008
  Age Range: 4 years 0 months to 8 years 11 months
- *Test of Language Development 4 (Intermediate) Fourth Edition (TOLD-1:4)*
  Pearson 2008
  Age Range: 8 years to 17 years 11 months

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  Age Range: 12 years to 24 years
- *Test of Adolescent and Adult Language Fourth Edition (TOAL-4)* Pro-Ed 2007
  Age Range: 12 years to 24 years 11 months

NOTE: Should a more recent edition of any of the above tests become available it is recommended that the later edition is used.

Australian Government Funding for Students with a Disability
Vision Impairment

Please Note: Schools enrolling a new student with a vision impairment should contact Independent Schools Victoria to discuss referral to the Education Vision Assessment Clinic and the Statewide Vision Resource Centre.

This will enable eligible students to access resources, such as large print, e-text and Braille materials, through the Statewide Vision Resource Centre.

All criteria must be met

1. Visual acuity less than 6/60 with corrected vision

OR

2. Visual fields are reduced to a measured arc of less than 10 degrees

Students with a less severe impairment may be eligible for State Support Services funding for a visiting teacher.

Evidence

- Assessment / report from the Vision Assessment Clinic

OR

- Assessment / report from an ophthalmologist
- Education plan provided by the school.

For **State Support Services Visiting Teacher: Vision Impaired**, please see page 22.

Australian Government Funding for Students with a Disability
Hearing Impairment

Please Note: Students with a mild impairment are not eligible for Australian Government funding.
Students with a less severe impairment may be eligible for State Support Services funding for a visiting teacher.

All criteria must be met

1. A bilateral sensorineural hearing loss that is moderate / severe / profound.

2. The levels of hearing impairment are based on audiological measures:

Normal hearing	average threshold	< 25 dB
Mild impairment	average threshold	25 – 39 dB
Moderate impairment	**average threshold**	**40 – 59 dB**
Severe impairment	**average threshold**	**60 – 89 dB**
Profound impairment	**average threshold**	**> 90 dB**

Evidence

- Assessment from the Australian Hearing Services or other agency including both a written statement and an unaided audiogram.
- For students with a unilateral cochlear implant, a statement from an audiologist together with an unaided audiogram of the non-implanted ear is necessary.
- For students with a bilateral cochlear implant a statement from the audiologist to this effect is necessary.
- Education plan provided by the school.

For **State Support Services Visiting Teacher: Hearing Impaired**, please see page 23.

Australian Government Funding for Students with a Disability
Physical Disability/Chronic Health Impairment

All criteria must be met

1. A moderate to severe physical disability e.g. cerebral palsy, spina bifida, muscular dystrophy
   AND/OR
2. A moderate to severe health impairment
   AND
3. May require regular paramedical support.

Purpose of Funding:

1. Programme funding is designed to assist the student to access the environment and/or curriculum to their maximum potential.

2. It is expected that collaboration will occur with the student's support team. This support team may consist of:
   - teacher
   - aide
   - parent
   - therapists (OT/Physiotherapist/Speech therapist)
   - visiting teachers
   - external consultants

3. The role of the support team is to set up an environment conducive to accessing the curriculum and to establish routines/programmes that support learning in between therapy consultations.

4. If using funding for an integration aide, the role of the aide is to

- provide physical support to individual students with activities such as toileting, transfers, mobility, physical access to the school environment and assistance on school camps
- support teacher in implementing therapeutic programmes
- work closely with consulting therapists, classroom teacher and parents

Evidence

- A statement detailing the disability or health impairment from a paediatrician or relevant medical expert
- Education plan provided by the school
- For primary aged students a School Function Assessment (SFA) is recommended for general assessment and programme review/ monitoring. This will also satisfy criteria if applying for OT and or Physiotherapy
- Educational assistance checklist.

For **State Support Services Visiting Teacher: Physical Disability / Chronic Health Impaired**, please see page 21.

Australian Government Funding for Students with a Disability
Physiotherapy and Occupational Therapy

Students applying for therapy funding must be experiencing moderate to severe physical difficulties.

Applications for therapy must demonstrate that the student meets the criteria for Australian Government funding, and that the level of disability is such that the student requires therapy to assist him/her to access and participate in the education program.

Therapy addresses the overall functioning of the pupil within the school environment.

- Ideally therapy will take place at school, with a focus on staff training to assist with implementing therapeutic strategies
- Examples of therapeutic services could include consultation to pupil/teachers, individual or group sessions, and PSG attendance
- Based on current research, the focus for funding is on early intervention and periods of transition
- It is anticipated that as the child progresses through school, therapeutic strategies will be passed on from year to year and move from direct intervention to a more consultative approach
- Emphasis is placed on training staff to assist with optimising the pupil's functioning throughout the day
- Attendance at PSGs is recommended

With regards to new assessments being required every year, it is expected that a child's functioning would change from year to year given the therapy they are receiving. The therapist should therefore be re-evaluating the child on a yearly basis to ensure they are using evidence based principles and goal setting accordingly.

All criteria must be met

1. A severe physical disability or health impairment that requires the provision of physiotherapy and/or occupational therapy not otherwise provided by medical services
   AND
2. Demonstrated impact on the student's access to education
   AND
3. Recent recommendation for therapy by a paediatrician.

Evidence

1. A Physical Disability Assessment Report should be completed by a paediatrician
   AND
2. Report including results of approved assessments provided by an occupational therapist and a physiotherapist (if applicable)
   AND
3. Results of assessments must place the student at least 2 standard deviations below the mean. Low results on one subtest alone will not be sufficient for funding purposes

It is important that the therapist chooses an assessment that adequately demonstrates the student's functional difficulties in the school environment. For primary aged students, the SFA is recommended. This can also be used to monitor change and evaluate programmes from year to year.
AND

4. A Therapy Needs Checklist completed by teacher.

Applications

- Applications must be made annually for therapy.
- Separate applications must be made for physiotherapy and occupational therapy.
- a separate therapy plan for both OT and Physiotherapy (if applicable) must be submitted annually.
- The therapist must reassess the student and provide new assessment results every year, unless advised otherwise.
- **The recommendation for therapy from the paediatrician must be no more than two years old.**

Assessment Requirements

- Therapists should use standardised assessments from the list below to demonstrate eligibility. If alternative assessments are used, the therapist must provide a detailed explanation as to the reason for not using the recommended assessment.
- A low score on one subtest will not be considered to demonstrate eligibility. A copy of the summary score sheet from the assessment must be attached to the application form. Complete results must be listed. It is not sufficient to give only **selected sub-tests.**

Results

Under Results on the application form, the therapist may elaborate on the assessment results and provide comment on the student's ability and level of participation in the following areas:

- Sport and playground activities
- Recording of schoolwork
- Friendships and social environment
- Movement around classroom and school
- Safety within the school environment
- Self care
- Attending to the learning environment and level of task performance.

Assessments and Tests

Primary Assessments (at least one primary assessment must be used)

Assessments used may include:

- *School Function Assessment (SFA)*
  Coster, Deeney, Haltiwanger and Haley, 1998
  Age Range: Kindergarten to Year 6
- *Miller Function & Participation Scales (MUN-FUN-PS)*
  Lucy J. Miller, 2006
  Age Range: 2 years 6 months to 7 years 11 months
- *Bruininks-Oseretsky Test of Motor Proficiency, Second edition (BOT2)*
  Bruininks and Bruininks, 2005
  Age Range: 4 years to 21 years (short form not accepted)
- *Movement Assessment Battery for Children, Second Edition (Movement ABC – 2)*
  Sheila E. Henderson and David A. Sugden, 2007
  Age Range: 3 years to 16 years 11 months
- *Peabody Developmental Motor Scales, Second Edition (PDMS-2)*
  Age Range: Birth to 5 years
- School Assessment of Motor and Process Skills (School AMPS)

Additional Assessments

The following tests may be used in conjunction with the above assessments but will not be sufficient as the sole assessment:

- *Handwriting Speed Test*
  Margaret Wallen, Mary-Anne Bonney and Lyn Lennox
  Age Range: Year 3 to Year 12
- *Sensory Profile*
  Dunn, 1999
  Age Range: 3 to 10 years
- *Sensory Profile School Companion*
  Dunn, 2006
  Age Range: 3 years to 11 years 11 months
- *Developmental Test of Visual Motor Integration, Fifth or Sixth Edition*
  Beery – Buktenica
  Age Range: 2 years to 18 years
- *Motor Free Visual Perception Test*
  Colarusso and Hammill
  Age Range: 4 years to 85 years
- *Developmental Test of Visual Perception Second Edition (DTVP-2)*
- *Detailed Assessment of Speed and Handwriting (DASH)*
  Barnett, Henderson, Scheib and Schulz, 2007
  Age range: 9 years to 16 years11 months
- *Sensory Processing Measure (SPM)*
  Parham, Ecker, Kuhaneck, Henry and Glennon, 2007
  Age range: 5 years to12 years

State Support Services Funding
Speech Therapy

Funding is targeted at students in their early years of education to maximise the benefits of intervention. Positive intervention for this age group is likely to have the greatest impact on long-term educational outcomes for the individual student.

Schools may apply for funding to provide speech therapy services for students in Prep to Year 4, to provide services for students with a range of communication disorders which have a significant impact on schooling.

It is expected that there will be consultation between the speech pathologist and the school.

Targeted Funds

Funds will be approved for:

- Students in Prep to Year 4 only
- A maximum of three years for any individual student.

Students of Non-English Speaking Background

Speech therapy funding is provided for students with demonstrated communication disorders. For students with a non-English speaking background, a diagnosis of language impairment is difficult to confirm prior to a sustained period of education in English. Students will still be learning English for a number of years, and may lack proficiency early on, but can be expected to show consistent progress. Where the expected progress is not made, a language test may be administered after 1.5 years of education in an English environment (can include only one year of preschool education) and the results will be considered for funding purposes.

Where a student has not had formal education for 1.5 years in English, an application will be considered if evidence is provided for coexisting diagnosis (e.g. Severe Language Disorder, Intellectual Disability, Autism Spectrum Disorder). When assessing students with a non-English speaking background, information about the student's language proficiency in their first and subsequent languages is vital to be able to ascertain whether a student has a language impairment or whether their language abilities are a result of their language learning experiences.

Speech Therapy Program

The speech pathologist should outline the goals and strategies to be used for the therapy. A new therapy plan with discussion of progress made must be submitted with the application. The therapy plan may include:

- Direct individual therapy
- Small group therapy if appropriate
- Consultancy and provision of information to teachers and support staff
- Training of staff to implement an individual plan
- Curriculum development and modification.

Funding Categories

Moderate to Severe Language Impairment

In this category, language impairment can be associated with a range of conditions.

Funding will be determined by:

- Scores on one approved language test
- Extent of the impact on educational progress
- Therapy plan provided by the speech pathologist.

Evidence

- Report from a speech pathologist including a new therapy plan for 2013.

Moderate to Severe Articulation Disorder

Mild articulation difficulties cannot be funded.

Wherever possible standardised assessments should be used to establish the severity of the difficulty. Specific information should be provided about the student's difficulties.

Eligibility will be determined by:

- Nature of articulation disorder: e.g. dyspraxia, dysarthria, phonological disorder
- Sounds correctly produced, sounds in error and manner of production, phonological processes as applicable and consistency of error patterns
- Level of intelligibility
- Points below expected scores according to standardised norms
- Impact of the problem on social, emotional and educational progress
- Therapy plan provided by the speech pathologist.

Evidence

- The speech pathologist must reassess the student and provide new assessment results every year.
- Report from a speech pathologist including a new therapy plan for 2013.

Moderate to Severe Voice Disorder

Mild voice difficulties cannot be funded.

Eligibility will be determined by:

- Ratings on standardised measures for pitch, loudness and quality
- The impact of the problem on social, emotional and educational progress
- Therapy plan provided by the speech pathologist.

Evidence

- The speech pathologist must reassess the student and provide new assessment results every year.
- Report from a speech pathologist including a new therapy plan for 2013

AND

- Report from an Ear, Nose and Throat specialist

Moderate to Severe Fluency Disorder

Mild fluency disorders cannot be funded.

It is expected that the therapy plan will follow the Lidcombe Program which best research evidence demonstrates to be most effective intervention for this age group (Jones, Onslow, Packman et al (2005) Randomised controlled trial of the Lidcombe program of early stuttering intervention, British Medical Journal).

Eligibility will be determined by:

- Ratings of percentages of words or syllables stuttered
- Number and severity of associated secondary behaviours
- The impact of the problem on social, emotional and educational progress
- Therapy plan provided by the speech pathologist.

Evidence

- The speech pathologist must reassess the student and provide new assessment results every year.
- Report from a speech pathologist, including a new therapy plan for 2013.

Alternative Communication

Eligibility for students in need of an alternative or augmentative non-speech communication system such as a communication board, signing or electronic device will be determined on the basis of expert reports provided.

Evidence

- Report from a speech pathologist including a therapy plan

AND

- Report from relevant medical specialist.

State Support Services Funding
Visiting Teacher: Physically Disabled or Chronic Health Impairment

A separate application must be submitted for Visiting Teacher Service.

The role of the visiting teacher includes consultancy, direct teaching and liaison with relevant agencies and professionals. Visits may be long or short term. Frequency depends on the student's educational needs related to the impairment/disability.

Limited funds are available to support the provision of visiting teacher services. Independent schools need to engage their own visiting teachers.

Philosophy of Visiting Teacher (VT):

- VT can work directly with a pupil who is unable to attend school, or has missed a large amount of school due to a chronic health
- VT could consult with school for curriculum modification
- VT will liaise with other members of student's support team (e.g. Occupational therapist/Physiotherapist/Speech therapist) and work closely with classroom teacher and integration aide to set up the optimal learning environment.

Health Impaired Students not Attending School Regularly

- Homebound students unable to attend school due to severe health impairment
- Students frequently absent from school for lengthy periods of time due to a serious health impairment, e.g. leukaemia, haemophilia, cystic fibrosis who require services when absences have adversely affected school work.

Students Attending School

Include students with a physical disability, e.g. cerebral palsy, muscular dystrophy, spina bifida, arthritis or health impairment, e.g. cancer, severe asthma, heart disease, cystic fibrosis.

Hospitalised Students

The student's absence from school must exceed four weeks.

Areas of educational need would include:

- Mobility
- Self care
- Fine motor coordination
- Communication
- Use of equipment
- Organisation
- Activities for daily living.

Evidence

- Medical statement or evidence demonstrating that the impairment severely hinders the student's ability to participate in education.
- It is strongly recommended that an appropriately qualified visiting teacher be engaged by the school. In this case a report from a visiting teacher is required.
- However, it is acknowledged that in some circumstances it is difficult for a school to find an available visiting teacher. In those cases a school must submit a detailed plan of service.

Applications

- Have pediatrician complete and sign Physical Disability Assessment Report
- Attach documentation from visiting teacher endorsing the need for the service

OR

Attach a detailed plan of service by the school.

For **Australian Government Funding: Physical Disability / Chronic Health Impairment**, please see page 16.

State Support Services Funding
Visiting Teacher: Vision Impaired

A separate application must be submitted for Visiting Teacher Service. Limited funds are available to support the provision of visiting teacher services. Independent schools need to engage their own visiting teachers.

The role of the visiting teacher includes consultancy, direct teaching and liaison with relevant agencies and professionals. Visits may be long or short term. Frequency depends on the student's educational needs related to the impairment/disability.

Additional levels of funding are available for visiting teacher service for students learning Braille.

Students with a vision impairment within the partially sighted range as determined by the World Health Organisation criteria, i.e. Visual Acuity worse than 6/18 (with best available correction) and/or field loss greater than 20 degrees of arc. Applications will be evaluated in consultation with the Education Vision Assessment Clinic.

Areas of Educational Need would Include:

- Training in the use of residual vision
- Training in the use of optical aids
- Development of tactile and auditory skills to supplement vision
- Use of specialist equipment
- Orientation and mobility training
- Development of Braille skills/low vision reading skills.

Evidence

- Report from the Education Vision Assessment Clinic or an ophthalmologist.
- It must be demonstrated that the vision impairment hinders the student's education.
- It is strongly recommended that an appropriately qualified visiting teacher be engaged by the school. In this case a report from a visiting teacher is required.
- However, it is acknowledged that in some circumstances it is difficult for a school to find an available visiting teacher. In those cases a school must submit a detailed plan of service.

Applications

- Have ophthalmologist complete and sign Assessment Report
- Attach documentation from visiting teacher endorsing the need for the service

OR

- Attach a detailed plan of service by the school.

For **Australian Government Funding: Vision Impairment**, please see page 14.

State Support Services Funding
Visiting Teacher: Hearing Impaired

A separate application must be submitted for Visiting Teacher Service. Limited funds are available to support the provision of visiting teacher services. Independent schools need to engage their own visiting teachers.

The role of the visiting teacher includes consultancy, direct teaching and liaison with relevant agencies and professionals. Visits may be long or short term. Frequency depends on the student's educational needs related to the impairment/disability.

Students with a bilateral, usually sensorineural hearing loss. Students with a mild loss will be considered for funding where it can be demonstrated that support is required.

Areas of Educational Need would Include:

- The development of receptive and expressive oral and written language
- The development of auditory skills (residual hearing, optimum use of hearing aids, lip reading skills), speech
- Independent learning skills e.g. coping in less than ideal auditory conditions.

Evidence

- Report from a registered audiologist with audiogram. Students with a unilateral cochlear implant will also require a statement from an audiologist. Students with a bilateral cochlear implant will require only an audiologist statement. It must be demonstrated that the hearing impairment hinders the student's education.
- It is strongly recommended that an appropriately qualified visiting teacher be engaged by the school. In this case a report from a visiting teacher is required.
- However, it is acknowledged that in some circumstances it is difficult for a school to find an available visiting teacher. In those cases a school must submit a detailed plan of service.

Applications

- Have Audiologist complete and sign Assessment Report
- Attach documentation from visiting teacher endorsing the need for the service

OR

- Attach a detailed plan of service by the school.

For **Australian Government Funding: Hearing Impairment**, please see page 15.

Secondary Schools Language Consultancy Program:
Addressing the Needs of Students with Language Learning Difficulties

The focus of this program will be on development of teacher expertise and not on therapy for students. A limited number of consultancies will be offered to independent secondary schools. Selected schools will be able to engage a speech pathologist of their choice to undertake this program. Interested schools should submit an expression of interest form.

Aims:

- To provide teachers with specialist advice and education about language disorder.
- To support teachers in the development of strategies to make learning more accessible for students with a language disorder.
- To assist schools to develop relationships with speech pathologists.

Schools will:

- Identify a target group of teachers who will participate in the program e.g. Year 7 teachers, maths/science teachers at years 8 & 9, or VCE teachers.
- Nominate a school leader to take responsibility for the coordination of the project.
- Coordinate timetabling and meetings to ensure that the program can run smoothly.
- Engage a speech pathologist of their choice for the program. The speech pathologist may or may not be engaged with working with individual students at the school.
- Attend a mandatory briefing meeting with the nominated speech pathologist regarding the running of the project.
- Complete a final report on the program in a format provided, outlining the work of the speech pathologist with the teachers involved.

Independent Schools Victoria will:

- Provide funding for up to eight days consultancy with a speech pathologist for each school. A consultancy rate will be paid to the speech pathologist.
- Provide CRT to facilitate teacher release for participation in the program.
- Provide a mandatory briefing on the project for schools and their nominated speech pathologist.
- Provide a framework for the program with a manual for the speech pathologist and CD Rom with information and sample presentation which may be used by the speech pathologist.

Outline of program:
Stage 1 – Education and Consultation

- The speech pathologist will meet with the nominated school leader and key school contacts to plan the program
- The speech pathologist will conduct at least one training session with the target group which will include:
  - An outline of the project
  - Comprehensive information about language and communication disorders and their impact on learning.
  - Identification of students with language disorder including use of a checklist.
  - Discussion of issues for secondary schools.
  - Completion of a teacher questionnaire which will provide information about the knowledge, priorities, perceptions and concerns of teachers.
- Teachers will organise completion of a student survey regarding their learning – what works for them, what happens in their classes
- The speech pathologist will meet with the key contacts to discuss results of surveys and to plan Stage 2. Priorities will be set and the delivery option appropriate to the needs of the teachers will be selected. Possible modules include:
  - Planning for students with language learning difficulties
  - Developing subject specific vocabulary including strategies for teachers and students
  - Organisation of physical environment and information
  - Supporting high needs students
  - Modification – oral, assignments, assessments.
  - Effective strategies
  - High level comprehension skills – oral, reading and thinking skills.

Stage 2
- Stage 2 consists of a cyclical program of student observation and teacher feedback sessions, alternating with small group workshops which focus on specific skill development, teacher collaboration and the sharing of strategies and resources

Stage 3
- Teacher reflection and feedback
- Final report from both speech pathologist and participating school to Independent Schools Victoria.

Application

Application will be by expression of interest. Information will be sent to schools in August 2012.

Minor Capital Works
and Equipment

Funding is available for minor capital works projects and equipment which provide essential access to the school and the curriculum for students with disabilities.

The maximum grant will be $30,000. Part funding for a project or piece of equipment may be offered if eligible applications from schools exceed the available funding.

It is expected that the school will make a contribution to the cost of the project. If this is not possible, the Principal should contact the Manager, Student Services at Independent Schools Victoria on 9825 7204 to discuss the situation.

Minor Capital Works

- Assistance is available to non-government schools for the provision of minor building projects. Schools have a general obligation to provide access to their site and buildings for students with disabilities, and to meet building standards for all new buildings and all major renovations. This funding is not designed to cover such basic obligations

- However, new enrolments, or deteriorating conditions and/or changes of circumstance for a student may necessitate minor capital works

- Prior to making an application, it is the school's responsibility to discuss the proposed works with their local government body and to ensure that town planning and building regulations are met.

- Funds may be allocated to assist with alterations to meet the needs of individual students. These may include ramps, widening doorways, changing a path etc. Only projects that increase access or are essential for a student's learning will be considered

- Funding is available for projects valued at $30,000 or less. Consideration will not be given to funding part of a larger project being undertaken by a school

- Schools proposing capital works and equipment projects estimated to cost more than $30,000 should make contact with the Victorian Independent Schools Block Grant Authority (VIS BGA) to discuss the availability of capital funding under the Australian Government's Capital Grants Program. Please contact VIS BGA on 9825 7200 for further details.

Equipment

- Funding is available to assist with the purchase of specialist equipment necessary for the student to participate safely in school activities, and to access the curriculum

- It must be demonstrated that the need for the equipment is directly related to the student's disability or impairment and the difficulties accessing schooling which result from it

- Computer hardware and general software will not be funded. Specialist software related to the student's disability may be considered.

Evidence

- Applications must be supported by a written endorsement from a visiting teacher for Visually Impaired, Hearing Impaired or Physically Disabled, an occupational therapist or physiotherapist or other appropriate professional with relevant expertise.

- All applications must include complete descriptions and commercial quotations for equipment and from contractors for minor capital works. Applications submitted without quotations will not be considered.

- Site plans and photographs may assist the Committee in its deliberations.

- The eligibility process may include a school visit.

Notes

Independent Schools Victoria Role

Independent Schools Victoria is dedicated to developing and supporting independent education. We represent 221 Member Schools with an enrolment of more than 129,000 students.
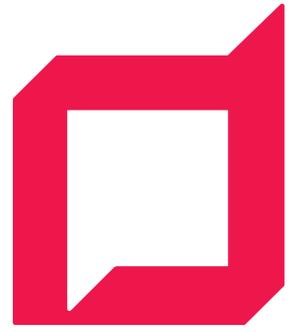
As a peak body, we:

- advocate excellence in education
- protect the right of parents to choose where and how their children are educated
- work to improve funding for the independent sector
- represent the interests of Member Schools to governments and the community
- conduct research to identify and implement best practice in education
- develop policy options for education.

As a membership organisation, we:

- administer state and federal funding programs for all independent schools
- conduct professional learning seminars for teaching and other staff
- provide information on governance, compliance and accountability to ensure that Member Schools meet government regulations and funding requirements
- provide advice to Member Schools on legislative and regulatory requirements
- develop and deliver cost-effective products and services – supporting Member Schools to fund and provide quality educational outcomes
- provide employee relations information.