

NDIS FUNDED THERAPY POLICY 2025-2027

BACKGROUND

To allow Bolinda Primary School to continue to provide optimal access to education for all students, a policy to ensure NDIS funded therapists do not diminish this role, is required.

This policy is based on information from the [Victorian Department of Education](#).

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

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

PURPOSE

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

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

OBJECTIVE

- To ensure that Bolinda Primary School meets its responsibilities in supporting students with their educational attainment.
- To ensure clarity regarding NDIS therapists attending Bolinda Primary School to observe or work with students.
- To establish clear guidelines for, and information sharing with, external therapists.

SCOPE

The NDIS provides choice and control for children with disability and their parents/carers on how disability services and supports are delivered.

As a result, school principals may receive requests from parents/carers to allow NDIS funded therapists to:

- observe a student in the classroom or in the school environment
- attend a Student Support Group meeting to monitor and tailor the support provided to the student.
- conduct an assessment on a student
- undertake regular therapy sessions onsite

These requests can generally be accommodated by schools and complement holistic student planning and support processes. Schools must develop their own school level policies and procedures to effectively screen, manage and supervise all visitors and should refer to these resources.

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

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

POLICY

School based therapist report writing and provision:

- Bolinda Primary School will provide copied versions of any information/reports that the school has previously obtained from educational or allied health professionals to parents to assist them in providing supporting evidence for NDIS planning, as requested.
- Bolinda Primary School will not arrange for or pay for new assessments to be completed, or provide evidence of disability support, for the sole purpose of NDIS funding which do not directly benefit the child and his/her schooling.

NDIS OBSERVATIONS

- Observations within the classroom from NDIS therapists may occur on a once per term basis provided that these occur without disruption to the class, and NDIS therapy goals overlap with the school environment.
- There must be at least two weeks' notice to the school (via the school office) prior to any requested school visit to observe a student. This request for observation requires the completion of the Request Form and Parent Consent Form by the NDIS therapist in collaboration with the student's family and should include the goals and expected impact of the observation on therapy. The following must be attached to the Request Form and Parent Consent Form;
 - Working With Children Check
 - **Certificates of Currency:** public liability insurance, professional indemnity insurance
 - Working With Children Check or Criminal History check
 - NDIS Worker Screening Check
 - Evidence of appropriate qualifications

- Evidence of insurance and NDIS registration
- Bolinda Primary School may negotiate a better observation time if the one requested by the NDIS therapist is not suitable.
- Collaboration with school therapists and teachers is expected for issues directly relating to overlapping with school therapist roles and responsibilities. It is expected that school and NDIS therapists have similar goals and approaches, as discussed with parents/carers.
- Communication with school staff by NDIS therapists will need to be planned and succinct given the volume of correspondence from NDIS therapists. NDIS therapists should communicate with school staff via email or during scheduled Student Support Group meetings (if invited by the parent/carer to participate).
- NDIS therapists will provide relevant school staff, copies of their reports, programs and recommendations as appropriate.
- The school will provide NDIS funded therapists with information as necessary once parental permission is provided and will offer observational/therapy visits

Note: an NDIS funded therapist observing a student in the classroom or in the school environment should only observe a particular child and with that child's parental/carer consent. The observer should:

- only make written notes focusing solely on the relevant child
- protect the privacy of other students in the class by not recording anything that in any way could identify them
- not make any audio or video recordings of the class.

NDIS FUNDED THERAPY ON SCHOOL GROUNDS

Principals may also receive requests for NDIS funded therapists to deliver therapy on school grounds or virtually during school hours.

- In general, NDIS therapists will not be permitted to provide therapy to students on an individual basis in the school during the school day.
- The Principal has the discretion to permit NDIS funded therapists to provide individual therapy, in the school, in particular circumstances where they deem it necessary to maximise outcomes for students. In making such a decision, consideration will be given to the relative benefits of an external therapist providing therapy versus the anticipated impact on student learning, disruption to classes, ability to provide supervision, the availability of an appropriate space to work in and timing of such requests.
- Following consideration of individual requests from parents/carers for NDIS funded therapists to work in the school, the Principal (or nominated school personnel) will provide a written response of their decision within 10 days, and will articulate reasons for granting or refusing NDIS funded therapy in school during school hours.
- Where the Principal approves a NDIS funded therapist to provide individual therapy during school hours, the Principal must then be satisfied that appropriate checks have been put in place to allow access in a manner that is compatible with the school's Duty of Care. This will include:
 - Working With Children Check or Criminal History check
 - NDIS Worker Screening Check
 - Evidence of appropriate qualifications
 - Evidence of insurance and NDIS registration

- Documentation regarding licence to use school premises and information sharing
- Compliance with Child Safe Standards
- Certificates of Currency

Requests for NDIS funded therapy to be delivered at school or virtually during school hours should be approved unless the specific circumstances raise practical, legal and/or educational issues that make the approval of the request unfeasible or unreasonable.

When deciding whether to approve a request for NDIS funded therapy in schools, principals may consider a variety of factors including:

- individual circumstances of the student
- student access to the curriculum
- Child Safe Standards and duty of care including the ability of school staff to supervise the student while the NDIS funded therapy is being provided
- practical and administrative capacity
- anti-discrimination obligations.

Ultimately, the decision rests with the school principal.

There is no legal obligation on principals to approve a request for NDIS funded therapy. This is because NDIS funded therapy is generally not required to enable the student to access their education.

COMMUNICATION PLAN

This policy will be communicated to all families in the school community by the following means

- Being published on our school website
- Being provided in hard copy to a parent should they wish to have a copy

An NDIS Provider requesting an observation or regular therapy on school grounds will be provided a copy of this policy via email by the Principal.

POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Policy last reviewed	February 2025
Consultation to occur	School Council meeting 13 th February 2025
Approved by	Principal
Next scheduled review date	February 2027