



**Brisbane  
Catholic  
Education**

teaching • challenging • transforming

**SUPPORTING STUDENTS  
WITH DISABILITIES AT SCHOOL  
A GUIDE FOR PARENTS**

UPDATED NOVEMBER 2015

## ***Welcome***

This publication aims to give a broad understanding of the support available for students with disability throughout the Archdiocese of Brisbane.

This guide has been compiled to support the partnership between you and the school in the education of your child. It provides information that will assist you in making contact with schools, enrolment procedures and the ongoing support of your child's education.

It gives an overview of the school's services and processes, and what you can do to achieve the best outcomes for your child. It emphasises the importance of the partnership and shared decision making regarding the needs and adjustments that are considered to promote your child's learning and wellbeing.

This guide is a starting point to help you and your family make informed decisions about your child's education. Advice about where you can find more detailed information is also included.

If there are any questions arising from this information, you are encouraged to speak with the principal or classroom teacher of the school your child attends or the school you are considering for your child.

At the end of this document you will find a list of acronyms and a glossary of terms to assist you in your understanding of the educational terms and processes used in Brisbane Catholic Education (BCE).

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## Section 1:

### Considering Catholic Schooling

Brisbane Catholic Education is founded on gospel values. With more than 130 schools from Coolangatta to Childers just south of Bundaberg, our schools are at the service of our students, their families and society, and aim to provide quality teaching and learning outcomes for all who are enrolled from Prep to Year 12.

Brisbane Catholic Education, through partnerships with parents, governments and the community, provide opportunities to develop social responsibility, self-discipline and Christian values for all its students. It nurtures and supports the community in the faith journey.

Schools within the Archdiocese fall into two categories: parish schools and Archdiocesan schools. There are also about 20 schools administered by religious orders which operate autonomously and do not fall under the authority of Brisbane Catholic Education.

The Catholic Education, Archdiocese of Brisbane website [www.bne.catholic.edu.au](http://www.bne.catholic.edu.au) provides information regarding Catholic education.

### Making Contact

Information on schools prior to enrolment can be obtained by:

- Contacting the principal of the relevant school
- Accessing the relevant school's website
- Contacting School Services North (for schools north of the Brisbane River) 3490 1700
- Contacting School Services South (for schools south of the Brisbane River) 3440 7900

### Choosing a School

The Brisbane Catholic Education website has an online school directory. This will assist you in identifying the locality of each school in the Archdiocese and accessing specific details for each school.

The Department of Education and Training (DET) also has an online schools directory which lists all state and non-state schools in Queensland and provides links to school websites. It's a useful starting point to help identify all schools in your area.

It may be helpful to talk to other parents who have children at the school you are considering for your child.

Note:

There are two Catholic types of schooling:

- **Religious Institute Schools** -These schools/colleges are operated by a particular religious order e.g. All Hallows' School is operated by the Sisters of Mercy. Religious Institute schools are independent of Brisbane Catholic Education and you contact them directly.
- **BCE Schools** – These schools are run and operated by Brisbane Catholic Education.

Thus when making enquiries about a school, it is important to establish whether the school/college is a Religious Institute or a BCE school.

When choosing a school, consider your child's particular needs along with the support available at the school. It may be useful to write a list of questions about schooling to help guide your discussions with school staff, other parents and community agencies.

**You might like to ask about:**

- religious education curriculum
- how to best support your child at the school
- communication between home and school
- what support is available
- the size of the school
- strengths of the environment for your child
- availability of specialist staff to help your child
- technologies available to help your child
- the physical location of the school
- any difficulties your child may have with access around the school
- parent support groups
- when and how to enrol
- school hours
- uniform policy
- fees and levies
- assessment and reporting procedures
- homework and assignment expectations
- available resources e.g. library, internet or computers
- extracurricular activities
- amenities e.g. tuckshop or out-of school-hours care
- parental involvement e.g. parents and friends associations, volunteering.

## Enrolment

The Principal, as the Executive Director's delegated educational leader within the school, carries responsibility for the enrolment of all students.

The Policy Statements, Enrolment of Students and Students with Disability can be accessed on the public website ([www.bne.catholic.edu.au](http://www.bne.catholic.edu.au)). *These policies are located in: Students & Parents / Inclusive Education.*

For students with disability or for students who require extra enrolment support, the *Enrolment Application and Support Procedures for Students requiring Significant Educational Adjustments* (EASP) are used. These procedures reflect the ongoing commitment of Brisbane Catholic Education towards inclusive practices in schools; guided by the principles of justice as reflected in Church, educational and legal areas.

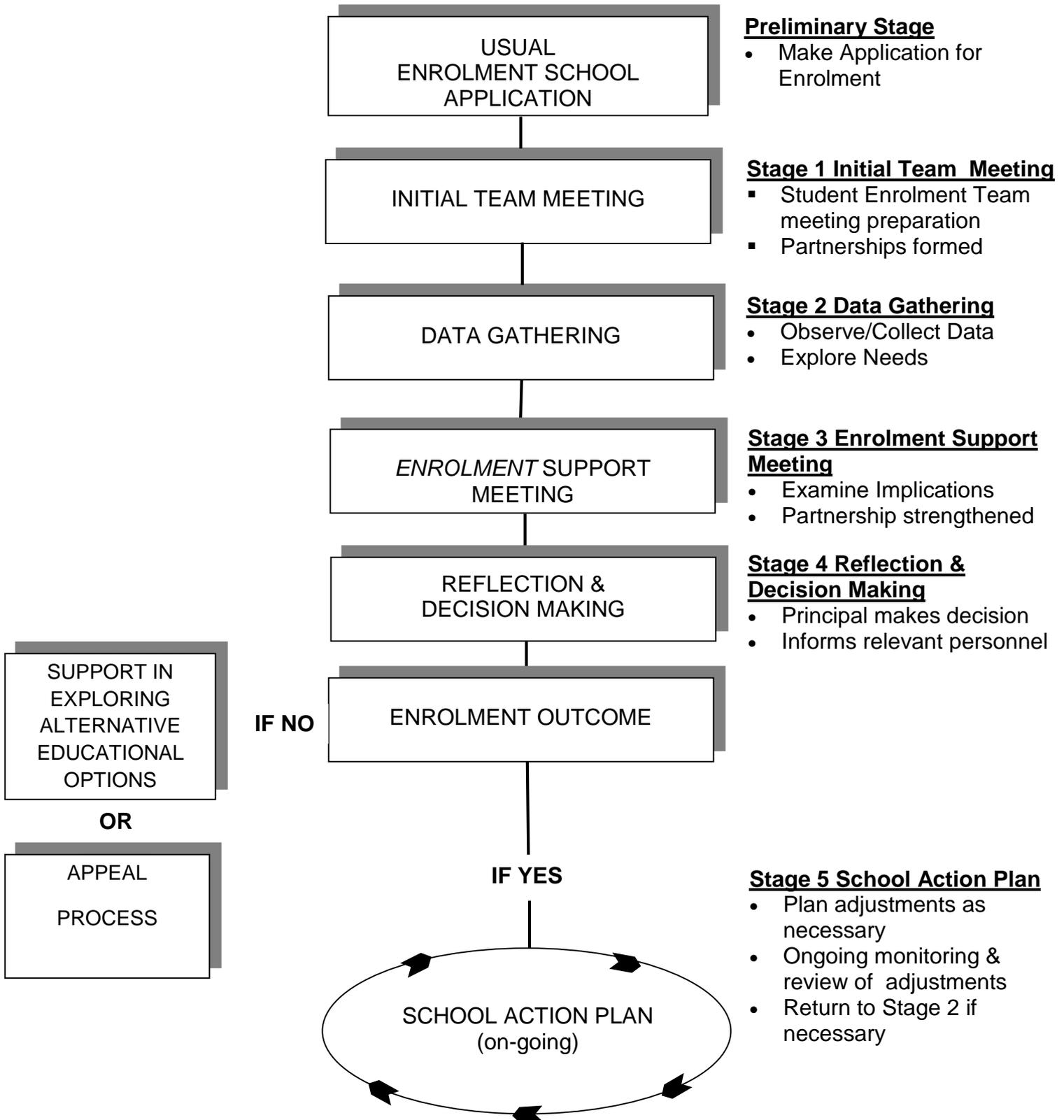
The EASP are applied when application for enrolment is made on behalf of a student and it is considered likely that significant educational adjustments will need to be made to support the student's initial and continuing enrolment in the school.

The enrolment of students requiring significant educational adjustments is the responsibility of the whole school as a community within the Church. *The EASP* encourages all participants in the education process (parents, students, teachers, school leadership, inclusive education representatives) to share as partners, the responsibility for successful outcomes for all students.

These procedures seek to reveal and clarify the needs of the student and to identify the educational adjustments and implications of these for the school, the family and the student. An adjustment is any change made to help a student participate at school, to learn, and to feel comfortable and be safe.

Adjustments are made for students with disability to enable them to access the curriculum, achieve curriculum outcomes and participate in school life.

## Enrolment Application and Support Procedures for Students requiring Significant Educational Adjustments



## **Being a Partner with Your School**

A Catholic school is a community within the Church built on collaborative and constructive partnerships involving parents, staff, students, parishes and government. Active participation by each of these partners is an essential element for success in our educational community. Our Catholic schools enjoy good relationships with parents and carers and, given the strong evidence of the benefits of parent-teacher collaboration for improving student learning, a high degree of importance is placed on partnership formation.

BCE has a commitment to maintaining open communication with key partners within and beyond the school communities. Every parent makes a valuable contribution to the life of the school community. A major aim of the school is contact and dialogue with students' families to promote a shared educational vision. School boards, Parents and Friends Associations and links with Parish Pastoral Councils are important ways in which the members of the school community and the church can work together in the important mission of Catholic Education.

*The environment of a Catholic school needs to reflect community, not simply as an ideal taught, but as a value realised. (Thomas H. Groome, What Makes A School Catholic?)*

## **Keeping Records**

Many parents find it very worthwhile to keep organised notes and records about their children. Copies of relevant documentation may be requested at the initial enrolment meeting or as part of the data gathering for the EASP. It is helpful to come prepared to any meetings regarding your child's progress.

To assist with information required at enrolment and transition times, it is useful to keep the following records.

### **General Notes about Your Child**

- goals, dreams, aspirations
- dates and ages of developmental milestones if relevant
- notes from meetings
- research information related to your child's needs, potential interventions or strategies
- current information about your child's condition that will inform the support team

**List of Contacts**

- community support staff, including names, agencies and contact numbers
- paediatricians and doctors involved in diagnosing and/or caring for your child, include their names, area of speciality, phone numbers and addresses
- other specialists e.g. speech pathologists, physiotherapists, occupational therapists

**School Records**

- any relevant school correspondence, with the date noted
- individual education planning/curriculum planning
- report cards
- records of educational assessment, standardised tests and adjustments
- school transportation details e.g. contact names, bus numbers and routes if applicable

**Medical Records**

- record of developmental checks and vaccinations – please note that Queensland Health provides all new Queensland parents with a Personal Health Record to record this information. If you need one, contact any hospital maternity ward.
- a record of medical interventions e.g. details of medications, side effects dosages and purposes

## Section 2:

### Adjustments and Education

#### Commonwealth and State Legislation

There are Commonwealth and State laws that protect people with disability and their families from discrimination and harassment.

- (1) The *Commonwealth Disability Discrimination Act (DDA)* provides protection for everyone in Australia against discrimination based on disability.
- (2) The *Disability Standards for Education 2005* is subordinate legislation which clarifies the obligations of education and training service providers and the rights of people with disability under the DDA.

*The Disability Standards for Education (2005)*, formulated under the *Disability Discrimination Act (1992)* clarify the obligations of educational providers to respect the rights of the student and to explore, in partnership with families, the most reasonable solutions that balance the interests of all parties. These Standards give students and prospective students with disability the right to education and training opportunities on the same basis as students without a disability. Education providers have an obligation to make changes to reasonably accommodate the needs of students with disability.

Education providers are required to put in place strategies and programs to prevent harassment and victimisation. They must also ensure that staff and students know it is not lawful to harass or victimise students with disability, or students who have associates with disability. Reasonable steps must be taken to ensure that staff and students know what to do if harassment or victimisation occurs.

The Queensland Catholic Education Commission (QCEC) *Inclusive Practices in Catholic Schools in Queensland* Position Statement (2014) advocates that Catholic school authorities commit to establishing policies and procedures that incorporate inclusive educational practices in their operations.

Brisbane Catholic Education *Position Statement Students with Disability* addresses the particular support needs of students with disability. It is linked closely to the values and goals of the *BCE Learning and Framework (2013)* and to the *Inclusive Practices in Queensland Catholic Schools (2014)*. This leads to the provision of programs and services that support those students with disability enrolled in our schools to participate fully in quality Catholic inclusive schooling.

This documents can be accessed on the public website ([www.bne.catholic.edu.au](http://www.bne.catholic.edu.au)) Students & Parents / Inclusive Education.

## **Inclusive Education**

In Brisbane Catholic Education, the term 'Inclusive Education' is used to describe the support of children and young people with diverse needs including those with disability. The term inclusion is used in the spirit and intention of the *Disability Standards for Education, 2005*.

Teachers make adjustments and have a commitment to provide quality learning opportunities to ensure access to the Australian curriculum for each student. There is a wide range of adjustments that are possible:

- providing specialised equipment to help a student communicate with a speech /language impairment
- modifying a classroom to make it accessible for a student with a physical impairment
- making class notes available for a student with a vision impairment
- adjusting the level of complexity of lesson content for a student with an intellectual disability
- providing additional support to help a student with disability in the classroom
- giving extra time to complete an exam or assessment task
- adjustments to school organisation – flexible timetable, organisation of classes, time for planning, school team structures
- modifications to buildings
- adjustments to curriculum organisation, delivery and assessment
- specific targeted programs
- provision of specialist support
- individualised plans such as behaviour support plans or health care plans.

*(Education for Children with a Disability –A Guide for Parents: Department of Education and Training and The Arts, 2008) (Shaddock et al. (2007, p28)*

## **Resourcing the Student's Learning**

Brisbane Catholic Education provides resourcing for students with disability through the Student Learning Enhancement program (SLE). This resourcing is a combination of Commonwealth, State and BCE funds.

School personnel discern the most appropriate and effective distribution of these resources to support the educational adjustments of its student population. As a parent you will be provided with the opportunity to discuss your child's educational adjustments during scheduled planning and monitoring meetings.

## The Education Adjustment Program (EAP)

Brisbane Catholic Education acknowledges its responsibility to make adjustments for students with disability to enable them to access the curriculum, achieve curriculum outcomes and participate in the life of the school.

The Education Adjustment Program (EAP) is a process for identifying and responding to the educational needs of students with disability. It initiates an ongoing cycle of documented data collection, planning, program development, intervention, evaluation and review. Various personnel, depending on the category of disability, provide support to schools. (Refer to Section 3 for information regarding support personnel)

Not every student with disability is included in the EAP process. However, even if your child does not meet criteria for inclusion in the EAP, the school will continue to work towards providing the required educational adjustments for your child.

The disability categories for EAP, identified by QCEC and Brisbane Catholic Education are:

- Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)
- Hearing Impairment (HI)
- Intellectual Disability (ID)
- Physical Impairment (PI)
- Social Emotional Disorder (SED)
- Speech–Language Impairment (SLI)
- Vision Impairment (VI)

<b>Disability Area</b>	<b>Who Can Assess or Diagnose</b>
Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)	Paediatrician, Psychiatrist, Neurologist
Hearing Impairment (HI)	Audiologist, Otolaryngologist
Intellectual Disability (ID)	BCE Guidance Counsellor
Physical Impairment (PI)	Paediatrician, Neurologist, Orthopaedic Surgeon, Geneticist, Rheumatologist
Social Emotional Disorder (SED)	Paediatrician, Psychiatrist, Neurologist
Speech Language Impairment (SLI)	Speech Pathologist
Vision Impairment (VI)	Ophthalmologist, Paediatrician, Neurologist

## **EAP Verification**

Verification is the process where BCE verifiers determine whether a student's disability meets the EAP criteria. Before verification takes place, specialised assessment or diagnosis will need to occur. Some assessment or diagnosis can be completed by school personnel, whereas other assessments and diagnoses will need to be completed by specialists outside the school.

BCE has specific personnel who verify for each disability category. The diagnosis is the first stage of the verification process. The school support team then completes the relevant EAP verification documentation which includes the identified activity limitations and participation restrictions requiring significant education adjustments. The verifier considers all information included in the documentation sent to BCE by the school to determine eligibility for verification.

## Section 3:

Brisbane Catholic Education schools have as a guiding principle, the pastoral care of all within their community and in particular the students.

Information regarding student support can be accessed through [www.bne.catholic.edu.au](http://www.bne.catholic.edu.au)

## Inclusive Education Programs

### 1. Additional Personal Support (APS)

The purpose of this program is to enable the school/college to implement a Health Management Plan to support the inclusion of students with significant medically related health and/or hygiene requirements.

### 2. Additional Intervention Support Early Years (AIS)

The diagnosis of a disability in the Early Years (Prep – Year 2) can be a particularly challenging and lengthy process. In response, BCE has established AIS as a dedicated resource to assist schools in the support of students requiring significant educational adjustments whose verification under the EAP has been delayed.

## Support Personnel

### 1. Support Teacher: Inclusive Education (ST:IE)

The Support Teacher: Inclusive Education works in collaborative partnership with school/college leadership, teachers, parents, consultants/education officers and other professionals, in fostering a school/college culture that enhances the educational outcomes for all students.

#### **This is achieved through:**

- provision of a range of services at student, class and whole school levels
- developing a whole school commitment to inclusive practices in order to improve student learning outcomes.

### 2. Consultant/Education Officer: Inclusive Education (C/EO:IE)

The Consultant/Education Officer: Inclusive Education has key partnership responsibilities with the school/college leadership, teachers, parents, and other professionals in fostering a culture that enhances the education outcomes for students in the area of inclusive education.

**This is achieved through:**

- professional support of Support Teacher :Inclusive Education (ST:IE)
- supporting inclusive education processes e.g. EASP, EAP
- professional learning.

**3. Speech Pathologist (SP)**

The Speech Pathologist has key partnership responsibilities with the school/college leadership, teachers and other professionals to enhance spoken and written language skills of students.

The Speech Pathologist supports school communities to identify students with significant educational needs arising from Speech Language Impairment (SLI) and/or significant communication disorders.

**This is achieved through:**

- provision of a range of services at student, class and whole school levels
- application of a range of practices and processes to support students requiring significant education adjustments arising from communication impairments, including:
  - evaluation
  - reporting
  - collaborative planning.

**4. Visiting Teacher: Hearing Impairment (VT:HI)**

The Visiting Teacher: Hearing Impairment has key partnership responsibilities with school/college leadership, teachers, and other professionals to maximise access for students with a hearing impairment in the development of language and social competencies.

**This is achieved through:**

- provision of a range of services to schools/colleges, teachers and parents to support the delivery of learning programs for students with a hearing impairment
- specific targeted support to students with a hearing impairment
- collaborative consultancy and networking with school communities and relevant agencies
- supporting inclusive education processes e.g. Enrolment Application Support Procedures (EASP) & Education Adjustment Program (EAP)
- dissemination of audiological information to key stake holders.

**5. Guidance Counsellors**

Guidance and counselling services may include activities such as the following:

- promote the mental health and life skills of all students in partnership with school communities through proactive and preventative activities

- provide counselling, advocacy and consultation services for students with personal, social, emotional, vocational and educational needs
- provide psycho-educational and other types of assessments.

### **Primary Schools**

In primary schools, guidance and counselling services are provided to clusters of two or three schools at a ratio of one full time guidance counsellor to approximately 1000 students.

### **Secondary Schools**

Each secondary school with a student population of 400 is provided with a full-time guidance counsellor. Schools which have enrolments of 900 students have one full- time and one half-time guidance counsellor. For schools with a population of over 1000 students, two guidance counsellors are employed.

## **6. School Pastoral Workers**

The school pastoral workers provide a wide range of pastoral care activities to students, teachers and families particularly in socio-economically disadvantaged schools.

## **7. Student Protection Officers**

Two student protection officers with a background in social work and human service assist schools and Brisbane Catholic Education personnel with the identification and management of cases of student harm. Student protection services are available to students in our schools and their families.

## **8. Advisory Visiting Teacher – Education Queensland**

- **Physical Impairment – (AVT: PI)**
- **Vision Impairment – (AVT: VI)**

**Note:** Services for these two impairment categories are provided by the Department of Education and Training (DET) through Education Queensland. Advisory Visiting teachers only provide services for students with a verified disability.

An advisory visiting teacher (AVT) is an experienced classroom teacher who has specialised knowledge about vision impairment or physical impairment. The main role of the AVT is to support school staff in enabling students with either vision and/or physical impairment to access and participate in the curriculum.

The following factors are taken into account when prioritising the actual support provided to individual students with disabilities:

- Level of specialist educational support required as a result of a disability
- requests from schools
- current case load.

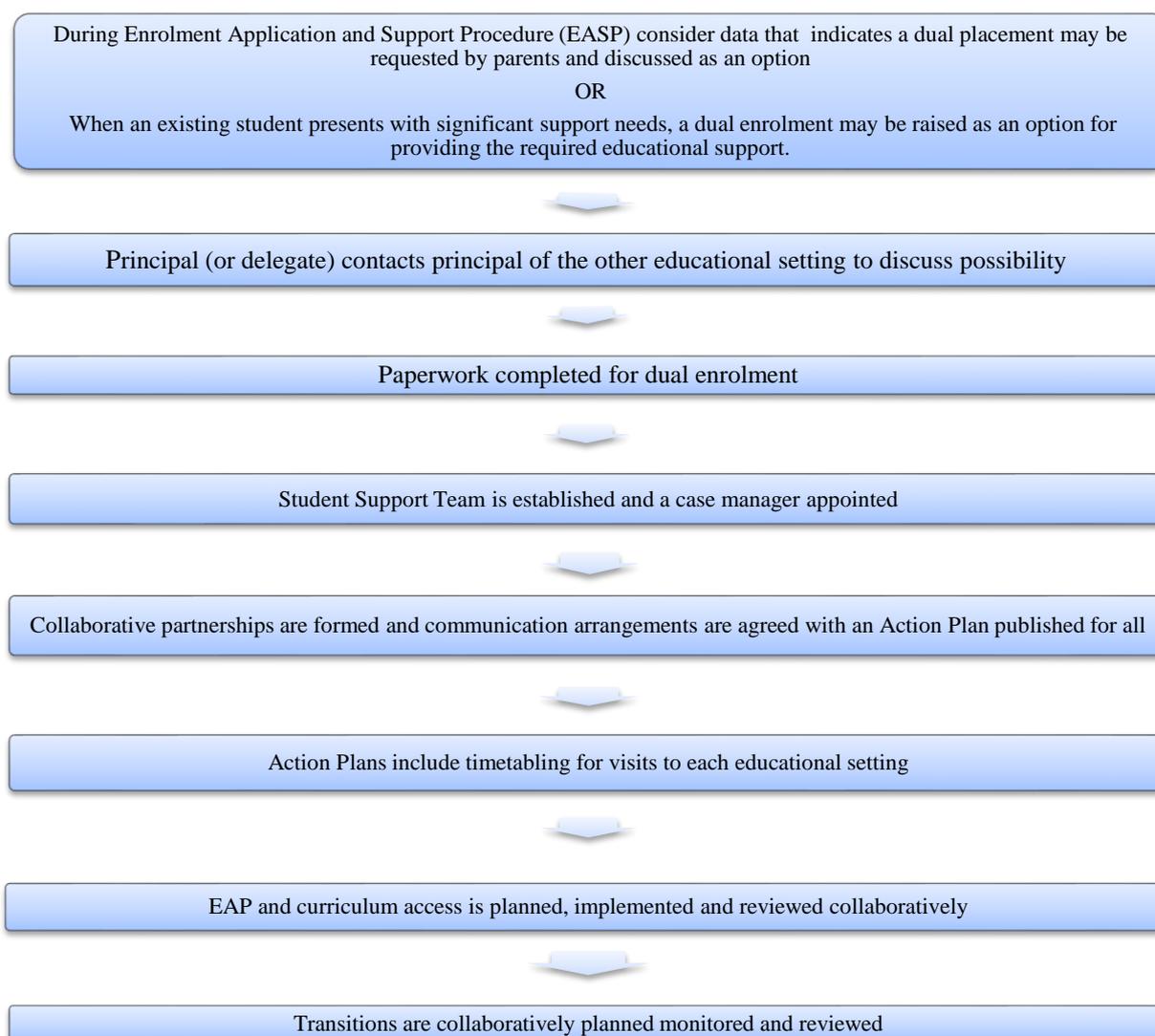
Advisory Visiting Teacher services include:

- assisting teachers with the adaptation and delivery of educational programs that target a student's learning and participation goals
- providing information about the specific disability and suggesting strategies for teaching students with the disability
- advocating for the supply of, and training in the use of, specialised equipment
- helping teachers and families to access support networks
- providing professional development activities to school personnel.

## Dual Enrolment

A dual enrolment occurs when a parent requests enrolment in a Brisbane Catholic Education school and concurrently in another setting. This usually occurs when the student is on a pathway to a full-time primary or secondary school enrolment, but currently requires significant support with learning from a specialist education setting.

### Model of Organisation



## Transport Assistance

A student may be eligible for the *Non-Government School Transport Assistance Scheme (NGSTAS)*, which is administered by the [Queensland Catholic Education Commission \(QCEC\)](#). It includes the *Bus Fare Assistance Program* and is a program specifically for students with disabilities. Students must meet the criteria as set down by the Queensland Government.

Eligibility requires the student to have a diagnosis of Autism Spectrum Disorder, Hearing Impairment, Intellectual Impairment, Physical Impairment, Speech-Language Impairment, Vision Impairment or Social Emotional Disorder.

The student must be verified under the Education Adjustment Program (EAP) as meeting the diagnostic criteria and as being eligible for additional resources in respect of participation in their educational program.

The student must be receiving a special education service or program in respect of the impairment.

When a student is verified under the Education Adjustment Program, individual planning occurs and is documented for each student. As part of this process, students' travel needs are determined according to the Travel Capability Rating Scale.

This scale ranges from A to F:

- A Adult Travel
- B Independent Travel
- C Semi-dependent Travel
- D Travel Assisted
- E Dependent
- F Most Dependent

For more information contact QCEC:

- (07) 3336 9192
- email: [schooltransport@qcec.catholic.edu.au](mailto:schooltransport@qcec.catholic.edu.au)
- talk to staff at your school

## Specialised Equipment

There are a number of ways to provide equipment for your child e.g. special chairs, slope boards, desks etc. You might choose to buy specific equipment yourself. Some government and non-government agencies offer subsidy schemes, grants, and one-off payments to support the purchase of equipment.

One option is Queensland Health's [Medical Aids Subsidy Scheme](#) (MASS), which subsidises the provision of certain aids and equipment. For more information, including details about who is eligible, visit their website.

For more information about getting your own equipment:

- talk to Disability Services Queensland (DSQ)
- talk to staff at your school

Brisbane Catholic Education provides funding for school-based minor capital works and specialised equipment. The application for equipment must relate specifically to the impact of the disability. Minor capital work applications refer to such things as ramps for access to areas, rails and safety fencing. Specialised equipment may include a specific desk, slope board or posture chair. The application is prepared by school personnel in consultation with student support team members.

When a school provides equipment for a student with a disability, the equipment remains the property of the school. The school will generally keep the equipment when the student leaves and ensure that other students are able to make use of the equipment.

## Alternative Format Production

The alternative format resource collection is a loan collection managed through Education Queensland's Metropolitan Region for students with vision impairment who require, as an education adjustment, their curriculum materials to be in formats other than standard print. Braille, audio and large print resources are held in this collection. Alternative format resources are produced on request for individual students with vision impairment. They are primarily alternative formatting of school text books.

This resource collection includes:

- textbooks and recreational reading in Braille
- textbooks and recreational reading on audio (CD, MP3 and DAISY)
- recreational reading in large print
- twin vision books (Braille and print)
- tactile story books
- tactile kits.

This service is available to students enrolled in a Non-State School supported by an EQ Advisory Visiting teacher in Vision Impairment.

The student must have had their educational support needs verified in DET's EAP category of vision impairment.

The application request must be completed by the relevant Non-State school.

### **Paediatric Low Vision Clinic**

The Paediatric Low Vision Clinic (PLVC) provides a range of specialised vision assessments, support and information to assist students with vision impairment, their families and specialist support staff.

The PLVC is located at Buranda and provides outreach services to major centres throughout the State. Referral to the outreach services is made through the Advisory Visiting teacher in Vision Impairment in consultation with school staff, parents and the student (if relevant), specialist teachers or relevant regional staff. Medical Practitioners can also make referrals to the PLVC directly.

This service is available to students enrolled in a Non-State School who have had their educational support needs verified in DET's EAP category of vision impairment.

Any applicable request must be completed by the relevant Non-State school.

### **Student Behaviour Support**

Catholic schools in the Archdiocese of Brisbane provide all students with opportunities to develop positive behaviours and self-discipline. Very close partnerships between home and school are encouraged in behavioural matters as children and young people are known to respond to consistent behaviour management strategies.

Ask your school for a copy of the *BCE Student Behaviour Support Policy (2012)* and the school's *Whole School Behaviour Support Plan*.

If your child's behaviour *outside* school is a problem, you can seek advice from the school, or from disability support groups, peak bodies and other parents.

## **Section 4:**

### **Transitions**

Transitions occur when a student has to move from or into a new educational setting.

Transitions may be:

- moving into prep
- moving from one year level to another
- moving from one phase of learning to another
- moving from primary to secondary school
- moving from secondary school to preparing for life after school.

Parents are encouraged to take time to consider all educational settings when considering enrolment.

The Enrolment Application and Support Procedures for Students requiring Significant Educational Adjustments (EASP) identifies the support and personnel required to make a successful transition for the student, family and school community.

Support Personnel involved in the transition process may include:

- Support Teacher: Inclusive Education
- Class teacher
- Consultant/Education Officer: Inclusive Education
- Parent
- School Buddy System
- Guidance Counsellor
- Speech Pathologist
- Visiting Teacher : Hearing Impairment
- AVT: PI
- AVT:VI
- A person from an outside agency e.g. paediatrician.

### **Options and Services for Children Prior to the Commencement of School**

In the year before compulsory schooling (Year 1), most children attend Prep. Children must be enrolled in Year 1 in the year they turn six as of 30 June.

Before that time there are many options:

- a child may go to child care, playgroup, crèche or community kindergarten
- some children with disability may be eligible to access early childhood development programs or services, or early childhood intervention programs

It is important to consider the full range of early education and care options available to your child, and place your child's name on waiting lists if necessary.

### **Playgroups**

Playgroup Queensland provides excellent quality, low cost, safe and supportive environments for families with young children from birth to school age. The network of affiliated Playgroups stretches from Thursday Island to Coolangatta and inner city Brisbane to Mt Isa.

For more information, contact [Playgroup Queensland](#) on telephone 1800 171 882.

### **Childcare and Kindergarten (C&K)**

Established in 1907, C&K is proud to be the largest and longest established provider of community based early childhood education and care services in Queensland. C&K is committed to providing quality education and care for your child's pre-schooling years (from birth to school age) in an environment that enables children to explore, satisfy their natural inquisitiveness and grow as individuals. As a community based association it recognises the valuable role families and the wider community play in children's education and care.

Government assistance for services is available to support children with a disability. Talk to the individual providers to find out about how they may cater for your child.

The Queensland Department of Communities has a database of childcare and early education services. Contact Child Care Information Service:

- (07)3224 4225
- 1800 637 711 for callers outside Brisbane
- [Website: C&K](#)

### **Early Childhood Development Programs and Services and Early Childhood Intervention**

There is a range of programs and services that support children with disability who haven't started school. There are programs and services offered by:

- state and non-state schools
- non-government organisations e.g. Autism Queensland and the Cerebral Palsy League (CPL)
- local clinics and centres.

A child may access a range of programs and services at the same time.

**Please Note:** The Department of Education and Training (DET) refers to programs as 'Early Childhood Development Programs and Services', whereas many other organisations use the term 'Early Childhood Intervention'. To find out about what might be available for your child, talk to:

- your GP
- your paediatrician

- Disability Services Queensland
- Non-government disability organisations.

## **Preparatory Program (Prep)**

Preparatory (Prep) is a non-compulsory program offered in primary schools for children in the year before they start compulsory schooling. Prep is a full-time program and children attend from Monday to Friday during normal school hours. Prep is integrated fully into the rest of the school. Classrooms and other facilities are located in school grounds.

The Preparatory year is available to all children of eligible age and this includes children with disability. If your child has a disability and is of eligible age, they will be included in Prep classes wherever possible.

For more information about Prep:

- talk to staff at your primary school
- visit [www.bne.catholic.edu.au](http://www.bne.catholic.edu.au)

## **Starting School**

Starting school can be a highly anxious time for both parents and children. Excitement is mixed with apprehension. Every child is unique and will face individual challenges that may require support.

Brisbane Catholic Education school personnel use the *Enrolment Application and Support Procedures* for Students requiring Significant Educational Adjustments (EASP) to assist with understanding the educational needs of your child and the support that the school can offer.

If a transition plan is required to facilitate a smooth entry to school, then this will be raised as part of the EASP. The transition plan will assist with familiarisation of the school, teachers and students. Fostering a good relationship with all personnel involved in your child's education ensures your child gets the best education possible. Keep the school informed of any developments or changes. This could include review of diagnosis, alteration to medication requirements, change in family circumstances e.g. death in the family.

There are always opportunities for parents to get involved in the school community, and your child will love having you involved in their new experiences. It's also a great way to get to know other parents.

Most Catholic schools have a parents' association, often called the Parents and Friends Association. These groups offer an opportunity for parents to gather and become involved in the life of the school.

These groups take many forms and provide support for the school in areas such as:

- social functions for the school community
- uniform requirements
- maintenance of grounds, buildings and equipment
- fundraising for particular needs in the school
- voluntary support for educational programs.

Parent groups can also assist in fostering the intellectual, cultural, social and spiritual interests of their members, and provide opportunities for the development of community spirit among the staff and parent body.

## **Starting Secondary School**

Starting secondary school is one of the most significant times in your child's life and once again there will be mixed emotions about the prospect. Transitioning processes set in place, in collaboration, with parents, primary and secondary staff and your child support the move from a safe, familiar primary environment to secondary school which can bring many new challenges. The larger school size and new school expectations, new peers, new subjects and getting used to having multiple teachers, even organising to have the right books and equipment, can be challenging for all students.

Forward planning is vital as it often takes time to get the necessary support in place to ensure things run smoothly. Many secondary schools run transition days or programs towards the end of the year where students can spend time at the school becoming familiar with new surroundings. This is an important time to help students feel more comfortable about starting secondary school. There are a number of things that can be done during the transition process to make the move easier for your child.

These include:

- having an example timetable and a map of the school
- having your child meet as many teachers as possible before the first day. Some schools run a separate transition day for students with disability or learning difficulties so that this can occur.
- buddy systems are used successfully in many schools. Discuss the possibility of this at the EASP meeting and transition meeting
- if your child has friends going to the same school, encourage them to go together for the first few days.
- colour coding books and textbooks (a different colour for each subject). This is useful for easy identification. They could also have weekly timetable for home, with a colour coding grid to match their books. This will help to remind them what to pack in their bag for the day
- tactile coding can also be useful, for example, small pieces of sandpaper inside the textbook and the same inside the relevant exercise book.

## Finishing School

The final few years of schooling are a time of transition, preparing for life after school. These years – from Year 10 onwards – are called the Senior Phase of Learning.

The basic allocation of schooling is 24 semesters—two semesters a year for 12 years of school. Additional semesters may be allocated after consideration is given to a student’s age and ability, likely educational outcomes and suitability, and availability of other education, training or employment options. If parents wish to seek an allocation of additional semesters for their child, they are required to do this through the principal. It is important to include your child in planning their transition to post-school life as much as possible.

The completion of secondary schooling is one of the key times that Disability Services supports Queenslanders with a disability to live and participate in their local community.

**Post School Services** is a government organisation that assists people with disability to experience a range of options and opportunities as they move toward establishing a life after school. Contact: 3109 7007 (Level 1, 55 Russell Street, South Brisbane)

### Compulsory participation phase

In the compulsory participation phase, young people don’t have to go to school – but they do have to be “learning or earning”. That means there are a wider range of options, including continuing school, studying at an institution like TAFE or university, doing a traineeship or apprenticeship or working full-time.

A young person’s compulsory participation phase starts when they stop being of compulsory school age (i.e. turn 16 or complete Year 10 whichever comes first) and ends when the person:

- gains a Queensland Certificate of Education (QCE), Senior Statement, Certificate III or Certificate IV, Queensland Certificate of Individual Achievement (QCIA)
- has participated in eligible options for two years after the person stopped being of compulsory school age; or
- turns 17.

For detailed information about the compulsory participation phase:

- Talk to staff at your school

## Planning for life after school

By the time your child is finished Year 9, you and your child should be planning and preparing for life after school. It is important to talk to your child about what their interests, abilities and aspirations are, and finding out about options.

Consider:

- occupations and career pathways
- the education and training requirements needed to achieve selected goals, such as subject prerequisites
- the full range of learning opportunities available
- the value of different forms of learning
- tertiary entrance procedures, including the range of options.

As part of planning for the transition to post-school options, Queensland students in Year 10 complete a Senior Education and Training (SET) plan. Essentially, the SET plan includes what the student's goals are, and what pathways they're going to take to reach those goals. Parents and school staff are involved in helping students put these plans together.

While the SET plan helps students to make decisions about their future, they can still make alterations to their SET plan if they change their plans.

For more information about planning for life after school:

- talk to staff at your school – particularly teachers and guidance counsellors
- to find out more about researching post-school options, visit the [Queensland Curriculum and Assessment Authority \(QCAA\) website](#) and search for *SET plans*.

## Certificates at the completion of schooling

The *Queensland Certificate of Education (QCE)* is a qualification which is awarded to eligible students, usually at the end of Year 12. Students are registered for the *Queensland Certification of Education* during Year 10 or in the 12 months before turning 16 years old, whichever comes first. The *Queensland Certificate of Education* confirms a student has attained:

- a significant amount of learning
- a set standard of achievement
- literacy and numeracy requirements.

Students who do not meet the requirement of the *Queensland Certificate of Education* at the end of Year 12 can continue to work towards their certificate – their learning account remains open, regardless of their age, however, credits expire after nine years.

The *Queensland Certificate of Education* will be awarded in the following July or December once a person becomes eligible.

Students with disability who have highly individualised learning programs may have their achievements reported on a *Queensland Certificate of Individual Achievement* (QCIA). It can be shown to employers as a summary of the student's knowledge and skills, and can be used by training providers to decide the best training options.

There is also a range of vocational certificates that record highly regarded industry skills in particular areas such as hospitality, engineering, automotive and tourism that schools may offer students.

### **Workforce Support for People with Disability**

There is a variety of options available to assist job seekers with a disability to find employment through Centrelink and Providers of Australian Government Employment Services (PAGES), including *Job Network* and the *Disability Employment Network* (DEN) programs.

Depending on the support needs of the job seeker, some options include:

- support to find a job, including job skills training
- intensive on-the-job training provided by a specialised employment agency e.g. a DEN provider
- support for employers to enable people with disability to access and remain in the workplace
- Auslan interpreting for work-related activities and job interviews
- reimbursement of workplace modifications and special or adaptive equipment
- Wage Subsidy Scheme for employers of people with disability.

Information on these programs is updated regularly. To find out more you can contact:

**Job Access:** A good starting point to learn about options available to people with a disability. Visit [JobAccess](#) or contact a JobAccess advisor by phoning 1800 464 800 for individualised help and advice

**Centrelink:** Visit [Centrelink](#) (search under *Disability Employment Services*), phone 1800 050 004

**Department of Employment:** Visit [Department of Employment](#) for more detailed information on the Disabilities Employment Network and Job Network

## **Section 5:**

In this section, information and contact details have been included of well-known agencies that provide support for people with a disability. This is only a sample representation of organisations that provide support.

### **Disability Services Queensland**

Disability Services Queensland (DSQ) is the Queensland Government department for disability services. DSQ works closely with communities to enhance service delivery and allow people with a disability and their families to have more input into the policies that affect them.

Your regional DSQ office has detailed knowledge about the disability services available in your area from government agencies and non-government organisations. Go to: [www.disability.qld.gov.au/](http://www.disability.qld.gov.au/)

### **National Disability Services**

National Disability Services is the Australian peak body for non-government disability services.

Through the provision of information, representation and policy advice, NDS promotes and advances services which support people with all forms of disability to participate in all domains of life. Go to: [www.nds.org.au](http://www.nds.org.au)

### **Centrelink**

Centrelink assists people to become self-sufficient and supports those in need. Contact: [www.centrelink.gov.au](http://www.centrelink.gov.au)

### **Centacare**

Centacare provides programs that are specifically designed for young persons with disability support needs. The Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Brisbane commenced Centacare Disability Services in 1985 with the introduction of the Disability Services Act and the Home and Community Care Act. Government funding from both Commonwealth and State Government Departments provide for staffing and administration. Centacare services are aimed at assisting people to leave large institutional care settings as well as preventing premature admission to residential or congregate care nursing homes and hostels. Individuals are supported to lead independent lives in the community.

### **i. Youth Focus - Post School Operations (Northside)**

Two funded programs support young persons with disabilities who have finished their schooling. The Moving Ahead Program and Options Plus package allows young people to receive individualised support to make the transition from school to early adulthood and aim to develop their identity as a valued member of their community.

### **ii. Youth Focus -Soubirous Place (Southside)**

Soubirous Place targets young persons with disabilities who lack other opportunities for personal development and who live within the geographical boundaries of Sunnybank, Upper Mt Gravatt, Salisbury, Acacia Ridge and Wishart. Persons who receive Moving Ahead funding may also choose to participate in these programs if it suits their needs.

Contact: Soubirous Place (07) 3344 3481 Email: [place@bigpond.com.au](mailto:place@bigpond.com.au)

## **HAND**

HAND is a not-for-profit organisation in north Brisbane supporting people with intellectual disability by enhancing leisure and lifestyle opportunities. As part of its service, HAND manages the:

- Leisure Access Program
- The HANDS UP! Program
- Day Respite Program.

HAND is sponsored by the Catholic Church through Centacare and is funded by Disability Services Queensland and the Home and Community Care Program. The aims of HAND are to:

- provide support which promotes opportunities for individuals to develop skills, access the community and become more independent
- promote inclusive opportunities for people with disabilities
- promote awareness of the value and needs of people with disabilities.

**Contact Address:** 19 Lovedale Street, Wilston, Q, 4051

- **PO Box 83, Wilston , Q , 4051**
- Email: [info@hand.org.au](mailto:info@hand.org.au)
- Phone: 07 38560281
- Fax: 07 3856 1388
- Web: <http://www.hand.org.au>

## **MAMRE**

The word Mamre is Hebrew in origin and means “mountain of friendship of God.” Mamre is a community committed to serving people. It endeavours to form a network of friendship around those who support families who have sons and daughters with a disability. Go to: [www.mamre.org.au](http://www.mamre.org.au)

## **Cerebral Palsy League (CPL)**

The Cerebral Palsy League was formed in 1948 by a group of concerned parents to provide services that were not otherwise available from other community agencies. Today, CPL is the largest non-government disability services provider for people with a physical disability. Support may include speech therapy, occupational therapy, physiotherapy, and social work services. Go to: [www.cplqld.org.au](http://www.cplqld.org.au)

## **Down Syndrome Association of Queensland Inc (DSAQ)**

This association has a comprehensive website. Go to: <http://www.dsaq.org.au/>

## Section 6:

### Acronyms

Additional Intervention Support Early Years	AIS
Additional Personal Support	APS
Advisory Visiting Teacher	AVT
Association of Independent Schools in Queensland	AISQ
Assistive technology	AT
Autism Spectrum Disorder	ASD
Brisbane Catholic Education	BCE
Cerebral Palsy League	CPL
Consultant/Education Officer: Inclusive Education	C/EO:IE
Department of Education, Training and Employment	DETE
Disability Discrimination Act	DDA
Disability Employment Network	DEN
Disability Services Queensland	DSQ
Down Syndrome Association of Queensland	DSAQ
Education Adjustment Program	EAP
Education Queensland	EQ
Enrolment Application and Support Procedures	EASP
Guidance Counsellor	GC
Hearing Impairment	HI
Individual Education Program	IEP
Inclusive Education	IE
Intellectual Disability	ID

Medical Aids Subsidy Scheme	MASS
National Disability Service	NDS
Non Government School Transport Assistance Scheme	NGSTAS
Physical Impairment	PI
Principal Education Officer	PEO
Providers of Australian Government Employment Services	PAGES
Preparatory	Prep
Queensland Catholic Education Commission	QCEC
Queensland Certificate of Education	QCE
Queensland Certificate of Individual Achievement	QCIA
Senior Education and Training Plan	SET plan
Speech Language Impairment	SLI
Social Emotional Disorder	SED
Speech Pathologist	SP
Student Learning Enhancement	SLE
Support Teacher: Inclusive Education	ST:IE
Vocational Education and Training	VET
Vision Impairment	VI
Visiting Teacher: Hearing Impairment	VT:HI

## Glossary of Terms

**Adjustment** – an education adjustment is something which the school does specifically to help your child access education

**Advocate** – somebody who supports or speaks up on behalf of someone else

**Advisory visiting teacher** – teachers with specialist knowledge and skills, who support the educational programs of students with disabilities

**Assessment** – ways of working out how much a student has learnt

**Assistive technology** – services or devices which lessen or remove the barriers faced by people with a disability

**Business service** – a commercial enterprise whose workforce is mainly people with a disability

**Compulsory participation phase** – the phase after the student turns 16 or completes Year 10 (whichever comes first) when it is compulsory to be at school, or engaged in training or employment

**Compulsory schooling phase** – the phase when it is compulsory to go to school, i.e. from when the child is at least 6 years 6 months to when they turn 16 or complete Year 10 (whichever comes first)

**Curriculum plan** – a plan of teaching and learning activities for a class

**Disability Services Queensland** – the Queensland government department for disability services

**Disability Services Support Unit** – a DET unit which provides a range of advisory and support services to staff working with students with disabilities in schools across Queensland

**Education Adjustment Program** – the process used by EQ and BCE to identify and respond to the needs of students with disabilities

**Employment Skills Development Programs** – a diverse range of activities aimed at re-engaging young people (aged 15-17 years) who are at risk of leaving school or those who have left school early in the Senior Phase of Learning

**Mobility** – being able to move safely and efficiently

**Multiple impairment** – verified as having intellectual impairment and one or more other impairment

**Non-government organisation (NGO)** – an organisation that is not operated by the Commonwealth Government or by state or territory government

**Occupational performance** – a person's ability to do everyday tasks such as working, playing and relaxing

**Occupational Therapist** – a therapist who helps people to improve their ability to do everyday tasks

**Orientation** – an understanding of the environments you move in

**Physiotherapist** – a therapist who helps people develop their physical abilities and functional skills

**Program** – a lesson or activity in which a student is engaged

**Senior Phase of Learning** – schooling from Years 10 to 12

**Service** – support which helps the student to participate in a program

**SET plan** – Senior Education and Training plan outlining student's goals and pathways for reaching these goals.

**Standardised** – done in the same way each time

**Verified disability** - a disability which a member of the BCE verification team has verified as meeting the criteria

**VET** – Vocational Education and Training