The Department has a range of guidance and resources to promote schools’ support for students with disability.

A focus for Term 4 will be ensuring educational, wellbeing and engagement supports are in place, so that students are connected with learning and engaged in a positive transition into 2021.

# **Key activities to coordinate support**

Personalised student-based approaches ensure that appropriate educational supports are being provided. Some students may require additional or different strategies at this time.

* Use the [Student Support Group (SSG)](https://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/teachers/learningneeds/Pages/student-support-groups.aspx) to work with families to identify and plan responses for areas of concern and need.
* Update [Individual Education Plans](https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/individual-education-plans-ieps/policy) to reflect any changed context for students’ learning.
* To support alternative meeting arrangements, see [SSG meeting via video or teleconferencing](https://edugate.eduweb.vic.gov.au/sites/i/Shared%20Documents/video-teleconferencing%20quick%20guide.docx?Web=1).

# **Curriculum and planning resources**

Ensure educational programs contain adjustments to accommodate each student's learning, support and engagement needs.

* [Inclusion Support FUSE page](https://fuse.education.vic.gov.au/Pages/inclusion-support) contains resources that can be used by with examples of effective teaching and learning in schools as well as extending learning to the home environment.
* [AllPlay Learn](https://allplaylearn.org.au/) helps to create inclusive education environments through practical online information, courses and resources for teachers, as well as resources for parents, children and the community.

# **Professional learning and development**

[Inclusive](https://www.deafeducation.vic.edu.au/inclusive-classrooms) Classrooms offers ten-week courses to school staff on understanding, assessing and supporting students with disability. Includes digital and face-to-face learning.

[Behaviour Support](http://detbehavioursupport.vic.edu.au/) offers a range of free online courses for educators to complete independently at their own pace.

* [Resources](https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/behaviour-students/resources) are available to support safe, healthy and hygiene behaviours.

# **Accessing support for students**

Schools will continue to have access to a Health and Wellbeing Key Contact for the 2020 school year.

* Students at Risk Planning Tool can assist schools to identify students who may be vulnerable and require support to maintain engagement and connection with education.

Schools are able to access support for students through [Student Support Services](https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/student-support-services/policy).

[Support student mental health and wellbeing](https://edugate.eduweb.vic.gov.au/sites/i/Pages/school.aspx#/app/news/detail/4211/) with resources available for schools, students, parents and carers.

# **Program for Students with Disabilities (PSD)**

Schools are reminded to [submit PSD applications](https://edugate.eduweb.vic.gov.au/sites/i/Pages/school.aspx#/app/news/detail/4214/) as soon as possible for student enrolment, support and transition planning. This includes:

* New applications for students currently enrolled and not supported by the PSD
* Year 6-7 and short-term reviews required to confirm students’ PSD eligibility for 2021; and
* New applications for new students commencing school in 2021 (i.e. Preps beginning in 2021 and transfers from other systems).

# **Students with complex health needs**

It is recommended that parents/carers of students with complex medical needs seek advice from the student’s medical practitioner to support decision-making about whether on-site education is suitable.

Ensure students with medical needs have an up to date [Student Health](https://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/school/principals/health/studenthealthsupport.doc) [Support Plan](https://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/school/principals/health/studenthealthsupport.doc) and accompanying condition specific health management plan based on medical advice from the student’s medical/health practitioner and consultation with the student and parents/guardians.

# **Health and safety actions**

For steps that schools can take to ensure safe teaching and learning environments for staff and students, see: [Health and safety advice for all Victorian schools](https://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/Pages/healthadvice.aspx).

School staff should refer to [guidance for the use of personal protective equipment (PPE) in education](https://edugate.eduweb.vic.gov.au/sites/i/_layouts/15/WopiFrame.aspx?sourcedoc=/sites/i/Shared%20Documents/Guidance-for-the-use-of-PPE-in-education-settings.docx&action=default) to determine when additional PPE is required and for information on the correct and safe use of PPE.

# **Transition**

# **Requests to repeat a year level**

[Repeating a year level policy](https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/repeating-year-level/policy) is aimed at ensuring students move through schooling with their peers.

* [Resources](https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/repeating-year-level/resources) outline the evidence and support principals to have conversations with families.

# **Starting school**

No matter what experiences children have had in their kindergarten year, they will have developed a range of skills and abilities that form the basis for further learning.

* [Adjustments to Transition Factsheet](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/about/department/covid-19/adjustments-to-transition-to-school-factsheet.docx) contains operational guidance on supporting children to make a positive start to school.

# **Moving to secondary school**

Schools will support students to finish their final year strong and with the confidence to progress to the next year level in 2021.

* Take the time to celebrate with students, and complete final year rituals, such as [adapted and innovative graduation ceremonies](https://www.bendigoadvertiser.com.au/story/6903677/giving-school-leavers-a-rite-of-passage-the-covid-safe-way/).
* [Transition to secondary school for students with a disability](https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/transition-year-6-7/guidance/transitioning-secondary-schools-students-disability) contains advice and resources to support a successful transition.

Submit PSD Year 6–7 Review applications, if required.

# **School leavers**

Schools have implemented opportunities to consolidate learning and educational experiences, which will support students’ transition to post-secondary destinations.

* As a general rule, students should be progressed to their post-school setting in 2021.
* Support students’ readiness for life after school through conducting [SSG meetings](https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/student-support-groups/policy), making adjustments in [IEPs](https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/individual-education-plans-ieps/policy), reviewing career aspirations and post-school plans, and facilitating transition.

The National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) funds a range of post school supports to help young people with disability move from school into employment or other options. For information, see the [Leaving School](https://www.ndis.gov.au/participants/finding-keeping-and-changing-jobs/leaving-school) page of the NDIS website.

# **National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS)**

[Advice for Victoria](https://www.ndis.gov.au/coronavirus/advice-victoria) contains NDIS information for participants including what support is available.

Parents and carers can access [NDIS frequently asked questions](https://www.ndis.gov.au/coronavirus/participants-coronavirus-covid-19/parents-and-carers-children-remote-learning) for parents and carers of children.

NDIA has produced [information for Victorian families and carers of school aged NDIS participants](https://www.ndis.gov.au/coronavirus/information-packs#victoria-information-for-families-and-carers-of-school-aged-ndis-participants).

Schools can contact the NDIA [Local Area Coordinator](https://www.ndis.gov.au/about-us/locations.html) in their area for local information about the NDIS.