Responding to requests for NDIS funded therapy in schools

# FACT Sheet

## **Background**

The National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) provides choice and control for children with disabilities and their families on how disability services and supports are delivered.

As a result, school principals may receive parent requests 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.

These requests can generally be accommodated by schools and complement holistic student planning and support processes.

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

The Department of Education and Training (the Department) is committed to supporting NDIS participants, and their families, to optimise the benefits offered by the NDIS. Consistent with this commitment, Victorian Government schools are encouraged to accommodate students and their parents exercising choice and control in relation to NDIS supports.

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

Ultimately, the decision rests with the school principal.

## **Three Step Process**

The Department has designed a three step process to assist school principals in finalising their response to therapy requests on a case by case basis.



## **Step 1**

The school principal gathers information about the proposed therapy to be provided at school, and the reasons for the request, by asking the therapist and parent to complete a **Request Form** and **Parent Consent Form**.

## **Step 2**

The principal considers the request in light of all relevant factors and makes a decision as to whether the therapy can be provided on school grounds.

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

* individual circumstances of the student
* student access to the curriculum
* Child Safe Standards and duty of care
* practical and administrative capacity
* anti-discrimination obligations.

After making a decision principals send a **Letter to Parents** which outlines the reasons for their decision to accept or decline the request.

## **Step 3**

If the principal approves the therapy to be provided at school, appropriate arrangements are put in place:

* The therapist signs a **Licence Agreement** to use school premises and enters into an **Information Sharing** **Deed** to set out how and when the therapist will share information with the school about the student.
* Principals inform relevant school-based therapists and Student Support Services staff about the services being delivered by the NDIS funded therapist, to ensure services are coordinated.

# Further information

## Where can I find out more information?

* Detailed guidelines, forms and template agreements are available for principals [here](https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/ndis-funded-therapy/policy?Redirect=1).
* Principals should contact their Senior Education Improvement Leader in the first instance for specific queries about requests for NDIS funded therapy at school.
* The Department’s Legal Division can provide advice about duty of care, anti-discrimination obligations and licensing agreements: legal.services@education.vic.gov.au
* For general information about the NDIS: [www.ndis.gov.au](http://www.ndis.gov.au)