



EDUCATION PATHWAYS

Information for Families

Schools understand that children learn in different ways. The Department for Education has a process referred to as "Education Pathways" to ensure each student has the most supportive learning environment. This means finding the place where they feel comfortable and can reach their full potential. Education Pathways may include mainstream learning settings or specialised settings including Special Class, Disability Units and Special Schools.

Students are at the centre of this process. Schools work closely with families and Student Support Services to make informed decisions about their educational journey. Parents and caregivers play a vital role in shaping this path.

Sometimes, department psychologists may recommend specialised education options. These are special learning environments designed to provide extra support tailored to a student's individual needs. Before recommending an alternative education pathway, psychologists and Inclusive Educators carefully consider two things: first, if the student is eligible for enrolment in a specialised setting, and second, if it's the most suitable environment for their success.

MAINSTREAM



Your child may be enrolled in your local school in a mainstream classroom setting.

Additional support can be provided at your local school to help your child participate in their learning program.

Reception Year Level Intake Process

Schools offer enrolment opportunities at the beginning and middle of the year.

To be considered, families can submit a single "Registration of Interest" form to preferred schools. These forms are available at your local school.

SPECIAL CLASS



Some primary and secondary schools have special classes for students with mild to moderate disabilities. These programs provide a supportive learning environment with smaller class sizes:

- Junior Primary: 1 teacher for every 8 students
- Primary & Secondary: 1 teacher for every 12 students

The curriculum in these special classes is carefully adapted to meet each student's individual needs. The focus is on developing essential literacy and math skills, while also fostering independence in daily living tasks and social interaction. In some cases, students may have the opportunity to learn alongside peers of the same age.

DISABILITY UNITS AND SPECIAL SCHOOLS



Disability units are located within some primary and secondary schools.


Special schools are either co-located with a mainstream school or in stand-alone specialised setting.

Disability Units and Special Schools typically cater for students with moderate to severe disabilities who require lots of help across all areas of the curriculum, including health and personal care, daily living skills and all school subjects, with their personal learning program tailored to what each student needs most.


Teacher to student ratios in these settings are 1 teacher for every 8 students.

What are the steps involved in investigating the best Education Pathway for my child?

Teacher Identifies Needs: Your child's teacher may notice areas where they struggle to learn or participate.




Develop Individual Learning Plan: You'll be invited to a meeting with the teacher to discuss your child's needs. Together, you'll create a personalised plan (One Plan) to support their learning in the classroom. You will meet regularly with your child's teacher to discuss their progress to see if adjustments are needed.




Additional Help Considered: If your child continues to struggle despite the learning plan, the teacher might suggest additional support within the classroom or a referral to Student Support Services for Education Pathways investigation.



Student Support Services Assesses Needs: An Inclusive Educator or Psychologist may assess your child's needs to determine if extra support options are necessary.



Discuss Specialised Support: The Inclusive Educator and/or Psychologist will discuss with you the different specialised programs available, what they entail, and how they can benefit your child. You'll have the opportunity to ask questions and choose the best option (if needed).



Explore Program Availability: Student Support Services will check if there's space available in any specialised programs you choose. If not, other support options will be provided for your child within the mainstream classroom setting. You'll be kept informed throughout this process.

THIS IS A BIG DECISION – WHO CAN I TALK TO? Your child's preschool/school is always the first point of contact. If you require additional information, you can contact your Local Education Office and ask to speak to the Inclusive Educator who supports your child's preschool/school.