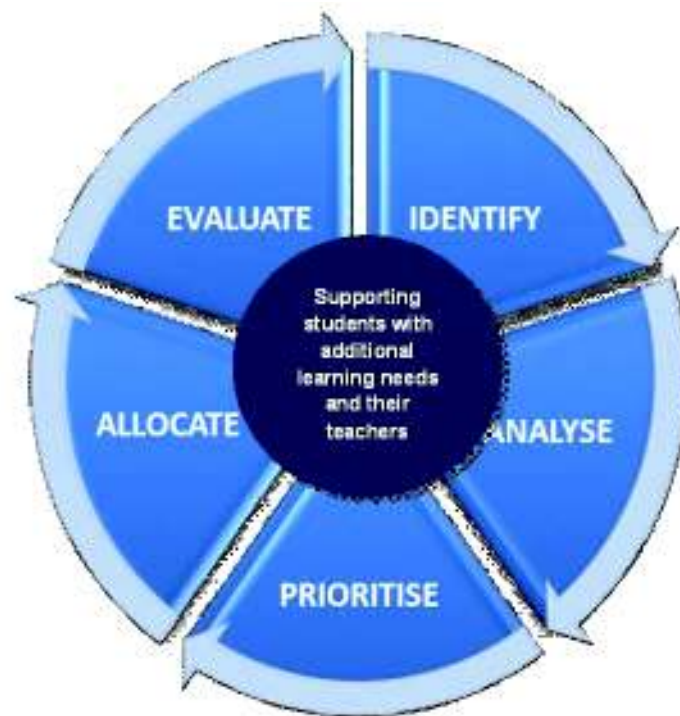


Learning and Support Teams

Department of Education



Effective learning and support teams provide a mechanism for the coordination of all aspects of teaching and learning in a school. They make a valuable contribution to whole school planning and the development of school policies and practices that are data and evidence driven, and focused on learning outcomes.

The learning and support team also provides a mechanism for embedding the learning and support framework into the culture and practice of the school. It plays a key role in leading and developing professional commitment by all staff to high expectations for every student, including those students who require adjustments to their learning.

Quality teaching and learning is central to the work of the learning and support team, making it a key decision making body within the school. This is important because the prime responsibility for meeting the specific learning needs of individual students with difficulties in basic areas of learning lies with the school and the classroom teacher.

The learning and support team is a whole school planning and support mechanism.

To remain responsive to the changing needs of individuals and groups of students, the learning and support team uses whole school data to underpin the decision making process.

The learning and support team has a key role in developing

and supporting teachers' capabilities to design, implement and evaluate programs and personalised learning and support plans. To do this, the team works cyclically through a series of planning steps to address the needs of individual students, groups of students and staff.

The learning and support team:

- **identifies** students with additional learning and support needs regardless of cause
- **analyses** data and evidence to understand more fully students' learning and support needs
- **prioritises** the needs of these students and their teachers
- **allocates** resources (teachers, funding, programs) to meet the needs of students
- regularly **evaluates** efficacy of interventions and re-aligns services.

Each step in the planning process is supported by effective communication and collaboration.

What makes an effective learning and support team?

Effective learning and support teams bring together the energies and strengths of the whole school and its community to plan personalised learning and support to enhance the quality of the learning experience and build the capacity of staff.

An effective learning and support team has:

- effective leadership
- a whole school approach to the implementation of a learning and support framework
- a clear understanding of the learning and support team's role
- involvement of parents/carers that is valued and supported
- effective processes for the identification and referral of students with additional learning and support needs
- professional learning for staff to build teacher capacity
- effective use of data to inform school planning and priorities
- regular reviews of the effectiveness and capacity of the team

Membership

Each school will determine the membership of the learning and support team depending on its needs. There should be a core membership with additional people taking part in the planning and intervention process when appropriate.

Core membership usually includes

- a learning and support team coordinator (the principal or a member of the school executive);
- school counsellor
- teacher representative/s
- other support staff as needed such as learning and support teachers, English as a second language teachers, Reading Recovery teachers, Aboriginal Education Officers.

Additional members could include:

- parents/carers
- students where appropriate
- school learning support officers or teaching assistants
- allied health professionals such as speech pathologists and occupational therapists

“The learning and support team is a whole school planning and support mechanism”

