

Copacabana Public School



Access for External Providers – Information for Parents & Carers and Allied Health Professionals

The Purpose of Externally Funded Service Providers in Schools

Externally Funded Service Providers (EFSPs) play an important role in supporting students by delivering specialised services that enhance their educational experience. These providers, funded by external agencies or organisations, contribute expertise in areas such as speech therapy, occupational therapy, psychological support, and other interventions tailored to student needs. Our procedures adhere to the advice and guidelines from the NSW Department of Education.

<https://education.nsw.gov.au/inside-the-department/teaching-and-learning/students-with-disability/resources/external-providers>

Core principles – aligned with Department of Education Policy

- Access is at the principal's discretion. Providers do not have an automatic right of entry.
- All student learning comes first. Our 8:50-10:50am and 11:40-12:30pm blocks are protected for literacy and numeracy and we do not allow access to external providers during these sessions.
- Parents and carers are required to submit requests and cannot hand parental responsibility over to an external provider. External Providers are not to approach the school to arrange access without parent initiation and consent having already been provided.
- All legal, safety and privacy obligations always apply.
- The school will reach out via email to externally funded service providers once parents submit a request.
- Parents requiring support can obtain this by contacting the school office.

Guiding Principles

- At the beginning of the school year staff create safe learning environments with established timetables, routines and programs along with getting to know their new students. Taking this into consideration, the best educational interests of the students at this time is to engage and focus on their school learning environment and for this reason requests for externally funded service providers will be considered from **Term 1, Week 5 onwards**.

- The student's educational goals are developed within the school setting through a Personalised Learning and Support Plan (PLSP) process. The services delivered in schools should link directly to the student's PLSP.
- So that students can engage fully in the NESA required hours for teaching, learning and wellbeing, we will not allow more than one external provider to work with a student in a day.
- Service delivery times are reviewed termly and once set cannot be changed during the term for any reason. It is the responsibility of the externally funded service provider to communicate any staff changes, absences or adjustments to service delivery schedules to the parents and carers.
- At all times, the teacher is responsible for the students' learning program, and the students remain under the duty of care of the classroom teacher whilst on school grounds.
- Whilst our school welcomes the provision of therapy during school time, it acknowledges that not all proposed activities and lessons are conducive to being provided in the classroom context. Some sessions have the potential to be disruptive to other learners in the classroom. The classroom teacher and their supervisors will review the suitability of a therapy session being conducted during school hours at the end of each semester, or as the need arises, with parents. The responsibility of service remains a parental responsibility. For our school, the learning, wellbeing and service agreement, the final decision remains with the principal.

How to arrange for an External Provider to work with your child at school:

1. Parents/Carers contact the school to request the provision of this support in writing, stating the type of therapy/service and providing the name and contact details of the provider.
2. A discussion with the Learning Support Team and class teacher occurs, to discuss the suitability of the service and how the service links to student outcomes.
3. Externally Funded Service Providers forms are completed by service provider and parent/carer.
4. Principal decision made, liaising with the class teacher, based on educational benefit to the student, operational impact and duty of care.
5. Scheduling of approved session occurs between service provider and class teacher.
6. Induction and compliance processes occur prior to the commencement of sessions – this is managed by the school office.

Compliance and Induction – all of which is mandatory prior to session commencement:

- Present a valid Working with Children Check and complete child protection training as required.
- Service provider staff undergo initial site induction prior to commencing services.
- Complete the school's site induction and sign in for every visit
- Agree to the school's policies, procedures and code of conduct while on site.
- Provide any other evidence requested by the school to meet legal and policy requirements.
- Externally Funded Service Providers understand that they will be expected to complete a Therapy Update form (see appendix) – for disclosure of information between contractor and school at Weeks 5 & 10 every term. Clear links to learning goals in the student's PLSP, as well as future goal setting must be included.

Access & scheduling Permitted session windows:

- **Session 1 – 12:30 - 1:25pm**
- **Session 2 – between 1:45 – 2:45pm**

Cancellations: Notify the school as early as possible so adjustments can be supported where possible. No rescheduling to other times will occur. It remains the responsibility of the EFSP to notify parents where non-attendance occurs and how this could impact any prior arrangements and service fees.

Scheduling of Itinerant Support for students through the Department of Education will be prioritised in timetabling. External Providers cannot secure a timeframe that is already supported by Itinerant Staff (i.e. Itinerant support for hearing or vision).

Discrete services such as psychology or counselling will not be supported due to privacy reasons.

NDIS-funded services

The NDIS generally expects therapy to occur **outside of school**. Where a parent requests NDIS-funded support at school, the same process above applies. The contract remains between the family and the provider. Approval is at the school's discretion and must show a clear educational benefit, linked to the student's PLSP.

Supervision, duty of care and privacy:

- **Observation:** Sessions occur in spaces that can be observed by staff (window or open doorway).
- **Duty of care:** The school retains overall duty of care. Providers also owe a duty of care to students they support.
- **Privacy:** Information shared is limited to what is necessary for the service. Providers must handle student information in line with privacy obligations.
- **Digital use:** Providers must comply with the school's digital safety expectations and any relevant declarations before using devices with students.

Withdrawal of approval Access may be withdrawn at any time where:

- The school observes that the service no longer meets the student's educational needs.
- There are unintended adverse effects on other students or school operations.
- Service quality, reliability or staffing becomes a concern.
- Agreement terms, school procedures or conduct expectations are not met.
- Where the EFSP fails to submit two Therapy Update forms – for disclosure of information between contractor and school in full.

Copacabana Public School

THERAPY UPDATE FORM



Contractor's Name	
School Name	Copacabana Public School
Student's Name	
Type of Service Provided	
Update timeframe	Week 5 <input type="checkbox"/> Week 10 <input type="checkbox"/>
Update – include all relevant information and progress summaries, with links to student PLASP outcomes	
Overview of next 5 weeks of student goals, linked to PLASP	
Contractor's Signature	
Date	

Please submit this form to our school office at *Weeks 5 & 10*.

This can be submitted in paper form or digitally.

Where this form is not submitted on two occasions, the Principal/Delegate has the right to revoke future access.