

INDIVIDUAL EDUCATION PLAN GUIDELINES

Partnering Agreement

School Attendance and Engagement of Children
and Young People in Out of Home Care



Department of Education & Training
and Department of Human Services



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Individual Education Plan Guidelines

The purpose of an Individual Education Plan is to describe a set of strategies to address the particular educational needs of the child or young person in out of home care. Schools may use existing proformas already in use such as the Literacy and Numeracy Plans; Managed Individual Pathways (MIPS); or Program for Students with Disabilities (PSD) proformas.

This suggested Individual Education Plan proforma has been compiled jointly by the Department of Education and Training and the Department of Human Services. It is provided for use by schools or may be used as a guide for schools using alternative formats or seeking to develop their own proformas. Many schools will already have something in place, particularly for students funded through the *Program for Students with Disabilities*. The Individual Education Plan template and the Student Support Group meeting record template can be found with this document on the Student Wellbeing Website at www.sofweb.vic.edu.au/wellbeing/index.htm.

If a student changes school, it is envisaged that the Individual Education Plan will be forwarded to the new school for consideration. This can be done using the normal processes for exchanging information.

Principles

The following principles should underpin the development of the Individual Education Plan by the Student Support Group for each student in out of home care. Guidelines for establishing and operating a Student Support Group can be found in the Partnering Agreement: *School Attendance and Engagement of Children and Young People in Out of Home Care*.

The Student Support Group should:

- provide ongoing support by having those with most knowledge of and responsibility for the child or young person work together to establish shared goals
- involve key people relevant to the student's success including:
 - the child or young person when appropriate
 - the parent, guardian or caregiver
 - the Department of Human Services or delegate or protective worker or Community Service Organisation case manager
 - the nominated teacher or Year level coordinator
 - the Principal or nominee to act as chairperson
 - the Student Welfare Coordinator and/or Student Support Service staff

- assign action or strategies to various Student Support Group members for implementation
- be overseen by the principal or nominee who has responsibility for monitoring the Individual Education Plan.
- Meet regularly according to the needs of the child or young person, the level of concern and the degree of change required.
- Convene meetings at any time at the request of the school, case manager, parent, guardian, caregiver or child/young person.

It is good practice for the Student Support Group to continue to meet for a period of time after a child or young person returns home, in order to monitor their progress.

The Individual Education Plan should:

- outline a meaningful educational program
- be age and developmentally appropriate
- be flexible and future-orientated
- adopt a holistic approach to the student’s education
- be a strength-based model with a focus on the student’s potential to achieve good educational, social and behavioural outcomes
- aim to retain the student at school
- clearly articulate individual and shared responsibilities
- provide/document information on which to reflect about how the student is progressing
- provide guidance for the Student Support Group
- contain a record of important decisions and actions
- be a useful transition tool.
- be reviewed on a regular basis according to the needs of the child or young person (at least 6 monthly)

Privacy responsibilities

A school has a duty of care to take all reasonable steps to provide an appropriate level of care to students. Privacy laws do not change this responsibility. They simply provide a guide to the reasonable steps to take in relation to handling a student’s personal and health information.

The principal or nominee must ensure the Student Support Group has been informed of their responsibilities in relation to the collection, use and storage of a student’s parents/guardians personal and health information.

For further information on privacy responsibilities in relation to the implementation of the Partnering Agreement, refer to the Privacy Partnership checklist at

www.eduweb.vic.gov.au/privacy (in the resources for schools section) or www.sofweb.vic.edu.au/wellbeing/index.htm (in the documents section).

Planning sequence

In developing an Individual Education Plan to support a student, the Student Support Group may wish to use the following planning sequence to ensure that optimum learning outcomes are facilitated.

Step 1 Understanding the student.

- Share understandings of factors that impact on the student's schooling
- Identify the student's skills, strengths, preferences, abilities and motivations.
- Identify the student's preferred learning style.

Step 2 Set goals.

- Consider key long-term goals that reflect learning outcomes in social, academic and life skills development.
- Establish short-term goals that will lead sequentially to the achievement of long-term goals.
- Ensure that the goals are measurable, achievable, supported and time-framed.

Step 3 Develop the plan .

- Identify what needs to be addressed to ensure achievement of goals.

Step 4 Implement the plan.

- Identify strategies for program delivery – when, where, by whom and with whom.

Step 5 Monitor and evaluate the plan.

- Determine how the student's plan is to be measured, rated and reported.
- Measure the student's progress in social, academic and life skills development.
- Revisit goals and priorities.
- Adjust the plan and implementation strategies.

Developing individual goals

When developing individual goals, use the SMART principle:

- S** *Specific* – the goal should relate to a particular skill or ability, not be a generalised, broad statement.
- M** *Measurable* – achievement of the skill or behaviour should be quantifiable and observable.

- A** *Achievable* – the skill, ability or behaviour targeted should have a reasonable chance of successful achievement.
- R** *Realistic* – the skill should be realistic in terms of the student’s circumstances and capabilities.
- T** *Timely* – the learning of the skill, ability or behaviour should be achievable within a reasonable time frame, and the time of learning the skill, ability or behaviour should be appropriate for the student’s age and life.
 - transferable (environmentally).

The goal should:

- lead to the student’s *inclusion* in all school activities
- be *individualised* in terms of the student’s needs (both short-term and long-term) and their current achievements and future aspirations
- be based on the student’s strengths.

Useful websites

www.sofweb.vic.edu.au/wellbeing/disabil/index.htm – the Student Disabilities website.

http://www.sofweb.vic.edu.au/voced/careers_transition/mips/ – contains *Managed Individual Pathways Plans*.

www.sofweb.vic.edu.au/wellbeing/index.htm – the document section contains:

- the *Partnering Agreement* and other useful documents to support the attendance of students
- the Framework for Student Support Services Teacher Resource, which provides guidelines for establishing a Student Support Group.

www.dhs.vic.gov.au/lac-victoria – information about the *Looking After Children Framework* in Victoria.

www.eduweb.vic.gov.au/privacy – the DE&T intranet site for the Privacy Principles (available to Department of Education and Training staff only)