



Mount Barker
Primary School

ONSITE THERAPY POLICY

Purpose

At Mount Barker Primary School, we are committed to supporting the wellbeing and learning of every student. We recognise that some children require additional support to thrive, and we value the vital role that therapy services can play in helping students achieve their best outcomes. Our school is dedicated to working collaboratively with families and therapy providers in a team-based approach that places the child at the centre. By fostering open communication and shared goals, we aim to create a supportive, inclusive environment where all students can succeed.

This policy outlines the requirements and procedures for engaging non-Department for Education service providers to deliver onsite therapeutic services to students during school hours. It aims to ensure student wellbeing, reduce disruption to learning programs, and uphold duty of care in line with departmental legislation and procedures.

Scope

This policy applies to all non-DfE providers (e.g. NDIS-funded therapists) delivering services on school grounds, students receiving external therapy services during school hours, families seeking therapy access at school and all school staff involved in planning or supervising onsite therapy.

Guiding Principles

The school is committed to inclusive education and supporting student access, participation, and achievement. A team-around-the-child model will guide all decision-making, with collaboration between families, educators, and service providers.

The school must maintain its legal duty of care and provide adequate supervision at all times.

Conditions of Service Delivery

Approval Requirements

Before any therapy services can commence on school grounds, a number of important steps must be completed to ensure the arrangement is appropriate, safe, and aligned with the student's educational goals.

Families are required to submit a **Parent/Guardian Request for Services** form, which outlines their consent and intention to engage a non-education service provider during school hours.

The nominated therapist or provider must then complete a **Service Agreement and Schedule**, detailing the nature of the service, its frequency, and how it supports the student's individual learning plan. The service provider will also be required to pay a one off administration fee to the school before commencing sessions.



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The Site Leader or their delegate will review this request by completing a **Record of Decision-Making** form to assess the suitability of the service within the school's learning environment and supervision capacity.

If approved, a formal **Licence Agreement** must be executed between the Minister for Education and the service provider before any onsite therapy can begin. This agreement formalises the terms of access and ensures compliance with departmental policies and legal obligations.

Required Documentation from Providers

When a non-Education service provider requests access to the school to provide direct supports or services to a student, the site leader must obtain the following from the service provider:

- A current Teachers Registration certificate **OR**
- A DHS Working with Children Check Unique Identifier and a current Responding to Risks of Harm, Abuse and Neglect – Education and Care certificate (RRHAN – EC) **OR**
- A DHS Working with Children Check Unique Identifier, a current Responding to Risks of Harm, Abuse and Neglect – Education and Care Bridging Course certificate (RRHAN – EC) and a Safe Environments Training certificate completed in the last three years run by DHS approved providers
- Evidence of a completed Child Safe Environments Compliance Statement
- A copy of the non-Education service provider's Public and Products Liability Insurance Policy
- A copy of qualifications in professional field of practice. Current registration or membership with a relevant professional organisation, for example, Psychology AHPRA Registration certificate, Occupational Therapy AHPRA Registration certificate, full membership of Speech Pathology Australia, membership of the Australian Association of Social Workers or qualifications relevant to the proposed service being delivered to the child or young person
- Any information that details limitations or restrictions that have been placed on professional practice
- Details of the proposed service being delivered to the child or young person, including frequency of service, time involved and program being delivered.

Site Logistics and Restrictions

To support the smooth start of the school year and allow students time to settle into their routines, onsite therapy sessions will not begin until **Week 4 of Term 1** each year. All sessions must take place in communal spaces approved by the school, considering the availability of suitable environments and the overall needs of the learning program. To meet the Department for Education's duty of care obligations, line-of-sight supervision by a school staff member is required at all times while therapy is being delivered. Group or joint therapy sessions, such as combined occupational therapy and speech therapy, are not supported on site due to space and supervision limitations. Any equipment trials or fittings must be booked with a minimum of one week's notice, to ensure the availability of appropriate space and any necessary safety equipment (e.g. hoists or slings). Due to limited storage capacity, each student may

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store a maximum of two specialised therapy items on site, with the exception of medical equipment, which is not subject to this restriction.

Responsibilities

Families

Families play a crucial role in facilitating successful onsite therapy arrangements. Before a service provider begins working with a student at school, families are responsible for arranging all initial meetings and introductions off-site, to ensure that the school environment remains focused on learning and minimally disrupted.

Families must also inform the service providers directly if their child will be absent for a scheduled session, or if the student is unable to attend a session due to school activities such as incursions or excursions. Additionally, families are expected to notify the school promptly if the service arrangement ceases, allowing the school to update its records and release any reserved space.

As part of the application process, families are also required to provide consent for the sharing of relevant information, including reports, assessments, and progress summaries, between the service provider and the school, to support collaborative planning and continuity of support.

Non DfE Providers

Service providers have a professional responsibility to work collaboratively with the school to support student outcomes and ensure safety. They are required to provide up-to-date Care Plans, therapy notes, and assessment summaries to teaching staff, allowing educators to align classroom strategies with therapeutic goals.

Service providers must also inform the school immediately of any changes to their professional registration, capacity to practise, or any restrictions placed on their practice, as these may impact their suitability to work on site.

In line with departmental policy, all service providers are expected to sign in at the front office upon arrival, follow school protocols and procedures, and conduct themselves in a manner consistent with professional and ethical standards.

Most importantly, service providers must ensure that all sessions are conducted within line-of-sight of a Department for Education staff member at all times, as this is a critical element of the school's duty of care and supervision obligations.

School / Site Leadership

The school's Site Leader (or delegate) is responsible for overseeing all aspects of onsite therapy access and ensuring it aligns with departmental guidelines and the operational needs of the school. This includes the authority to approve or deny therapy access based on the completeness of submitted

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documentation, suitability of the proposed service, and the school's capacity to accommodate sessions safely and effectively.

All sessions delivered on-site must be directly linked to the student's educational goals, as outlined in their One Plan, ensuring a consistent and collaborative approach to supporting student development. The Site Leader will conduct annual reviews of all agreements and therapy arrangements to evaluate their effectiveness and continued appropriateness. Where a service no longer meets school expectations, due to safety concerns, non-compliance, or other operational impacts, the Site Leader reserves the right to withdraw approval for onsite delivery at any time.

In line with Department for Education requirements, the school will maintain accurate and secure records of all documentation and communications, in accordance with the department's information privacy policy.

Service Cessation or Refusal

The site leader reserves the right to refuse or withdraw access for service providers if duties of care cannot be maintained or if guidelines are not followed. If services are refused or withdrawn, a meeting with the family and provider will be arranged to explore alternative options.

Contact and Communication

All initial contact and queries from families or service providers must be directed to the Front Office.



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