

## Working with external therapists and NDIS service providers at Burwood East Special Developmental School

### Rationale

The Department of Education and Training (DET) is responsible for the educational programs and provisions for students enrolled in Victorian government school settings. BESDS recognises, however, that input from external therapists and NDIS service providers may benefit the wellbeing and development of a student and, as a result, improve their learning outcomes.

At BESDS, to maintain the learning, safety and wellbeing of every student, requests for DET employees to consult and liaise with external therapists are handled as follows:

### Ways in which we can work with external therapists and NDIS service providers

- If requested by a student's parents/guardians an external therapist/NDIS service provider is **welcome to attend a Student Support Group (SSG)** meeting, contribute to the discussion and have input into school-based goals if appropriate
- **Therapy reports that are held on school file** can be shared with an external therapy provider/NDIS provider on request from a parent/guardian and once the appropriate written full and informed consent from a parent or legal guardian has been obtained (attached)
- **BESDS therapy staff can communicate via email and phone calls** with an external therapist or NDIS service provider once BESDS is provided with written full and informed parental consent to do so (form attached)
- **Classroom observation and/or consultation with BESDS staff** – On request from a student's parent or guardian, we can support an external therapist attending school for classroom observation and/or staff consultation where possible. Observations are arranged at a time suitable for the school and consist of 30 minutes supervised classroom observation immediately followed by 30 minutes consultation with school staff (i.e. teacher, therapist(s), education support staff). Please use the attached form.

### Requests from external therapists/NDIS service providers that we CANNOT support:

- BESDS therapy staff cannot write an additional report for the purposes of supporting an NDIS application or the commercial work of an external therapist.
- As a general rule, a request to provide a private therapeutic service at the school (i.e. a private speech therapy session or an ABA therapist working with a student at school) will not be approved. In some circumstances, and subject to the approval of the Principal and the School Council a request can be considered and is subject to the department guidelines available here:  
<https://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/teachers/learningneeds/Pages/ndisfundedtherapy.aspx>

**SECTION 1 - EXTERNAL THERAPIST/NDIS PROVIDER TO COMPLETE**

|  |  |
|--|--|
| <b>Name of Therapist</b>                               |  |
| <b>Company Name</b>                                    |  |
| <b>Company Address</b>                                 |  |
| <b>Therapist Phone Number</b>                          |  |
| <b>Therapist email</b>                                 |  |
| <b>Qualifications held</b>                             |  |
| <b>Professional registration</b>                       |  |
| <b>Are you registered as an NDIS service provider?</b> |  |

In reference to the following student at BESDS \_\_\_\_\_

I am applying to request consent for the following activities (tick all that are appropriate)

A classroom observation and consultation with school staff

Permission to discuss the student named above via email, telephone or in person

Permission for the school to release the following report(s) to me\*:

Occupational Therapy

Physiotherapy

Speech Pathology

Cognitive Assessment Reports

\*While you may request release of all reports, **we can only release those that a parent/carer consents to share**

*Documentation requirements for Classroom Observations*

**Child Safety**

Front and back copies of your **Working with Children Check Card for Employment** (a Volunteer card will not be accepted)

**public liability insurance** (check that the certificate is current and is for a minimum sum per occurrence of \$10 million)

**professional indemnity insurance** (check that the certificate is current, with a reputable insurer, covers the professional services being provided, and is for no less than \$5 million per any one event and in the aggregate)

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*EXTERNAL THERAPIST/NDIS PROVIDER Consent to Share Information*

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The Department requires NDIS funded therapists or other external private therapists to share important and relevant information about the student with the school. The school requires this information to optimally educate and support the student and fulfil important legal obligations. This means that the NDIS funded therapist or external private therapist must provide student information to the school as follows:

- information about the student's disability and their needs - in the way/s and at the times specified by the principal; and
- student information that relates to reasonably foreseeable risk to anyone. This includes, for example, information that the student has emotional, wellbeing or self-harm issues; displays aggressive or violent behaviours; is a victim or perpetrator of bullying, assault or age-inappropriate sexualised behaviours.

I agree to share information in the ways specified above:

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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*EXTERNAL THERAPIST/NDIS PROVIDER Commitment to Child Safety*

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At Burwood East Special Developmental School (BESDS), we consider the health, safety and wellbeing of all children and young people to be our highest priority. We strive to ensure the safety and wellbeing of children and young people at our school at all times. We have zero tolerance of child abuse, and all allegations and safety concerns will be treated seriously and consistently. We are committed to creating a safe, respectful and inclusive school environment where all students can be happy, confident and resilient, regardless of their sexual or gender identity, cultural background, disability or other circumstances. We take account of the diversity of all children, including the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, children with disabilities and vulnerable children. Any physical contact with children or young people must be appropriate to the delivery of the programs and services based on the needs of the individual rather than the needs of any staff, visitor or service provider.

All visitors, volunteers, staff, casual staff and any placements must have a Working with Children Check (WWC)/VIT registration and be prepared to undertake an induction regarding to Child Safety at our school.

I understand that BESDS operates within a framework of Child Safe policies and procedures and agree to abide by these requirements. I may review copies of this documentation at any time on request.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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**PARENT OR LEGAL GUARDIAN TO READ AND COMPLETE**

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You have requested for an external therapist or NDIS service provider to consult with the school. Please complete the following table to show which services you consent to being undertaken. Please also indicate which information you consent to being shared.

|   |                          |
|---|--------------------------|
| A classroom observation and consultation with school staff                      | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Permission to discuss the student named above via email, telephone or in person | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Permission for the school to release the following report(s) to the therapist*: |                          |
| Occupational Therapy  | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Physiotherapy   | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Speech Pathology  | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Cognitive Assessment Reports  | <input type="checkbox"/> |

\*although therapists often request that all reports are released, we will only release the information you tick above

This Parent Consent Form records consent to your request for:

- a) the NDIS funded therapist or other private external therapist sharing important and relevant information about the student with the school (as set out in the Information-sharing section below)
- b) an NDIS funded therapist or external private therapist to undertake a supervised classroom observation of my child
- c) the school to share the reports indicated with the therapist named overleaf
- d) staff at the school to engage in professional consultation with the therapist or provider named overleaf

### Sharing student information

Schools must comply with the Victorian privacy law when collecting and otherwise managing personal and health information about students and their families (student information).

The Department requires NDIS funded therapists or other external private therapists to share important and relevant information about the student with the school. The school requires this information to optimally educate and support the student and fulfil important legal obligations. This means that the NDIS funded therapist or external private therapist must provide student information to the school as follows:

- information about the student's disability and their needs - in the way/s and at the times specified by the principal; and
- student information that relates to reasonably foreseeable risk to anyone. This includes, for example, information that the student has emotional, wellbeing or self-harm issues; displays aggressive or violent behaviours; is a victim or perpetrator of bullying, assault or age-inappropriate sexualised behaviours.

The principal and other school staff will only share this information with other staff who 'need to know' to enable the school to educate or support the student or fulfil legal obligations. For more information about this see the Schools' Privacy Policy, which also describes how you

may seek to access and/or correct information held by the school about the student. Alternatively, please feel free to contact our school to discuss this further.

**Your consent**

I confirm that I have read this Consent Form and:

- I request the support of the external/NDIS funded therapist named below to observe my child (named below) at school and consult with school staff in person, via telephone or by email  

and/or
- It is my request that the school release reports held on file to the therapist named on this form  

and/or
- It is my request and I understand that the therapist must share information about my child with the school, as described.
  
- I understand that I can also withdraw my consent by contacting the school.

| STUDENT DETAILS                   |   |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| Student Name:                     |   |
| Date of Birth:                    |   |
| School:                           | Burwood East Special Developmental School |
| Therapist's Name and Organisation |   |
| PARENT/GUARDIAN CONSENT           |   |
| Name:                             |   |
| Signature:                        |   |
| Relationship to student:          |   |
| Date:                             |   |

Once both sections are complete, please return to the school with any additional documents for approval by the Principal or their nominated delegate.