




Policy Category: Education	
Number of pages: 13	Appendices:
Version: 2.2	Status: approved, current
Reviewed by: Principal	Endorsed by: Board
Approved by: Board	Date: 11/10/24
Signature: 	
Recommended frequency of review: 1 year for new policies, and then at least every 3 years unless otherwise approved by the Executive Team. Next review: 2027	
Related Legislation and Documents: Australian Steiner Curriculum Framework	
Additional Information:	

Document history:

Version	Date	Nature of Amendment
1.1	2013	Approved
1.2	2013	Approved
2.1	2021	Major revision
2.2	11/10/24	Minor Revision – edits to report and EAP guidelines reflect new roles in the school.

Curriculum

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DEFINITIONS AND ABBREVIATIONS

MSSA: Milkwood Steiner School Association

ASCF: Australian Steiner Curriculum Framework

SEA: Steiner Education Australia

PURPOSE

The Australian Steiner Curriculum Framework (ASCF) was developed in response to the 2009 Federal Government's proposal to create a mandatory Australian Curriculum for all schools. As Steiner education is internationally recognised, Steiner Education Australia accepted the opportunity to put forward an alternate curriculum framework for recognition, in order to protect the integrity of Steiner education philosophy and pedagogy.

As a SEA Member School, Milkwood Steiner School's approach to curriculum critically honours the wisdom of Steiner Education, draws on and assesses student learning against the ASCF, adapting an approach to curriculum to the social, historical, environmental and cultural context of Larrakia country (Darwin, Northern Territory).

POLICY STATEMENT

Milkwood Steiner School draws its curriculum considerations from SEA's ASCF.

The ASCF Content Descriptors for each Subject are mandatory in implementation. The Content Elaborations are examples only and teachers may create different learning experiences for teaching the content.

As in the Australian Curriculum, teacher's professional judgement with regard to a particular cohort of student needs may vary the curriculum implementation one year before or after the designated staging.

Students are assessed against the ASCF's Achievement Standards, adapted as required to the needs of each child and class by the class teacher.

Supplementary Curricula, such as the Department of Education's Indigenous Languages and Culture Curriculum, Consent Education or Respectful Relationships Curricula, may be integrated into the school's program in ways that enrich the provision of a Steiner Curriculum, facilitate inclusion, and adjust a teaching practice to the needs of children in this time and place.

Achievement Standards are reported against in Student Learning Profiles (formerly Student Reports), at the end of each Semester.

Student Learning Profiles are completed and distributed to parents each Semester.

Curriculum and child development discussion are ongoing features of College of Teachers meetings.

The Principal is responsible for

- Coordinating systemic and Professional Development in areas of Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting
- Developing and reviewing systems for strengthening MSSA's approach to Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting

- Improving the quality of teaching and learning at MSSA according to the *Recruitment and Employment Policy*

Teachers are responsible for

- Planning, documenting, implementing, evaluating, adjusting and reporting on Curriculum according to this policy and guidelines
- Submitting evidence of lessons plans, student assessments, and reports to the school, as required
- Adapting the ASCF to meet the unique needs of each child in the class
- Adapting the ASCF to meet the unique context of this Time and Place
- Regularly communicating curriculum rationales and classroom plans to families and community
- Creating curriculum adjustments as required (see *Inclusion and Anti-Discrimination Policy*)
- Support Specialist Teachers to enhance MSSA's provision of a Steiner Curriculum
- Provide direction to Teacher Assistants and other support staff to deliver a Steiner Curriculum
- Maintaining professional development and knowledge of best practice in areas of Curriculum teaching and learning

Teacher Assistants are responsible for

- supporting the provision of a Steiner Curriculum in the classroom, with individual students and with small groups of students, according to the Teacher's direction
- Maintaining professional development and knowledge of best practice in areas of student support and learning
- Developing strategies to ensure the inclusion of each child in accessing Curriculum
- Sharing observations and recommendations regarding student learning and wellbeing, to the Responsible Teacher, College of Teachers and Principal

Specialist Teachers are responsible for working with the Principal and Teachers, drawing on the ASCF and other sources for Steiner Pedagogy considerations, to run and report on specialist curriculum programs which align with, support and enhance MSSA's provision of a Steiner Curriculum. Examples may include Music, Gardening, Library, Language, Eurythmy, Dance, Health and Physical Education and others.

Instrument Teachers are responsible for creating an individualised learning program for their students, which supports the school's Music Program and Curriculum, honours children's individual differences, interests and strengths, values participation, creativity and self-development, and supports a love for music.

Parents and Friends of MSSA are encouraged to contribute to the delivery of a Steiner Curriculum at MSSA, supporting the teacher in various subject areas. This may include craft, storytelling, reading, gardening amongst other contributions.

GUIDELINES / PROCEDURES

Whole School Main Lesson Overview

A Whole School Main Lesson Overview has been developed for MSSA from the ASCF. This overview guides the progression of Main Lessons taught in the Primary Years at MSSA. See Appendix 1: *Advice for Composite Teaching at MSSA and Whole School Main Lesson Overview*.

Literacy and Numeracy Scope and Sequence

A Scope and Sequence of Essential Literacy Skills, and a Scope and Sequence of Essential Numeracy Skills has been developed for MSSA from ASCF English and Maths Scope and Sequence. These overviews guide the progression of skills taught from in the Primary Years at MSSA. See Appendix 2: *Scope and Sequence of Essential Literacy Skills* and Appendix 3: *Scope and Sequence of Essential Numeracy Skills*.

Curriculum considerations for composite classes

Teachers of composite class create a two-year sequence plan, aiming to cover all curriculum content for two class levels over the course of two years. The process for creating this plan may vary depending on the class' history, topics covered prior to entry into this class and the needs of the children in the class. The teacher is responsible for determining which topics may be taught simultaneously. Where possible, the teacher plans to alternate some topics over an 'A' and 'B' year, allowing children to complete all topics over two years and minimise repetition. Other topics, especially mathematics, can be taught simultaneously making adjustments for each year level, or in combination by integrating topic content and achievement standards during planning. See Appendix 1: *Advice for Composite Teaching at MSSA and Whole School Main Lesson Overview*.

Lesson Planning Guidelines

The Teacher is responsible for maintaining documentation for Lesson Planning via the Main Lesson Planning Template (Appendix 4).

This document is shared with the Principal regularly for feedback, and submitted in its final form to the Principal annually in December, and filed and prepared for auditing purposes by the Enrolments and Administration Officer.

Educational Adjustment Plans document and evaluate adjustments to curriculum (see *Inclusion and Anti-Discrimination Policy*).

Teachers maintain a day book/diary documenting teaching, adjustments and assessments. This diary is property of the school and should not be removed from the classroom. The diary is submitted to the Principal at the end of each calendar year, and is a legal document for auditing and reporting purposes.

Daily Rhythm

Considerations of climate are significant in planning the rhythm of the day. As time outdoors everyday is recognised as essential, the Main Lesson daily rhythm is adapted by each teacher to ensure children can have time outdoors before the heat of the tropics in the afternoon sometimes becomes a barrier.

Main Lesson

The Main Lesson is usually taught for the first two hours of each day. A Main Lesson Topic is usually studied for 3 weeks to allow for an immersive learning experience. The vehicle for the presentation of all Main Lesson work, and wherever possible all practical work as well, is 'imagination'. The teacher strives to represent all intellectual work through imaginative pictures. These pictures are mobile and alive within the child, compared to their antithesis found in pre-formed concepts and isolated information, which are to be avoided. Creativity and artistic presentation thus become the teacher's main tools.

Thinking, feeling and willing as human faculties, operate within us all the time throughout the day. However, we place emphasis on different aspects of these faculties to fully engage the children in the rhythm that occurs quite naturally during the day. ie in the morning we are very awake and alert in our thinking. In the afternoon we feel less inclined towards academic work and are more inclined towards handwork, projects and making things (craft and technology). In the middle of the day we are open to rhythmic practice and artistic activity. The teacher endeavours to present the Main Lesson, through the use of a wide range of strategies, to unite all the powers of the human being by engaging the child's faculties of thinking, feeling and willing.

Middle Lesson

Between thinking and willing – between the head and the limbs – lies the feeling life, the human rhythmic systems of breathing and blood circulation. The middle session therefore reflects this aspect of the human body and, although other subjects need to be introduced at this time, it is also the period of the day where consolidation of learning is scheduled through repetition (rhythm). Skills taught in all subjects in the literacy and numeracy Main Lessons are subsequently worked into a program of regular practice and reinforcement in the periods following these Main Lessons. Supplementary subjects are also timetabled during this middle session. The material covered during this time will form an important part of the assessment and reporting process for each child.

The middle session is used to consolidate the Main Lesson content, particularly in literacy and numeracy and provide time for other subjects such as Craft, Languages, Eurythmy, Sport and Form Drawing lessons.

Afternoon Lesson

The afternoon lesson is directed towards the child's developing will forces. Activities can be linked to the main lesson as part of an integrated main lesson. For example, a main lesson about botany can be supported by the planting of a class garden in the afternoon lesson. Other activities may include sport, dance, craft, painting, woodwork, clay and building. These lessons meet the technical and practical arts needs of the students.

Principles of teaching practice are informed by the following tenets:

- Connect everything to the human being: The child is gradually led to be familiar with everything that surrounds him in nature and human life. This is never done in an abstract, scientific way, but always in such a way that the child feels: this has to do with me, this concerns me.
- First the experiencing, then the understanding: There are three stages to this process – first, experiencing through the will – the doing; second, expressing that pictorially, using the feelings; this acts as a bridge to the understanding of the concept through the thinking.
- From the whole to the parts: The whole is experienced before it comes to be broken down and analysed. Again, this is often the opposite of the adult experience, especially in the reductionist approach to science. For example learning to read starts with a story. The story represents the whole. This story can be broken down into sentences and then further into words and then into letters and then sounds. It is the story to begin with that contextualizes the parts and gives the human being somewhere to place himself in what otherwise might be an abstract process where letters have no direct relationship to the world or the learner.
- The World is beautiful: The child who sees the world as beautiful will experience wonder and respect; they will want to know about the world and to interact with it in a healthy way.
- Present pictorially through imagination: Material is presented in vivid descriptions rather than

defined concepts. This brings things alive for children and speaks to their feelings as well as their minds. 'The spring, the river, a boulder, a tree, a flower, the north star, even the laws of attraction and repulsion in physics and chemistry as well as prosaic life can become allegory and simile when the teacher characterises them in a pictorial way.' When presented in this way feelings of sympathy and antipathy are engaged and lead into artistic expression (dramatic role play, water colour painting etc.) where the learner is fully involved with the material in a living way.

- All activity needs rhythm: Just as our bodies are regulated by our breathing and our heartbeat, our days are made healthy by a rhythm of breathing in and breathing out – between concentration and relaxation, listening and speaking, moving and stillness, group activity and solitude.
- Have truly practical life in mind: Rudolf Steiner emphasised the need for the Steiner school to stand firmly in the full reality of contemporary life, and for the students to become active and useful citizens. The maxim 'Head, Heart and Hands' often used to describe Steiner methodology exemplifies our integrated, holistic approach to education.
- From knowledge to knowing: Knowledge is not necessarily intrinsically useful or interesting. Nourishing young people with an understanding and experience of their context in place and time changes the emphasis on acquisition of knowledge to one of learning and clarity of thought. Equipping children with the skills our culture demands and setting them on the path to free thinking is the task a Steiner school has as part of its mission.
- Steiner education is based on a profound understanding of the natural process of human development. It is important to understand that human development is an organic, natural process that is inherently healthy. If we can support and nurture this process through education, we will develop healthy, whole individuals with not only sound physical health, but just as importantly, sound emotional health. This is the first underlying principle to remember. To do this, a thorough understanding of this natural process of human development is essential.

Adapted from Working Material for the Class Teacher, Study Material of the Pedagogical Section and the Pedagogical Research Centre, in Examining the Waldorf Curriculum from an American Viewpoint pp18-19, cited in Working with Curriculum in Australian Steiner Schools, Cunningham, 2004, p27

Student Learning Profiles (formerly Student Reports) – Guidelines for Kindergarten, Primary and Specialist Teachers

Report filing and submission

Reports are a legal requirement for students from Preschool to Year 8, who are enrolled for any period during the Semester.

Report templates for each class are stored on Sharepoint under GENERAL -> REPORTS (Files).

Teachers should save and file their reports under CLASS XX -> REPORTS -> SEMESTER 1 -> Reports_2022_S1_STUDENTSURNAME_Studentfirstname.doc (eg. Reports_2022_S1_POTTER_Harry.doc)

Timeline

Report writing deadlines and release time are distributed in the Term calendars.

Teachers must notify the Principal prior to a deadline if there is any reason they may not be able to meet a deadline.

Report Writing

Boxes to grade are extracted from the ASCF Achievement Standards (table and gradings) for Transition to Year 8, and from the EYLF Outcomes for Preschool.

Tick checkboxes for all assessable learning areas. Achievement standards listed are for the full year.

In Semester 1, standards that are still in progress reflect the level of competence a student has displayed at this stage of learning knowing there's still 6 months of learning to come.

Individual Subject Areas

Include 1-2 photos of teaching and learning in the relevant subject area. This can be a photo of board work, a festival, garden etc. and can be the same photo for all students in the class. Insert this into your template so that you don't have to manually insert it into each report. No subject area comments required in Semester 1 (General comment only, see below).

Below each table, add 1 paragraph (3-4 sentences) about work covered this year. This subject area summary may be adapted from the ASCF to include the lesson as it was taught in your class this year.

This paragraph is the same for every child in your class.

Include 2-3 photos or work samples as appropriate, along with your comment.

Specialist Subject Areas

Specialist teachers submit their comments to the Principal in a single word document by Week 7. This includes an overview for the semester's learning + 1-2 sentences per child including: Achievements/Progress; Areas of strength; Recommendations/areas for improvement

General Comments

General comments are written by the Class Teacher. The General Comment should have a positive orientation and include:

- Relationships and contributions to life of the class/school
- Personal, social, behavioural, spiritual growth over the year/semester
- General and academic capabilities and growth including critical thinking, creativity, communication, collaboration, problem solving, research...
- Areas for improvement: 'Next step of learning' comments can include advice on how the child can consolidate the skills already described.

Comments Style Guide

Comments should be constructive

Report comments should follow the following scaffold:

1. **Introductory comment on overall performance**
2. **Comment on an area of strength**

3. Comment on an area of challenge + strategy to help

4. Concluding comment should be more personal and encouraging about the student as an individual/valued member of the class.

Reports are written to parents, not to the child. Congratulatory comments can be addressed through reports eg. "P is to be congratulated for his effort", not "Congratulations on your effort, P".

No surprises: reports should document what has already been shared with parents. The end of term report is not the place to raise a major issue for the first time.

Try to word any issues constructively – give the student and parent the problem and the solutions to the problem.

Use the student name that is written at the top of the report (as a legal document, reports must use the student's legal name, even if they have a different preferred name). Abbreviations or nicknames are not to be used.

All comments require an indicator:

Eg. "open to new things" is too generalized. "demonstrated an openness to new learning experiences, performing the role Brahma in a class play to an audience of parents for the first time".

Eg "...is a good reader" or "one of the best readers in the class" (no evidence, a judgemental comment, not useful to compare to other class members although can be acceptable to state achieving above the expected levels for her age according to the ASCF)

"... chooses challenging reading material and often chooses to engage in shared reading during free time. This term, she read the Harry Potter series and took pride in sharing highlights with her peers" (good anecdotal evidence with examples).

Kindergarten Reports

The Waterlily Kindergarten teacher completes the Transition Report for any Waterlily enrolled student.

The Bush Apple Kindergarten teacher completes the Preschool Report for any Bush Apple students, regardless of part-time/full-time enrolment status.

Reports are a legal requirement for students enrolled in school or preschool for any period during the Semester. This means that even if an enrolled student only attended 1 day of school, they require a report.

Kindergarten reports include 1 paragraph (maximum 4 sentences) about some special moments in the Kindergarten program this Semester. This paragraph is the same for every child.

Eg.

In our Kindergarten, songs about red lilies and stories that reflect seasonal characteristics of magpie geese laying eggs on the floodplains reflected children's experiences outdoors of the season of Mayilema. Children especially enjoyed sand and water play as the pleasant weather was inviting of more outside play. It was very special to welcome Traditional Owners from the Crocodile Islands to share stories of turtles and boating with our children. Gardening day, with many parent helpers, allowed us to celebrate a first bunch of bananas; the banana muffins we baked were such a treat.

Next, include 1 paragraph (maximum 4 sentences) presenting unconditional positive regard for the child. The "report" should reflect the teacher having truly seen the child. Reporting should avoid any fixed assessments of a child of Kindergarten age.

Eg.

In our Kindergarten, Yusuf lives deeply into the stories told each week; I see these stories coming out in his play and imagination every day, from building a tower so tall even his teachers could not reach its peak after the story of 'The Boy who Touched the Sky, to the stories he shared of hunting from his own ancestral heritage, supported by his grandmother. Yusuf

particularly loves the Kindergarten chickens, handling them with care and often teaching younger children how to be still and quiet around the chickens so that they will come to say hello. Yusuf is loved by his friends who seek him out as someone with great ideas for games and deep, imaginative play. Yusuf enriches our Kindergarten with his wonderful questions (he is especially interested in the lives of the living creatures of our bush block!), embracing all parts of the Kindergarten rhythm with a sense of wonder.

A closing sentence, expressing your care or gratitude for the child. Eg.

It is such a pleasure to know Yusuf as he grows.

Educational Adjustment Plan (EAP)

Teachers write Educational Adjustment Plans (EAPs) for children who require any adjustments (teaching, environmental, behavioural or other) to accessing learning at Milkwood Steiner School. The Learning Enrichment Teacher plays an active role in this process, guiding best practice and providing administrative and other support for creating the interventions needed for a child to thrive. The EAP is required to apply for funding for students and is reviewed every 6 months unless requested or in need or review at an earlier point. EAPs feature 3-4 school-focused goals, achievable in 6-12 months. EAPs are applicable to all students regardless of disability/diagnosis.

Term 1: Teachers identify students with additional needs, documenting evidence of adjustments being made in their planning documents and ongoing assessments. EAPs are drafted and shared with parents in the Term 1 parent meetings.

Term 2: EAP documents are finalised, signed by parents and submitted to the office for filing. Adjustments implemented.

Term 3: Principal validates EAPs through NCCD by the first Friday in August (Week 3). Teachers continue working with EAP goals, updating parents and updating document as needed.

Term 4: Teachers review, evaluate and update EAPs.

EAPs are written in one or more of the following areas:

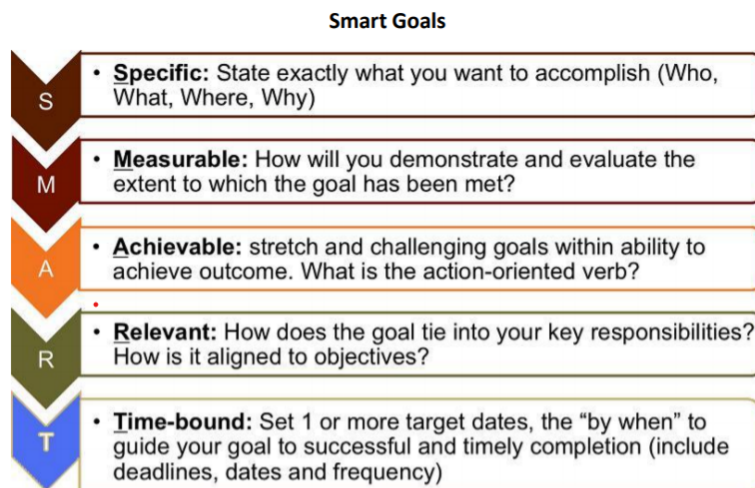
- Curriculum access
- Behaviour
- Social Competence
- Safety
- Communication Access – Receptive Language
- Communication access – Expressive Language
- Hygiene
- Eating and Diet
- Health Care
- Gross Motor and Mobility
- Fine Motor

- Extension of Learning

The EAP is completed on the Milkwood Steiner School EAP Template Document. Completed documents should be saved electronically so that they are retrievable for updating at the 6-month review, and in subsequent schooling years. Two copies of the completed document are printed: One copy is signed and filed by the teacher into the student’s confidential file. A second copy is provided to the parent/carer.

Goal writing

Goals must be specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-bound.



Example

Learning Outcome: Student A will attempt set tasks for 10 minutes at a time
Condition: With one on one adult support
Criteria: 3 times a session consistently by the end of Term 3.

Learning Outcome: Student B will be able to read 50 sight words
Condition: With the support of 15 minutes daily practise
Criteria: By the end of Term 2.

Communication

An EAP involves communication between school and home (parents and guardians) regarding the cause for concern and the need for further planning and development. Before implementing an EAP, a meeting is scheduled between the teacher and parents to discuss the child’s learning goals and adjustments required. Parents may be invited to contribute to the child’s profile regarding their interests and strengths. Any parent observations or concerns about learning should be noted in the meeting minutes section.

Before finalising the EAP, the following steps are taken:

- Assess student need
- Complete the EAP form
- Arrange a parent conference to discuss, minuting decisions made and concerns raised

Transitional Support

Milkwood Steiner School is the only Steiner School in the Top End. The majority of students are expected to transition into mainstream schools after Year 8. Adjustments are made to curriculum in Class 8 to support inclusion of students through this transition, including work with the Digital Literacies curriculum.

Education service providers: overview of the Disability Standards

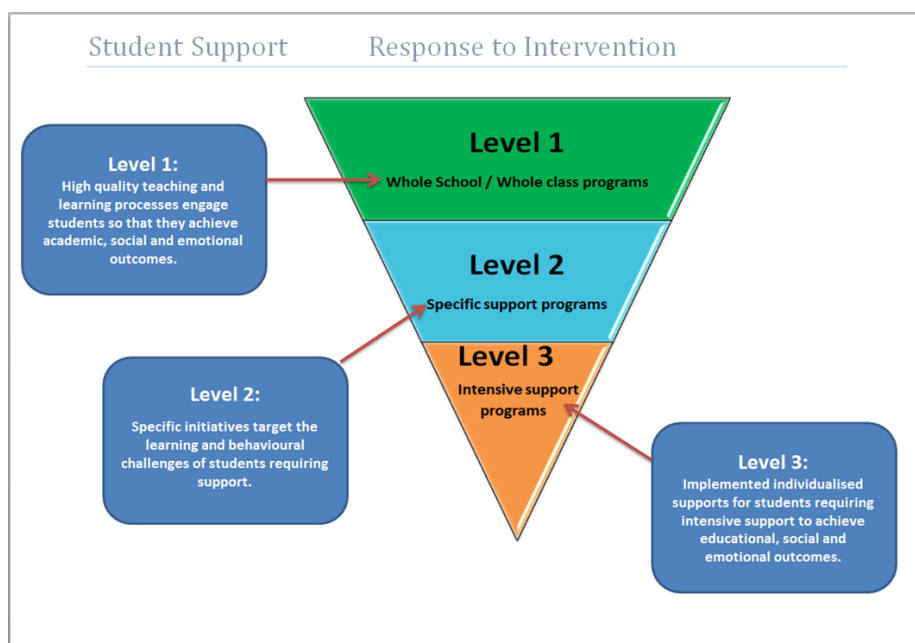
Table 1: Rights and Requirements under the Disability Standards for Education ¹

Rights	Requirements
Enrolment	
Right to seek admission and enrol on the same basis as prospective students without disability including the right to reasonable adjustments.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take reasonable steps to ensure that the enrolment process is accessible. • Consider students with disability in the same way as students without disability when deciding whether to offer a place. • Consult with the prospective student or their associates about the effect of the disability on their ability to seek enrolment, and any reasonable adjustments necessary.
Participation	
Right to access courses and programs; use services and facilities; and have reasonable adjustments made to ensure students with disability are able to participate in education and training on the same basis as students without disability.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take reasonable steps to ensure participation. • Consult with the student or their associates about the effect of the disability on their ability to participate. • Make a reasonable adjustment if necessary. • Repeat this process over time as necessary.
Curriculum development, delivery and accreditation	
Right to participate in courses and relevant supplementary programs that are designed to develop their skills, knowledge and understanding, on the same basis as students without disability; and have reasonable adjustments made to ensure students with disability are able to participate in education and training on the same basis as students without disability.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enable students with disability to participate in learning experiences (including assessment and certification). • Consult with the student or his/her associates. • Take into consideration whether the disability affects the student's ability to participate in the learning experiences.
Student wellbeing and inclusion	
Right to access student wellbeing and inclusion services provided by education institutions on the same basis as students without disability. Students with disability have the right to the specialised services needed for them to	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that students with disability are able to use general support services. • Ensure that students have access to specialised support services.

¹ Disability Standards for Education: Fact Sheet 2. *Disability Standards for Education*. <http://www.education.gov.au/disability-standards-education>.

participate in the educational activities in which they are enrolled.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitate the provision of specialised support services.
Harassment and victimisation	
Right to receive education and training in an environment that is free from discrimination caused by harassment and victimisation on the basis of disability.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement strategies to prevent harassment or victimisation. Take reasonable steps to ensure that staff and students are informed about their obligation not to harass or victimise students with disability. Take appropriate action if harassment or victimisation occurs. Ensure complaint mechanisms are available to students.

Intervention Model guideline



When teaching and learning systems are operating at their best, most learning needs for the majority of students are met at Level 1. Small groups of children require Level 2 support. Individuals receiving Level 2 support may require significant Level 3 support.

Teacher Assistants implement Level 2 and Level 3 interventions, designed by the Teacher/College of Teachers and Principal.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Advice for Composite Teaching at MSSA and Whole School Main Lesson Overview.

Appendix 2: Scope and Sequence of Essential Numeracy Skills at Milkwood Steiner School

Appendix 3: Scope and Sequence of Essential Literacy Skills at Milkwood Steiner School

Appendix 4: Main Lesson Planning Template

Appendix 5: Student Learning Profile Template K-6, Semester 1

Appendix 6: Student Learning Profile Template K-6, Semester 2