

2022

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*Motto: Independence through learning*



Fernhill School Guidelines for Provision of Therapy Services

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## PURPOSE

This document clarifies, defines and supports Fernhill School and therapy service organisations who seek to work in partnership to provide services to students attending the school during school hours.

## RATIONALE

Fernhill School and therapy organisations share an interest in achieving positive educational outcomes for students through developing opportunities to strengthen collaborative partnerships with principals, teachers, parents, therapists and therapy organisations working within the school setting. The ultimate goal of this collaborative approach between education and therapy service provision is to ensure therapy provision during school hours enhances educational outcomes and curriculum access for our students.

## THERAPY SERVICES IN THE SCHOOL SETTING

Fernhill School appreciates the contribution that therapy services can make to the lives of people with a disability; supporting them to reach their potential and enjoy meaningful relationships and experiences in their community.

In some cases, it is appropriate for therapy services to be delivered in the school setting where therapy is clearly linked to enhancing the attainment of positive educational experiences and outcomes. Such an outcome will require positive relationships between Fernhill School staff and therapy service providers. The service must also meet the needs of the students, their class peers and the operation of the school.

## ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF EDUCATION AND THERAPY ORGANISATIONS

The role of school in relation to therapy services is to liaise with families to facilitate any reasonable request for such a service during school hours which will lead to improved educational outcomes.

The role of the therapist when working in schools is to contribute to positive educational outcomes for students, in a planned, collaborative and cohesive manner. At Fernhill this means that the therapist will **provide a program for the student to follow at school**.

## GUIDING PRINCIPLES

* Student safety, wellbeing and educational development are the priorities for any therapy service provided in the school setting.
* Schools are ultimately responsible for student educational outcomes. The decision as to whether a therapy service is to operate within the school is entirely at the discretion of the principal.
* Therapy service providers are responsible and accountable to the student and parents for the service they provide. School staff will not “sign-off” on any service conducted in the school as the agreement is between the parent and service provider. School staff may agree to sign time sheets.
* A collaborative approach between teachers, therapists, families and carers is in the best interest of the student and will assist in achieving positive educational outcomes.

## GUIDING PRACTICES FOR RELATIONSHIPS

* The delivery of therapy services in schools MUST be planned and documented in partnership with the school and family or carers. In this way all stakeholders have a clear understanding of their roles and can resolve any arising issues in a collaborative manner. Service providers will sign an engagement agreement with the school and provide a service schedule for each student linked to the organisation.
* The student’s educational goals are developed within the school setting through a Personalised Learning Plan process. **Therapy services delivered in schools should link to a student’s plan when possible.**
* Effective relationships between therapists and teachers are responsive and have the flexibility required to meet educational goals where resources and priorities change.
* A high standard of confidentiality is maintained where information is shared between stakeholders.
* Any concerns regarding students or staff should be immediately brought to the attention of the principal.

# OPERATIONAL GUIDELINES – FERNHILL SCHOOL

The following information provides a list of guidelines and a starting point for discussion between families, school and therapy providers.

Decisions around whether to provide school access to externally funded providers will be based on whether it is in the best educational interests of the student for the service to be provided at the school, and the school’s duty of care towards all staff and students.

## Commencement Schedule for Therapy Sessions

School staff require time to establish timetables, routines and develop an understanding of each student’s individual needs. We seek your cooperation in ensuring timetabled therapy sessions do not occur until extensive consultation with the student’s Learning Support Team has taken place. Four weeks’ notice is required before therapy may commence. In Term 1 of 2022 there will be no therapy sessions in school until Week 6.

## Therapy programs

Therapy programs should contribute to and support the student to access learning.

When a service during school hours is proposed for a student, parents must use the parent Request for External Therapy form to establish a request. The school executive team will review a student’s PLP and ensure any proposed therapy programs contribute to achieving these goals. Therapists are asked to provide a copy of their therapy notes after each visit in order that their expertise can be followed through in the classroom on a daily basis. We are not therapists and will not be evaluating the program, but we want to ensure that the program aligns with the students’ personal learning plans.

## Mutual negotiation of suitable therapy times.

Therapy times will be arranged with individual therapists via the school executive team. This will ensure minimal disruption to a student’s learning plan. Session times are available on the following days/times - Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday or Friday between 11:50am – 2:30pm.

## Changes to session times.

Consistency of routine is important to all students. We request any alterations to session times be negotiated with the class teacher through the school office prior to commencement of the new session time.

## Sign In / Out Register.

To ensure your safety in the event of an emergency evacuation or lockdown we ask that this register be completed before and after each visit. It is expected that therapists will follow school emergency practices.

## Identification whilst on site.

Please wear your identification badge / tag whilst working in the school. If you do not have an identification badge available, please ask the admin staff for a Visitors Badge.

## Session Location

Fernhill School believes that any provision of therapy services is best conducted in the classroom environment within the context of the timetabled key learning activities. Students remain under the duty of care of the classroom teacher whilst on school grounds. All therapy is to occur within the line of sight of a school staff member.

## Classroom management

Class Teachers are responsible for the learning and management of all students during class time. We encourage open communication between staff and therapists. However, class time is for teaching. We also ask that discussions about the students do not take place while the students are present and able to hear what is said. Service providers will need to seek a mutually appropriate time for discussion and consultation. Each teacher has a small amount of time being relieved from face to face class duties and MAY be available during this time. Please negotiate a suitable time with the class teacher for this consultation via phone or school email. fernhill-s.school@det.nsw.edu.au

## Absences

If you are absent on a given day please ensure you inform the school and the family. Contact the school by phoning the office on 4733 0388 and let the administration staff know who will inform the teaching and learning team for the student. Please do not send an email to the teacher as they are on class and do not see their emails.

## Review of therapy service in school

Whilst our school welcomes the provision of therapy during school time it acknowledges that not all proposed activities and lessons are conducive to being conducted in the classroom context. Some sessions have the potential to be disruptive to other learners in the classroom. The School Executive Team 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 and therapists.

## Request forms and information

The following forms and information can be found on the school website.

* Fernhill School Guidelines for Provision of Therapy Services 2021
* Department Information for Externally Funded Service Providers
* Therapist Request for External Service Provision
* Parent Request for External Therapy Provision

Go to [www.fernhill-s.schools.nsw.gov.au](http://www.fernhill-s.schools.nsw.gov.au). Click on the **Supporting our Students** tab above the photo banner, then choose Therapy at Fernhill School. Click on the link for External Therapy Providers.



# DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION PROCEDURES

1. The school receives a documented request from the students’ parents or carers for externally funded service delivery at the school.
2. The service provider or therapist contact the school.
3. An External Provider Engagement Agreement setting out the responsibilities of each party must be signed between the school and the provider (where an existing agreement with the provider does not exist). Only one agreement per school is required. The provider must supply certified copies of Workers compensation insurance (or personal injury insurance in the case of sole traders undertaking the work themselves), Professional indemnity insurance for not less than $2 million, and Public liability insurance for not less than $20 million.
4. Therapists complete a Request for External Service Provision form for each student.
5. Requests are considered at School Executive Meetings.
6. The school will negotiate service delivery arrangements, including times, place of delivery and frequency of service and confirm with provider.
7. Therapists supply a completed Service Schedule for each student.
8. Parents provide written consent to the agreed service delivery arrangements, including the sharing of information related to the provider’s services to the student.

# MANDATORY REQUIREMENTS FOR THERAPISTS

Departmental procedures for schools engaging the services of volunteers and contractors are in place. As such each therapist must individually meet the following requirements:

## Working With Children Check

If this is the first school at which you are seeking to deliver services, provide the school with:

a completed Declaration for Child Related Work - Specified volunteers and child related contractors

Working With Children Check clearance details.

Photo ID

(This information is to be entered into eCPC to allow for the department’s Probity Unit to commence its verification process and can take up to 48 hours to be approved.)

If seeking to deliver services at a subsequent school:

* Provide photo identification with date of birth details (eg driver’s licence) to allow the school to check this against previously provided identity and clearance details.

## Child Protection Awareness Training

It is a Departmental requirement that all external contractors working with children complete the Child Protection Awareness Training. This e-learning module is free and available publicly on the MyPL page of the Department’s website. External provider staff first need to register as a ‘community member’ on MyPL and create a login ID and password to access the training. The link to register is <https://mypl.education.nsw.gov.au/>. Once successfully registered on MyPL, click on the ‘browse learning’ tab, and use the search facility to locate ‘child protection’ training. A copy of the certificate of completion should be generated and provided to the school. An annual update is required from each therapist.

## Health Care Training

Providers may be required to complete relevant health care training specific to the student.

As part of this requirement, schools can require that provider staff demonstrate completion of any health related training specific to the health care requirements of the student, as identified in the student’s health care plan, and reflecting the nature of the services being provided. For example, if the service includes water-based activities the external service provider must have a first aid and CPR certificate.

Similarly, where the student receiving the service has anaphylaxis, it is necessary that the provider complete the publicly available [online ASCIA anaphylaxis training](https://etraining.allergy.org.au/login/index.php). <https://etraining.allergy.org.au/>. A certificate is awarded upon completion of the training, which can be provided as evidence that the training has been undertaken.

## School-based Induction

All provider staff involved in delivering services within a school must participate in a school-based induction program. Provider staff should familiarise themselves with the department’s Code of Conduct and Controversial Issues in Schools Policy and Guidelines prior to the induction.

# FLOWCHART

