



Research Request – Learning Supports for children with a disability in public and catholic school system

Brief	Investigation into support available in the Catholic and public school systems for a child with a learning impairment in particular funding for specific programs in this case the Arrowsmith program.
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Contents

The Arrowsmith Program.....	3
Victoria.....	3
New South Wales.....	3
Queensland.....	3
Western Australia.....	4
Funding support in public and catholic school systems.....	4
ACT.....	4
Public School System.....	4
Catholic Education.....	5
NSW.....	5
Public School System.....	5
Catholic Education.....	7
NT.....	7
Public School System.....	7
Catholic Education.....	8
Queensland.....	9
Public School System.....	9
Catholic Education.....	10
South Australia.....	11
Public School System.....	11
Catholic Education.....	11
Tasmania.....	12
Public School System.....	12



Catholic Education 13

Victoria 13

 Public School System 13

 Catholic Education 14

Western Australia 14

 Public School System 14

 Catholic Education 15

Please note:

The research and literature reviews collated by our TAB Research Team are not to be shared external to the Branch. These are for internal TAB use only and are intended to assist our advisors with their reasonable and necessary decision making.

Delegates have access to a wide variety of comprehensive guidance material. If Delegates require further information on access or planning matters they are to call the TAPS line for advice.

The Research Team are unable to ensure that the information listed below provides an accurate & up-to-date snapshot of these matters

The Arrowsmith Program

The Arrowsmith Program is one of a number of commercial programs developed by learning consultants. It is offered to schools as resources to assist schools to meet their educational responsibilities according to the curriculum offered. Like many others, the Arrowsmith Program offers a structured range of progressive tasks that support a student towards automaticity in learning tasks.

The Arrowsmith program is not funded by the State and Territories or the Catholic Education system. Schools choose to adopt the program and offer it to parents at an additional fee (see [costs](#) below).

Arrowsmith Program Option	Cost on top of school fees
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full Arrowsmith program assessment <i>(\$1,000 credited back to fees if enrolled in the program within 90 days)</i> 	\$2,000
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Symbol Relations - Clocks only <i>Clocks post assessment</i> 	\$ 2,100
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Motor Symbol Sequencing (MSS) only <i>MSS assessment</i> 	\$ 2,100
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One program (1 period per day) <i>Including pre & post assessment</i> 	\$ 3,700
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two programs / Part time program (2 periods per day) <i>Including pre & post assessment</i> 	\$ 7,400
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two programs + MSS (2 periods per day + home work) <i>Including pre & post assessment</i> 	\$ 9,100
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Four programs / Full time program (4 periods per day) <i>Including pre & post assessment</i> 	\$13,100

Below is a list of schools and 'centres' listed on the Arrowsmith website who have adopted the program.

Victoria

[Brain Athletics](#)

[St Catherine's Primary School](#)

[Oakleigh Grammar School](#)

New South Wales

[3Bridges Community](#)

[Sydney Catholic Schools](#)

[CoreSenses | Awakening Capabilities](#)

Queensland

[Blackheath and Thornburgh College](#)

[Darling Downs Christian School](#)

[Brisbane Boys College](#)

[Silkwood School](#)

[Empowering Lives](#)

[The Southport School](#)

[Western Australia](#)

[Cognitive Strengthening Centre](#)

Funding support in public and catholic school systems

Each State and Territory delivers different programs and resources to assist students with a disability. Most commonly, funding is provided at a regional/whole school level, rather than a specific amount for each individual student. Schools make the decision on how this funding is used. The States and Territories clearly state what programs and services are available for students with learning difficulties and how to apply for assistance.

The Catholic education system provides little information about what services they offer. Most direct enquires to individual diocese or schools for information on obtaining additional assistance.

ACT

Public School System

The [ACT education department](#) provides a range of programs and supports for students from preschool to year 12 who meet the [ACT Student Disability Criteria](#).

Student Centred Appraisal of Need

When a student is eligible for Disability Education support, their needs will be assessed in a Student Centred Appraisal of Need (The Appraisal). The Appraisal meeting is held once the student has commenced in the disability program. The meeting determines the extent of the student's needs at their school, in a variety of areas including communication, mobility, personal care and safety, social development and curriculum.

Individual Learning Plans

An Individual Learning Plan (ILP) is developed for all students who access Disability Education support. The plan is developed within the school in collaboration with families and other support staff. The ILP outlines agreed goals and strategies to support your child to access the school curriculum.

Programs and supports offered

Support at Preschool (SAP) program works with schools to support the inclusion of children with developmental delay and disability in their preschool year. SAP support is provided to schools where substantial or extensive adjustments are required to support the child in the play-based preschool program.

Hearing and Vision support is provided for students from preschool to year 12. Specialist staff work with the child's school and other involved services to support the student's access to the curriculum.

Inclusion Support Program (ISP) provides additional resourcing to schools to facilitate reasonable adjustments to meet the needs of students at their local school from kindergarten to year 12.

Specialist Schools (SS) provide educational programs for students with high and complex needs who have a moderate to profound intellectual disability or Autism.

Small group programs are provided at a range of public schools across the ACT for students from kindergarten to year 12:

- **Learning Support Centres (LSC)**
LSCs are small group programs for students with a significant learning delay, a mild intellectual disability or who meet the ACT Student Disability Criteria for Autism. They are located in various primary schools, high schools and colleges.
- **Learning Support Units (LSU)**
LSUs are small group programs located in primary schools, high schools and colleges. Students must meet the ACT Student Disability Criteria for Intellectual Disability or Autism to be eligible for a placement in these programs. They are located in various primary schools, high schools and colleges.
- **Learning Support Units Autism (LSUA)**
LSU-As are small group programs located in primary and high schools for students who meet the ACT Student Disability criteria for Autism. They are located in various primary schools and high schools.
- **P-10 School Disability Program**
These schools provide a range of flexible programs and supports to meet the needs of students living in their Priority Enrolment Area, who are eligible to access LSU and LSUA programs, from the time of their enrolment through to their transition to year 11.

Catholic Education

Unable to locate any information on what support is offered to students with a disability who attend a Catholic school in the ACT.

NSW

Public School System

The [NSW Education Department](#) provides a 'personalised learning and support,' which is a process that supports a wide range of students with additional learning and support needs.

Personalised learning and support is underpinned by evidence of four key elements or areas of activity:

- The assessed individual education needs of the student
- The provision of adjustments or support to meet the students' assessed needs
- Monitoring and review of the impact of the adjustment or support being provided for the student

- Consultation and collaboration – of teachers with parents, support staff and other professionals where required.

Programs and services

Learning and support

Every mainstream NSW public school has a learning and support resources package (also known as low level adjustment for disability) that gives the school a specialist teacher and an allocation of flexible funding as part of the school budget.

Integration funding support

Integration Funding Support helps schools to provide adjustments for students with disability in mainstream classes who have moderate to high learning and support needs – as defined by the Department's [disability criteria](#).

Funding is used:

- for additional teachers and school learning support officers to assist with personalised learning and support for students in their own classrooms
- to provide relief for classroom teachers to undertake professional learning and to plan adjustments with parents and carers and other school staff

Most students with disability and additional learning and support needs can be supported through resources at their local school, allocated through a learning and support resource package as part of the school budget.

Integration Funding Support is only considered when a school learning and support team determines that:

- additional resources are required to develop and provide adjustments to personalise learning and support
- extra teacher and/or school learning support officer time is the most appropriate resource

Itinerant support teachers

Itinerant support teachers visit schools and other approved educational centres to help support students and young children with confirmed disability.

Itinerant support teachers work directly with students and in partnership with the school's learning and support team, parents and carers, and other support agencies to plan personalised learning and support.

Specialist support classes in mainstream schools

Specialist support classes located in some mainstream primary schools, high school and central schools across NSW are available for students with moderate to high learning and support needs - as defined by the Department's disability criteria.

Specialist support classes cater for students with moderate to high learning and support needs including students with:

- intellectual disability
- mental health issues
- autism
- physical disability

- sensory impairment
- Behaviour disorders

Specialist support classes in mainstream schools have fewer students than mainstream classes. Class sizes depend on the class type and, in some cases, the students' additional learning and support needs.

Every specialist class has a teacher and a school learning support officer. Class teachers - in consultation with parents and carers and allied health professionals, where appropriate - are responsible for planning personalised learning and support for each student.

Catholic Education

The [Catholic Schools NSW website](#) doesn't explicitly state what support is provided to students with a disability. It mentions that all schools adhere to the Disability Standards for Education (DSE) 2005. All teachers undertake the DSE e-learning module to ensure that students with disability are able to access and participate in education **on the same basis** as other students.

NSW Centre for Effective Reading

The NSW Centre for Effective Reading is a joint NSW Department of Education and NSW Health initiative.

The Centre provides direct assessment and intervention services for students in rural and remote primary schools who are experiencing complex reading difficulties, professional learning and resources for teachers and other key participants and undertakes research and development in the area of complex reading difficulties.

NT

Public School System

The [Northern Territory Department of Education](#) provides various support services including specialist education advisors, specialised equipment and resources.

The range of support services available cover all of the following:

- autism spectrum disorder (ASD)
- counselling
- disability
- early childhood intervention
- hearing
- psychology
- transition from school
- vision

Support at school

Disability advisors can assist in developing support strategies for your child to promote equitable access and participation in education.

Disability advisors can provide all of the following:

- information on how to manage your child's disability
- information on the range of support available
- working with you and your child's school to identify access needs and appropriate adjustments to curriculum delivery, so that your child can access programs on the same basis as their peers
- support a student's transition between schools

Catholic Education

The [Catholic Education NT Diocese of Darwin](#) have developed a students with disabilities policy. The policy statements include:

Identification, Referral and Assessment

- Schools have the responsibility to follow the recommended procedures for the identification, referral and assessment of students with disabilities (ISSF).
- Additional resource allocation will be considered provided that the provision of the additional resources does not constitute unjustifiable hardship.
- In the event of a dispute about the specific needs of a student, a review by an independent and appropriately qualified third party may be sought.

Educational Options

- This policy, in recognition of the assessed needs of students with disabilities, supports the commitment to providing high levels of consultative and additional support.
- Quality educational outcomes can be optimised through:
 - provision of all relevant information to families, guardians and/or caregivers to enable them to come to a timely decision on the best options, and to actively support them in that decision
 - a range of educational options to provide for the learning and curriculum needs of students

Available Educational Options

Inclusion in Regular Classrooms with Consultative Support

This type of provision is appropriate for students with disabilities who can successfully participate in all or most classroom activities, with minimal intervention. The Principal may seek guidance, advisory and/or therapy consultative support from specialist personnel.

Inclusion in Regular Classrooms with Additional Support

In order for some students with disabilities to achieve quality outcomes in their regular class, additional support may be needed. This support may be given from a special education support teacher, advisory personnel, teacher assistant or an inclusion support assistant.

Inclusion in Regular Classrooms with Withdrawal Support

Some students with disabilities may receive support from staff within the regular classroom and on a withdrawal basis. This may include a special education support teacher, advisory personnel, teacher assistant or an inclusion support assistant. The support may be short term, transitional or long term.

Queensland

Public School System

The [Queensland Government](#) provides various funding and programs at a school/regional level rather than providing funding for individual students.

Support services and resources

Targeted resources are provided to schools to assist them so that they can address the diverse learning needs of their students. Additional targeted resources are provided either directly to schools or to regions. The department provides resourcing directly to schools to allow greater flexibility, and to enable schools to explore innovative ways to tailor programs to maximise students' potential. These resources are, in addition to the classroom teachers and general teacher aide time, already allocated to schools. Schools are also able to request access to a range of specialist services.

The department supports school autonomy and believes that decisions about the needs of students are best placed at the school level, by professionals who know their students. Direct to school resourcing is delivered through a number of models:

- Whole School Support—Student Learning Resource (WSS-SLR)
- Education Adjustment Program (EAP)

Targeted funding is not allocated directly to students. Schools are allocated the resources, with principals responsible for supporting the educational programs of all students with disability in their school.

Other funding to assist students with disability includes [Investing for Success](#).

Targeted intervention and other support services

Regions and schools provide a continuum of support and services for students with disability and learning difficulties. This may include:

- guidance officers
- support teachers (literacy and numeracy)
- speech-language pathologists
- behaviour support teachers
- English as an additional language or dialect
- Auslan support
- nurses
- teacher aides
- chaplains
- assistive technology
- alternative format materials
- special provision for assessment

- other supports available at the school level as determined by the school

Students who meet EAP criteria may also have access to:

- specialist teachers (disability specific)
- physiotherapists
- occupational therapists
- state-wide services for students with vision impairment

In addition, schools have access to regional inclusion coaches, autism coaches, mental health coaches, principal advisors' student protection and advisory visiting teachers specialising in hearing, physical or vision impairment. Regions may also provide other support services to meet local context.

Catholic Education

Students with disability program (SWD)

All Queensland schools are required to adhere to the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* and the *Disability Standards for Education 2005*. All schools must therefore make reasonable adjustments to ensure students with disability are able to participate in education on the same basis as students without disability.

The purpose and objectives of the [SWD program](#) are to:

- support the education of students with disability in non-state schools
- promote the educational outcomes of these students

Target group – eligibility

Students with disability who are eligible for support under the program are those who meet the [Queensland criteria](#) used by all 3 education sectors, including students with:

- autism spectrum disorder (ASD)
- hearing impairment (HI)
- intellectual disability (ID)
- physical impairment (PI)
- speech–language impairment (SLI)
- vision impairment (VI)

An additional category of disability is also eligible for support in non-state schools only:

- social emotional disorder (SED)

Students with temporary medical conditions, or long-term episodic conditions such as epilepsy, are not eligible to receive support under this program.

Use of funds

The funds are to be used to support eligible students through:

- the improvement of in school resourcing for students with disability. In school support may include: teacher aide time, professional development for teachers working with students with disability, purchase of external support services (including therapists and other specialist support), the purchase of specialised equipment and resources for the student and/or their teachers

- the provision of centralised or regionalised services to support students with disability

South Australia

Public School System

Children with special needs or a disability may be eligible for additional support through the [South Australia Department of Education](#) at primary and high school through a range of internal and external options, including:

- year level classes
- special classes located within schools
- disability units located within schools
- special schools located in stand-alone specialised settings

A referral from the student's current school is required before special education options can be explored.

Special Education Resource Unit

The [Special Education Resource Unit](#) (SERU) provides a range of learning and teaching materials and specialised services which support children and students with disabilities and learning difficulties such as:

- equipment for use in schools
- special supports for children at school
- resources and publications

A negotiated education plan (NEP) or learning plan is a learning support plan that describes the support that will be provided.

Support with education and to explore future opportunities

The [Better Pathways Program](#) helps students remain engaged with school and successfully transition to their chosen post school options.

The program was designed to improve engagement, transition and post-school outcomes for young people with:

- disabilities
- learning difficulties
- mental health issues
- complex needs

Catholic Education

[Catholic Education South Australia](#) has developed an Enrolment and Support Process (ESP) to identify any additional needs a child with a disability may have in the school setting.

When an Enrolment and Support Process is required.

- the Principal informs the Special Education Consultant from the Catholic Education Office
- information about the student's needs is gathered, analysed and discussed by the Special Education Consultant, parents or legal guardians, Principal and relevant school staff
- Information about the adjustments, support and resources required as well as training and development for school staff are collated and forwarded to the Senior Education Adviser at the Catholic Education Office
- Following advice from the Catholic Education Office the Principal communicates with the parents or legal guardians regarding the next steps in the enrolment and transition process.

Continuing Support and Transition

An Individual Education Plan for the student is developed. This includes:

- Information about the student
- Reasonable adjustments or accommodations required
- Ongoing monitoring of the student's needs
- Evaluation of the student's program and regular case reviews.

The school works with the parents or legal guardians and Special Education Consultant in this process. School personnel, parents or legal guardians and specialised support providers work together at points of transition. If requested, the Special Education Consultant provides information to the parents or legal guardians, **regarding other schooling options.**

Tasmania

Public School System

The [Tasmanian Department of Education](#) provides support for students with disability across 'resourcing for schools' and 'specialist services'.

Resourcing for schools

Funding is used to make educational adjustments to teaching and learning programs to ensure students with disability can participate and engage in quality educational programs. A large component of this is individually targeted funding for students with disability aligned to meeting the needs defined within student Learning Plans.

There are centrally funded programs to provide assistance for students with disability with information on eligibility and referral at the links below:

- Transport Assistance
- Minor access works and building modifications
- Assistive technology
- Provision of Specialist Equipment
- Consultative Physiotherapy and Occupational Therapy Program
- Mediation and Liaison Services

The following specialist services to support students with a disability are also available:

- Autism consultants
- Consultative physiotherapy and occupational therapy in school
- Hearing services
- Inclusion and access coordinators
- Mediation and liaison service

- Respectful schools support team
- School psychologist
- Social workers
- Speech pathologists
- Student wellbeing
- Support teachers
- Vision services

Catholic Education

[Tasmanian Catholic schools](#) and colleges have access to a centralised [Student Support Services](#) to deliver appropriate support to students with additional needs and/or disabilities. A range of expertise, personnel, and resources are provided to support all students' access to and participation in learning. Each school provides a range of pastoral care and well-being programs and strategies designed to assist and support our students and families.

Victoria

Public School System

The Victoria Education Department has a range of programs and resources to assist students with a disability. This includes the [Program for Students with Disabilities](#) (PSD).

The PSD gives government schools extra funding to help them support students with disability and high needs.

Schools use the funding in different ways, depending on the needs of each child.

This can include:

- specialist staff, such as occupational therapists, physiotherapists and speech pathologists
- specialist equipment like assistive technology
- training for teachers so they know more about your child's disability or additional needs
- specialist teachers
- education support staff such as teacher aides

PSD funding is available for schools who are supporting children with disability and high needs. There are seven categories of eligibility criteria.

- Physical disability
- Visual impairment
- Hearing impairment
- Severe behaviour disorder
- Intellectual disability
- Autism
- Severe language difficulties and critical education needs

If the individual student is assessed as not being eligible for PSD funding a [student support group](#) can be set up. A student support group gives you the opportunity to work with your child's school to make decisions about their education and check their progress.

The group includes:

- You – as your child’s parent or carer
- the teacher or teachers who have responsibility for your child
- the school principal or a nominee – for example, the assistant principal

At the meetings, you may work with the rest of the group to:

- consider your child’s learning needs and views
- make an individual education plan for your child
- plan [reasonable adjustments](#) to support your child's participation
- plan your child’s personal or medical care at school
- plan transitions – for example, from primary to secondary school
- check your child's progress

Student Resource Package

Schools also get funding through the Student Resource Package for every child. This funding is provided so that schools can meet the needs of all students. The Student Resource Package includes the [Language and Learning Disabilities Program](#) funding.

They also have access to [student support services](#) such as:

- speech pathologists
- psychologists
- visiting teachers
- social workers

Catholic Education

Catholic schools in Victoria provide a range of student support services to assist students with additional learning needs.

To obtain further information about these programs and services the local diocesan [Catholic education office](#) or your child’s [school](#) needs to be contacted. No information on these ‘support services’ could be sourced online.

Western Australia

Public School System

The [Western Australian Department of Education](#) will develop a support team for all children found to have special educational needs or a learning disability. The support team includes the parents/carers and may include the child’s teacher, principal, school psychologist, medical practitioners and specialist service providers.

Together, the support services and programs that are right for the child are determined, ensuring they receive the best education and support available, tailored to their unique needs.

School staff will develop an individual education plan. This plan is written specifically for each child to address their academic and personal needs. All staff working with the child at school will use the plan.

Student Centred funding model

Public school funding is allocated to schools based on the learning needs of students and school characteristics. It delivers funding for each student enrolled and additional funding for students needing extra support.

The objectives of the funding model are to:

- allocate resources based on the learning needs of students
- ensure funding is responsive to the needs of individual schools and their students
- increase flexibility for principals in relation to financial and workforce management decisions
- provide a simple and transparent funding mechanism

Education support school

Specialist schools for children from the beginning of Kindergarten to the final year of their schooling. Students have access to multi-disciplinary teams including nursing and therapy staff. Specialist teachers and support staff to ensure appropriate and responsive learning in a safe and accessible environment.

Education support centres

Located alongside primary and secondary schools. In addition to the individualised programs delivered by specialist staff, students benefit by interacting and participating in programs with their mainstream school peers.

Catholic Education

[Catholic Education Western Australia](#) is committed to embedding inclusive practices in all school environments for students with disability and additional needs.

Students with disability who are enrolled in a Catholic school receive assistance through a range of options including, among others:

- individualised learning plans
- access to specialised programs, resources and equipment
- small group or individual instruction
- teacher assistant support

Education Support Centres have been established in designated primary and secondary Catholic schools for students with disability whose educational needs require the provision of additional support and resources. This includes special education teacher/s and additional teacher assistants, as well as specialised resources and facilities. The centres offer educational service provision for children whose disability might limit their ability to gain access to the regular curriculum without specialist support. Depending on individual needs and abilities, some students will receive the major part of their academic program in the Education Support Centre while others will spend the majority of their time in regular classes with varying levels of support.