

What is Support?

Extended research across many years has shown that the best support for students; those who need something different for their learning in order to achieve their potential – is best delivered the majority of the time within the student’s own classroom setting, by familiar adults and linked to the curriculum.

Schools manage their approach to supporting students in ways that suit the needs of their community. At Mango Hill State School, we run inclusive support programs. We design programs to meet the needs of the students in front of us at that point in time. We have a range of support staff, who can help to provide specialised advice so we can ensure we support our students to reach their potential. Our school has a Deputy Principal of Inclusion, a group of Inclusive Learning Teachers and Teacher Aides, a Guidance Officer, a Student Welfare Officer, a speech and language pathologist and Student Engagement Teachers. These people never work in isolation; they always work as part of *Team Mango*, together with Sector Leaders and Class Teachers, to ensure support is delivered in an inclusive and targeted way.

Why is this important?

Academic progress is important for all students, there’s no doubt about that! At Mango Hill State School we want every child to succeed and to reach their potential. But we need to ensure balance between academic learning and student wellbeing. Students learn best when they feel valued, included and part of their classroom environment and have strong links to adults who care about them at the school. This evidence is why most support is now delivered within the classroom setting.

What does the teaching and learning look like?

In providing best matched learning opportunities for **all students**, teachers regularly engage in professional learning and sharing to implement a range of adjustments for **all students**. There is no “one size fits all” approach to teaching and learning in schools. We make adjustments on a daily basis for a broad range of students in our classrooms, in order to meet their specific learning needs. This includes adjustments for the “high fliers”, those passing subjects and those students who need support to pass subjects. Support is also given to students who need to develop their social and emotional skills or their ways of managing disappointment and frustration. We look at the whole child; both academic and wellbeing and behaviour progress.

At Mango Hill State School, a range of modifications are made within regular school classroom programs. These may include:

- **Planning:** our year level teams of teachers regularly meet and delve into student work samples. What do these students need me to do as an educator, to help them improve? We work together to develop a range of strategies, implement these in the classroom – then return and assess whether these have worked, or whether we might need to try something else!
- **Grouping / Clustering students:** all day every day, our teachers make decisions about who works with whom, for what purpose. We deliver learning content through whole class groupings (focused instruction), guided groupings (guided instruction), collaborative groupings (students learning from each other) and independently (can the student show their learning, by themselves?)
- **Curriculum Adjustments:** the curriculum is stepped out, with students needing to attain some skills before they can tackle the “next bit”. For some students, this will require additional time, extra repetition and practice; for others, they may attain the skills more quickly than expected and need a challenge. For us, the key is to find the right level of challenge for each child – what is their next bit to learn?
- **Environmental Adjustments:** these are very helpful for all students. How have we set our classroom up, for the learning of the students within our class? How are students seated, what visual cues do we provide, where is the quiet space / chill out / reset space? What is the sensory load of the classroom space / play space / line up space?
- **Playtime Adjustments:** some of our children need structure in their play and have successful play breaks when there is a play plan in place. Others need some “down time”. Some engage better when play is linked to their interests and they may attend clubs during breaks. We have buddy benches around the school for those students who may need to “take a minute” during play, or who need assistance to connect with peers.
- **Pre-teaching / Additional Teaching:** some students need concepts introduced to them before they are introduced to the class. They may need vocabulary pre-taught. Other students may need vocabulary repeated.
- **Individual Goals:** some students need more individual goals based on their current strengths and areas of need, providing opportunities for all students to reach the next milestone in their learning journey.
- **Homework:** homework is differentiated to meet the individual needs of the learner.

How do we know how our children are progressing?

Data is collected on all students by class teachers, support personnel and parents to identify students who may require support in one or more areas.

Data sources include:

- Work samples and assessment tasks
- Teacher and parent observations
- Support personnel / medical / allied health assessments (eg, OT / Speech reports, paediatrician letters)
- Academic results
- Playtime and social observations
- Standardised test results, eg PAT R, PAT M, NAPLAN

Across each term, teachers track the learning; both academic and social and emotional, for all the students in their class. Whilst there is one Reach Classroom in each year level, Mango Hill State School ensures inclusive programming and curriculum design for all students through a rigorous moderation and curriculum design process.

What support can be provided at home?

- Connect the Classroom Teacher through parent teacher interviews and open communication to your child's academic growth, social and emotional wellbeing
- Celebrate your child's individual growth
- Provide environmental opportunities for them to learn in the real world environment and to practice skills learned with you