

# And so to school ... but which school?

## Primary school options for children with a disability

Centre for Teaching & Learning – Tuesday 8.6.10 – 7-8.30pm

### PROGRAM

7:00-7:10 **Welcome and Overview**

Ian Copland  
Manager Disability Education  
ACT Department of Education and Training

7:10 – 7:30 **Role of the Counsellor and the Assessment and Placement Process**

Lyn Moorehouse  
Senior Counsellor  
ACT Department of Education and Training

Notes:

- the school counsellor is fundamental to the process of selecting the right school for your child
- there are limited places in certain classes, so some families will not be able to get their first option
- the most important thing is for the counsellor to listen carefully to the parent re what the parent(s) want for the child and then support and guide the parent(s) re what is available
- there are 6.5 counsellors for the ACT – each counsellor is allocated a different sector
- the role of the counsellor is to:
  - gather and discuss information with parents
  - outline / discuss the next best steps
  - assist parents in understanding the assessment process
    - ❖ the assessment is for the purpose of providing a picture of a child's needs
    - ❖ cognitive testing is standardised / universal and is one part of the total picture of needs
    - ❖ the assessment should be used by teachers and parents to understand the abilities and needs of a child and as a checklist

7:30 – 7:40 **Transitions from preschool**

Chris Ellis and Janis Collins  
Preschool Resource Teachers  
ACT Department of Education and Training

Notes:

- steps involved in transitions from preschool:
  - parents should visit programs that might benefit their child
  - submit an Disability Program Application (previously called a Green Card as the application form was on green paper) for a placement for their child that includes a couple of options ie first and second preferences
  - have a Student Centred Assessment of Needs (SCAN) conducted – the SCAN is not used to make a placement but to determine a child's eligibility for a special school or class placement
  - applications should be for a program rather than a particular school

- when the department works out a placement for a child then look at the current make up of a group (age, gender, needs etc) and also consider where a child lives and the parent's preferences
- there are some restrictions around special needs bus transport (average of 100 placements per year) – generally transport is to the closest education option available
- **transition meeting**
  - parents are given an Individual Learning Plan (ILP) brochure and a transition brochure
  - parents should prepare for this meeting eg organise for the attendance of therapists involved with the child to date – these therapists have vital information and strategies regarding the child re things that work and things that don't work for the child
  - the Preschool Resource Teachers are happy to facilitate transition meeting

## 7:40 – 8:15 **Support Programs**

- **Special Schools – Karin Wetselaar & Jennie Lindsay**
  - minimum IQ 55
  - 1/3 of students have autism; 1/3 have an intellectual disability
  - Have an Inclusive Technology team
  - Hearing and Vision support Teams work with students through to year 12
- **Turner School – Jan Day**
  - Turner School is a specialist primary school – minimum IQ 69
- **Catholic Education Office (CEO) – Patrick Kelly**  
Notes:
  - factors to consider are what the parents want and what the school can offer
  - catholic schools have learning support teachers (LST) with learning support qualifications
  - the CEO provides professional development and up-skilling for its teachers and LSTs re children with additional needs
  - the process for schools obtaining resources is called the Student Appraisal of Need (SAON)
- **Association Independent Schools – Andrew Wrigley**
  - Independent schools are fiercely independent
  - if you want to send your child with additional needs to an independent school it is a case of finding the right match
- **Inclusion Support Program (ISP) – Robyn Ackland**
  - ISP has 10 staff and 4 teams
- **Lindy Abbott**
  - a) **Learning Support Centres (LSCs)**  
- 14 students, 1 teacher, 1 LSA
  - b) **Learning Support Units (LSUs)**  
- 8 students (higher needs than LSC students), 1 teacher, 1 LSA
  - c) **Learning Support Units Autism**  
- up to 6 students, 1 teacher, 1 LSA

## 8:15 – 8:30 **Discussion and Questions**

NOTE: notes in blue font taken by: Liz Mellor