

Recommendation 9. Dyslexia-friendly schools

1. A national program should be established for the development and accreditation of 'dyslexia friendly' schools involving specific inclusion (at all levels of policy and practice) of the needs of students who have dyslexia. (The British Dyslexia Association has a detailed model of such 'dyslexia friendly' schools).
2. A funding scheme should be established to which schools could apply with a specific plan for making the school dyslexia-friendly. Schools already accredited as dyslexia-friendly could also apply to this scheme for funding to become consultants and PD providers to other schools and to become providers of assistance to dyslexic children in other schools.
3. Clear guidance should be provided to schools on what appropriate provisions have become available for people with dyslexia.
4. A national teacher dyslexia resource booklet should be compiled and distributed to all schools, similar to that produced by NZ Education Department.

Australian Government response to recommendations of the Dyslexia Working Party Report

Response: Recommendations 9.1, 9.2, 9.3 and 9.4 – Not agreed.

There is currently no Australian Government funding available for the establishment of a national accreditation program for dyslexia-friendly schools. However, the Australian Government is providing \$65.4 billion in 2009-2012 to government and non-government education authorities for school education, including funding for students with disabilities. The state and territory governments and non-government education authorities have primary responsibility for the delivery of school education and can utilise this funding flexibly to provide programs and services for schools and their students.

The Australian Government has been working closely with states, territories and the non-government education sector to progress work in response to the Review of Funding for Schooling recommendations related to improved funding arrangements for students with disability. The report proposes that the Australian Government develop a funding 'Schooling Resource Standard', including funding loadings for a range of disadvantage factors, including disability.

Under the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* all schools have an obligation to ensure all children have the same opportunities to participate in learning experiences. The *Disability Standards for Education 2005* provide schools and other education providers with further guidance regarding their obligations and provisions that should be made for students with disability, including those with dyslexia.

Further guidance and clarity regarding the application of the *Disability Standards for Education 2005* in schools, including information on provisions and accommodations available and appropriate for individual students, has been raised and is being considered within the *Disability Standards for Education 2005* Review.

Through the \$200 million *More Support for Students with Disabilities* initiative a number of education authorities are developing on-line training modules for teachers and other schools staff on dyslexia. An independent evaluation of the initiative will identify good practice and ensure information on case studies and resources are publically available.

All schools can promote what they are doing for students with learning difficulties and disabilities, such as dyslexia, in their profile on My School. My School provides updated school profile data, performance outcomes and financial information for all Australian schools.

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