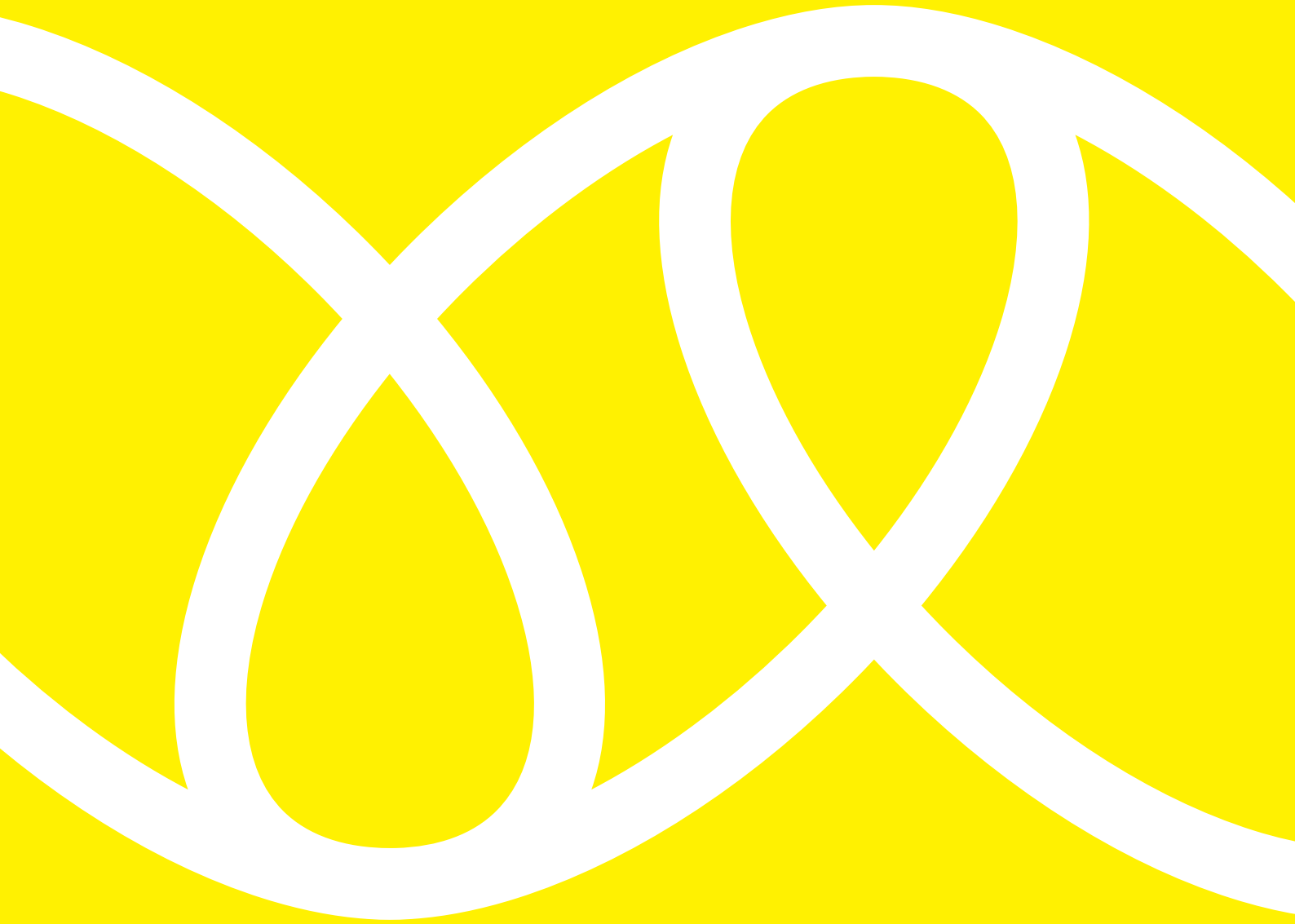


Supporting students who are blind or have low vision



Vision Australia
Blindness. Low Vision. Opportunity.



Supporting your school team, teachers, students and their families

Every student in your school is unique and they interact and learn in their own way. Much of how we learn in life is gained through our vision. So students who are blind or have low vision need to gather information about their world in different ways. Vision Australia understands the challenges that blindness and low vision can create for students.

We are funded by the Queensland Government Department of Education. Under the Specialist Disability Support in Schools (SDSS) Program we can support schools, providing direct services in the form of allied health assessment and intervention as well as consultation and in-service training to teachers. Across all state, Catholic and independent schools in Queensland we work with school teams to support students who are blind or have low vision.

Our services build the capacity of the school team and support the individual learning requirements for each student within their educational setting. Interventions are designed to maximize your student's access to and participation in the curriculum, enhancing their engagement and assisting them to achieve school goals. We deliver therapy and consultation face-to-face at school and via teleservices (i.e. phone or video conference).

Our team includes occupational therapists, physiotherapists, speech and language pathologists, psychologists, orientation and mobility specialists and access technology specialists. We specialise in blindness and low vision support. We know how to support students to acquire skills in the Expanded Core Curriculum (ECC). These are the compensatory skills that help students access information, complete their school work using technology, get around safely and efficiently, and prepare for their life beyond school.

When to refer

If you have a student who is blind or has low vision and is experiencing any of the below issues, it might be worth teaming up with Vision Australia for support.

If they:

- Don't want to participate in sport or physical education class (PE)
- Sit awkwardly at their desk
- Frequently ask for help in the classroom
- Complete worksheets and activities very slowly
- Have trouble reading and spelling
- Don't want to play or are always by themselves
- Rely on other students to take them to the bathroom or lunch areas
- Have difficulty remembering how to get from one place to another



Jack,
Vision Australia client

Vision Australia's team of experts

Physiotherapists

- Support students to gain good posture for class activities to optimise their residual vision
- Help students to learn gross motor and mobility skills to participate in sports, PE (and on the playground)
- Provide recommendations on how to modify physical activities and games so students can be included

Occupational therapists

- Help students with strategies to access information in the classroom
- Support students to overcome difficulties with participating in class activities
- Recommend the most effective place for the student to sit
- Show them how to organise their desk so they know where everything is
- Assist them with their pencil grip or computer typing
- Introduce them to equipment that will make learning quicker and easier

Speech pathologists

- Work with students to improve their language and literacy skills so they are engaged with all material and can reach their learning milestones
- Support students to learn conversational and social skills so they connect with their friends and peers on the playground

Orientation and mobility specialists

- Help students to move around the school and classroom independently
- Assist students to understand where they are in school, where their classroom is and how to get to different areas in the school

Psychologists

- Support to adjust socially and emotionally to changes in vision
- Help students work on their problem solving, resilience and social skills
- Assist students to develop self-regulation, self-esteem and confidence

Access technology specialists

- Assess a student's needs and recommend a range of equipment or technology for them to engage with all classroom material
- Provide training for students on how to use the recommended assistive technology. Equipment may be loaned or trialled

Services tailored to meet your school's needs

As well as providing individual support to students, Vision Australia can also design services to support the school to support the student.

This might look like:

- A whole of class approach where teachers have identified all students within the class have a common goal (e.g. therapy sessions where the whole class joins in)
- A whole of year level approach where the school's identified students would benefit from a presentation or workshop about blindness and low vision for example
- An intensive program of therapy to the student over a short block of time (e.g. a week) designed to quickly improve students learning skills
- In-service or professional development training for school staff on topics like supervising exercise programs designed by Vision Australia physiotherapists, engaging students through online learning, etc

All services can be delivered at school or via teleservices.



Aston,
Vision Australia client

Our equipment library

Schools can borrow equipment from Vision Australia's specialised equipment library. The types of equipment we loan out can enhance students learning by making things easier and quicker. For a complete catalogue of equipment or to place a loan request please email us on SDSS.EquipmentLoans@visionaustralia.org



Contact Vision Australia

Vision Australia is the leading national provider of services for people who are blind or have low vision.

We are funded by the Queensland Government, Department of Education and Training, to provide specialist support in schools.

To find out more about how we can work with you and your students who are blind or have low vision call **1300 84 74 66** or email referrals@visionaustralia.org

How to refer

Call	1300 84 74 66
Online referral	visionaustralia.org/referrals
Email	referrals@visionaustralia.org
Post	PO Box 1637, Coorparoo DC Qld 4151



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