

# CECV Intervention Framework 2015



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## Foreword

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The *CECV Intervention Framework* has been developed by the Catholic Education Commission of Victoria Ltd (CECV) in the context of the values and beliefs of the Catholic Church and the mission of Catholic schools in their communities.

The Intervention Process outlined in the Framework has been designed to support schools in strengthening their educational endeavour in the development of the ‘whole person’ and to contribute to ‘... the centrality of the human person in the educational project of the Catholic school’.

The *CECV Intervention Framework* provides a structure for educators to work in teams to best understand and meet the learning needs of students. This better equips schools to meet compliance requirements under the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* and to fulfil their commitments arising from the Catholic education ethos. An inclusive approach to meeting the needs of **all** students was initially driven by agreements outlined in the UNESCO Salamanca Declaration (Ministry of Education and Science, Spain 1994) and later reinforced by the *Melbourne Declaration of Educational Goals for Young Australians* (MCEETYA 2008).

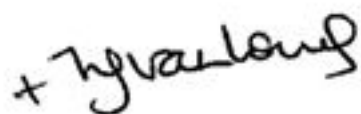
Among the intended benefits of this *Intervention Framework* is the belief that students receive effective early instruction and intervention, avoiding the ‘wait to fail’ scenario so common among struggling learners. Instead, the Framework promotes high expectations for **all** children in Catholic schools. This is communicated through the ‘Principles Underpinning Intervention’:

- All students can learn.
- Effective schools enable a culture of learning.
- Effective teachers are critical to student learning success.
- Learning and teaching are inclusive of all.
- Teaching support matches the needs and talents of the student.
- Effective teaching practices are research-based.
- Inclusive schools actively engage and work in partnership with the wider community.

The Framework reflects the values of Catholic education across the four Dioceses of Victoria with the aim of fostering a sense of community and belonging for all. It demonstrates our commitment to welcome, partnership and service. We strive to develop the potential of each individual.

In this way the vision and mission of Catholic education are realised and the school’s main purpose and mission – ‘development of the whole person (spiritually, intellectually, morally, physically, socially and emotionally)’ – is fulfilled. I hope you will find this Intervention Framework useful in your ongoing pursuit of excellence in Catholic education.

I commend this publication to you.



**Most Rev. Bishop Vincent Long Van Nguyen OFMConv STL DD VG**

Chairperson

Catholic Education Commission of Victoria Ltd



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# 1. Preamble

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An inclusive education system can be described as one which values diversity and celebrates difference. Inclusive education systems seek to engage **every** learner to ensure ‘the successful participation and maximised achievement of **every** student’ (Elkins 2004, p.13) regardless of academic, cultural, physical, social/emotional or behavioural differences.

Within this inclusive and culturally responsive context, Catholic schools develop policies and practices that recognise and value diversity in order to provide an effective education for **all** students and a welcoming environment for families. Catholic schools are continually challenged to focus their energy on creating positive and inclusive school communities in which school improvement strategies are directly aimed at supporting student learning. Within this inclusive and culturally responsive context, schools develop policies and practices that recognise and value diversity.

Catholic schools are an integral part of the Catholic Church’s mission. Their belief in the ultimate intrinsic value of each individual student is based on a distinctive educational vision inspired by the example and message of Jesus Christ.

The integral formation of the human person, which is the purpose of education, includes the development of all the human faculties of the students, together with preparation for professional life, formation of ethical and social awareness, becoming aware of the transcendental, and religious education. Every school, and every educator in the school, ought to be striving ‘to form strong and responsible individuals, who are capable of making free and correct choices’, thus preparing young people ‘to open themselves more and more to reality, and to form in themselves a clear idea of the meaning of life’ (Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education 1982, n.17).

School leaders, teachers and staff work collaboratively with the school community as they inquire into their practice and collaborate across the school with a shared focus on optimising student learning, engagement and positive sense of self. Teachers recognise the need to know their students’ learning profiles and to continually consider their own professional learning needs as they work together to promote individual, collective and systemic learning within the Catholic faith.

In November 2008, the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) agreed on some key ways to lift the quality of education for **all** students. All States and Territories, alongside the Australian Government, agreed to work together to deliver reforms that will contribute to improving educational outcomes, particularly for those students most in need. In line with this reform agenda, the four Catholic education dioceses in Victoria have collaborated to develop an intervention process.



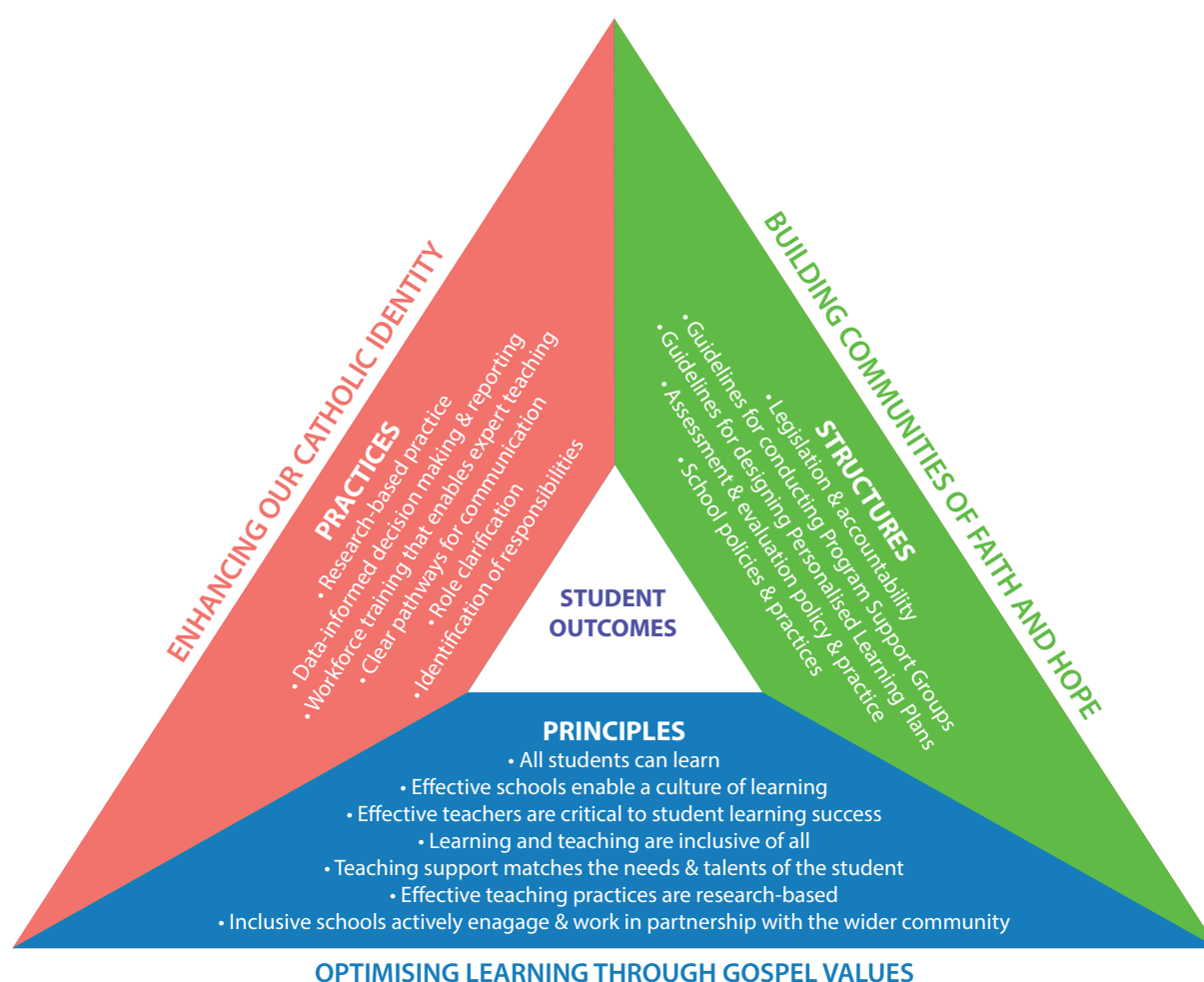
## 2. Overview of the Intervention Framework

The Catholic Education Commission of Victoria Ltd (CECV) *Intervention Framework* supports schools in managing student learning. The *Intervention Framework* identifies key principles, structures and processes which need to be considered in developing effective school practice (refer Figure 1).

Educators are constantly seeking effective ways to meet the needs of **all** learners, so that **every** student can experience success. When students learn differently or have particular talents, teachers are required to identify their learning needs and intervene. This intervention may be in the form of specific teaching in any particular instance, or it may be over a longer, more sustained period. These interventions or adjustments are necessary for academic and social achievement and require teachers to identify the most effective services. Educators must understand the demands of their curriculum, their instructional practices, and their students as learners.

All students are expected to receive appropriate, high-quality instruction within a broad array of instructional strategies operating within the general educational setting. The *Intervention Framework* is designed to scaffold learning and strategically support learners. It is founded in a key set of principles which have been informed by gospel values and strong beliefs of justice and equity, where the child is at the heart of education.

**Figure 1:** The CECV Intervention Framework





The Framework promotes high expectations for **all** children in Catholic schools. This is communicated through the 'Principles Underpinning Intervention':

- All students can learn.
- Effective schools enable a culture of learning.
- Effective teachers are critical to student learning success.
- Learning and teaching are inclusive of all.
- Teaching support matches the needs and talents of the student.
- Effective teaching practices are research-based.
- Inclusive schools actively engage and work in partnership with the wider community.

The Framework provides a structure for educators to work in teams to best understand and meet the learning needs of students. It seeks to support schools to meet compliance requirements under the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* and the associated *Disability Standards for Education 2005*. The Disability Standards clarify and describe more explicitly the rights of students and the obligations of schools under the Act. The Standards are intended to give students with disabilities the same rights as other students. They are based on the proposition that all students, including students with disabilities, should be treated with dignity and enjoy the benefits of education and training in an educationally supportive environment.

An inclusive approach to meeting the needs of **all** students was initially driven by agreements outlined in the UNESCO Salamanca Declaration (Ministry of Education and Science, Spain 1994) and later reinforced by the *Melbourne Declaration of Educational Goals for Young Australians* (MCEETYA 2008). The intent is that schools are proactive and students receive effective early instruction and intervention, avoiding the 'wait to fail' scenario. The challenge is to effectively and systematically put in place structures and processes that clearly identify student need and inform the selection of instruction/interventions, thus promoting very high-quality teaching for every child at every level in every context (Ministry of Education Ontario, 2005).

The *CECV Intervention Framework* draws strongly from a number of current education documents, resources and relevant legislation, including:

- Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership - Australian Professional Standards for Teachers <<http://www.aitsl.edu.au/australian-professional-standards-for-teachers>>.
- *The Disability Discrimination Act 1992*, <[www.hreoc.gov.au/disability\\_rights/dda\\_guide/dda\\_guide.htm](http://www.hreoc.gov.au/disability_rights/dda_guide/dda_guide.htm)>.
- *The Disability Standards for Education 2005*, <<https://education.gov.au/disability-standards-education>>.
- *Education for All: The Report of the Expert Panel on Literacy and Numeracy Instruction for Students with Special Education Needs*, K– 6, Ontario, Ministry of Education, 2005, <[www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/document/reports/speced/panel/index.html](http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/document/reports/speced/panel/index.html)>.
- *The Melbourne Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians*. Ministerial Council for Education, Early Childhood Development and Youth Affairs (MCEECDYA) 2008, <[http://www.curriculum.edu.au/verve/\\_resources/National\\_Declaration\\_on\\_the\\_Educational\\_Goals\\_for\\_Young\\_Australians.pdf](http://www.curriculum.edu.au/verve/_resources/National_Declaration_on_the_Educational_Goals_for_Young_Australians.pdf)>.
- Nationally Consistent Collection of Data, <<http://www.schooldisabilitydatapl.edu.au/>>.
- Response to Intervention, <[www.rti4success.org](http://www.rti4success.org)>.
- *Schools for All Kinds of Minds*, MD Levine 2010, <[www.allkindsofminds.org](http://www.allkindsofminds.org)>.
- *Universal Design for Learning*, <<http://www.cast.org/udl/>>.

### 3. Structures, Practices and Principles Underpinning the Intervention Framework

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The Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL) *Australian Professional Learning Standards for Teachers* and *The Australian Curriculum in Victoria (AusVELS)* support teachers to fulfill their role as educators to provide enriched learning experiences across all areas of the curriculum for **all** students. The *Disability Standards for Education 2005* cover the rights of students and obligations of schools where adjustments are required under the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992*.

*Program Support Groups* and *Personalised Learning Plans* are other important structures which are expanded on in sections 8 and 9 of this document.

#### ***The Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL)***

##### ***Australian Professional Learning Standards for Teachers***

The Australian Professional Standards for Teachers are a public statement of what constitutes teacher quality. They define the work of teachers and make explicit the elements of high-quality, effective teaching in 21st century schools that will improve educational outcomes for students. The Standards do this by providing a framework which makes clear the knowledge, practice and professional engagement required across teachers' careers. The development of the Australian Professional Learning Standards for the teaching profession is an integral part of ensuring quality learning and teaching in Australian schools. <<http://www.aitsl.edu.au/australian-professional-standards-for-teachers/standards/list>>

These Standards build upon the significant work undertaken previously in Australia. They are a fundamental component of the reforms agreed to by governments to realise the goals and commitments set out in the Melbourne Declaration.

##### ***The Australian Curriculum in Victoria (AusVELS)***

The Australian Curriculum in Victoria (AusVELS) has been developed to ensure that curriculum content and achievement standards establish high expectations for **all** students. **Every** student is entitled to enriching learning experiences across all areas of the curriculum. Students in Australian classrooms have multiple, diverse and changing needs that are shaped by individual learning histories and abilities as well as cultural language backgrounds and socioeconomic factors.

The objectives of AusVELS are the same for **all** students. The curriculum offers flexibility for teachers to tailor their teaching in ways that provide rigorous, relevant and engaging learning and assessment opportunities for students with special education needs.

Most students with disabilities can engage with the curriculum provided the necessary adjustments are made to the complexity of the curriculum content and to the means through which students demonstrate their knowledge, skills and understanding.

For some learners, making adjustments to instructional processes and to assessment strategies enables students to achieve educational standards commensurate with their peers.

For other students, teachers will need to make appropriate adjustments to the complexity of the curriculum content, focusing instruction on content different to that taught to others in their age group. It follows that adjustments will also need to be made to how the student's progress is monitored, assessed and reported.

For a small percentage of students whose learning is well below the standards at Foundation, additional curriculum content is required. Most of these students have a significant intellectual disability. The 'Towards Foundation Level AusVELS' materials, taken as a whole, provides the additional curriculum content and standards to ensure the curriculum is inclusive of **every** learner.

For more advice in regard to curriculum provision and students with disabilities, please see the AusVELS Students with Disabilities Guidelines (PDF). Additional advice and support is also available from the DEECD Abilities Based Learning and Education Support (ABLES) website <<http://ausvels.vcaa.vic.edu.au/Personal-Learning/Overview/Diversity-of-learners>>, which will be available to all Catholic schools from 2015.

### ***Disability Standards for Education***

The *Disability Standards for Education 2005* clarify and describe more explicitly the rights of students and the obligations of schools under the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992*. The Standards are intended to give students with disabilities the same rights as other students. They are based on the proposition that **all** students, including students with disabilities, should be treated with dignity and enjoy the benefits of education and training in an educationally supportive environment which values and encourages participation by all students.

### ***Principles***

The following seven principles reflect contemporary theory and research concerning student learning and educational pedagogy. In Catholic schools these principles underpin a commitment to intervention practices that enable **all** students to experience learning success.

#### ***1. All students can learn.***

All students can experience success in learning when they are actively engaged and supported through learning. Teachers can ensure students' success by adopting assessment principles for learning so that clear evidence is used to set learning goals and drive achievement. This is used in conjunction with explicit feedback to students and self-monitoring by students to plan future learning goals.

#### ***2. Effective schools enable a culture of learning.***

Effective schools have agreed expectations and coherence around the quality of teaching required to impact on student performance. A constant focus on learning and teaching is entrenched in their culture.

Supported by effective leadership, effective schools provide ongoing learning opportunities for teachers to develop the skills, knowledge and dispositions necessary to teach to higher professional standards, such as those outlined in the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL) National Professional Standards for Teachers (AITSL 2011).

Effective schools are defined by an agreed vision and goals, purposeful teaching and high expectations for student learning. They have rigorous systems of accountability and stimulating and secure learning environments. They are also distinguished by professional leadership motivated by the desire to build a vibrant, professional learning community.

### *3. Effective teachers are critical to student learning success.*

Effective teachers know their students and how they learn. The Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership presents professional standards that require teachers to:

- 1.1 demonstrate knowledge of the physical, social and intellectual development of students
- 1.2 understand how students learn
- 1.3 demonstrate knowledge of teaching strategies to support students with diverse linguistic, cultural, religious and socioeconomic backgrounds
- 1.4 employ strategies for teaching Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students
- 1.5 differentiate teaching to meet the specific learning needs of students across the full range of abilities
- 1.6 demonstrate strategies to support full participation of students with disabilities.

Students with diverse needs may receive important support and programming from a number of people, but the key educator for literacy and numeracy development is the teacher(s). Teachers are ideally placed to gather ongoing assessment data and monitor student learning. They have the advantage of knowing the student and can provide valuable feedback for others working with the student. Here, the communication between the student's teacher/s and the Learning Support Officer (LSO) is crucial.

### *4. Learning and teaching are inclusive of all.*

The Australian Government articulates a vision for social inclusion and defines a socially inclusive society as one in which all Australians feel valued and have the opportunity to participate fully in the life of our society. In this society all Australians will have the resources, opportunities and capability to:

- learn by participating in education and training
- work by participating in employment, in voluntary work and in family and caring
- engage by connecting with people and using their local community's resources
- have a voice so that they can influence decisions that affect them.

In education, inclusion is often related to students with disabilities and in many cases is applied to the idea of students with disabilities being placed in general education classrooms. However, inclusion is much more than that. It is the foundation on which learning for **all** students should be based. Inclusion is a belief system. It is the understanding that **all** students – those who are academically gifted, those who are average learners, and those who learn differently for any reason – should be fully active members of their school community and that all professionals in a school share responsibility for their learning. The term *inclusion* only has meaning when it is applied to an entire school because this belief system cannot be made into a reality when it is only applied to individual students, teachers, or classrooms and teams.

### *5. Teaching support matches the needs and talents of the student.*

Treating all students exactly the same means that students who need adjustments to the program in order to succeed will be disadvantaged. Some students require more or different support in order to work at a level appropriate to their abilities and needs. Adjustment intensity should be dynamic, research-based and 'at the point of need'.

Under the Nationally Consistent Collection of Data (NCCD) model, teachers use their professional, informed judgement to determine the level of support (adjustment) required in regard to:

- which of their students are being provided with a reasonable adjustment because of disability, as defined in the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* (the DDA) and the *Disability Standards for Education 2005*
- the level of adjustment that students with disability are being provided with, in both classroom and whole of school contexts
- the broad category of disability under which each student best fits.

Where there is evidence at a school to demonstrate that a student is being provided with a reasonable adjustment to meet long-term (10+ weeks) specific needs associated with disability, in consultation with the student or their parents or carers, then the student is eligible to be counted in the national data collection on students with disability.

### *6. Effective teaching practices are research-based.*

Effective teaching practices are founded on research, and tempered by informed teacher judgment and sound pedagogical content knowledge. Students with diverse needs benefit most when teachers deliver programming informed by both professional judgment and domain knowledge, supported by empirical evidence. Good pedagogy is based on good research. Basing instruction on sound research will avoid the pitfall of following trends that lack efficacy.

### *7. Inclusive schools actively engage and work in partnership with the wider community.*

The larger community has a place in the process of educating **all** students. Student success is optimised when schools are outward-facing and engage with the community to both seek and offer support.

Schools work in partnership with school leadership, classroom teachers, learning support officers, parents/families and community support agencies. Families and community support agencies are crucial contributors. In turn, schools have a responsibility to be a resource to the wider community. Everyone has a place in the process, including the student and parents. The latter are respected and are actively encouraged to be involved in decisions about their children's diversity of educational needs.

Teachers enhance their effectiveness by working with colleagues in schools and other educational services and, when required, with other professionals from allied fields, in particular the health sector.

## 4. The Intervention Process

### **Purpose of the Intervention Process**

The *CECV Intervention Framework* identifies key principles, structures and processes which need to be considered in developing effective school practice. In order to further support schools, the steps have been outlined as an ongoing 'Intervention Process' encompassing accurate identification and ongoing monitoring of individual students, with particular emphasis placed on identifying students who may require an adjustment in support to actively and successfully engage in appropriate learning.

The steps are outlined in an intervention process and encompass: Identification, Targeted Assessment, Analysis & Interpretation, Learning & Teaching and Evaluation (refer Figure 2). The Appendix of this resource presents a series of guiding questions that can be used by teachers to assist them in working through the Intervention Process.

**Figure 2:** The steps in the Intervention Process





## 5. Overview of the Intervention Process

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The Intervention Process (refer Figure 2) describes the steps of effective intervention for supporting improved learning. The five steps of effective intervention are:

- **Identification:** The learning needs of individual students are accurately identified;
- **Assessment:** Targeted assessment data provide teachers with additional information to further direct adjustments to learning and teaching;
- **Analysis & Interpretation:** data analysis provides information for Program Support Groups (PSGs) to develop and document targeted instruction (TI) and Personalised Learning Plans (PLPs);
- **Learning & Teaching:** Decisions regarding appropriate intervention/s are made and resources to support the implementation of the TI/PLP are identified, including identifying which staff will work with students on each aspect of the PLP (learning support officer, classroom teacher, parent, specialist teacher); and
- **Evaluation:** Through a period of specific interventions the student's progress is monitored, with adjustments to learning and teaching, ensuring the student's ongoing success.

The Appendix to this resource presents a series of guiding questions that can be used by teachers to assist them in working through the Intervention Process.

### **Design of the Intervention Process**

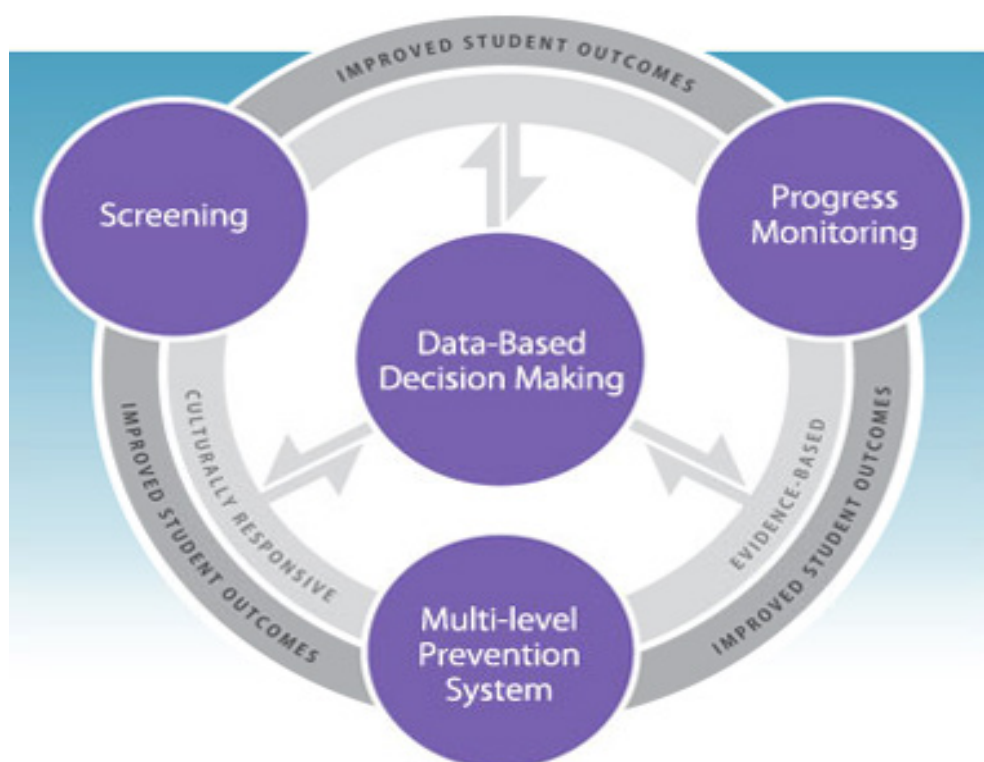
The CECV *Intervention Process* has been informed by the *Response to Intervention* (RtI) Model. *Response to intervention* is defined as the change in behaviour or performance as a function of an intervention (Gresham 1991). The response to intervention (RtI) model is a multi-tiered approach to providing services and intervention for students, at increasing levels of intensity, based on progress monitoring and data analysis. This model integrates assessment and intervention within a multi-level prevention system to maximise student achievement, promote positive classroom interactions and reduce behavioural problems. The CECV recognises that this model offers schools a means to better understand and support students with diverse learning needs.

The RtI model is based on the belief that teachers have the responsibility to create the best possible learning environment for **each and every** student through effective screening, progress monitoring and data-based decision-making processes utilising a multi-level decision-making system (refer Figure 3).

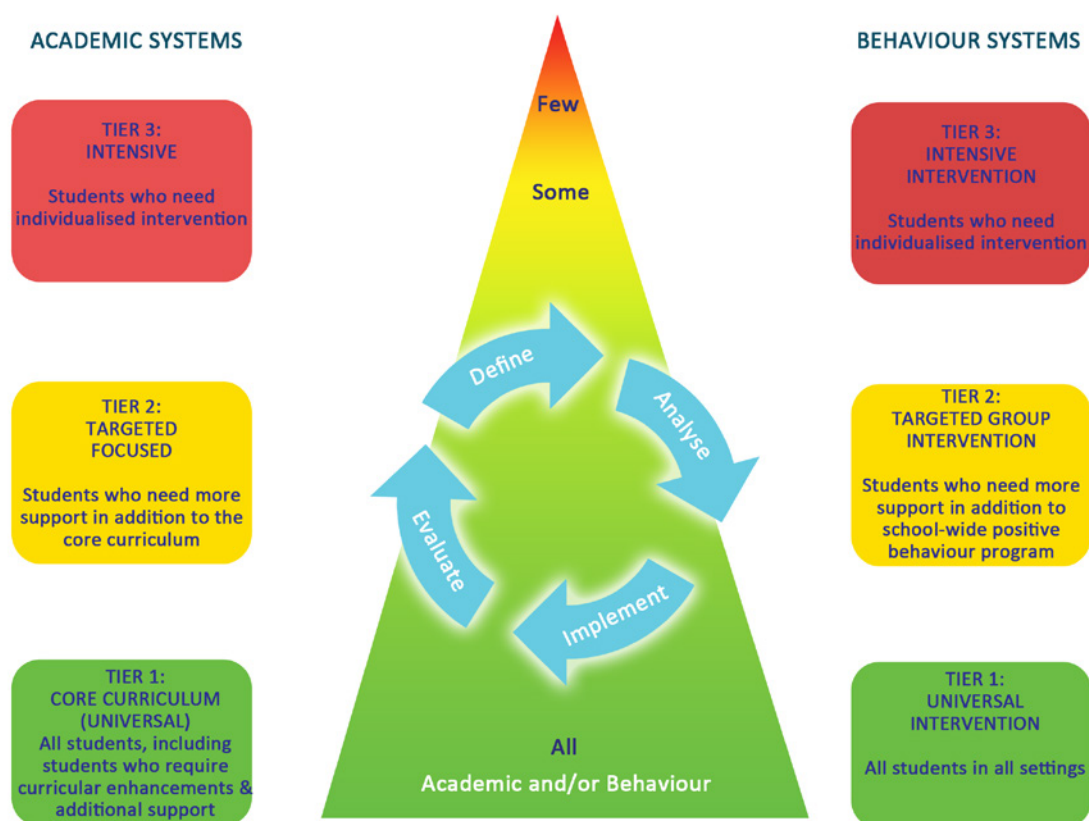
The 'first tier' of support is also known as Tier 1, the universal tier. In Tier 1 some supplementary adjustments may be made, as part of regular classroom teaching. Students needing substantial adjustment are identified as requiring a 'second tier' of instruction – Tier 2, involving more focused and intentional strategies to meet the needs of a smaller and more targeted audience. Should further support be required, students are able to access more intensive strategies through a 'third tier' of instruction and extensive adjustment – Tier 3. It is expected that students will move between and within the tiers of instruction (refer Figure 4).



**Figure 3:** The Essential Components of Response to Intervention (Source: < <http://www.rti4success.org/>>)



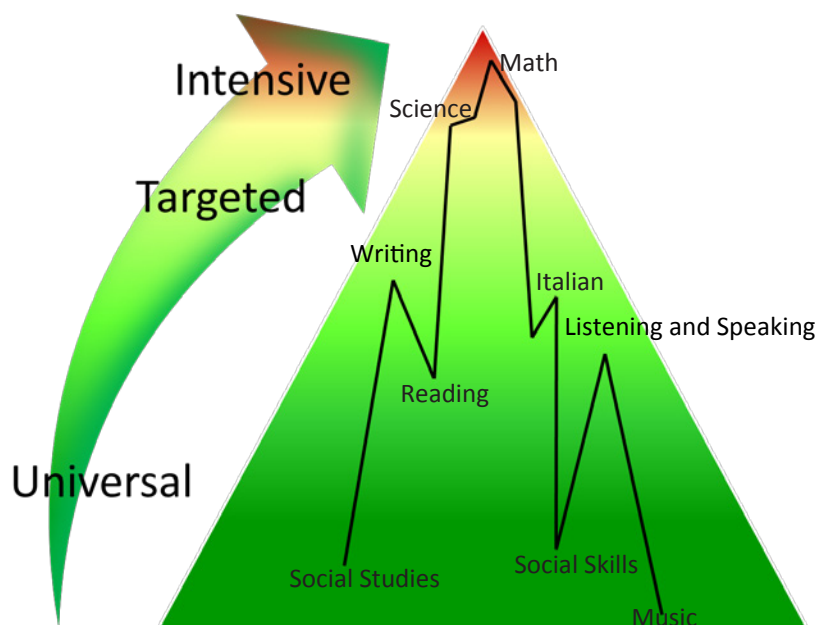
**Figure 4:** The Intervention Process at each tier using the Rti model



The RtI triangle can be used to represent actual data distribution against the optimal distribution being Tier 1 – representing most; Tier 2 – some; and Tier 3 – few. The Rti triangle can profile whole school data, smaller cohort data and individual profiles of strengths and challenges as can be seen in Figure 5, where one student's profile is represented. The triangle assists teachers in deciding what support needs to be put in place, and at what point, in order to facilitate student learning.

**Figure 5:** Continuum of support - a student profile

(Adapted from <[http://www.pbis.org/common/cms/files/pbisresources/Lewis\\_Keynote\\_Australia.pptx](http://www.pbis.org/common/cms/files/pbisresources/Lewis_Keynote_Australia.pptx)>)



### Universal Learning Design

Universal Design for Learning (UDL) is a set of principles for curriculum development that give all individuals equal opportunities to learn.

UDL provides a blueprint for creating instructional goals, methods, materials, and assessments that work for everyone – not a single, one-size-fits-all solution but rather flexible approaches that can be customized and adjusted for individual needs.

UDL is an approach to curriculum that minimises barriers and maximises learning for all students by seeing all students as having diverse needs.

Using this approach, adjustments are possible for all students as part of the curriculum design by

1. Presenting information in different ways
2. Providing multiple means of expression
3. Providing multiple means of engagement ... for all students.

**Figure 6:** UDL Three Primary Principles (Source: <<http://www.cast.org/udl/>>)

I. Provide Multiple Means of Representation	II. Provide Multiple Means of Action and Expression	III. Provide Multiple Means of Engagement
Perception	Physical action	Recruiting interest
Language, expressions, and symbols	Expression and communication	Sustaining effort and persistence
Comprehension	Executive function	Self-regulation

## ***Intervention Fidelity***

Irrespective of the pedagogical or delivery model chosen or the personnel involved in the implementation of an intervention, there is a need to ensure that the intervention is implemented as designed or intended. Regular and ongoing management and supervision are required to ensure a high level of intervention fidelity. *Intervention fidelity* is defined as the degree to which an intervention has been implemented as designed or intended (Gearing, El-Bassel, Ghesquiere, Baldwin, Gillies & Ngeow 2011; Pereplechikova, Hilt, Chereji & Kazdin 2009).

Five common aspects of fidelity include: adherence, exposure, program differentiation, student responsiveness, and quality of delivery (Dane & Schneider 1998; Power, Blom-Hoffman, Clarke, Riley-Tillman & Kelleher 2005).

An example of each of these aspects of fidelity is:

- *Adherence*: the intervention/program is implemented as intended and is in line with the principles underpinning interventions (see pages 5–7 of this resource).
- *Exposure*: the duration and frequency of sessions is at an acceptable level.
- *Program differentiation*: an individual student's needs are met through differentiation; however, changes to the teaching need to be within the intended parameters.
- *Student responsiveness*: the intervention/program maintains student active engagement.
- *Quality of delivery*: the intervention is implemented at a high standard.

Numerous researchers have noted that the fidelity of the implementation of an intervention has considerable importance (Brown & Rahn-Blakeske 2009; Gearing et al. 2011; Hogue, Liddle & Rowe 1996; Leff, Hoffman & Gullan 2009; Noell 2000; Pereplechikova et al. 2009). The ability to evaluate how closely intervention provision upholds the initial design allows for a judgment on the intervention itself, by permitting conclusions to be drawn regarding the intervention and eventual outcomes (Gearing et al. 2011; Hogue et al. 1996; Pereplechikova et al. 2009). This strengthens the knowledge base regarding specific interventions and enables practitioners to make predictions regarding those elements that are key components to success (Leff et al. 2009).

In 2009 Pereplechikova found that there were several barriers to the collection of data to measure intervention fidelity. These included time constraints, cost resources and labour issues, in addition to a lack of theoretical information and formalised guidelines to direct the information gathering. However, Pereplechikova's findings provided consistent acceptance that the collection of data on intervention fidelity was becoming increasingly important in evaluating the effectiveness of interventions, particularly in professions that were progressively promoting the use of evidence-based practice. The practice of gathering information and data regarding the implementation of an intervention provided an evidence base and opportunity to accurately evaluate an individual's response to an intervention.

Any evaluation of intervention fidelity should include an analysis of data relating to key aspects of delivery. These should include the nature of the setting, the duration and frequency of sessions, the individual student's attendance, and the adherence to implementation guidelines and program content.

## **A Key Complementary Resource**

A supplementary document, the **Effective Practices Framework for Learning Support Officers**, is intended to be used in conjunction with the *CECV Intervention Framework*. The *Effective Practices Framework for Learning Support Officers* sits within the Learning and Teaching elements of this intervention process (refer Figure 7 on page 14).

Learning Support Officers are school-based employees, trained and/or untrained staff, who work alongside teachers to support the education of **all** students or, at times, specific students, including those with disabilities. A range of terms is currently used to refer to the individuals who hold these positions. These terms include but are not limited to the following: aide, teacher aide, teacher assistant, learning support assistant, paraprofessional, instructional assistant, and school officer. Throughout this document these support personnel will be referred to as Learning Support Officers (LSOs). The learning and teaching process outlines the role of the Learning Support Officer (LSO) when working in collaboration with teachers to support **all** students, including:

- i. the broader range of students in the class or cohort
- ii. a smaller, specifically identified group requiring targeted instruction
- iii. an individual student when implementing a particular aspect/s of his/her PLP.

*Effective Practices Framework for Learning Support Officers* also promotes effective school processes and practices to:

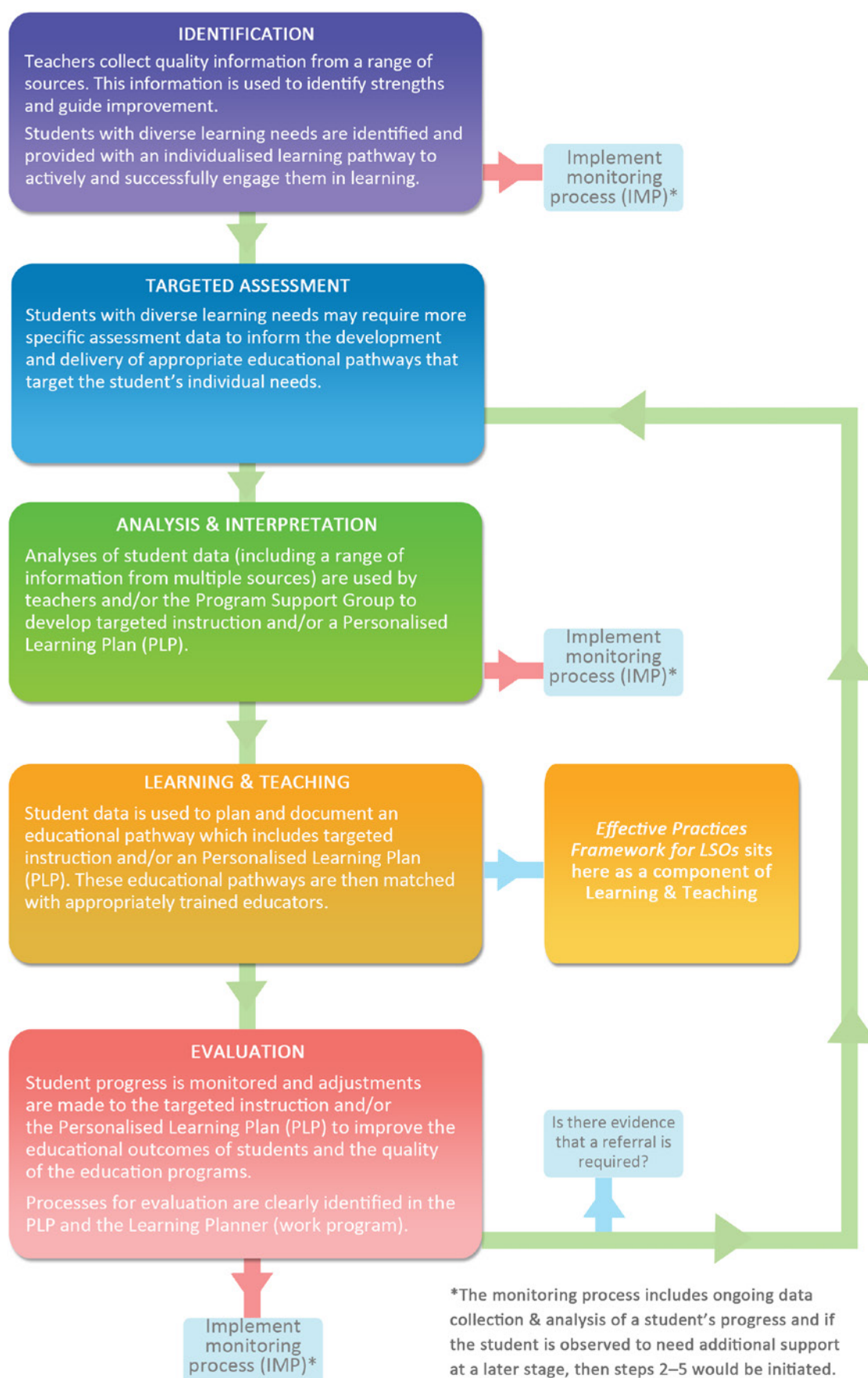
- accurately identify student needs
- plan and document appropriate educational pathways for students based on carefully constructed goals and measurable outcomes
- match these pathways with appropriately trained and qualified educators and/or Learning Support Officers.

More information about the *Effective Practices Framework for Learning Support Officers* is presented in section 6 of this resource.

There has been a recent shift within Catholic schools to measure student progress and monitor the effectiveness of the delivery by calculating effect sizes (Hattie 2011). These, along with direct and indirect observation of student performance, can be used to evaluate the effectiveness of an intervention (Hattie 2012). In addition, these data provide an opportunity for self-reflection on current practice and provide evidence for the development and provision of ongoing professional learning for teachers and LSOs (Groom 2006).

Broadbent & Burgess (2003) and Groom (2006) consider the LSOs as ‘frontline workers’ and acknowledge that the particular knowledge, skills and attributes that they bring to their roles can provide valuable insights into the phenomenon of supporting students. They also note that these insights are valuable in further informing the development of inclusive policies, as well as directing the roles, responsibilities and professional relationships of the LSOs.

**Figure 7:** The Intervention process: an effective intervention pathway





## 6. Key Competencies of Supervising Teachers

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Teachers play a key role in facilitating the effectiveness of the Intervention Process, through their supervising role in relation to LSOs and their capacity to enhance student learning outcomes. Due to the diversity in the students' needs and the corresponding diversity in the role of the LSO, flexibility, communication and clear direction are required from the teacher.

A teacher's role in supervising the work of LSOs has changed since LSOs were introduced to educational settings. Unfortunately, few training programs for teachers working with LSOs have been developed; further, little empirical research has been conducted to identify the skills and knowledge that teachers or other professionals require to successfully supervise the work of LSOs. One aspect of the supervision is to identify future training skill. The AITSL Standards for Teachers, in part, addresses this issue by seeing teachers as possible coaches and mentors, an important professional learning strategy that can be used to support the growth of LSOs.

In a study by Wallace, Shin, Bartholomay, and Stahl (2001, pp.520–533), feedback gathered from administrators, teachers and LSOs revealed that the competencies identified are important and necessary for teachers who direct the work of Learning Support Officers.

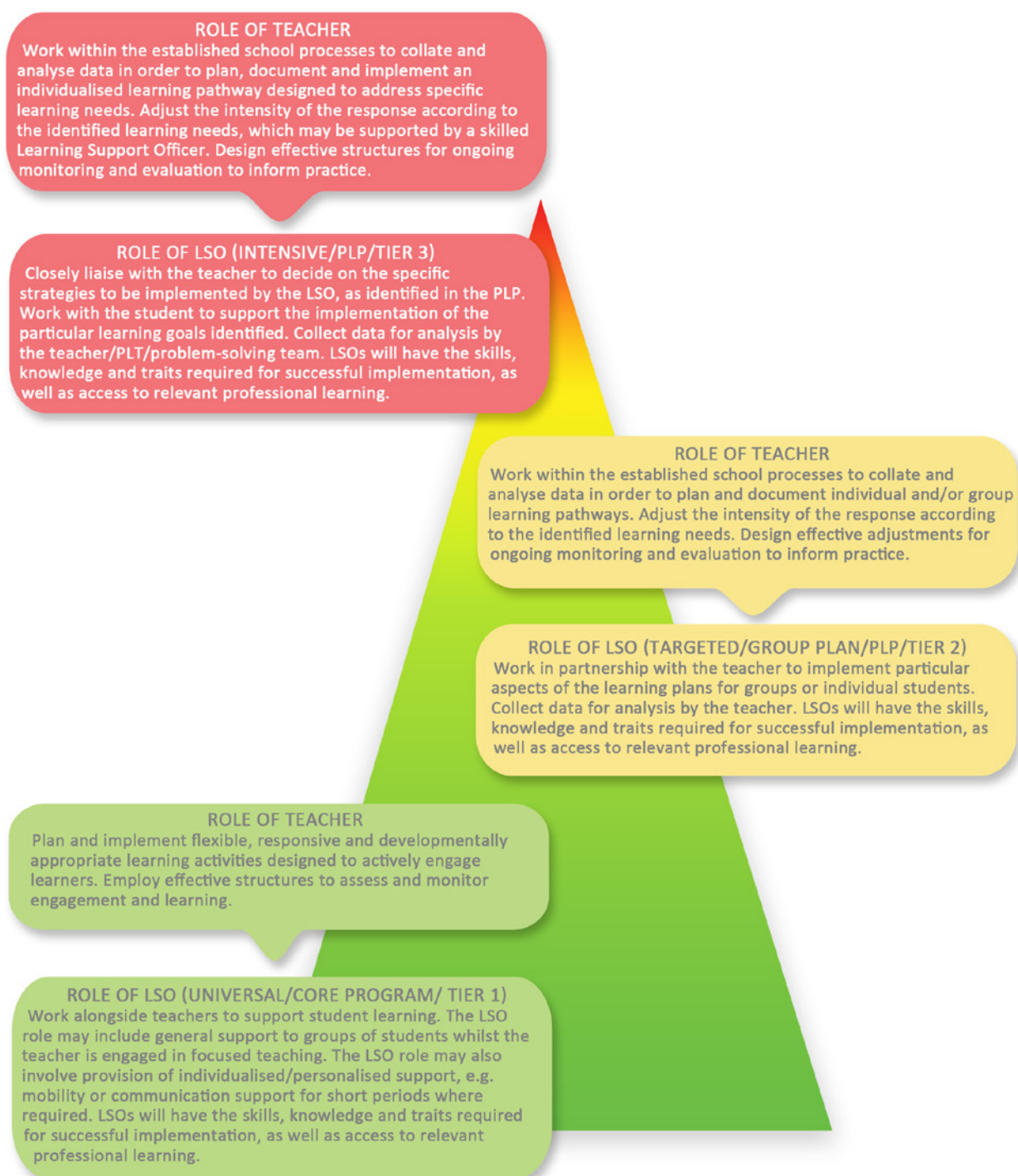
### ***Desirable Competencies for Teachers Supervising the Work of LSOs***

<i>Competency</i>	<i>Description of Competency</i>
1. Communication with LSOs	Share student-related information, explain role of the LSOs.
2. Planning and scheduling	Coordinate schedules, establish goals, set plans, establish time for planning, and consider strengths and interests of LSOs when aligning tasks.
3. Instructional support	Provide regular feedback regarding each LSO's work performance; support LSOs in providing instruction to students; and provide support and direction to LSOs who work in independent capacities.
4. Modelling for LSOs	Model for LSOs a caring and respectful manner when interacting with students.
5. Public relations	Inform administrators, teachers, and parents of the responsibilities and roles that LSOs have in the educational program; advocate for the LSOs regarding training, modifications in responsibility and involvement in decision-making groups (PSGs).
6. Training	Provide on-the-job training for skill development and identify future skill improvement needs.
7. Management of LSOs	Maintain regular positive and supportive interaction with LSOs; contribute to the evaluation of LSOs' performance; support skill improvement.

Using the *CECV Intervention Process* as a core resource, the diagram below (Figure 8) may assist supervising teachers and LSOs to clarify their respective roles and responsibilities in working collaboratively to strengthen student learning.

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**Figure 8:** Teacher and LSO Relationships and Roles in the CECV Intervention Process





## ***The Roles and Responsibilities of the Learning Support Officer***

The role of LSOs can be varied and complex. An LSO may provide support, under the direction of a teacher, to one child or more than one child with disabilities, or to groups of students with similar needs across various teaching spaces in a school.

An LSO may provide support for a student's academic learning, behaviour program, physical care, or social progress throughout the entirety of a school day, including class and recess times.

LSOs may play many different roles and they require the ability to adapt their skills over time.

## ***Employment and Deployment of an LSO***

Four key practices are critical, both for the school and the LSO, in employing and deploying an LSO. These are:

1. **Clarification of the role** – developing a clearly defined role description for the LSO in accordance with his/her conditions of employment.
2. **Identification of tasks** – clarifying the specific tasks to be undertaken by the LSO. The tasks should be incorporated into a student's Personalised Learning Plan and specify the LSO's role in data collection.
3. **Establishment of clear pathways for communication** – identifying for the LSO communication pathways with the student/s teacher/s and parents (through a PSG).
4. **Identification of training** – establishing prior experience and ongoing training required by the LSO to complete the identified tasks (i.e. LSOs who have the experience and expertise, or who have immediate access to the expertise, or who will require training opportunities to strengthen confidence and competence).

Again, using the *CECV Intervention Process* as a core resource, LSOs sit within the Learning and Teaching element of the Intervention Process.

For more information on the roles and responsibilities of LSOs, see the supplementary document, the *Effective Practices Framework for Learning Support Officers*.

## 7. Structures, Policies, Resources and Practices

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When schools are designing effective pathways for students with a diversity of learning needs, school leaders and teachers need to consider existing school curriculum, policies, resources and practices that impact on the roles and responsibilities of teachers and LSOs carrying out the intervention.

The key structures, policies, resources and practices include the following:

- *The Australian Curriculum in Victoria (AusVELS)*  
<<http://ausvels.vcaa.vic.edu.au>>.
- *The Disability Standards for Education 2005*  
<<http://education.gov.au/disability-standards-education>>.
- *The Disability Discrimination Act 1992*  
<[http://www.hreoc.gov.au/disability\\_rights/dda\\_guide/dda\\_guide.htm](http://www.hreoc.gov.au/disability_rights/dda_guide/dda_guide.htm)>.
- *The Australian Curriculum* <<http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/Home>>.
- Guidelines for conducting Program Support Groups (PSGs). Refer to Section 8 p.19.
- Guidelines for designing Personalised Learning Plans (PLPs). Refer to Section 9 p.21.
- Learning and Teaching policy – in particular an understanding of the principles of Inclusive Education.
- Assessment policy – in particular an understanding of the principles of assessment; including summative and formative assessment.
- Evaluation processes – including school-based assessment schedules. Effective and efficient procedures for the identification and assessment of the educational needs of **all** students are recognised as essential first steps in making provision for them. Provision for a diversity of learning needs is planned, well managed and regularly reviewed.
- Curriculum – the educational needs of **all** students are met through the provision of an appropriate curriculum (including PLPs).
- Resources and contexts – the accommodation and resources are suitable.

*Some of these policies, resources and practices are further expanded upon in sections 8 and 9 of this document.*

## 8. Guidelines for Conducting Program Support Groups

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The education of each student in a Catholic school is a partnership between parents as the first educators of their child and the school to whom they entrust their child. As the active engagement of parents is critical to each student's wellbeing and learning, Catholic schools aim to create welcoming environments where schools are core community centres.

Effective communication between home and school is essential for developing and maintaining a positive partnership. This partnership is of critical importance when planning programs for students with diverse learning needs. For these students, formal communication takes place through regular Program Support Group meetings. A Program Support Group (PSG) may also be referred to as a Student Support Group (SSG) <<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/school/teachers/teachingresources/diversity/studentsupportguidelines2013.pdf>>.

In planning for a Program Support Group meeting, schools will have followed the steps outlined in the Intervention Process, and have worked through the processes of Identification, Assessment and Analysis & Interpretation. They will be ready to commence specific planning for the Learning and Teaching stage. At the Learning and Teaching stage schools will have identified students with diverse learning needs and will be in the process of planning and documenting 'where to next' for this student. The Program Support Group may decide that the identified student requires a Personalised Learning Plan.

### **Aims**

The aims of a Program Support Group are to:

- ensure that those with the most knowledge of, and responsibility for the student, work together to establish shared goals for the student's educational future
- plan reasonable adjustments for the student to access the curriculum and participate in their education
- provide educational planning that is ongoing throughout the student's school life
- monitor the progress of the student.

### **PSG Members**

A Program Support Group consists of:

- the parent/guardian/carer(s) of the student
- an advocate for the parent/guardian/carer(s) (where nominated by them)
- the student's teacher(s) or nominated responsible teacher(s) (secondary)
- the principal or nominee (to act as chairperson)
- the student (where appropriate).

Consultants to the PSG (e.g. psychologists, speech pathologists, occupational therapists, physiotherapists, school advisers, and visiting teachers) may also be invited to attend.

## ***Roles and Responsibilities of the PSG***

In order to achieve these aims the Program Support Group will:

- identify the student's progress
- determine any adjustments to be made to the curriculum
- plan an appropriate educational program
- develop a Personalised Learning Plan
- discuss the plan with teachers and provide support to implement it
- provide advice to the principal concerning the diversity of educational needs of the student and the types of resources required to meet these needs
- review and evaluate the student's program at least once per term, and at other times if requested by any member of the group.

Note: Teachers will continually review and evaluate the student's program in light of student progress and report this via the PSG at least once a term.

## ***PSG Minutes***

By the end of the PSG meeting there should be a written summary or plan of agreed actions. These should include the issue, the action, the person responsible and when the action is to be completed. In addition:

- Agreed actions should be read back to the group at the end of the meeting.
- All members of the group should receive a copy of the minutes.

## ***For Further Reference***

It is recommended that the *Student Support Group Guidelines* document published by the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (DEECD) be utilised as a detailed reference in this area. <<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/school/teachers/teachingresources/diversity/studentsupportguidelines2013.pdf>> Note that this document is updated regularly.

Another resource covering this area is *Positive Education Planning: Supporting Students with a disability in Victorian government primary schools (2nd Edition 2012)* <<http://acd.org.au/positive-education-planning-resource/>>

## 9. Guidelines for Designing Personalised Learning Plans

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A Personalised Learning Plan (PLP) is a working document designed to clearly record the planned adjustments or interventions that will support the student's learning and the student's progress toward the specified long- and short-term goals. In designing a Personalised Learning Plan for a student or group of students, the following key elements need to be considered:

- The Personalised Learning Plan is developed through a PSG.
- Identify student learning needs and set goals.
- Learning goals are Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time-framed (SMART goals) (Doran 1981).
- Entry levels are established prior to setting short-term goals (STGs).
- Implementation details of each learning goal are clearly identified – how each learning activity will be implemented (frequency, duration, resources required).
- Determine adjustments that need to be made to meet the learning needs as documented in the PLP.
- Key elements of intervention fidelity are considered when implementing an intervention program – adherence, exposure, program differentiation, student responsiveness and quality of delivery. (Refer to section 5 of this resource.)
- Ongoing monitoring and data collection are clearly identified in the PLP (how and by whom).
- Clear identification of who is carrying out each task on the PLP ensures that tasks are appropriately allocated to a teacher or LSO.
- Instructional strategies and content are based on knowledge of developmental sequences or skill acquisition continuums.
- Instruction is delivered systematically, explicitly, and with sufficient intensity and duration.
- Current student data are used for identifying the diversity of learning needs and setting goals.
- Ongoing assessment is essential for improving instruction.
- Instruction is sufficiently varied and balanced to ensure that **all** students are active participants.
- Monitoring a student's progress via STGs provides an opportunity to acknowledge and celebrate a student's efforts and provide feedback to the PSG.

## 10. Shared Terminology

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When working collaboratively to design and implement learning interventions for students with diverse learning needs, school leaders, teachers, PSG members and LSOs need to ensure that the 'technical' language, acronyms and abbreviations pertaining to these matters are well understood and used appropriately.

The following description of terms will assist this process. The terms are listed in alphabetical order.

### **Adjustment**

Adjustments are modifications made for students with disability and the school-based processes central to ensuring students with disability participate in education on the same basis as their peers (NCCD 2013).

There are four levels of adjustment to consider:

- No adjustment at this time
- Supplementary adjustment
- Substantial adjustment
- Extensive adjustment.

Supplementary adjustments are provided at the time of need to complement the strategies and resources already available within the school and may require accessing specialist support services.

Substantial adjustments address the specific nature and significant impact of the student's disability. These adjustments address the more significant barriers to their engagement, learning, participation and achievement.

Extensive adjustments are provided when specific measures are required across all learning areas to address the individual nature and acute impact of the student's disability and the associated barriers to their learning and participation. These adjustments are highly personalised, comprehensive and ongoing.

### **Differentiation**

Students work on the same curricular area, but interact in different ways with teachers and resources. They have some or all of the assignments, learning targets, resources, teaching methods and student groupings planned to differentially take account of their aptitudes and the levels of their current strengths, attainments and needs.

## **Inclusive education**

Inclusive education reflects the values, ethos and culture of an education system committed to excellence by enhancing educational opportunities for **all** students. Inclusive education relies on a school community's ability to embrace diversity and be flexible in its approaches – where the school system and structures change to fit the needs and strengths of a child, rather than attempting to change the child to fit the system, and where the benefits derived from overcoming barriers to the access, participation and achievement of particular students have a positive impact upon the learning and teaching environment for **all**.

Today within the Catholic education system, increasing numbers of parents are choosing their local Catholic school for the education of their children with diverse learning needs. While legislation such as the *Commonwealth Disability Discrimination Act 1992*, and the *Disability Standards for Education 2005* support this right, the Gospel of Jesus Christ and the principles of social justice and equity for **all** underpin the practice of inclusion within our schools.

Classrooms in the Archdiocese of Melbourne are multi-dimensional, made up of students with differing ability, gender, ethnicity, age, physical attributes and backgrounds. Our challenge as educators is to provide learning environments:

- that celebrate these variations
- where positive learning outcomes are the goal for **all** students
- where everyone, regardless of ability, belongs
- where all kinds of learning take places and are valued (CEOM 2006).

## **Individualisation**

Aspects of the curriculum and/or approaches to learning and teaching are altered to take account of the personalised educational needs of individual pupils or students.

## **Intervention**

Adjustments to learning and teaching are implemented for students who are identified with additional learning needs. The support may be with an individual, a small group or within the classroom.

## **Intervention fidelity**

Intervention fidelity is the extent to which any intervention has been implemented as originally specified or intended (Gresham, MacMillan, Beebe-Frankenberger & Bocian 2000). Any evaluation of intervention fidelity should consider the data collected relating to particular aspects of delivery, including setting, duration of sessions, frequency of sessions, attendance, and direct observation or observable phenomena and student performance. (Refer to section 5 of this resource for further explanation of this concept.)

## **Long term goals (LTGs)**

Long term (annual) goals are specific statements describing the expected behaviour or skill to be achieved by the end of the school year. Long term goals need to be specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time bound (DEECD 2012).

## **Paraprofessional**

Paraprofessional is a job title given to persons in various occupational fields, such as education and healthcare, who are trained to assist professionals but are not themselves qualified at a professional level. The paraprofessional is able to perform tasks requiring significant knowledge in the field, and may even function independently of direct professional supervision, but lacks the official authority of the professional (DEEWR 2011).



## ***Personalised Learning and Personalised Learning Plan (PLP)***

The term 'Personalised Learning' does not imply learning in isolation of others.

Personalised learning recognises the individual strengths, needs and goals of students and the need for schools to respond to these differences. It involves a commitment to identifying each student's learning needs, then designing and applying the curriculum so **all** students can achieve. Personalised learning may include individual, small-group or whole-class instruction.

Personalised learning focuses on working with each student, in partnership with a student's parents/ carers, to develop a plan that reflects the student's goals and current capabilities and includes specific learning targets.

Descriptions and definitions of personalising education have emerged at national and international levels. As a key driver of education reform, personalising education has the following common themes:

- Learners are central.
- Information and communications technology (ICT) is a key enabler.
- Learning is lifelong.
- Schools and communities are communities of collaboration.

## ***Research-based practice (RBP)***

Research-based practice (RBP) means using the best research-proven assessments and practices in our day-to-day teaching. This means each educator upholds his/her responsibility to stay in touch with the research literature and to implement best practice as a part of all decision-making. Implementing research-based practice means a real commitment to lifelong learning, expressed in the best possible education of **all** students (Sackett, Rosenberg, Muir Gray, Haynes & Richardson 1996).

Hempenstall (2006), following the 2005 National Inquiry in Australia into the Teaching of Literacy, asserted that 'teaching, learning, curriculum and assessment need to be more firmly linked to findings from research-based research indicating effective practices, including those that are demonstrably effective for the particular learning needs of individual children' (p.9). The National Inquiry recommended a national program to produce research-based guides for effective teaching practice, the first of which is to be on reading.

## ***Short term goals (STGs)***

Short term goals are developed by identifying the sub-skills that are required for a student to achieve a long term (annual) goal. Short term goals specify what is to be achieved in periods ranging from a week through to a semester. They also need to be specific. Short term goals are set/reviewed at each Student Support Group meeting (DEECD 2012).

## ***Universal design for learning***

Universal design for learning (UDL) is a concept that originated in the field of architecture and was applied to education in the early 1990s through work completed at the Centre for Applied Special Technology (Hitchcock, Meyer, Rose & Jackson 2002). UDL applies this idea to curriculum and instruction.

A universally designed curriculum has built-in flexibility and options for **all** learners from the beginning – at the planning stage – and this leads to more elegant, integrated, and seamless educational opportunities. The application of UDL that teachers can use daily is differentiation <<http://www.cast.org/udl/>>.

## **Acronyms**

DDA	Disability Discrimination Act
DSE	Disability Standards for Education
PLP/ILP/IEP	Personalised Learning Plan / Individual Learning Plan / Individual Education Plan
LSO/LSA/SSO	Learning Support Officer / Learning Support Assistant / Student Support Officer
LTGs	Long-term goals
NCCD	Nationally Consistent Collection of Data
PSG/SSG	Program Support Group / Student Support Group
STGs	Short-term goals

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## Appendix

