



07/03/2014

LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT SCHOOL/CENTRE APPLICATIONS 2014 for 2015 INTAKE

PSYCHOLOGISTS' PROCEDURES

According to current procedures to determine eligibility for appropriate placement within a Language Development Centre, “the child needs to demonstrate evidence of non-verbal learning potential within the average or above average range”. That is, the students’ functioning can not be accounted for by intellectual impairment, sensory impairment or other primary disorders which account for the language impairment.

The psychologist provides evidence of non-verbal intellectual functioning within the average range on a *reliable, valid* measure appropriate to the child’s specific needs. Psychologists use professional judgement to select the measure which best demonstrates this, taking into account the child’s:-

- age
- general language skills
- level of comprehension
- overall capacity to be assessed

With this purpose in mind, assessments must reflect the best practice guidelines for the “Assessment of Global Intellectual Functioning for Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Students” (CALD). Further information can be found in the “Intellectual Assessment of Children with Language Impairment” document, which specifically reviews the use of non-verbally administered psychometric assessments with this student population.

As the choice of a cognitive assessment tool takes into account the impact of the student’s language on their possible performance, a non-verbally administered assessment is required to ensure the best possible performance for the student. These may include the UNIT, or the Leiter R. In some cases, in order to ascertain the student’s learning profile, the psychologist’s professional judgement is that more than one assessment is needed to sufficiently demonstrate the student’s level of functioning. It is possible to provide information gained from a range of assessment tools if required- such as the Leiter R Brief IQ and Ravens Coloured Progressive Matrices if that assists you make an informed decision about the student’s learning profile. Abbreviated or brief versions of intellectual assessments, used alone, are insufficient to make a judgement about level of functioning.

All students enrolled in a school who wish to apply for the specialist programs require a full cognitive assessment. Children who are pre-kindergarten have their language assessed by a speech pathologist and may also have a developmental assessment if they are a patient of a paediatrician or other specialist.

The due date for applications has not been released but usually occurs towards the end of Term 3 each year. It is important to consider that a placement is *one* of the options available and should not be the only option considered due to the possibility that not every child will be offered a position for 2014. A Language Development Centre or School placement is part of the continuum of service for children identified with a specific language impairment, which also includes access to blocks of individualised therapy provided by both private and public sector clinicians, and teacher training to enhance capacity to support children in their local school. Schools can access the outreach specialist service attached to their local Language Development School

or Centre for further information regarding professional learning sessions that may be available across the school year.

A report template is available to assist with your applications. It does not replace comprehensive psychological reports that are written following psychometric assessments and intervention. You do not need to use this if you have a full written report available.

If you are utilising data gathered by external service providers please complete your own report and reference the assessments as it is important to demonstrate current functioning in the school environment.

A new report is required even if the previous psychologist applied for placement last year, but a new cognitive assessment will not be required if it is recent.

The teacher checklists will be sent to all psychologists as soon as they have been finalised by the management group, and completed documents can be forwarded to the respective LDS/LDC facility in the South Metropolitan Education region:

**Principal/Placement Panel
Peel LDS
Laguardia Loop
PORT KENNEDY WA 6172**

**Principal/Placement Panel
Fremantle LDC
PO Box 1031
WILLAGEE WA 6156**

**Principal/Placement Panel
South East Metro. LDC
276 Epsom Ave
CLOVERDALE WA 6105**

I am happy to answer any questions you may have. I can be reached via email jo.nowak@det.wa.edu.au or my schools.

Best wishes



Jo Nowak
Senior School Psychologist
Peel Language Development School and Statewide Specialist Services