

Aim: to provide information/advice that is meaningful, based on parental experiences and school specialist advice.

Frequently Asked Questions

- I'm worried about my child's progress at school. What is the first step?
 - [Have a look at the school's recommended process with concerns](#) which will give you step by step guide to the process used by the school.
 - Talk to your child's teacher
 - Your child's teacher is the best person to discuss your concerns with, and will have access to assessment information, as well as their professional observations of your child's performance in the classroom relation to their peers.
 - Email your child's teacher to request a meeting to discuss your concerns. Include in your email the specifics of your concerns, giving examples if possible. The teacher will schedule a meeting with you, allow time for them to gather all relevant information on your child's performance.
 - Start observing and noting child's behavior, any areas you feel there may be difficulties. Gathering information will be helpful in any discussions with your child's teacher, as well as for any specialist you may see. Is homework taking much longer than is supposed to?

- Who can I talk to about my concerns?
 - Teacher
 - GP – can assist with appropriate development referrals or support options.
 - Child Development Program - <https://www.childrens.health.qld.gov.au>
 - Specialists – see below to find a specialist

- When do I need to go and see a specialist eg developmental pediatrician, speech pathologist?
 - This is a decision for you to make, but it is suggested you seek advice from your GP and Student Support Services. In some cases, Support Services may suggest external assessment. Be prepared to be advised to seek hearing and vision testing first. This may rule out
 - Can I get a diagnosis straight away? There is often quite a delay in gaining appointments with Developmental Pediatricians, so when making your appointment check if there are any actions you can take prior to your appointment to get started.

- How do I find a good specialist?
 - Your GP may have a list of recommended specialists.
 - Ask your friends and other parents for recommendation.
 - Contact the Learning Difficulties Support Group Co-ordinator for the list of parent specialist recommendations.

- Now I have a diagnosis, what's next?
 - Your specialist will normally provide an extensive report which will include the specifics of the diagnosis, and recommendations/strategies to support your child.
 - Ensure school is provided with any specialist reports/recommendations, and meet with your class teacher/Support Services to discuss and implement any suggested adjustments/strategies in the classroom.
 - You may need to see additional specialists, which your specialist may recommend, or take a look at the "ICSS Parents Specialist Recommendations" list. Finding the right specialist for your child may take time, but it is important that you are happy and confident with them.

- What is a PLP (Personalised Learning Plan)

A Personalised Learning Plan (PLP) is developed by the classroom teacher and outlines the adjustments which are presently in place to cater for the student's needs and allow access to learning, 'on the same basis' as his/ her peers. A PLP may be required due to learning difficulties, advanced learning requirements, social / emotional needs, behaviour or safety. It may include provisions such as extra time during assessments, fiddle tools, movement breaks, use of assistive technology or extra small group support for reading.

- What does a PLP mean for my child in the classroom?

A PLP does not change anything in the classroom – it simply is a way of recording adjustments that are already in place in the classroom.

Recording these adjustments does assist communicating and tracking the support which has been required from one year to the next.

- Does tutoring help (what other parents want you to know)?

Anecdotal feedback from parents suggests caution before committing to long term tutoring via large commercial businesses. Tutors to assist students with a specific diagnosis can be a specialized field, so it's best to ensure you know exactly what type of assistance your child needs prior to engaging a tutor. Organisations such as SPELD can provide a list of tutors in your area, or ask other parents.

Useful links to websites and organisations

These are just some of the numerous groups and information available online.

- SPELD Qld – support and services to all Qlders experiencing learning difficulties
<http://www.speld.org.au/>
- Education Qld – learning and reading difficulties info
<http://www.education.qld.gov.au/schools/disability/learning-reading-difficulties.html>
- Autism Hub – <https://ahrc.eq.edu.au>
- Asperger's Centre - <http://www.asperger.asn.au>
- Autism Qld - <https://www.autismqld.com.au>
- Reading Centre – <https://ahrc.eq.edu.au>
- beyondblue's [Healthy Families website](#).
- AUSPELD - Aust Federation of SPELD Assoc <http://www.auspeld.org.au>
- The Dyslexia Association <https://www.dyslexia.org.au>
- International Dyslexia Assoc <https://www.dyslexiaida.org>