



# ST. JOHN'S SCHOOL

12 Tamar St, Rangeway WA 6530  
PO Box 7156, Geraldton WA 6531  
Tel. (08) 99 200 100 Fax. (08) 99 200150

## SPECIAL NEEDS EDUCATION ASSISTANT DUTY STATEMENT

(The terms Teaching Assistant and Education Assistant can be used interchangeably)

**At St John's School we believe in a whole school shared approach in which all staff are involved and responsible for the catering for the needs of all children, including those with Special Needs. The Special Needs Education Assistants are important team members.**

### **Purpose of the Education Assistant (Special Needs)**

Education Assistants and their time is allocated for specific needs and purposes. Individual or shared Education Assistant time is allocated to those classes in which there are students who, without that additional level of assistance, would be unable to access or participate effectively in the mainstream programmes provided by the school.

The allocation of Education Assistants is provisional, dependent on specific individual/support needs. It is allocated on an annual or short term basis, rather than a recurrent basis and therefore the contract is end dated.

The major role of Special Needs Education Assistants is to support the class teachers to provide for the physical, intellectual, social, religious and emotional development of all students in the class. The Education Assistants provide a supportive role in assisting the classroom teacher to facilitate the access, participation and learning outcomes of students with Special Needs. The Education Assistants provide valuable support in the implementation of programmes in the classroom/school, as directed by the Principal and teacher/s.

Assistance may vary from general class support to working with individual students for a specified time or activity to working with small groups of students for particular activities.

### **Specific roles, tasks and responsibilities will vary depending on:**

- Specific individual needs
- The number of students requiring assistance
- The types of programmes operating within the class or school
- The level and type of individual support required by a student or group of students for a particular activity at a particular time
- Particular contextual and situation specific needs
- The number of classes or the number of students with whom the Education Assistant is involved or has been assigned
- The specific goals, objectives and expectations of key associated personnel involved, such as Special Needs consultants, Special Needs co-ordinator, parents/caregivers and service providers
- Particular skills and areas of expertise of the teacher/s and Education Assistants.

### **Duties and Responsibilities of Special Needs Education Assistants**

**Special Needs Education Assistants are employed in many and varied roles.**

#### **Duties involve:**

1. Be in attendance ready for duties at the allocated times

2. Directly assists classroom teachers to implement, monitor and supervise student learning experiences
3. Assists with the adaptation/modification of the classroom environment, materials and activities production, gathers and photocopies material, which may involve reducing or enlarging worksheets and printed materials
4. Supports students by listening, encouraging, reassuring, directing, re-directing, explaining, reinforcing and practising skills, concepts and instructions
5. Models particular techniques or instructions and maintains student attention to task
6. Accompanies and supervises student/s to and in specific designated areas within the school and activities external to the school, with the approval of the Principal and when parents/carers permission has been sought and granted, e.g. excursions
7. Assists with the care, monitoring and supervision of students' outdoor activities, including before school, recess and lunch time periods
8. Attends to students who are sick or require minor first aid
9. Assist with the toileting and changing of students if accidents occur- using the school's protective behaviour procedures.
10. Assists with and contributes to observations of student behaviour /progress, charting and recording student activities, student performance or specific behaviours and marking student work and/or record sheets
11. Assists with or supervises small group or whole class activities of other students to allow the teacher to work with student/s with the Special Needs
12. Participates in school and school community activities, such as Mass, Sports Day, Swimming Carnivals, assemblies, excursions, etc.
13. Contributes to the maintenance of the educational environment
14. Maintains confidentiality: Education Assistants will be involved in professional and informal discussions about individual students. Strictly confidential information should not be discussed outside of the school context at any time.
15. Using interaction and effective language and talking to advance the students learning and well being
16. Assist with the pack away and next day's preparation after school.

**Education Assistants are NOT RESPONSIBLE for:**

- *The development of Individual Education Plans (IEPs)*
- *Planning of individual or group programmes*
- *The development of learning experiences*
- *Identifying or defining goals and objectives*
- *Formally assessing, diagnosing or evaluating student progress.*

*While close co-operation and positive relationships with parents is encouraged, Education Assistants **are not authorised** to discuss a student's actual progress or incidents with parents or caregivers.*

***The above mentioned points remain the responsibility of the classroom teacher***

**The Special Needs Education Assistant can also be involved in duties allocated to General/Classroom Education Assistants, as outlined below.**

Education Assistants are responsible to the Principal. They are at all times under the direction and supervision of the teacher and may not assume direct responsibility for the management, teaching or control of students unless specifically instructed to do so for a specific task.

**General Duties**

1. Assists in teaching-learning and classroom activities, as directed and supervised by the teacher.
2. Participates in discussions with teachers and assists in the implementation of individual or group programmes as directed by the teacher.
3. Adheres to the professional ethics of confidentiality. Assists with the collection, preparation and distribution of teaching aids/resources.
4. Photocopies, collates and staples, distributes student lesson material.
5. Maintains records of books and materials distributed.
6. Assists with clerical duties associated with normal classroom activities, e.g. note collections, filing, etc.
7. Collects, prepares and distributes stock, equipment and materials.
8. Undertakes ongoing “skilling” and Professional Development, where appropriate.
9. Contributes to the welcoming, supportive atmosphere of the school for parents/carers, students and friends.
10. Assists teachers with care of children on school excursions, Sports Days and other out of classroom activities.
11. Assists teachers in attending to sick children or children in need of minor first aid.
12. Directs all parental or other enquires to the teacher - as determined by C.E.O. Policies and Education Act of WA - regarding: student progress, educational programmes being run in the classroom, etc.
13. Assists with arrival and departure of children, including those travelling on bus.
14. Assists with care of children at play before school and at school recess/lunch.
15. Prepares room and outdoor equipment as required by teacher, including preparation and cleaning away of teaching materials and equipment.
16. Assists with supervision of activity work as programmed by teacher including: listens to reading, writing on children’s pictures, reading stories, singing songs with small groups etc.
17. Assists with care and supervision of children in both indoor and outdoor activity as directed by teacher.
18. Assists to maintain classroom and work areas in a tidy condition, as necessary.

19. The Education Assistant is responsible primarily to the teachers, but, as with all staff, can be allocated duties as appropriate by the Principal or Assistant Principals.
20. *All duties should be conducted within the Christian understanding and ethos of the Catholic school, living out the Gospel values and the Code of Conduct for Catholic Schools.*

## **General Guidelines for Teachers**

### **Education Assistants' time can be most effectively utilised by:**

- Ensuring the Education Assistant clearly understands the roles and responsibilities of the team
  - i.e. the teacher is responsible for the decision making, planning the IEP and programming
  - i.e. the Education Assistant assists in the implementation of the programme as the teachers deems appropriate
- Establish a daily/weekly timetable for the Education Assistant which indicates the class/student activities
- Informing/training the Education Assistant in the instructional methods and behaviour management techniques used in the class and for individual students.

### **General Guidelines for Teachers and Special Needs Assistants**

- Teachers need to explain to the Education Assistant exactly what they need to do in the lesson, (e.g. please circulate and help all students...)
- Notes on the Teachers' Daily Work Pad or in a daily Communication Book between the teacher and Education Assistant is a school expectation and practice
- The teacher needs to tell the Education Assistant how they would like them to assist with the behaviour management of the class and particular student/s. The Education Assistant needs to stand back, observe current practices
- Encourage students to do everything possible for themselves  
Foster a 'You can do it attitude.' Nothing is too hard and work hard!
- Allow students to make mistakes: fostering independent work habits, gradual release of responsibility model
- Raise issues and concern in an appropriate timely manner, i.e. not in front of children, quiet discrete discussion (Recognise that we are all only human and make mistakes and have different perspectives.)
- The Education Assistant will not sit by one student for the whole lesson/ day unless they are delivering a specific programme. Students should be as independent as possible.
- Provide ideas without taking over, i.e. 'drop seeds'-  
"I found this might be useful, you might have something else, what do you think?"
- Positively reinforce staff and students  
"Sunshine loves the way you ask him to do jobs, etc."
- Encourage students to join a group or sit next to someone.  
Don't insist on it unless the teacher does.
- Build and maintain positive, respectful relationships with other staff.
- Maintain confidentiality between classes. Refrain from making comments on what other staff do
- Provide regular feedback to the appropriate parties in line with your role description... (E.g. I liked how you..., next time can you please... I am unclear about what you would prefer me to do...)