## Junior School Academic Needs Policy

### PURPOSE
To communicate the School academic needs philosophy, guidelines and procedures.

### SCOPE
Junior School teaching staff

### RESPONSIBLE OFFICER
Ms. Heather Ablett, Head of Junior School

### LEGISLATION AND OTHER KEY MANDATES
The Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority; The Standards and Practices of the International Baccalaureate Organisation.

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**Approved by:** Mrs Anne Coutts, Principal  
**Signed:**  
**Last updated:** 9 June 2015
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POLICY OUTLINE
The purpose of this document is to:

- communicate the School’s academic needs philosophy;
- and outline the guidelines and procedures for accessing academic needs support.

POLICY PROCESS
The information contained within this policy is informed by educational research, effective practice and information obtained from professional learning. The policy was first drafted in 2011 and a subsequent review by the Academic Needs Team (ANT) and Junior School staff in Term 2 2015 led to this revised version. A policy review is scheduled for the 2018 academic year.

This policy ensures compliance with the requirements of:

- The Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA);

CGGS MISSION
Canberra Girls Grammar School aims to be an example of educational excellence by:

- delivering outstanding academic, pastoral and co-curricular programs;
- recruiting, developing and retaining high quality staff;
- building a caring, inclusive and nurturing school community; and
- providing new ways of learning in an innovative, progressive and responsive educational environment.

PHILOSOPHY OF ACADEMIC NEEDS SUPPORT
The School is committed to practices that promote the development of a caring learning community. The School understands that learning is enhanced when relationships between the learner and educator are strong and based on mutual respect, trust and understanding. Cooperation, collaboration and diversity are valued.
The School believes that every student is capable of learning and it is the role of the educator to provide:

- stimulating, positive and interactive learning environments
- acceptance of individual differences, ability and potential
- engaging, effective and appropriate teaching methods
- flexible organisation and responsiveness to learning needs
- holistic development of each individual – intellectually, emotionally, socially, physically, ethically and spiritually
- learning opportunities which enable students to develop the intellectual tools required for lifelong learning; and
- culturally sensitive and inclusive education programs.

At times students may require academic consideration and possibly intervention and/or additional support. To this end, teachers may refer students to the Academic Needs Team. Referred students may include students requiring academic enrichment, students with disabilities and/or specific learning difficulties, students who are learning English as an additional language or dialect (EAL/D), and/or students whose behaviours are impacting on their learning.

**ACADEMIC NEEDS TEAM**

The Junior School ANT team provide a range of services for students from the Early Learning Centre to Year 6 requiring additional academic assistance.

The Junior School ANT consists of:

- Head of Junior School (HoJS)
- Directors of the Junior School
- Curriculum Coordinator
- 2.0 FTE Support Teachers
- 0.8 FTE School Psychologist
- 0.4 FTE English as an Additional Language or Dialect (EAL/D) Teacher
- Early Learning Centre Coordinator as required

![Diagram of the Junior School Academic Needs Team]

*Figure 1: Structure of the Junior School Academic Needs Team*

The Junior School ANT meets weekly and is chaired by the HoJS. At the meeting new student referrals are addressed, updates are provided on students who have previously been referred, issues relating to the teaching and learning of academic needs services are discussed and recommendations are made for allocation of the ANT time and budget. Minutes are taken by the Executive Assistant (EA) to the HoJS, which are circulated to the ANT prior to the next meeting. Members of the ANT can place items on the agenda via the EA.

In addition to the weekly meeting to address academic concerns, pastoral care meetings (Student Review Meetings) are held for each year level from Prep to Year 6 once per term. These meetings are attended by all teaching staff involved in the year level, including specialist teachers. The meetings provide an opportunity for pastoral information about students who are experiencing social, emotional, or family difficulties (or changes in their circumstances), to be shared and discussed amongst staff. Individual student social and/or emotional concerns are referred directly to the School Psychologist.

Student Review Meetings are also held by Early Learning Centre staff twice a year, in Term 1 and Term 3. The Director (ELC – Year 2) and ELC Coordinator meet separately with each ELC teaching team (teacher and co-educator). As in the Junior School, these meetings provide an opportunity for
pastoral information about students who are experiencing social, emotional, or family difficulties (or changes in their circumstances), to be shared and discussed amongst staff and action taken if necessary. Outside of these meetings, ELC teachers have open and ongoing dialogue with the ELC Coordinator about individual students and their needs.

IDENTIFICATION OF STUDENTS WITH SPECIFIC ACADEMIC NEEDS

Referrals to the ANT meeting are made by the class teacher (refer Appendix 1). The teacher completes a Student Referral form (refer Appendix 2), discusses the issues with the relevant Director and informs parents of the referral. The Director collects background information, places the student on the agenda for the next ANT meeting and presents the referral to the team.

Referrals may be made for a variety of reasons including:

- general academic difficulties: Literacy and Numeracy
- language: Receptive and/or Expressive
- articulation difficulties
- English as an Additional Language or Dialect (EAL/D)
- motor difficulties: Gross and/or Fine
- attention concerns
- academic enrichment
- psycho-educational concerns

The ANT considers the referral and makes recommendations. This may include: psycho-educational screening (refer Appendix 3); further specialised assessment regarding achievement; a referral to an external health or allied health professional; suggestions to the class teacher; additional one-on-one or in class support; or ‘watching brief/later review.’
When available, allied health professionals (ie. Occupational Therapists and Speech Language Pathologists) provide services to students at school as part of a private arrangement with parents who wish to pursue this option. The School has developed a working relationship with allied health professionals embodied formally in a Memorandum of Understanding (refer Appendix 4), which is signed by both parties.

**IDENTIFICATION OF STUDENTS WITH SPECIFIC ACADEMIC NEEDS IN THE EARLY LEARNING CENTRE**

Referrals to the ANT meeting are made by the class teacher (refer Appendix 1). The teacher completes a Student Referral form (refer Appendix 2), discusses the issues with the Early Learning Centre Coordinator and informs parents of the referral. The ELC Coordinator collects background information, places the student on the agenda for the next ANT meeting and presents the referral to the team. Referrals may be made for a variety of reasons including:

- language: Receptive and/or Expressive
- articulation difficulties
- motor difficulties: Gross and/or Fine
- attention concerns
- developmental concerns

The ANT considers the referral and makes recommendations. This may include: a referral to an external health or allied health professional; suggestions to the class teacher; or ‘watching brief/later review.’ When available, allied health professionals (ie. Occupational Therapists and Speech Language Pathologists) provide services to students at school as part of a private arrangement with parents who wish to pursue this option.

Within the Early Learning Centre, one co-educator is employed to provide additional support to the ELC classes. When required, support from this person is targeted to particular student/s and/or classes, in order to provide extra assistance in the class and/or one-on-one support to a student. The allocation
of this additional support is determined by the Director (ELC – Year 2) and ELC Coordinator, in consultation with the class teachers.

**ASSESSMENT OF STUDENTS**

Referral of students may come as a result of achievement during assessment.

Routine assessments which students complete include:

- InCAS
- NAPLAN - Years 3 and 5
- Running Records

Copies of these assessments are stored by cohort on the School network and also in the ANT Assessment folder which is kept in the Junior School administration area. This folder is taken to each ANT meeting for reference.

Following a referral, further testing is often recommended. This can include:

- Marie Clay Observation Survey
- Sutherland Phonological Awareness Test-Revised (SPAT-R)
- Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children IV (WISC-IV with a view to WISC V in 2016-17)
- York Assessment of Reading for Comprehension (YARC)
- NEALE Analysis of Reading Ability
- Clinical Evaluation of Language Fundamentals (CELF – IV)
- EAL/D Assessment Pack
- BRIGANCE CIBS-11
- Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (Numeracy)
- Schedule for Early Number Assessment (SENA 1 and SENA 2)
- Primary Survey: Words Their Way Spelling Inventory; Single Word Spelling Test; Written Expression; Record of Reading; PAT Vocabulary, Comprehension and Numeracy.
An interpreter will be sourced, where possible, for cognitive and speech assessments involving EAL/D students. Reports from outside professionals may also be sought or provided as part of the referral process. Parents are required to provide copies of such assessments for the student’s file, a requirement which is agreed to upon admission in writing (refer Appendix 5).

Results from further testing are summarised at ANT meetings. Further discussion takes place to determine the appropriate support for the student. Once a student is allocated support, the relevant Director speaks to the class teacher and the class teacher then advises parents about the support that has been allocated. In the case of an EAL/D student, the class teacher notifies the parent and this is followed up with contact from the EAL/D teacher.

PROGRAMS FOR STUDENTS WITH ACADEMIC SUPPORT NEEDS

The Junior School offers a variety of programs/services which provide support to identified students. These include:

- differentiation of learning tasks (in class)
- individual or group withdrawal
- in class support from an Academic Needs Teacher or School Assistant
- Reading Program undertaken by trained School Assistants (refer Appendix 6)
- EAL/D program
- Maths Clinics
- co-curricular opportunities (e.g. Gateways, da Vinci Decathlon, Chess, Home Learning Support, ICAS, Tournament of Minds, French Development, Mandarin)
- referral to external agencies

ENGLISH AS AN ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE OR DIALECT PROGRAM (EAL/D)
EAL/D students are those whose first language is a language or dialect other than English and who requires additional support to assist them to develop proficiency in English.

It is acknowledged that EAL/D students have differing degrees of exposure to their home language and differing degrees of fluency which may change over time. It is further acknowledged that whilst social language acquisition typically takes approximately two years, academic language proficiency can often take seven years of regular exposure to acquire. An EAL/D student may progress in one area, for example, speaking and listening more quickly than in another, for example, reading or writing. To this end, the ANT team reviews EAL/D students’ progress once per term to determine if adjustments to support and the focus of support are appropriate.

EAL/D students may receive support through individual sessions or may be grouped with students with similar needs. Support may also be provided in the classroom setting in the case of many EAL/D students being placed in the same class.

Based on the belief that language learning occurs in context and given that CGGS is an IB PYP school, much of the EAL/D assistance supports the Units of Inquiry, for example, the pre-teaching of vocabulary, support constructing text types and the modification of class tasks and assessments. However, EAL/D students will also require explicit teaching of certain skills, particularly grammar, pronunciation and writing skills.

It is acknowledged that EAL/D students in the Early Learning Centre benefit greatly from immersion in the language rich, play based environment of the ELC. ELC teachers are able to liaise with the EAL/D teacher to discuss strategies to enhance language development and to seek advice regarding individual students.

The EAL/D teacher tracks student progress using the EAL/D Learning Progressions (LPs). These LPs are based on the ACARA document, “English as an Additional Language or Dialect Teacher Resource – Learning Progression: Foundation to Year 10” - May 2014. Students’ progress along the Progressions is reported to parents each semester. LPs are a collaborative document, shared with class teachers.
INDIVIDUAL LEARNING PLANS AND EDUCATIONAL SUPPORT GROUPS

For those students who receive disability funding, an Individual Learning Plan (ILP) (refer Appendix 7, 8) is formulated with input from the class teacher, relevant Academic Needs Teacher and/or EAL/D. Teacher and/or School Psychologist. The relevant ANT members meet with parents once per term to review progress and update goals.

At present, students who have academic needs, but do not require an ILP, may have an Educational Support Group (ESG) meeting to review goals (refer Appendix 9). These meetings occur once per term, and include any relevant parties from the ANT, the Class Teacher, parents, and occasionally, the students themselves.

For some students who have academic learning needs and access significant support, the ANT may recommend an ILP even though the student may not be eligible for disability funding. In addition, an ESG may be established in these circumstances.

MONITORING

Progress of students is monitored by the ANT member providing additional support. Updates are provided, when appropriate, to the ANT. Should a staff member believe a student requires an adjustment to support, an update will be provided at the ANT meeting. Students are reviewed once per term to determine the appropriate level of support, including the possibility of discontinuation.

REPORTING TO PARENTS

The Junior School values its partnership with parents. Parents are kept informed about their child’s progress. Methods of reporting include:

- Parent-Teacher Interviews and discussions
• communication logs
• ESG conferences
• written reports each semester
• Student-Led Conferences
• NAPLAN results
• reference to goals on ILP
• face-to-face meetings with the School Psychologist, and
• face-to-face meetings with ANT each semester.

FUTURE DIRECTIONS FOR POLICY MAKING: NATIONAL DISABILITY INSURANCE SCHEME

The School is aware that the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) is likely to require changes to this policy in the near future. Several key staff have attended the Australian Independent Schools (AIS) training programs in regard to NDIS. In 2014, the School participated in the trial National Consistent Collection of Data (NCCD) process in order to prepare for and receive feedback for this initiative. The School will continue to work in collaboration with the AIS to address any future requirements and implementation of NDIS.

REFERENCES

• ACARA: English as an Additional Language or Dialect Teaching Resource: EAL/D Learning Progressions: Foundation to Year 10 – May 2014
• ACARA: English as an Additional Language or Dialect Teacher Resource- EAL/D Overview and Advice – February
• National Disability Insurance Scheme documentation provided by AIS to date
• Radford College Individual Needs Program – Junior School
APPENDIX 1 – STUDENT REFERRAL PROCESS

Identification of student by teacher or HoJS on enrolment in case of EAL/D. Teacher informs parents of referral.

Referral form completed by teacher in discussion with relevant Director. Director presents referral to ANT.

Collaborative decision making by ANT based on all available information. If necessary, additional information collected from ANT.

Student is referred to an external specialist and/or School Psychologist. Assessment conducted as appropriate.

Is student eligible for SCAN funding?

No

Contact parents. Complete DCS. SCAN process takes place.

Yes

Watching brief. Directors notify class teacher. Teacher informs parents.

No action taken. Directors notify class teacher. Teacher informs parents.

Student receives academic support relevant to their needs from ANT (EALD, in-class, withdrawn, small group).

Directors notify class teacher of decisions made. Class teacher informs parents via email, cc Director.

Documentation of decisions & support provided placed in student’s file. Copies sent to relevant parties.

End of term review.

ILP developed post-SCAN in collaboration with parents, class teacher, ANT.

ILP documenting support given completed & signed by all parties.

SCAN review/documentation as appropriate.

End of term review.
# STUDENT SUPPORT REFERRAL FORM

Please forward completed form to relevant Director of Junior School

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student:</th>
<th>DOB:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Year/Class:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date:</td>
<td>Glasses Worn: Y/N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class Teacher:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Referee(s):</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## REASON FOR REFERRAL

(Place ‘X’ against the applicable reason/s)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Academic Enrichment</th>
<th>Learning Support – Numeracy</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Behaviour</td>
<td>Social/Emotional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disability/Medical</td>
<td>Speech Articulation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EAL/D</td>
<td>Language Receptive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning Support - Literacy</td>
<td>Language Expressive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Add further comments:

This referral has been discussed with parent/s

Date:

This referral has been discussed with relevant staff. List ______________________

Date: ______________________

What outcomes are sought from this referral? ______________________

Date: ______________________

Is this student accessing outside services? Yes/No List if known: ______________________

Date: ______________________

Indicate any previous modifications/support positions:

Referee’s Signature: | Date: |
Student Support Team Recommendation/s:
APPENDIX 3 – CONDUCTING A PSYCHO-EDUCATIONAL ASSESSMENT IN A PRIMARY SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT
PLANNING

• Collect Background Information
  o Teacher’s ANT Referral form – how problem is perceived at this point in time by the Class Teacher (Directors)
  o Student File (Psychologist)
    ▪ Build a picture of the family/student
    ▪ Family’s relationship with the school
    ▪ Relevant health/mental health factors
    ▪ Student’s previous academic-social-emotional history
    ▪ Previous assessment (Naplan, InCas etc)/School Reports
  o Teacher and ANT (Team, Psychologist)
    ▪ Current classroom achievement
    ▪ Behavioural indicators
  o Allied Health Professional Reports: Review (Psychologist)
    ▪ Previous Assessment results
    ▪ Goals and progress
  o Review any Medical/Paediatric info - implications for learning (Psychologist)
• Parent Interview (Psychologist)
  o Establish parental expectations and address them
  o First and best opportunity to clearly explain the process ahead, provide a sense of “safe hands”; and “take the parents with you”
  o Collect developmental-social/emotional-behavioural-family history/background
  o Possibly acknowledge that there may be a grief process – if appropriate

INVESTIGATION

• Assess Ability – “psychometric”- IQ test WISC (Psychologist)
• Assess Achievement (Teacher, ANT teacher, InCas, Psychologist, WIAT)

EVALUATION (PSYCHOLOGIST AND TEACHERS, INCLUDING ANT TEACHER)

• IQ test results (and any discrepancies among/between scores) (Psychologist)
• Discrepancies -> Ability and Achievement. (Psychologist/teachers)
• Consider all background information (educators, parent, allied health, etc)
• Determine child’s academic Ability - Strengths and Limitations (Psychologist)
• Determine what will be practical to implement for the family and school (ANT)

REVIEW/RECOMMENDATIONS

• Meet with all parties concerned (as at beginning)
  o Provide results.
  o Provide recommendations, eg, Speech Path., OT, “what the school can provide,” Other.
  o Process parents’ thoughts/feelings. Deal with grief/expectations.
• Leave the door open.
• Keep Class teacher/ANT teacher in the loop.
FOLLOW-UP

- Review meeting (IP, ESG) every term with concerned parties, as appropriate
APPENDIX 4 – CGGS MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING
EXTERNAL SPECIALISTS WORKING WITH STUDENTS
This Memorandum of Understanding is made between Canberra Girls Grammar School (Junior Campus) and the above mentioned specialist. Its purpose is to outline the objectives and expectations of both parties.

**OBJECTIVE:**
To provide a specific service to students recommended by the school as requiring investigation.

**EXPECTATIONS**
- The School to provide an adequate venue for the lesson to take place at no cost to the Specialist.
- The venue may change subject to availability
- The School will make recommendations to the parents for specialist services as appropriate
- The parents are responsible for making direct contact with the Specialist
- The Specialist will negotiate with the relevant class teacher the most suitable time for the withdrawal
- Regular formal and informal communication shall occur between the School staff and Specialists on the progress of referred students (after parental consent)
- Provision for resources is the responsibility of the external specialist, including all photocopying
- It is the responsibility of the parent to advise the Specialist of any variations to normal school routine, eg excursion, illness
- Specialists to maintain their own Police Checks and other necessary paperwork required to be working with minors
- All invoicing for services provided to be sent directly to parents
- The School will not charge for the use of facilities, however, occasionally the School will request a brief meeting for non-case related School business. This would be at no cost to the School.

**GENERAL ASPECTS**
- Ensure strict adherence to Occupational Health and Safety and Duty of Care rules and guidelines at all times including during lessons and whilst on the School premises
- All parties to provide Duty of Care to students

I ______________________(your name) agree to the teaching conditions outlined in the duty statement above.
When parents choose to send their children to Canberra Girls Grammar School Junior School, they trust us to provide the best education that we can, based on the children’s individual needs and our available resources. The School cannot undertake this responsibility unless it is aware of all circumstances of a child’s background, development issues and special needs that could affect the program we offer to the child and the other children in the Junior School.

The responsibility that we have to your child is matched by your responsibility to make us aware of all circumstances, issues or particular needs that your child has and which may affect the way in which we provide our program. If we are not aware of these, then both your child and others in the class or the Junior School may be adversely affected.

We encourage you to offer this information at interview with the Head of Junior School. Such information remains confidential to the staff who will be dealing with your child.

We may also need to talk with your child’s doctor, external practitioner, or helping person to form a complete picture, and will seek your approval for this.

You will appreciate that if we are not given all relevant information prior to enrolment, and are unable to discuss this with you and others involved, then we cannot provide the best caring educational environment for your child and others in the Junior School.

If this failure to provide us with information comes to light after enrolment or during your child’s time at the Junior School, then we reserve the right after discussion with you, to ask you to withdraw your child and make alternative arrangements for his or her education.

Your signature on this policy document is an acknowledgement that you have read the document and agree to provide the above information to the Head of Junior School at interview.

Signature .................................................................................

..................................................................................................................

(Father)                     (Please print name)

Signature .................................................................................

..................................................................................................................

(Mother)                     (Please print name)

Name of Student: ………………………………………………………………………………………………………. ….

Date: ..................................................
The Reading Program forms part of the Academic Needs opportunities offered at Canberra Girls Grammar School. It is a highly intensive, intervention program targeting those students who, for a variety of reasons, are not achieving at the same rate as their peers in Reading. It is designed for children in their second, third or fourth year of formal schooling and generally between the ages of six and nine years. Students new to the school are eligible for nomination for Reading Program after a semester’s attendance at CGGS. The exception is for students transferring from Canberra Grammar School into Year 3.

The selection of students for the program is based on evidence from Running Records, teacher observation and InCAS reading results. Targeted students are those who demonstrate some reading ability, although they are reading at a lower level to the average for their cohort. The program does not suit those students who have identified specific academic needs.

On entry into the program, student undergo baseline testing that consists of the following assessments:

- Running Record to establish instructional level
- Letter ID test
- Concepts About Print
- BURT: Word count and EAB

The Reading Program is delivered by trained school assistants in thirty minute lessons two, three or four times per week. Students remain in the program for a minimum of ten to a maximum of twelve weeks during which time liaison with the classroom is paramount to enhance overall learning.

At the end of their Reading Program lesson series, students are tested again on the initial set of tests for comparative data. The students having completed the program are discontinued from Reading Program but are monitored for continuing progress via the Monitoring Program. Students who struggle to demonstrate significant progress are referred to the ANT team for further investigation and intervention.

**MONITORING PROGRAM**

Students discontinuing the Reading Program (and occasionally those who have narrowly missed out on a placement) are placed on the Monitoring Program. A file of students to be monitored is accessed by trained school assistants during monitoring periods on their timetable. A lesson is administered, including a running record to keep a record of the student’s progress in terms of reading level, type of errors and self-correction rate.

**READING PROGRAM TRAINING**

All school assistants delivering the Reading Program have been through a rigorous training program. This consists of twelve intensive workshop sessions with practice of skills in between sessions.

**READING PROGRAM TRACKING**

School assistants are responsible for keeping Reading Program records and submitting them to the Director of Junior School ELC-Year 2. This includes a summary of entry testing, monthly lesson logs, and comparative data sheet of entry and exit Testing.

The Director of Junior School ELC-Year 2 collates this information in to the Reading Program file for the year. The Director also keeps a check on the Monitoring Program file, discontinuing or referring students to the ANT team as appropriate.
# APPENDIX 7 – INDIVIDUAL LEARNING PLAN

## CANBERRA GIRLS GRAMMAR SCHOOL

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FOCUS AREA LINKED TO CURRICULUM</th>
<th>SPECIFIC LEARNING OUTCOME</th>
<th>INTERVENTION PLAN, CURRICULUM ADAPTATIONS, TEACHING STRATEGIES, RESOURCES AND PERSONNEL</th>
<th>MONITORING AND EVALUATION STRATEGIES</th>
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APPENDIX 8 – INDIVIDUAL LEARNING PLAN

STUDENT: ___________________________ CLASS: ___________________________

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<tr>
<th>ISSUE</th>
<th>POSSIBLE ADJUSTMENTS</th>
<th>ACTION</th>
<th>RESPONSIBILITY</th>
<th>TIMEFRAME/FOLLOW-UP</th>
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</table>
# Record of Educational Support Group (ESG) Meeting

## Student: 

## Class: 

## Date: 

### Present: 

### Apologies: 

### Reports: 

### Class Teacher: 

### Learning Support Teacher: 

### Parents: 

### Other: 

### Goals: 

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<thead>
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<th>Action</th>
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### Next Meeting: 

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