



STANDING COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND COMMUNITY INCLUSION

MICHAEL PETERSSON MLA (CHAIR), JOHNATHAN DAVIS MLA (DEPUTY CHAIR), PETER CAIN MLA

**Inquiry into referred 2019–20 Annual and Financial Reports
ANSWER TO QUESTION ON NOTICE**

Asked by Mr Hanson MLA:

In relation to:

Disability Education

1. How many schools currently offer LSU classes?
 - i. In what schools
 - ii. For what years
 - iii. Number on each class
2. How many schools offer a discrete Learning Support Unit for autism (LSUA)?
 - iv. What schools
 - v. For what years
 - vi. Number in each class
3. How many Learning Support Assistants (LSA's) are employed by the Education Directorate to work in learning support units?
 - vii. How many are employed in LSUA's
4. What are the minimum qualifications for LSA's?
5. Is it a prerequisite for staff in LSUA classes have appropriate training in autism awareness?
6. It was a recommendation of the Schools for All Report (Shaddock) that all schools that have LSU's have appropriate and purpose-built quiet spaces for students needing time out. How many do not have such spaces?
 - viii. When will they?
7. Are all staff – teachers and LSA's employed in special education classes - required to have additional appropriate training in disability or special needs education?
8. Are all teachers employed in the ACT's 4 special schools all required to have appropriate disability education training?

Minister Berry MLA: The answer to the Member's question is as follows: –

1. Small group programs, including numbers of each type are publicly available on the ACT Education Directorate website at:

https://www.education.act.gov.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0019/1702333/Disability-programs-2021.pdf.

These programs are available for eligible students in any school year. The number in each class depends on the type of program, the delivery model used by the school and the needs of the students within the program. Typically, however, a Learning Support



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
FOR THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

QON No. 25 ECI

STANDING COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND COMMUNITY INCLUSION

MICHAEL PETTERSSON MLA (CHAIR), JOHNATHAN DAVIS MLA (DEPUTY CHAIR), PETER CAIN MLA

Unit (LSU) has up to 8 students and a Learning Support Unit Autism (LSUA) has up to 6 students. A school can have more than one unit.

2. As above.
3. Staffing in each unit is based on the needs of individual students and this information is not centrally held.
4. There is no minimum qualification for Learning Support Assistants.
5. All teaching staff are required to hold relevant teaching qualifications and Teacher Quality Institute (TQI) registration. All teaching staff registered by the TQI are qualified to support students with complex learning needs, including students with autism. All public school staff are required to complete the Disability Standards for Education online training.
6. Recommendation 8.1 from the Report of the Expert Panel on Students with Complex Needs and Challenging Behaviours recommends *“that ETD, CE and each Independent School, ensure that all existing schools have safe, calming/sensory spaces that are appropriate to meet the needs of students with complex needs and challenging behaviour”*.

All public schools have a sensory space that can be utilised for this purpose. The characteristics of these spaces differ across schools and classrooms and can change on a regular basis as they are highly dependent on the needs of students at any given time. Schools work with the directorate and families to ensure the space is appropriate and students are often invited to personalise these spaces with their own items, decorations and activities that may assist them to feel calm.

7. All public school staff are required to undertake training in the Disability Standards for Education 2005 to clarify obligations of education and training providers, and support staff to ensure all students with disability can access and participate in education on the same basis as other students.
8. See response to question 5 and question 7.

Approved for circulation to the Standing Committee on Community Inclusion

Signature

Date: 24/03/21

By the Minister for Education and Youth Affairs, Yvette Berry MLA