



Ministry of Education

SPECIAL AND INCLUSIVE EDUCATION POLICY

2024-2027

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1.0 POLICY OBJECTIVE

- 1.1 This policy establishes a framework for planning, resourcing, implementing and monitoring quality education for learners with disabilities throughout Fiji.

2.0 POLICY

Links to relevant legislation and policies are provided in footnotes.

- 2.1 The Ministry of Education (MOE) and schools shall promote learning environments for all learners that foster positive attitudes towards disability inclusion.¹
- 2.2 Schools shall enrol all learners, including learners with disabilities, and raise community awareness on opportunities for learners with disabilities to attend school.²
- 2.3 School personnel, including special school staff, shall identify learners who experience functional difficulty and are at risk of disability. Their level of educational support need shall be verified by MOE's Special and Inclusive Education Officer(s), or other MOE personnel as delegated by the Special and Inclusive Education Officer(s).³
- 2.4 Schools shall complete a [School Accessibility and Inclusion Form](#) to identify barriers, and record strategies to overcome these in order to increase disability inclusion at school. Data from the School Accessibility and Inclusion Form shall be entered into FEMIS annually.⁴
- 2.5 MOE shall provide necessary support to schools where learners with disabilities have been identified and verified to enable quality education for students with disabilities. This support will be in addition to the Primary and Secondary Free Education Grant.⁵
- 2.6 MOE and schools shall enable access to specialist support services as required.⁶
- 2.7 Schools shall deliver the national curricula in a way which benefits all learners, regardless of their disability and educational support needs.⁷

¹ Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act 2018, Part 6, Article 43.

² Fiji Constitution 2013, Article 31; Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act 2018, Part 6, Article 43.

³ Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act 2018; Part 6, Article 31.

⁴ Child Welfare Decree 2010, Part 2, Numbers 4 and 5; Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act 2018, Part 6, Article 43.

⁵ Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act 2018, Part 6; Article 43; School Management Handbook 2020, Page 15.

⁶ Child Welfare Decree 2010, Part 2, Numbers 4 and 5; Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act 2018, Part 6, Article 43.

⁷ National Curriculum Framework 2013; Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act 2018, Part 6, Article 43.

- 2.8 MOE shall support improved access to quality ECE for learners with disabilities to strengthen and support the early years of foundational learning as a basis for success and further learning.⁸
- 2.9 MOE and schools shall enable access to a range of assessment modalities to learners with disabilities, in accordance with their abilities and requirements.⁹
- 2.10 MOE and schools shall support the smooth transition of learners with disabilities between year and school level and post-school.¹⁰
- 2.11 MOE and schools shall ensure that the inclusion requirements of learners with disabilities are identified and met in efforts to ensure that disaster plans, response and recovery activities consider the differential needs of girls and boys with disabilities.¹¹
- 2.12 MOE shall make adequate staff, including Teachers and Teacher Aides, available to schools based on the educational needs of learners with disabilities identified within FEMIS.¹²
- 2.13 MOE shall promote pre- and in-service professional development in special and inclusive education for Teachers and Teacher Aides to provide necessary human resource support to schools, including special schools.¹³
- 2.14 MOE shall strengthen and support Officer(s) with Special and Inclusive Education responsibilities to incorporate provisions for learners with disabilities in MOE policies, and coordinate and monitor implementation of the Special and Inclusive Education Policy.¹⁴
- 2.15 MOE and schools shall maintain MOE's zero tolerance policy concerning child protection for learners with disabilities, in line with the Policy on Child Protection in Schools. MOE

⁸ Policy on Early Childhood Education 2013, 6.11.2; Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act 2018, Part 6, Article 43.

⁹ Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act 2018, Part 6, Article 43; Policy on National Curriculum Assessment and Reporting, 7.3.

¹⁰ Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act 2018, Part 6, Article 43.

¹¹ Child Welfare Decree 2010, Part 2, Numbers 4 and 5; Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act 2018, Part 6, Article 43; Policy on Occupational Health and Safety in MoE Offices and Schools 2007, 6.18; Education in Emergencies and School Safety Policy 2014.

¹² MoE Human Resources Policy; Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act 2018 Part 6, Article 43.

¹³ Policy on Professional Development 2014, 2.2; Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act 2018, Part 6, Article 43.

¹⁴ Policy on Professional Development 2014, 2.2; Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act 2018, Part 6, Article 43.

shall support the implementation of existing national gender equality and violence against women and girls' policy commitments.¹⁵

3.0 BACKGROUND

Education is a human right for all Fijians. Inclusive education has been implemented since the 1960s, when several Catholic Church schools such as St Joseph's Secondary School and Marist Brothers High School enrolled students with disabilities. However, students with extensive educational support needs, or less visible disabilities such as deaf learners and those with intellectual disabilities, were often excluded.

In 1967, Fiji's first special school, Hilton Special School, was established to provide education for students with severe physical and hearing impairments. Later, more Special Schools were established around the country; to date there are 15 Special Schools and two vocational training centres which are specifically for students with disabilities.

The policy for the education of students with disabilities was first endorsed in 2010 and focussed on the provision of education for learners with disabilities through special schools.

Following a review in 2016, the Special and Inclusive Education Policy and Implementation Plan 2017 – 2020 was developed and signed. This policy guided efforts to embed disability inclusive education approaches, building on the lessons and good practices of five Inclusive Education Demonstration Schools, as well as supporting special schools. Much change occurred under the auspices of this policy, including the introduction of a system for the identification and verification of students with disabilities in FEMIS, and a special and inclusive education grants mechanism targeting children with disabilities.

The Special and Inclusive Education Policy (2022) was developed in close consultation with a broad range of stakeholders in 2021 and 2022. It builds on previous policies and Fiji's strong special and inclusive education foundations, to strengthen opportunities for learners with disabilities such that they may achieve educational outcomes equal to those of their peers.

The Special and Inclusive Education Policy recognises that girls and boys with disabilities experience different barriers to and facilitators of education. Relevant Policy procedures reflect and respond to these differences.

Fiji's Special and Inclusive Education journey was documented during national consultations in 2022 and can be found in Annex 1.

4.0 DEFINITIONS

4.1 MOE is the Ministry of Education.

4.2 FEMIS is Fiji's Education Management Information System, which records and reports student and school data.

¹⁵ Child Protection Policy 2015, 2.8; Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act 2018, Part 6, Article 43; National Gender Policy 2014, 5.14.

- 4.3 Special Education is the practice of educating learners with disabilities in a way that accommodates their individual differences, disabilities, and special needs, in settings that are dedicated to learners with disabilities – commonly known as special schools.
- 4.4 Inclusive Education is the process of focusing on and responding to the diverse needs of all learners, removing barriers impeding quality education, and thereby increasing participation in learning and reducing exclusion within and from education. In the Special and Inclusive Education Policy, Inclusive Education focusses on learners with disabilities to access education within mainstream schools alongside peers without disabilities, in the classrooms they would be attending if they did not have a disability.
- 4.5 Special and Inclusive Education Officer(s) oversee implementation of the Special and Inclusive Education Policy.
- 4.6 Schools are educational institutions which provide ECE, primary, secondary, special and/or technical and vocational education.
- 4.7 Special Schools are schools which provide targeted education exclusively for learners with disabilities who have moderate to extensive educational support needs.
- 4.8 Mainstream schools are general schools, apart from Special Schools, attended by both learners with and without disabilities.
- 4.9 Heads of Schools are personnel employed as School Head in schools.
- 4.10 ECE is Early Childhood Education, early years education available through Early Childhood Education Centres to students aged 3 - 8 years.
- 4.11 Learners with Disabilities are students who experience functional difficulty (see Annex 2). They may have been identified by Teachers / Heads of School and verified by MOE's Special and Inclusive Education Officer(s) or their delegate, as experiencing functional difficulty as recorded in FEMIS' Student Learning Profile.
- 4.12 Student Learning Profile is a tool which captures information to identify functional difficulty type and severity, learning and support needs and (where available) information on clinical diagnosis, treatment and referral services.
- 4.13 Functional difficulty is difficulty in the areas of seeing, hearing, gross motor actions, fine motor actions, speaking, learning, behaviour, attention, socialisation or emotions (see Annex 2 for detailed definitions). Learners identified as experiencing functional difficulties using the Student Learning Profile may be at risk of disability. Information on the level of functional difficulty is combined with information on supports that the student needs, and this is expressed in terms of level of educational support need.
- 4.14 Medical support needs are experienced by learners with a health condition that needs regular and specialised medical care at school.
- 4.15 Educational support needs are experienced by some learners with disabilities where they need more, or different support to what is normally provided in schools to children of the same age. Educational support needs can include personal assistance, access

to a sign language interpreter, adaptations to learning or assessment, or assistive technologies, and are classified as mild, moderate and extensive. The definitions of these are outlined in Annex 3.

- 4.16 Disability is experienced by people who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which in interaction with various barriers may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others.
- 4.17 SIEG is the Special and Inclusive Education Grant, and is provided to schools where eligible learners with disabilities have been identified and verified.
- 4.18 OPDs are Organisations of Persons with Disabilities, non-government organisations which are representative self-advocacy groups of people with disabilities. Historically, OPDs have also been known as Disabled People's Organisations (DPOs).
- 4.19 Reasonable adjustments or accommodations are measures or actions to enable learners with disabilities to participate in education on the same basis as learners without disabilities. These should be applied to learning and assessment processes.
- 4.20 Teacher Aides support Teachers to deliver educational programs to learners with disabilities and may have specialisations such as sign language and/or braille.
- 4.21 Individual Education Plans (IEP) may be developed for a learner with disabilities and provide a plan for provision of teaching and learning adjustments for students. IEPs consider the reasonable adjustments that need to be made to provide students with access to teaching, learning and the school experience. IEPs are developed and their progress reviewed in collaboration with the learner's parents and/or caregivers. For students with moderate or extensive educational support needs an IEP must be developed. Progress against IEP goals may be used to measure learning achievement for some students; this relates to students for whom academic assessments of the mainstream curriculum are insufficient to demonstrate achievement.
- 4.22 Differentiated teaching describes methods Teachers use to extend the knowledge and skills of every student in every class, regardless of their starting point. The objective is to lift the performance of all students, including those who are falling behind and those ahead of year level expectations.
- 4.23 Family-Centred Approaches include engaging with family members to set and work towards goals, make decisions, and provide individualized support to learners with disabilities.
- 4.24 Specialist support services provide supports to learners with disabilities, and advice to their Teachers regarding learning adaptations, and can include:
 - 4.24.1 Orientation and mobility services, which teach learners who are blind or have low vision to navigate their way independently and safely through their environment.
 - 4.24.2 Audiology services, which identify, assess and manage disorders of hearing, balance and other neural systems.

- 4.24.3 Speech therapy, which provides training to help people with speech and language problems to speak more clearly.
- 4.24.4 Occupational therapy, which helps people to overcome or adapt to disabilities in order to improve life and learning skills.
- 4.24.5 Physiotherapy, which maximises quality of life through the prevention, treatment and rehabilitation of people with disabilities related to mobility.
- 4.24.6 Mobility device services, which provide assistive technologies including wheelchairs, white canes, walking sticks and crutches to support people with mobility difficulties.
- 4.24.7 Sign language education, which supports deaf and hard of hearing people to learn to communicate using visual gestures and signs.
- 4.24.8 Braille education, which supports blind people to read using a written language, in which characters are represented by patterns of raised dots that are felt with the fingertips.
- 4.24.9 Educational psychology services, which identify and support people with specific learning difficulties and other disabilities related to learning.
- 4.24.10 Medical services, which are healthcare services that seek to maintain or improve health through assessment, prevention, diagnosis, treatment, recovery or cure of disease, illness, injury, or functional difficulties.
- 4.24.11 Early intervention services, which support babies and young children with disabilities and their families and can have a significant impact on a child's ability to learn new skills and increase success in school and life. May include speech therapy, physiotherapy, and other types of services based on the needs of the child and family.
- 4.25 Counselling is the provision of assistance and guidance in career selection, resolving personal, social or psychological problems and difficulties by a professional to support the well-being and success of students.
- 4.26 Out-of-school learners are primary- and secondary-aged students who are not currently enrolled in primary or secondary school.
- 4.27 Cluster Leader is an appointed school head or Teacher who leads a group of Teachers from schools that are close together within the same locality. The cluster leader facilitates professional development regarding contemporary issues that relate to teaching and learning for Teachers.
- 4.28 Gender equality is equality between women and men. It refers to the equal enjoyment by women, girls, boys and men of rights, opportunities, resources and rewards. A critical aspect of promoting gender equality is the empowerment of women, with a focus on identifying and redressing power imbalances.

- 4.29 Gender norms are ideas about how men and women should be and act. Internalized early in life, gender norms can establish a life cycle of gender socialization and stereotyping.
- 4.30 Intersectionality describes the ways in which inequalities based on gender, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, class and other forms of discrimination “intersect” to create unique dynamics and effects.

5.0 RELEVANT LEGISLATIONS AND AUTHORITIES

- 5.1 Fiji Constitution (2013)
- 5.2 Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act (2018)
- 5.3 Child Welfare Decree (2010)
- 5.4 Fiji National Gender Policy (2014)
- 5.5 MoE Policy on Occupational Health and Safety in MoE Offices and Schools (2007)
- 5.6 MoE Policy on National Curriculum Assessment and Reporting (2011)
- 5.7 MoE Policy on Early Childhood Education (2013)
- 5.8 MoE Education in Emergencies and School Safety Policy (2014)
- 5.9 MoE Policy on Professional Development (2014)
- 5.10 MoE Child Protection in Schools Policy (2015)
- 5.11 MoE Human Resources Policy
- 5.12 MoE National Curriculum Framework (2013)
- 5.13 School Management Handbook (2020)
- 5.14 United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
- 5.15 United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

6.0 PROCEDURES

The following procedures outline specific actions in alignment with the policy priorities listed in section 2.0. Links to relevant legislation and policies are provided in footnotes.

6.1 Promotion of learning environments for all¹⁶

- 6.1.1 MOE shall make education available, accessible, and inclusive to all learners alongside their peers, regardless of disability, in the communities in which they live (see Annex 4).
- 6.1.2 All schools shall promote fair and equitable access to education for all learners with disabilities regardless of their gender, age, social status, economic, geographical location, race, ethnicity, religious background, sexual orientation and gender identity, or intersections between these factors.

6.2 Improving enrolment, attendance and retention of learners with disabilities¹⁷

- 6.2.1 MOE shall enable Schools to make all reasonable efforts to be available and accessible to all learners with disabilities, who, wherever possible, shall enrol in school in their community.
- 6.2.2 Special schools shall enrol learners with moderate to extensive educational support needs, as identified through FEMIS' Student Learning Profile, who are unable to attend a mainstream School.
- 6.2.3 Where determined beneficial by the Head of School and family, special schools shall enrol learners with specific inclusion requirements, such as deaf and/or blind students for limited periods, to learn specific skills including sign language or Braille. Such learners shall transit to a mainstream School when the special school, mainstream school, learner and their family agree that they are ready, provided adequate supports are available.
- 6.2.4 Learners who only experience difficulties with reading, writing and/or numeracy shall remain in mainstream schools.
- 6.2.5 Schools shall enrol learners with disabilities in age-appropriate classes. Exceptions may be made based on the educational support needs of the student. The Social Welfare Department supports children under the age of 3. Corresponding ages for year levels are as follows:
 - 6.2.5.1 3 - 8 years: ECE;
 - 6.2.5.2 6 – 13 years: primary;

¹⁶ Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act 2018, Part 6, Article 43.

¹⁷ Fiji Constitution 2013, Article 31; Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act 2018, Part 6, Article 43.

- 6.2.5.3 14 – 18 years: secondary;
- 6.2.5.4 18 – 30 years: vocational. Exceptions may be made for students aged 16 – 17 years.

- 6.2.6 To optimise educational outcomes for all students including learners with disabilities, MOE and schools shall ensure classes do not exceed relevant student to Teacher ratios.

- 6.2.7 Special and Inclusive Education Officer(s) and schools shall promote education enrolment for learners with disabilities, including through community engagement and the implementation of awareness raising activities, in collaboration with OPDs and families/caregivers of children with disabilities to raise awareness of the opportunities for learners with disabilities to attend school.

- 6.2.8 Teachers and Heads of School shall create awareness of education enrolment opportunities for out-of-school learners with disabilities and their families.

- 6.2.9 Heads of Schools may encourage teachers in special and mainstream schools to support part-time school attendance or learning at home for otherwise out-of-school learners with disabilities, with approval from MOE's Special and Inclusive Education Officer(s).

6.3 Identification and verification of learners with disability¹⁸

- 6.3.1 Guided by the FEMIS Disability Disaggregation Package, teachers shall collaborate with parents / caregivers and relevant staff (e.g., Teacher Aide), drawing on medical and/or child health assessments, to complete the Student Learning Profile in FEMIS for any learner they suspect may experience disability and/or educational support needs, by the end of Term 1 of each school year, or as soon as Teachers become aware of student difficulties.

- 6.3.2 MOE shall distribute a circular at the beginning of each academic year, notifying Heads of Schools of the requirement to complete the Student Learning Profile for any learner they suspect may experience disability and/or educational support needs.

- 6.3.3 By the end of Term 1 of each school year, teachers shall complete the Student Learning Profile for learners verified as experiencing disability in previous years, to enable monitoring of changes in student's disability and educational support needs.

¹⁸ Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act 2018; Part 6, Article 31.
Policy Owner: Ministry of Education

- 6.3.4 Teachers shall update an individual learner's Student Learning Profile data as soon as possible as additional or new information becomes available through teacher observation, medical or specialist assessment and/or services.
- 6.3.5 Teachers shall complete the Student Learning Profile in FEMIS on the student's Disability / Function page, or on paper. Where the Student Learning Profile is completed on paper:
 - 6.3.5.1 the information shall be entered into the student's Function/Disability page in FEMIS by the Teacher or school administrative officer;
 - 6.3.5.2 the paper form shall be filed in the student's confidential file at the school;
 - 6.3.5.3 any medical certificates, assessments or allied health reports will be photocopied and retained with the Student Learning Profile, with parent/guardian consent.
- 6.3.6 Heads of Schools shall review completed Student Learning Profiles within a reasonable time and approve those which have identified learners with disability by ticking the approval box on the student's online Student Learning Profile.
- 6.3.7 Learners with disability shall be visited and reviewed by the Special and Inclusive Education Officer(s), or other district office MOE personnel as agreed with Special and Inclusive Education Officer(s), and their disability status verified in accordance with steps outlined in the FEMIS Disability Disaggregation Package and recorded in FEMIS.
- 6.3.8 Identification and verification shall be completed prior to the end of Term One in order for SIEG eligibility to be considered.
- 6.3.9 Heads of schools will provide access to Student Learning Profile data to parents / guardians on request, to promote a family-centred approach.
- 6.3.10 Where a learner transits to a new school, Heads of schools shall make documentation related to the student's disability available to the new Heads of Schools.
- 6.3.11 Teachers shall check the disability status of newly transited students in FEMIS upon enrolment to ensure that the new school is aware of any educational support needs experienced by new students.

6.4 School accessibility and inclusion assessment¹⁹

- 6.4.1 Guided by the FEMIS Disability Disaggregation Package, the Heads of Schools shall work with the School Management Committee to complete the School Accessibility and Inclusion Form in order to inform the school's annual plan and budget. Accessibility of school infrastructure, including classrooms, water, safe and accessible sanitation and hygiene facilities, including menstrual hygiene facilities, playgrounds and sporting facilities and hostels shall be recorded in FEMIS' Infrastructure/Facilities and WASH sections. Where possible, completion of the assessment shall occur in collaboration with learners with disabilities and their parents/guardians, and OPD representatives.
- 6.4.2 Heads of Schools shall explore and note particular accessibility and inclusion issues for boys and girls with disabilities, noting the importance of safe and accessible classroom and water, sanitation and hygiene facilities for girls.
- 6.4.3 On an annual basis, the Special and Inclusive Education Officer(s), Education Advisor at the district level, or their delegate shall review school inclusion FEMIS data with the Heads of Schools at all schools where students with disabilities are verified and identify accessibility and inclusion issues and solutions.
- 6.4.4 MOE and School efforts to upgrade school facilities outlined in 6.4.1 shall incorporate accessibility provisions outlined in MOE's Minimum Infrastructure Standards and School Accessibility and Inclusion Form to ensure access and use by all, ensuring resilience to climate change and natural disasters. As far as possible, completion of School Accessibility and Inclusion Forms shall occur in collaboration with OPD representatives.

6.5 Enabling Special and Inclusive Schools²⁰

- 6.5.1 Special and Inclusive Education Officer(s) shall approve a list of schools enrolling verified learners with disabilities, which are recommended to receive the SIEG. Special and Inclusive Education Officer(s) shall ensure equitable distribution of the SIEG amongst urban, rural and remote schools and special schools enrolling both girls and boys with disabilities.
- 6.5.2 As per the School Management Handbook, following approval from the Permanent Secretary, Special and Inclusive Education Officer(s) shall inform Heads of Schools from eligible schools and relevant District Offices of the amount of SIEG the school will receive, the timeframe in which it will be

¹⁹ Child Welfare Decree 2010, Part 2, Numbers 4 and 5; Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act 2018, Part 6, Article 43.

²⁰ Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act 2018, Part 6; Article 43; School Management Handbook 2020, Page 15.

received, and its purpose, and an agreement between MOE and schools shall be signed.

- 6.5.3 Learners with disabilities attending mainstream schools who have been verified by the end of Term 1 each year will be considered for the SIEG. However, those who are identified and verified after Term 1 will be considered in the next financial year.
- 6.5.4 As per the School Management Handbook and Financial Management Arrangements in Schools Policy, and in collaboration with relevant Teachers, the School Management Committee and parents of students with disabilities, Heads of schools shall oversee expenditure of the SIEG, which shall be used to support learning and accessibility for students with disabilities.
- 6.5.5 Special and Inclusive Education Officer(s) shall develop and deliver annual training in the SIEG allocation process and eligibility, for Heads of Schools and cluster leaders.
- 6.5.6 Heads of Schools shall update School Management Committees, parents and Teachers regarding how the SIEG shall and has been used.
- 6.5.7 Special and Inclusive Education Officer(s) shall monitor the use of the SIEG.
- 6.5.8 MOE, School Management Committees, Heads of Schools and teachers shall promote gender equality and respect for inclusion and diversity in classrooms and schools.
- 6.5.9 Heads of Schools and Teachers shall provide disability information and education to parents and caregivers of learners with disabilities.
- 6.5.10 Special and Inclusive Education Officer(s) shall collaborate with Ministry of Health and Medical Services to implement Health Promoting Schools activities which promote healthy communities and mitigate Non-Communicable Diseases and obesity.

6.6 Access to specialist support services²¹

- 6.6.1 Based on information in the Student Learning Profile, schools shall identify learners requiring referrals to specialist support services throughout the school year, including prior to or following the completion of the Student Learning Profile.

²¹ Child Welfare Decree 2010, Part 2, Numbers 4 and 5; Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act 2018, Part 6, Article 43.

- 6.6.2 Schools shall refer learners with hearing and speech disabilities to the Ministry of Health and Medical Services, Frank Hilton Organisation or Project Heaven.
- 6.6.3 Schools shall refer children with physical disabilities to the Ministry of Health and Medical Services, Frank Hilton Organisation or Fiji Spinal Injuries Association for assistive devices.
- 6.6.4 Schools shall refer learners with intellectual impairments to the Ministry of Health and Medical Services.
- 6.6.5 Schools shall refer learners with vision impairments to the Ministry of Health and Medical Services and Fiji Society for the Blind for screening and assistive devices.
- 6.6.6 Schools shall refer learners with autism to the Ministry of Health and Medical Services and Pacific Autism Centre.
- 6.6.7 Schools shall refer learners with disabilities to subsidy schemes providing bus fares and free textbooks, female hygiene pads and specialist support services as outlined in “definitions”, MOE’s [Assistive Technology Referral Guide](#), [Disability Services Information and Referral Directory](#), and/or the Special and Inclusive Education Officer(s), as required and available.
- 6.6.8 Schools shall record and monitor referrals and services provided to learners with disabilities in the student’s function / disability page within FEMIS in a timely manner.
- 6.6.9 Schools shall refer learners with disabilities and their parents and caregivers to counselling services and/or specialist support services as required and available.
- 6.6.10 Special and Inclusive Education Officer(s) shall convene a multi-sectoral Special and Inclusive Education Working Group comprised of the Ministry of Health and Medical Services, Ministry of Women, Children and Poverty Alleviation, civil society organisations, OPDs, women’s organisations, parents’ and caregivers’ groups, faith-based organisations, disability service providers and development partners to strengthen and monitor referral systems.

6.7 Delivering the curricula to benefit all learners²²

²² National Curriculum Framework 2013; Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act 2018, Part 6, Article 43.

- 6.7.1 Primary and secondary teachers shall deliver the National Curriculum Framework in schools using MOE's Toolkit for Disability Inclusive Education and Teachers Guide to Disability-Inclusive Education in Fiji to assist in the application of differentiated approaches and provision of educational adjustments to support the differential learning needs for learners with disabilities. This may include use of braille, screen reading software, sign language and other accommodations.
- 6.7.2 ECE Teachers shall deliver the ECE curriculum, using MOE's Teachers Guide to Disability-Inclusive Education in Fiji to assist in the application of differentiated approaches and provision of educational adjustments to support the differential learning needs for learners with disabilities.
- 6.7.3 In line with the National Curriculum Framework, MOE shall ensure learners with disabilities access technical and vocational education and training. Vocational trainers shall use MOE's Teachers Guide to Disability-Inclusive Education in Fiji to assist in the application of differentiated approaches and provision of educational adjustments to support the differential learning needs for learners with disabilities.
- 6.7.4 Teachers shall utilise Individual Education Plans to guide and adapt curriculum delivery to individual learners with disabilities as endorsed by Special and Inclusive Education Officer(s), to support achievement towards educational goals. Teachers shall engage parents and/or caregivers, relevant specialist support services and OPDs in the development and progress review of Individual Education Plans each Term.
- 6.7.5 Schools shall provide a designated space, for example in the library, computer lab or resource room if available, which can be used by teachers to provide additional, specific and/or remedial support for learners with disabilities, for example sign language training, videos or reading support. Learners with disabilities shall spend a greater proportion of their time learning in the classroom, and a smaller proportion of their time learning in the designated space.
- 6.7.6 Educational and informational materials shall be provided in formats that are accessible to all.
- 6.7.7 Special and Inclusive Education Officer(s) shall collaborate with relevant stakeholders to enable access to disability-specific resources to schools that need them, such as braille machines, screen-reading software, and sign language dictionaries.

6.8 Improving early years learning²³

- 6.8.1 MOE shall encourage Heads of Schools to work with school communities to promote school readiness and the enrolment of learners with disabilities.
- 6.8.2 ECE Centres shall encourage parents and caregivers of children aged between 3 and 5 years with disabilities to enrol in ECE.
- 6.8.3 Noting lower numbers of girls with disabilities in schools, ECE Centres shall make specific efforts to encourage parents and caregivers of girls aged between 3 and 5 years with disabilities to enrol in ECE.
- 6.8.4 In exceptional circumstances, ECE Centres shall allow learners aged between 5 and 8 years, with moderate or extensive educational support needs, to continue attending ECE with agreement from Special and Inclusive Education Officer(s). Transit to primary shall occur in line with transit procedures (6.10).
- 6.8.5 MOE shall collaborate with the Ministry of Women, Children & Poverty Alleviation, Ministry of Health and Medical Services, Civil Society Organisations, OPDs, and disability service providers to strengthen early intervention services for very young children with disabilities provided in ECE Centres.

6.9 Assessment for learners with disabilities²⁴

- 6.9.1 Exams and Assessment Officers shall work in collaboration with Special and Inclusive Education Officer(s) and schools to provide reasonable adjustments to enable learners with disabilities to participate in examinations and internal assessments, in accordance with the Policy on External Examinations and Assessment. This shall be revised to provide clear guidelines regarding access to assessment adjustments in all schools.
- 6.9.2 Special and Inclusive Education Officer(s) shall provide schools with guidance on the use of Individual Education Plans to monitor progress and achievement towards learning outcomes.
- 6.9.3 In special schools, students following the national curriculum and/or undertaking other academic work shall be assessed using classroom observations, examinations, and other assessments of the mainstream

²³ Policy on Early Childhood Education 2013, 6.11.2; Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act 2018, Part 6, Article 43.

²⁴ Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act 2018, Part 6, Article 43; Policy on National Curriculum Assessment and Reporting, 7.3.

curriculum, with reasonable adjustments as needed. Students who are not assessed using the national curriculum, or following vocational pathways, may demonstrate learning achievements through progress against their IEP goals and/or competency assessments.

6.10 Transit of learners with disabilities²⁵

- 6.10.1 In preparation for transition between year/school levels or schools, schools shall collaborate with families, caregivers, and relevant specialist support services and OPDs to identify the educational support needs and strengths of learners with disabilities, and guide plans for their transit in line with policy procedures regarding age-appropriate enrolment outlined in 6.2.
- 6.10.2 Special schools shall support learners with disabilities to transit to mainstream Schools at the earliest opportunity, when the learner is ready, and the mainstream school has a supportive learning environment, including adequate teaching / Teacher Aide staff.
- 6.10.3 Heads of Schools shall check the disability and gender status of newly transited students in the Student Learning Profile in FEMIS upon enrolment, to ensure that the new school is aware of any educational support needs.
- 6.10.4 Partnerships between mainstream and special schools shall be supported by District Offices and maintained in order to support the transit of learners with disabilities.

6.11 Enabling disability inclusive education in emergency preparedness, response and recovery²⁶

- 6.11.1 Schools shall consult with learners with disabilities and their families, caregivers and where possible OPDs and women's organisation, to ensure inclusion and gender requirements are met in school safety and disaster management plans, handbooks and activities, including fire and evacuation drills, in line with MOE's Education in Emergencies, School Safety Policy and Policy on Occupational Health and Safety in MOE Offices and schools. Schools shall regularly train Teachers and raise awareness of these amongst the school community.
- 6.11.2 MOE and schools shall assess the requirements of learners with disabilities and ensure that provisions are made to meet these through safer schools, disaster and pandemic preparedness, response and recovery operations, in line with school safety and disaster management plans.

²⁵ Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act 2018, Part 6, Article 43.

²⁶ Child Welfare Decree 2010, Part 2, Numbers 4 and 5; Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act 2018, Part 6, Article 43; Policy on Occupational Health and Safety in MoE Offices and Schools 2007, 6.18; Education in Emergencies and School Safety Policy 2014.

- 6.11.3 MOE and schools shall ensure that educational options are in place for learners with disabilities following unexpected school closures due to climate change, natural disasters or pandemics, and shall communicate regularly with learners with disabilities and parents / caregivers to enable these.
- 6.11.4 Schools shall ensure that emotional and psychological supports are available for learners with disabilities during and after a disaster.
- 6.11.5 MOE shall represent the requirements of learners with disabilities in the National Disaster Management Office's Education Cluster.
- 6.11.6 MOEs efforts to rehabilitate schools following disasters shall incorporate accessibility provisions, to enable access and use by all.

6.12 Enabling inclusive education through a sufficient workforce²⁷

- 6.12.1 Staffing at special and mainstream schools shall be determined according to MOE school staffing guidelines. Schools enrolling learners with moderate and extensive educational support needs (EN2 and EN3) require additional classroom support; this will be determined by Special and Inclusive Education Officer(s).
- 6.12.2 Schools shall engage Teacher Aides to support classes which are attended by learners with extensive educational support needs.
- 6.12.3 MOE shall ensure that schools have appropriately qualified teachers, teacher aides and specialists including sign language interpreters and braillists, including in vocational classes which occur in special schools.
- 6.12.4 MOE shall clearly define the qualifications, roles and responsibilities of teacher aides.
- 6.12.5 MOE shall replace teacher aides who are promoted into Teacher roles.
- 6.12.6 MOE shall explore the engagement and training of volunteers in Schools to address unmet educational support needs amongst learners with disabilities.

6.13 Supporting a fit-for-purpose inclusive education workforce²⁸

²⁷ MoE Human Resources Policy; Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act 2018 Part 6, Article 43.

²⁸ Policy on Professional Development 2014, 2.2; Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act 2018, Part 6, Article 43.

- 6.13.1 Special and Inclusive Education Officer(s) shall work in collaboration with Human Resources to approve transfers of teachers trained in Special and Inclusive Education from Special Schools to mainstream schools.
- 6.13.2 MOE shall collaborate with Teacher Training Institutions to strengthen pre-service training in special and inclusive education for all teacher trainees, including the procedures, tools and resources outlined within the Special and Inclusive Education Policy, incorporating a minimum of one practicum in a mainstream or Special School.
- 6.13.3 MOE shall provide flexible and appropriate annual in-service professional development opportunities, including accredited training and coaching, for Heads of Schools, teachers, teacher aides and District Education Advisors, in special and inclusive education policy, history and progress of special and inclusive education in Fiji, classroom approaches and MOE processes, including the identification and verification of learners with disabilities, use of the SIEG, Teachers Guide to Disability-Inclusive Education in Fiji, individual education plans and individual transit plans to enable the fulfilment of their roles.
- 6.13.4 MOE shall enable access to specialist training, to enable identified teachers to read and teach braille, use sign language and behavioural support approaches.
- 6.13.5 MOE shall collaborate with Teacher Training Institutions, OPDs, specialist support services and other external partners in the delivery of in-service professional development.
- 6.13.6 MOE, School Management Committees and Heads of Schools shall ensure all professional development is conducted in a way that is disability accessible and incorporates special and inclusive education perspectives.
- 6.13.7 MOE shall organise an annual or bi-annual conference on Special and Inclusive Education to enable collaboration among teachers.
- 6.13.8 Heads of School shall organise professional development for school personnel in procedures, tools and resources outlined within the Special and Inclusive Education Policy. This shall include a minimum of annual training, and may also include ongoing coaching, online learning etc.
- 6.13.9 MOE shall support special and mainstream schools to learn from each other through their clusters.
- 6.13.10 MOE shall ensure the education of learners with disabilities in line with the Special and Inclusive Education Policy is incorporated in volunteer, teacher, teacher aide, and Head of School work plans and role descriptions.

6.13.11 MOE shall provide training to counsellors and Child Protection Officers in the provision of counselling and psychosocial support, child protection and behaviour management support for learners with disabilities and their families, particularly those with psychosocial support needs and girls with disabilities in the area of gender-based violence.

6.14 Coordination of special and inclusive education²⁹

6.14.1 MOE shall incorporate actions outlined in the Special and Inclusive Education Policy and Implementation Plan in strategic, corporate and costed operational plans.

6.14.2 MOE shall incorporate provisions for learners with disabilities within its policies, in alignment with the Special and Inclusive Education Policy.

6.14.3 MOE shall provide guidance to Heads of Schools to enable the incorporation of actions outlined in the Special and Inclusive Education Policy and Implementation Plan into school strategic and annual plans.

6.14.4 MOE shall resource Special and Inclusive Education Officer(s) so that they can undertake the roles outlined within this Policy.

6.14.5 Special and Inclusive Education Officer(s) shall monitor the implementation of the Special and Inclusive Education Policy in MOE and school plans, through annual visits made by Special and Inclusive Education Officer(s) or their delegate, and Education Advisors at the District level.

6.14.6 Special and Inclusive Education Officer(s) shall train and coach MOE personnel, District Education Advisors, Heads of Schools and School Management Committees so that they are familiar with their roles and responsibilities regarding implementation of the Special and Inclusive Education Policy.

6.14.7 MOE shall coordinate and undertake research to explore and disseminate challenges and lessons that inform the delivery of special and inclusive education.

6.14.8 Through the National Council for Persons with Disabilities Education Committee, MOE shall facilitate collaboration with relevant Ministries, Teacher Training Institutions, civil society organisations, OPDs and disability service

²⁹ Policy on Professional Development 2014, 2.2; Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act 2018, Part 6, Article 43.

providers to guide and monitor implementation of this policy, including annual progress reviews.

6.15 Child protection for learners with disabilities³⁰

- 6.15.1 MOE shall ensure child protection for learners with disabilities by implementing its Policy on Child Protection in Schools.
- 6.15.2 MOE shall provide annual training in school-wide positive behaviour support to school personnel to enable teachers to take proactive approaches to manage challenging behaviour and advocate the use of best practices/strategies for the management of challenging behaviours positively school wide, in classrooms and at home.
- 6.15.3 MOE and schools will maintain confidentiality of all information about learners with disabilities, including information recorded in FEMIS. Consent will be sought from parents and/or caregivers before referrals to specialist support services are made.
- 6.15.4 Schools shall take preventative measures to address all forms of violence including gender-based violence against learners with disabilities including training, awareness, reporting, provision of support, counselling and referrals.
- 6.15.5 MOE shall coordinate with the Ministry of Women, Children and Poverty Alleviation, Ministry of Health and Medical Services, OPDs and women's organisations to promote safety and prevent violence including gender-based violence and bullying within school communities, including amongst learners, their parents, caregivers and School Management Committees.

7.0 EFFECTIVE DATE.....7th June 2024

8.0 REVIEW DATE.....7th June 2025

9.0 KEY SEARCH WORDS

Special education, inclusive education, special school, mainstream school, disability, disabilities, learner with disabilities, teacher aides, support services, student learning profile.

³⁰ Child Protection Policy 2015, 2.8; Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act 2018, Part 6, Article 43;
National Gender Policy 2014, 5.14

**APPROVED BY THE HONORABLE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION,
HONOURABLE ASERI MASIVOU RADRODRO**



.....
Signature



.....
Date

HON. ASERI MASIVOU RADRODRO

MINISTER FOR EDUCATION

REVIEW DATE: 7th JUNE 2025.

Annexes

Annex 1: Fiji's Special and Inclusive Education history

Fiji's special and inclusive education journey was documented during national consultations in 2022.

- **1960:** Six children with poliomyelitis were admitted to Beatty Keen Ward at the Colonial War Memorial (CWM) Hospital, as a result of a national outbreak of polio.
 - Government of Fiji tasked the Red Cross with establishing formal education for these children.
 - Joint consultation between the MOE and the Australian Government resulted in an agreed need to establish formal education for children with disabilities.
- **1962:** Suva Crippled Children School established by the Fiji Crippled Children Society at the Beatty Keen clinic. MOE appointed Mrs Shiu Prasad as the first special education Teacher.
- **1965:** Ms Diane Clark, a special education Teacher from Australia, became the first Head Teacher at the Suva Crippled Children School.
- **1967:**
 - Mr Frank Hilton was seconded to the Government of Fiji under the Commonwealth Co-operation Scheme and became the Head Teacher at the Suva Crippled Children School.
 - The Ba Branch of Fiji Crippled Children Society was established by a group of Ba citizens who were concerned with the welfare of children with disabilities in the district.
 - The management board for Sunshine Special School was established.
- **1968:** The first class of deaf children started at the Suva Crippled Children School, which later became the Hilton Special School. Mrs Hilton launched a scheme for teaching children with vision impairment, and the Fiji Society for the Blind was formed.
- **Late sixties / early seventies:**
 - Faith-based schools opened their doors to enrol students with disabilities, including Marcellin primary, Marist Suva St, Marist Convent Primary in Lami, and Dilkusha Boys School.
 - The first two secondary schools that enrolled children with disabilities included Marist Brothers High School and Saint Joseph Secondary.
- **1970:** Lautoka School for Special Education was officially registered under the name Lautoka Crippled Children's School.
- **1972:** Fiji School for the Blind was established, with boarding facilities so that children around Fiji could benefit. Sixteen special schools were formed, replicating this model to meet the educational needs of children with disabilities in Fiji.
- **1973:**
 - Blind and vision impaired children started at a unit at the Suva Crippled Children

- School (now Hilton School) and later moved to its current site.
- Sigatoka School for Special Education began.
- **1975:** The Ba Crippled Children's Society established a Deaf Unit at Khalsa Primary School with a group of 9 students.
- **1982:**
 - Ra School for Special Education was established, previously called Ra Special Unit.
 - The Fiji Crippled Children's Society Nausori branch was established.
- **1983:** Nausori Special School was established.
- **1985:**
 - Deaf students began attending mainstream schools for vocational training. This program was cancelled the following year due to limited sign language interpreters.
 - The Early Intervention Centre, now at Hilton School, was established.
- **1989:** Nadi Centre for Special Education was established.
- **1992:** Nasavusavu Centre for Special Education was established.
- **1997:** Building on efforts undertaken in 1985, a pilot program was implemented in which a small number of deaf students were integrated into a mainstream primary school. They were withdrawn in 1999 due to lack of Teacher assistance.
- **2000:** Marist Champagnat Institute was established to cater for the learning needs of students who failed their Year 8 exams or struggled with reading and maths in secondary education.
- **2002:** Six deaf students were enrolled at Nadi SSKMC (Nadi Sangam College).
- **2004:** A small number of deaf students were enrolled at Gospel High School; this continues today.
- **2010:** The first Special and Inclusive Education Policy was endorsed by the Minister of Education.
- **2012:** The Australian Government-funded Access to Quality Education Program (AQEP) began, supporting five Inclusive Education Demonstration Schools in collaboration with MOE.
- **2015:** The Toolkit for Disability Inclusive Education in Fiji, containing the Disability Inclusive Education Handbook for Teachers, was produced and disseminated to all schools.
- **2016:**
 - The Student Learning Profile was embedded in the Fiji Education Management Policy Owner: Ministry of Education

Information System (FEMIS) Disability Module, and schools began using this to identify and record students with disabilities.

- The 2010 Special and Inclusive Education Policy was revised and launched with an Implementation Plan.
- **2017:** AQEP concluded, with 69 mainstream and 17 special schools enrolling and supporting students with disabilities.
- **2018:** The Australian Government-funded Fiji Education Program began, implemented by the Fiji Program Support Facility.
- **2021:**
 - Analysis of disability data collected by schools and verified by MOE using the Student Learning Profile was automated within FEMIS.
 - FEMIS disability data began being used by MOE to identify the eligibility of schools for the Special and Inclusive Education Grant (SIEG).
 - SIE review of the National Curriculum Framework undertaken.
- **2022:**
 - According to FEMIS, as of July there are 2295 students with disabilities (836 girls) enrolled in 384 mainstream and 17 special schools.
 - MFAT initiated a program to strengthen Teacher capacity in special and inclusive education.

Annex 2: Definitions of functions³¹

1. **Seeing:** The ability of the eyes to see, for example, peoples' faces, objects, writing or pictures on the blackboard or in books, even when wearing spectacles / glasses (if used).
2. **Hearing:** The ability of the ears to hear sounds like peoples' voices or music, even when using hearing aids (if used).
3. **Gross motor actions:** The ability to walk or climb stairs even when using a mobility aid such as wheelchair, crutches or walker, or receiving assistance for moving (if used).
4. **Fine motor actions:** The ability to use hands and fingers for detailed tasks, such as writing, drawing, controlling pencil, picking up coins or other small object, or fastening clothes.
5. **Speaking:** The ability to be understood when speaking in the language that is most customary (preferred) for the child.
6. **Learning:** The ability to learn, including undertaking school tasks, such as literacy and numeracy, as well as more general intellectual functions, such as remembering, and learning everyday tasks including those at home, to the same extent as children from the general population of the same age. The Student Learning Profile distinguishes between generalised and specific learning difficulties, to differentiate between students with intellectual disabilities such as Down Syndrome and those with specific learning disabilities such as dyslexia.
7. **Managing behaviour / Attention / Socialisation:** The child's ability to: manage his / her own behaviour; focus and concentrate; accept changes to routine; and socialize and form relationships, to the same extent as children from the general population of the same age.
8. **Managing emotions:** Ability to manage feelings such as sadness, depression, worries and/or anxiety.

³¹ MEHA (2017) [FEMIS Disability Disaggregation Package: Guidelines and forms](#)
Policy Owner: Ministry of Education

Annex 3: Categorisation of educational support needs (EN)

The Student Learning Profile identifies students' level of difficulty performing various functions. Students may experience no difficulty, a little difficulty, a lot of difficulty, or may not be able to perform the function at all. The exception is the area of "Emotions", which are measured in terms of frequency of the student appearing very sad, depressed and/or worried and anxious.

Educational support needs (EN) are classified into three levels.

- Mild = EN1
- Moderate = EN2
- Extensive = EN3

Students are given an **overarching classification of educational support need level (EN1, EN2 or EN3)**, based on the formulae below. Formulae are required for two reasons:

- (i) functional difficulties in different areas (e.g., seeing, hearing) result in different levels of educational support needs; and,
- (ii) students may have difficulties in more than one functional area.

Formulae: A child with:

- Mild educational support needs has: $\geq 1 \times \text{EN1}$
- Moderate educational support needs have: $1 \times \text{EN2}$
- Extensive educational support needs has either $\geq 1 \times \text{EN3}$ or $\geq 4 \times \text{EN2}$

Categorisation of functional difficulties across these levels is provided in the table below.

Educational support needs classification, by area of difficulty

Difficulty Area	EN1	EN2	EN3
Seeing		<p>LOT OF DIFFICULTY SEEING:</p> <p>The child's vision cannot be corrected to normal vision even by wearing glasses, but the child has some vision. Or glasses or contact lenses may overcome the difficulty but the child does not have access to glasses.</p>	<p>CANNOT DO AT ALL:</p> <p>A child is considered legally blind when s/he cannot see at 6 metres what a child with normal vision can see at 60 metres, or if her field of vision is less than 20° in diameter (a person with normal vision can see 180°).</p> <p>AND/OR</p> <p>Use of Braille machine AND/OR white cane</p>
Hearing		<p>LOT OF DIFFICULTY:</p> <p>Child needs to wear hearing aids to understand normal speech. For some children, even if wearing hearing aids, they will not understand normal speech. Without hearing aids, the child will</p>	<p>CANNOT DO AT ALL:</p> <p>Children with profound hearing loss will always have difficulty understanding conversational speech and would not detect even the loudest shout without hearing aids. Many children with</p>

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		<p>need to rely on lip reading or sign language.</p> <p>AND/OR</p> <p>Use of hearing aid AND/OR 4d=2 (a little more assistance in communication)</p>	<p>profound hearing loss will need to use sign language.</p> <p>AND/OR</p> <p>Q4d=3 (much more assistance in communication)</p>
Gross motor		<p>LOT OF DIFFICULTY:</p> <p>Walking is limited even with crutches or walker; requires support to climb stairs or cannot climb stairs.</p> <p>Or uses a wheelchair independently. May be able to propel independently (push the wheels herself) in a wheelchair.</p> <p>Or, has a lot of difficulty moving between sitting and standing.</p>	<p>CANNOT DO AT ALL:</p> <p>Has difficulty with voluntary control of movement. Cannot sit, stand, or walk independently even with mobility aids.</p> <p>Cannot propel (push the wheels herself) in a wheelchair.</p>
Fine motor		<p>LOT OF DIFFICULTY:</p> <p>A lot of difficulty grasping, picking up, holding, or using small objects with hands and fingers; for example, holding and using pen, spoon, doing buttons or zipper. May need assistance or a special aid to help with gripping objects.</p>	<p>CANNOT DO AT ALL:</p> <p>Child is basically unable to use hands and fingers to do fine motor actions. Assistance or a special aid for gripping objects is required to assist with eating and other fine motor tasks.</p>
Speaking	<p>A LITTLE DIFFICULTY:</p> <p>Mild difficulty speaking or being understood while speaking; can include mild stuttering (interruption of the flow of speech, prolongation of sounds or words).</p>	<p>LOT OF DIFFICULTY:</p> <p>Speaks only a little. Or is very difficult to understand. Or mostly avoids speaking. Or seems to struggle to get words out. Or uses only simple sentences (less than 4 words). Or mixes up the order of words in a sentence. Or, has a very limited vocabulary compared to other children. Or, has significant stuttering.</p>	<p>CANNOT DO AT ALL:</p> <p>Does not speak at all (mute). If the child uses sign language but does not speak, this is the correct category to select for question 3e.</p>
Learning (intellectual disability)	<p>A LITTLE DIFFICULTY: Needs some assistance but can work independently.</p>	<p>LOT OF DIFFICULTY:</p> <p>Has a lot of difficulty with learning academic skills and concepts; or, with learning to do practical tasks such as</p>	<p>CANNOT DO AT ALL:</p> <p>Not able to understand what is taught.</p>

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		unpacking schoolbag, putting books and pencils in desk, doing jobs or duties, home responsibilities, including self-care (toileting, dressing, eating).	AND 4e=3 (needs much more assistance with cognitive / learning activities)
Learning (specific, i.e., dyslexia)	<p>A LITTLE DIFFICULTY:</p> <p>Mild difficulties with literacy or numeracy activities. Child appears to be improving in these areas.</p> <p>Or significant difficulties in these areas when compared to children of the same age, however unlikely to be caused by factors related to the student's brain. The causes may be because the child has a history of limited access to quality education, lack of learning support at home, neglect, moving from home to home, poverty, a health problem, high absenteeism or because the language of teaching is not yet well known to the child.</p>	<p>LOT OF DIFFICULTY:</p> <p>Child is at risk of, or has been diagnosed with, dyslexia (or another Specific Learning Disability).</p> <p>Child shows clear abilities in some areas; alongside weaknesses in areas that show as: poor handwriting with many errors and words tried several times; spelling a word different way in one piece of writing; no expression in reading; poor comprehension; fails to recognise familiar words; slow speed of processing information; poor concentration; exhaustion from extra effort required to concentrate; difficulty following instructions.</p>	N/A
Behaviour / attention / socialisation	<p>A LITTLE DIFFICULTY:</p> <p>Difficulty making eye contact with the teacher.</p> <p>Or needs a little more time to adjust when routines change.</p> <p>Compared to children the same age, may display mildly higher levels of aggressive, destructive, or self-injurious behaviour, anger, inability to handle frustration, being disruptive or oppositional (hostile and unco-operative).</p>	<p>A LOT OF DIFFICULTY:</p> <p>Requires adult assistance with some behaviour and social activities but can do some things independently.</p> <p>A lot of difficulties with friendships and interpersonal relationships; difficulty staying on a task; overly dependent on routines.</p> <p>Short attention span; impulsive or hyperactive; poor attention to detail; difficulty organising tasks or following instructions; frequently loses books, homework, toys, other items; excessive talking, fidgeting or inability to remain seated in appropriate situations.</p>	<p>CANNOT DO AT ALL:</p> <p>Needs frequent adult assistance. May display actions such as: repetitive behaviours such as rocking, waving, or flapping; intensely focused on inappropriate items; obsesses over particular topics of conversation; unable to maintain friendships; becomes fixated on certain sensory experiences, e.g., lights or textures.</p> <p>Compared to children the same age, may display much higher levels of aggressive, destructive, or self-injurious behaviour, anger, inability to handle frustration, being disruptive or oppositional (hostile and unco-operative).</p>

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		Compared to children the same age, may display moderately higher levels of aggressive, destructive, or self-injurious behaviour, anger, inability to handle frustration, being disruptive or oppositional (hostile and unco-operative).	
Emotions	DAILY. Child seems very sad, depressed and/or feels very worried and anxious every day.		

Annex 4: Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act 2018 (Act No. 4 of 2018)**Section 43: Education**

(1) All persons with disabilities have the right to an education.

(2) Pursuant to subsection (1), all persons with disabilities have a right to education without discrimination and on the basis of equal opportunity, and such education shall be inclusive and lifelong.

(3) In accordance with subsection (2), such a right shall ensure—

- (a) the full development of human potential and sense of dignity and self-worth, and the strengthening of respect for human rights, fundamental freedoms and human diversity;
- (b) the development by persons with disabilities of their personality, talents and creativity, as well as their mental and physical abilities, to their fullest potential;
- (c) the enabling of persons with disabilities to participate effectively in a free society;
- (d) that persons with disabilities are not excluded from the general education system, including tertiary education on the basis of disability, and that children with disabilities are not excluded from free and compulsory primary education, or from secondary education, or from tertiary education on the basis of disability;
- (e) that persons with disabilities can access an inclusive, quality and free primary education and secondary education on an equal basis with others in the communities in which they live;
- (f) that reasonable accommodation of the individual's requirements is provided;
- (g) persons with disabilities receive the support required, within the general education system, to facilitate their effective education; and
- (h) effective individualised support measures are provided in environments that maximise academic and social development, consistent with the goal of full inclusion.

(4) Persons with disabilities have the right to learn life and social development skills to facilitate their full and equal participation in education and as members of the community including—

- (a) the learning of Braille, alternative script, augmentative and alternative modes, means and formats of communication and orientation and mobility skills, and facilitating peer support and mentoring;
- (b) the learning of sign language and the promotion of the linguistic identity of the deaf community;
- (c) ensuring that the education of persons, and in particular children, who are blind, deaf or deaf and blind, is delivered in the most appropriate languages and modes and means of communication for the individual, and in environments which maximise academic and social development;
- (d) to access general tertiary education, vocational training, adult education and lifelong learning without discrimination and on an equal basis with others; and
- (e) the right to reasonable accommodation while pursuing education.

Annex 5: Roles and responsibilities of key personnel

Special and inclusive education requires commitment and action from personnel across the education sector. Key roles and responsibilities for personnel is described as follows.

MOE

- MOE shall make education available, accessible and inclusive to all learners alongside their peers, regardless of disability, in the communities in which they live
- MOE shall enable Schools to make all reasonable efforts to be available and accessible to all learners with disabilities, who, wherever possible, shall enrol in School in their community.
- To optimise educational outcomes for all students including learners with disabilities, MOE and Schools shall ensure classes do not exceed relevant student to Teacher ratios.
- MOE shall distribute a circular at the beginning of each academic year, notifying Heads of Schools of the requirement to complete the Student Learning Profile for any learner they suspect may experience disability and/or educational support needs.
- MOE, School Management Committees, School Heads and Teachers shall promote gender equality and respect for inclusion and diversity in classrooms and schools.
- In line with the National Curriculum Framework, MOE shall ensure learners with disabilities access technical and vocational education and training. Vocational trainers shall use MOE's Teachers Guide to Disability-Inclusive Education in Fiji to assist in the application of differentiated approaches and provision of educational adjustments to support the differential learning needs for learners with disabilities.
- MOE shall encourage Heads of Schools to work with school communities to promote school readiness and the enrolment of learners with disabilities.
- MOE shall collaborate with the Ministry of Women, Children & Poverty Alleviation, Ministry of Health and Medical Services, Civil Society Organisations, OPDs, and disability service providers to strengthen early intervention services for very young children with disabilities provided in ECE Centres.
- MOE and Schools shall ensure that educational options are in place for learners with disabilities following unexpected school closures due to climate change, natural disasters or pandemics, and shall communicate regularly with learners with disabilities and parents / caregivers to enable these.
- MOE shall incorporate actions outlined in the Special and Inclusive Education Policy and Implementation Plan in strategic, corporate and costed operational plans.
- MOE shall incorporate provisions for learners with disabilities within its policies, in alignment with the Special and Inclusive Education Policy.
- MOE shall provide guidance to Heads of School to enable the incorporation of actions outlined in the Special and Inclusive Education Policy and Implementation Plan into school strategic and annual plans.
- MOE shall resource Special and Inclusive Education Officer(s) such that they can undertake the roles outlined within this Policy.
- MOE shall coordinate and undertake research to explore and disseminate challenges and lessons that inform the delivery of special and inclusive education.

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- Through the National Council for Persons with Disabilities Education Committee, MOE shall facilitate collaboration with relevant Ministries, Teacher Training Institutions, civil society organisations, OPDs and disability service providers to guide and monitor implementation of this policy, including annual progress reviews.
- MOE shall ensure child protection for learners with disabilities by implementing its Policy on Child Protection in Schools.
- MOE and Schools will maintain confidentiality of all information about learners with disabilities, including information recorded in FEMIS. Consent will be sought from parents and/or caregivers before referrals to specialist support services are made.
- MOE shall coordinate with the Ministry of Women, Children and Poverty Alleviation, Ministry of Health and Medical Services, OPDs and women's organisations to promote safety and prevent violence including gender-based violence and bullying within school communities, including amongst learners, their parents, caregivers and School Management Committees.

MOE Human Resources

- Staffing at special and mainstream schools shall be determined according to MOE school staffing guidelines. Schools enrolling learners with moderate and extensive educational support needs (EN2 and EN3) require additional classroom support; this will be determined by Special and Inclusive Education Officer(s).
- MOE will ensure that schools have appropriately qualified Teachers, Teacher Aides and specialists including sign language interpreters and braillists, including in vocational classes which occur in Special Schools.
- MOE shall clearly define the qualifications, roles and responsibilities of Teacher Aides.
- MOE shall replace Teacher Aides who are promoted into Teacher roles.
- MOE shall explore the engagement and training of volunteers in Schools to address unmet educational support needs amongst learners with disabilities.
- Special and Inclusive Education Officer(s) shall work in collaboration with Human Resources to approve transfers of Teachers trained in Special and Inclusive Education from Special Schools to mainstream schools.
- MOE shall ensure the education of learners with disabilities in line with the Special and Inclusive Education Policy is incorporated in Volunteer, Teacher, Teacher Aide, and Head of School work plans and role descriptions.

MOE Learning and Development

- MOE shall collaborate with Teacher Training Institutions to strengthen pre-service training in special and inclusive education for all Teacher trainees, including the procedures, tools and resources outlined within the Special and Inclusive Education Policy, incorporating a minimum of one practicum in a mainstream or Special School.
- MOE shall provide flexible and appropriate annual in-service professional development opportunities, including accredited training and coaching, for Heads of School, Teachers, Teacher Aides and District Education Advisors, in special and inclusive education policy, history and progress of special and inclusive education in Fiji, classroom approaches and MOE processes,

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including the identification and verification of learners with disabilities, use of the SIEG, Teachers Guide to Disability-Inclusive Education in Fiji, individual education plans and individual transit plans to enable the fulfilment of their roles.

- MOE shall enable access to specialist training, to enable identified Teachers to read and teach braille, use sign language and behavioural support approaches.
- MOE shall collaborate with Teacher Training Institutions, OPDs, specialist support services and other external partners in the delivery of in-service professional development.
- MOE, School Management Committees and Heads of School shall ensure all professional development is conducted in a way that is disability accessible and incorporates special and inclusive education perspectives.
- MOE shall organise an annual or bi-annual conference on Special and Inclusive Education to enable collaboration among Teachers.
- MOE shall support special and mainstream schools to learn from each other through their clusters.
- MOE shall provide training to counsellors and child protection officers in the provision of counselling and psychosocial support, child protection and behaviour management support for learners with disabilities and their families, particularly those with psychosocial support needs and girls with disabilities in the area of gender-based violence.
- MOE shall provide annual training in school-wide positive behaviour support to School personnel to enable Teachers to take proactive approaches to manage challenging behaviour and advocate the use of best practices/strategies for the management of challenging behaviours positively school wide, in classrooms and at home.

MOE Examinations and Assessment

- Exams and Assessment Officer(s) shall work in collaboration with Special and Inclusive Education Officer(s) and Schools to provide reasonable adjustments to enable learners with disabilities to participate in examinations and internal assessments, in accordance with the Policy on External Examinations and Assessment. This shall be revised to provide clear guidelines regarding access to assessment adjustments in all Schools.

MOE Asset Management

- MOE and School efforts to upgrade school facilities outlined in 6.4.1 shall incorporate accessibility provisions outlined in MOE's Minimum Infrastructure Standards and School Accessibility and Inclusion Form to ensure access and use by all, ensuring resilience to climate change and natural disasters. As far as possible, completion of School Accessibility and Inclusion Forms shall occur in collaboration with OPD representatives.
- MOE and Schools shall assess the requirements of learners with disabilities and ensure that provisions are made to meet these through safer schools, disaster and pandemic preparedness, response and recovery operations, in line with school safety and disaster management plans.
- MOE shall represent the requirements of learners with disabilities in the National Disaster Management Office's Education Cluster.
- MOEs efforts to rehabilitate Schools following disasters shall incorporate accessibility provisions, to enable access and use by all.

MOE Special and Inclusive Education- Principal Education Officers (1 new establishment)

- Special and Inclusive Education Officer(s) and Schools shall promote education enrolment for learners with disabilities, including through community engagement and the implementation of awareness raising activities, in collaboration with OPDs and families/caregivers of children with disabilities to raise awareness of the opportunities for learners with disabilities to attend School.
- Learners with disability shall be visited and reviewed by the Special and Inclusive Education Officer(s), or other district office MOE personnel as agreed with Special and Inclusive Education Officer(s), and their disability status verified in accordance with steps outlined in the FEMIS Disability Disaggregation Package and recorded in FEMIS.
- On an annual basis, Special and Inclusive Education Officer(s), Education Advisors at the district level, or their delegate shall review school inclusion FEMIS data with the Head of School at all schools where students with disabilities are verified and identify accessibility and inclusion issues and solutions.
- Special and Inclusive Education Officer(s) shall approve a list of Schools enrolling verified learners with disabilities, which are recommended to receive the SIEG. Special and Inclusive Education Officer(s) shall ensure equitable distribution of the SIEG amongst urban, rural and remote Schools and Special Schools enrolling both girls and boys with disabilities.
- As per the School Management Handbook, following approval from the Permanent Secretary, Special and Inclusive Education Officer(s) shall inform Heads of Schools from eligible Schools and relevant District Offices of the amount of SIEG the school will receive, the timeframe in which it will be received, and its purpose, and an agreement between MOE and Schools shall be signed.
- Special and Inclusive Education Officer(s) shall develop and deliver annual training in the SIEG allocation process and eligibility, for Heads of Schools and cluster leaders.
- Special and Inclusive Education Officer(s) shall monitor the use of the SIEG.
- Special and Inclusive Education Officer(s) shall collaborate with Ministry of Health and Medical Services to implement Health Promoting Schools activities which promote healthy communities and mitigate Non-Communicable Diseases and obesity.
- Special and Inclusive Education Officer(s) shall convene a multi-sectoral Special and Inclusive Education Working Group comprised of the Ministry of Health and Medical Services, Ministry of Women, Children and Poverty Alleviation, civil society organisations, OPDs, women's organisations, parents' and caregivers' groups, faith-based organisations, disability service providers and development partners to strengthen and monitor referral systems.
- Special and Inclusive Education Officer(s) shall collaborate with relevant stakeholders to enable access to disability-specific resources to schools that need them, such as braille machines, screen-reading software, and sign language dictionaries.
- Special and Inclusive Education Officer(s) shall provide Schools with guidance on the use of Individual Education Plans to monitor progress and achievement towards learning outcomes.
- Special and Inclusive Education Officer(s) shall work in collaboration with Human Resources to approve transfers of Teachers trained in Special and Inclusive Education from Special Schools to mainstream schools.

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- Special and Inclusive Education Officer(s) shall monitor the implementation of the Special and Inclusive Education Policy in MOE and School plans, through annual visits made by Special and Inclusive Education Officer(s) or their delegate, and Education Advisors at the District level.
- Special and Inclusive Education Officer(s) shall train and coach MOE personnel, District Education Advisors, Heads of School and School Management Committees so that they are familiar with their roles and responsibilities regarding implementation of the Special and Inclusive Education Policy.

District Education Offices (2 new establishments)

- Learners with disability shall be visited and reviewed by Special and Inclusive Education Officer(s), or other district office MOE personnel as agreed with Special and Inclusive Education Officer(s), and their disability status verified in accordance with steps outlined in the FEMIS Disability Disaggregation Package and recorded in FEMIS.
- On an annual basis, Special and Inclusive Education Officer(s), Education Advisors at the district level, or their delegate shall review school inclusion FEMIS data with the Head of School at all schools where students with disabilities are verified and identify accessibility and inclusion issues and solutions.
- As per the School Management Handbook, following approval from the Permanent Secretary, Special and Inclusive Education Officer(s) shall inform Heads of Schools from eligible Schools and relevant District Offices of the amount of SIEG the school will receive, the timeframe in which it will be received, and its purpose, and an agreement between MOE and Schools shall be signed.
- Partnerships between mainstream and Special Schools shall be supported by District Offices and maintained in order to support the transit of learners with disabilities.

Schools

- All schools shall promote fair and equitable access to education for all learners with disabilities regardless of their gender, age, social status, economic, geographical location, race, ethnicity, religious background, sexual orientation and gender identity, or intersections between these factors.
- Schools shall enrol learners with disabilities in age-appropriate classes. Exceptions may be made based on the educational support needs of the student. Corresponding ages for year levels are as follows:
 - 3 - 8 years: ECE;
 - 6 – 13 years: primary;
 - 14 – 18 years: secondary;
 - 18 – 30 years: vocational. Exceptions may be made for students aged 16 – 17 years.
- To optimise educational outcomes for all students including learners with disabilities, MOE and Schools shall ensure classes do not exceed relevant student to Teacher ratios.
- Special and Inclusive Education Officer(s) and Schools shall promote education enrolment for learners with disabilities, including through community engagement and the implementation of awareness raising activities, in collaboration with OPDs and families of children with disabilities to raise awareness of the opportunities for learners with disabilities to attend School.

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- MOE and School efforts to upgrade school facilities outlined in 6.4.1 shall incorporate accessibility provisions outlined in MOE's Minimum Infrastructure Standards and School Accessibility and Inclusion Form to ensure access and use by all, ensuring resilience to climate change and natural disasters. As far as possible, completion of School Accessibility and Inclusion Forms shall occur in collaboration with OPD representatives.
- Based on information in the Student Learning Profile, Schools shall identify learners requiring referrals to specialist support services throughout the school year, including prior to or following the completion of the Student Learning Profile.
- Schools shall refer learners with hearing and speech disabilities to the Ministry of Health and Medical Services and to Frank Hilton Organisation or Project Heaven.
- Schools shall refer learners with physical disabilities to the Ministry of Health and Medical Services, Frank Hilton Organisation or Fiji Spinal Injuries Association for assessment and assistive devices.
- Schools shall refer learners with intellectual impairments to the Ministry of Health and Medical Services.
- Schools shall refer learners with vision impairments to the Ministry of Health and Medical Services and Fiji Society for the Blind for screening and assistive devices.
- Schools shall refer learners with autism to the Ministry of Health and Medical Services and Pacific Autism Centre.
- Schools shall refer learners with disabilities requiring health and medical services to the Ministry of Health and Medical Services and Frank Hilton Organisation.
- Schools shall refer learners with disabilities to subsidy schemes providing bus fares and free textbooks, female hygiene pads and specialist support services as outlined in "definitions", MOE's Assistive Technology Referral Guide, Disability Services Information and Referral Directory, and/or the Special and Inclusive Education Officer(s), as required and available.
- Schools shall record and monitor referrals and services provided to learners with disabilities in the student's function / disability page within FEMIS in a timely manner.
- Schools shall refer learners with disabilities and their parents and caregivers to counselling services and/or specialist support services as required and available.
- Schools shall provide a designated space, for example in the library, computer lab or resource room if available, which can be used by Teachers to provide additional, specific and/or remedial support for learners with disabilities, for example sign language training, videos or reading support. Learners with disabilities shall spend a greater proportion of their time learning in the classroom, and a smaller proportion of their time learning in the designated space.
- Educational and informational materials shall be provided in formats that are accessible to all.
- In preparation for transit between year/school levels or Schools, Schools shall collaborate with families, caregivers, and relevant specialist support services and OPDs to identify the educational support needs and strengths of learners with disabilities, and guide plans for their transit in line with policy procedures regarding age-appropriate enrolment outlined in 6.2.
- Schools shall consult with learners with disabilities and their families, caregivers and where possible OPDs and women's organisations, to ensure inclusion and gender requirements are met in school safety and disaster management plans, handbooks and activities, including fire and evacuation drills, in line with MOE's Education in Emergencies, School Safety Policy and Policy on

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Occupational Health and Safety in MOE Offices and Schools. Schools shall regularly train Teachers and raise awareness of these amongst the school community.

- MOE and Schools shall assess the requirements of learners with disabilities and ensure that provisions are made to meet these through safer schools, disaster and pandemic preparedness, response and recovery operations, in line with school safety and disaster management plans.
- MOE and Schools shall ensure that educational options are in place for learners with disabilities following unexpected school closures due to climate change, natural disasters or pandemics, and shall communicate regularly with learners with disabilities and parents / caregivers to enable these.
- Schools shall ensure that emotional and psychological supports are available for learners with disabilities during and after a disaster.
- MOE and Schools will maintain confidentiality of all information about learners with disabilities, including information recorded in FEMIS. Consent will be sought from parents and/or caregivers before referrals to specialist support services are made.
- Schools shall take preventative measures to address all forms of violence including gender-based violence against learners with disabilities including training, awareness, reporting, and provision of support, counselling and referrals.

ECE Centres (in addition to roles outlined in 'Schools')

- ECE Centres shall encourage parents and caregivers of children aged between 3 and 5 years with disabilities to enrol in ECE.
- Noting lower numbers of girls with disabilities in schools, ECE Centres shall make specific efforts to encourage parents and caregivers of girls aged between 3 and 5 years with disabilities to enrol in ECE.
- In exceptional circumstances, ECE Centres shall allow learners aged between 5 and 8 years, with moderate or extensive educational support needs, to continue attending ECE with agreement from Special and Inclusive Education Officer(s). Transit to primary shall occur in line with transit procedures (6.10).

Special Schools (in addition to roles outlined in 'Schools')

- Special Schools shall enrol learners with moderate to extensive educational support needs, as identified through FEMIS' Student Learning Profile, who are unable to attend a mainstream School.
- Where determined beneficial by the Head of School and family, Special Schools shall enrol learners with specific inclusion requirements, such as deaf and/or blind students for limited periods, to learn specific skills including sign language or Braille. Such learners shall transit to a mainstream School when the Special School, mainstream School, learner and their family agree that they are ready, provided adequate supports are available.
- In Special Schools, students following the national curriculum and/or undertaking other academic work shall be assessed using classroom observations, examinations, and other assessments of the mainstream curriculum, with reasonable adjustments as needed. Students who are not assessed using the national curriculum, or following vocational pathways, may demonstrate learning achievements through progress against their IEP goals and/or competency assessments.

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- Special Schools shall support learners with disabilities to transit to mainstream Schools at the earliest opportunity, when the learner is ready, and the mainstream school has a supportive learning environment, including adequate teaching / Teacher Aide staff.

Heads of School

- Teachers and Heads of School shall create awareness of education enrolment opportunities for out-of-school learners with disabilities and their families.
- Heads of School may encourage Teachers in special and mainstream schools to support part-time school attendance or learning at home for otherwise out-of-school learners with disabilities, with approval from MOE's Special and Inclusive Education Officer(s).
- Heads of Schools shall review completed Student Learning Profiles within a reasonable time and approve those which have identified learners with disability by ticking the approval box on the student's online Student Learning Profile.
- Heads of School will provide access to Student Learning Profile data to parents / guardians on request, to promote a family-centred approach.
- Where a learner transits to a new school, Heads of School shall make documentation related to the student's disability available to the new Head of School.
- Guided by the FEMIS Disability Disaggregation Package, the Head of School shall work with the School Management Committee to complete the School Accessibility and Inclusion Form in order to inform the School's annual plan and budget. Accessibility of school infrastructure including classrooms, water, safe and accessible sanitation and hygiene facilities including menstrual hygiene facilities, playgrounds and sporting facilities and hostels shall be recorded in FEMIS' Infrastructure/Facilities and WASH sections. Where possible, completion of the assessment shall occur in collaboration with learners with disabilities and their parents/guardians, and OPD representatives.
- Heads of School shall explore and note particular accessibility and inclusion issues for boys and girls with disabilities, noting the importance of safe and accessible classroom and water, sanitation and hygiene facilities for girls.
- On an annual basis, Special and Inclusive Education Officer(s), Education Advisors at the district level, or their delegate shall review school inclusion FEMIS data with the Head of School at all schools where students with disabilities are verified and identify accessibility and inclusion issues and solutions.
- As per the School Management Handbook and Financial Management Arrangements in Schools Policy, and in collaboration with relevant Teachers, the School Management Committee and parents of students with disabilities, Heads of School shall oversee expenditure of the SIEG, which shall be used to support learning and accessibility for students with disabilities.
- Heads of School shall update School Management Committees, parents and Teachers regarding how the SIEG shall and has been used.
- MOE, School Management Committees, School Heads and Teachers shall promote gender equality and respect for inclusion and diversity in classrooms and schools.
- Heads of School and Teachers shall provide disability information and education to parents and caregivers of learners with disabilities.

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- Heads of Schools shall check the disability and gender status of newly transited students in the Student Learning Profile in FEMIS upon enrolment, to ensure that the new School is aware of any educational support needs.
- MOE, School Management Committees and Heads of School shall ensure all professional development is conducted in a way that is disability accessible and incorporates special and inclusive education perspectives.
- Heads of School shall organise professional development for School personnel in procedures, tools and resources outlined within the Special and Inclusive Education Policy. This shall include a minimum of annual training, and may also include ongoing coaching, online learning etc.

Teachers

- Teachers and Heads of School shall create awareness of education enrolment opportunities for out-of-school learners with disabilities and their families.
- Guided by the FEMIS Disability Disaggregation Package, Teachers shall collaborate with parents / caregivers and relevant staff (e.g., Teacher Aide), drawing on medical and/or child health assessments, to complete the Student Learning Profile in FEMIS for any learner they suspect may experience disability and/or educational support needs, by the end of Term 1 of each school year, or as soon as Teachers become aware of student difficulties.
- By the end of Term 1 of each school year, Teachers shall complete the Student Learning Profile for learners verified as experiencing disability in previous years, to enable monitoring of changes in student's disability and educational support needs.
- Teachers shall update an individual learner's Student Learning Profile data as soon as possible as additional or new information becomes available through teacher observation, medical or specialist assessment and/or services.
- Teachers shall complete the Student Learning Profile in FEMIS on the student's Disability / Function page, or on paper. Where the Student Learning Profile is completed on paper:
 - The information shall be entered into the student's Function/Disability page in FEMIS by the Teacher or school administrative officer;
 - The paper form shall be filed in the student's confidential file at the school;
 - Any medical certificates, assessments or allied health reports will be photocopied and retained with the Student Learning Profile, with parent/guardian consent.
- Teachers shall check the disability status of newly transited students in FEMIS upon enrolment, to ensure that the new school is aware of any educational support needs experienced by new students.
- MOE, School Management Committees, School Heads and Teachers shall promote gender equality and respect for inclusion and diversity in classrooms and schools.
- Heads of School and Teachers shall provide disability information and education to parents and caregivers of learners with disabilities.
- Primary and secondary Teachers shall deliver the National Curriculum Framework in Schools using MOE's Toolkit for Disability Inclusive Education and Teachers Guide to Disability-Inclusive Education in Fiji to assist in the application of differentiated approaches and provision of educational adjustments to support the differential learning needs for learners with disabilities.

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This may include use of braille, screen reading software, sign language and other accommodations.

- ECE Teachers shall deliver the ECE curriculum, using MOE's Teachers Guide to Disability-Inclusive Education in Fiji to assist in the application of differentiated approaches and provision of educational adjustments to support the differential learning needs for learners with disabilities.
- Teachers shall utilise Individual Education Plans to guide and adapt curriculum delivery to individual learners with disabilities as endorsed by Special and Inclusive Education Officer(s), to support achievement towards educational goals. Teachers shall engage parents and/or caregivers, relevant specialist support services and OPDs in the development and progress review of Individual Education Plans each Term.

School Management Committees

- Guided by the FEMIS Disability Disaggregation Package, the Head of School shall work with the School Management Committee to complete the School Accessibility and Inclusion Form in order to inform the School's annual plan and budget. Accessibility of school infrastructure including classrooms, water, safe and accessible sanitation and hygiene facilities including menstrual hygiene facilities, playgrounds and sporting facilities and hostels shall be recorded in FEMIS' Infrastructure/Facilities and WASH sections. Where possible, completion of the assessment shall occur in collaboration with learners with disabilities and their parents/guardians, and OPD representatives.
- As per the School Management Handbook and Financial Management Arrangements in Schools Policy, and in collaboration with relevant Teachers, the School Management Committee and parents of students with disabilities, Heads of School shall oversee expenditure of the SIEG, which shall be used to support learning and accessibility for students with disabilities.
- Heads of School shall update School Management Committees, parents and Teachers regarding how the SIEG shall and has been used.
- MOE, School Management Committees, School Heads and Teachers shall promote gender equality and respect for inclusion and diversity in classrooms and schools.
- MOE, School Management Committees and Heads of School shall ensure all professional development is conducted in a way that is disability accessible and incorporates special and inclusive education perspectives.

ADMINISTRATION / CLERK (1 establishment)

MOE Special and Inclusive Education

- As per the School Management Handbook, following approval from the Permanent Secretary, Special and Inclusive Education Officer(s) shall inform Heads of Schools from eligible Schools and relevant District Offices of the amount of SIEG the school will receive, the timeframe in which it will be received, and its purpose, and an agreement between MOE and Schools shall be signed.

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- Special and Inclusive Education Officer(s) shall develop and deliver annual training in the SIEG allocation process and eligibility, for Heads of Schools and cluster leaders.
- Special and Inclusive Education Officer(s) shall monitor the use of the SIEG.

SIE Coordinators (School-Based – 4 new establishments)

- Provide direct support to students in a classroom by delivering instruction and ensuring learning through a variety of co-teaching models and strategies.
- Develop Individual Transition Plan in alignment from the Individual Education Plan (IEP) for students; maintaining compliance with mainstream regulations regarding the education, transition and training of students with disabilities.
- Ensure appropriate accommodations to the curriculum, lessons and learning environment. Instruction may be provided within the regular classroom setting, resource setting, and/or small classroom setting.
- Design engaging classroom activities and differentiated lessons so that all students may access the curriculum and benefit from the educational experience.
- Formally and informally assess the student learning (rather than relying solely on standardized curriculum) to create a comprehensive learning program.
- Set appropriate expectations that are suitable for the students to transit.
- Develop assessment measures. Assessments may be differentiated based on each individual student plan. This may require developing alternative assessments.
- Work collaboratively with Head of School, teaching staff and district level teams and other staff, especially transitional support team, to plan, share student work and ensure that instruction is aligned with identified curriculum and standards.
- Build a partnership with families, encouraging their active participation in students' learning
- Perform other duties as assigned by the Head of School and Head of Special & Inclusive Education Unit.

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Special and Inclusive Education Policy Implementation Plan 2024 - 2027

The Special and Inclusive Education (SIE) Policy Implementation Plan consists of priority actions, responsibilities, timeframes and financial and human resources implications to enable implementation of the SIE Policy. Each priority action is mapped against the relevant policy procedure.

The SIE Policy Implementation Plan presents priority actions in line with 5 themes:

1. Development and implementation of school level strategies to support special and inclusive education.
2. Ministry of Education (MoE) leadership to promote a special and inclusive education system.
3. Ensuring relevant and responsive curriculum delivery and assessment.
4. Strengthening the special and inclusive education workforce.
5. Improving access to specialist supports to maximise the benefits of special and inclusive education.

Each of the 5 themes is accompanied by a monitoring plan.

1. Development and implementation of school level strategies to support special and inclusive education.

Priority Action	Policy Procedure	Responsibility – leading	Responsibility – support	2024	2025	2026	2027	Estimated Costs
1.1 Undertake school-level awareness on the rights of children with disabilities to attend school in line with the Disability Act 2018, to address stigma.	6.1	MoE SIE Districts HoS SMC	Media OPDs	X	X	X	X	\$0 (This can be conducted during school assembly)
1.2 Celebrate International Day for People with Disabilities at MoE and schools.	6.1	MoE SIE Districts HoS	SMC Media OPDs	X	X	X	X	\$0 per year (school-based activity) MoE press release
1.3 Develop a Standard Operating Procedure for schools to enable school-level implementation of the SIE Policy and disseminate to special and mainstream schools.	6.1	MoE SIE Districts HoS		X				\$0
1.4 Use the FEMIS disability module to identify students with disabilities, and undertake verification processes, annually.	6.3	Teachers HoS Districts MoE – SIE, IT		x	X	X	X	\$20 000 per year
<p>Justification: The allocation will allow District Education Officers to conduct school visits to verify students who have been identified as at risk of disability. Verification allows students with disabilities to be supported and receive the necessary support from the Ministry of Education via their schools. The Eastern Division Education office will receive extra funds due to the geographical location of their schools. Amount is \$2000 per district except for Eastern Office which will receive \$4000 per year. Position descriptions of District Education Advisors and Officers should include SIE roles and responsibilities as outlined in annex 2 of the SIE Policy, to ensure that students with disabilities in the districts are supported.</p>								

1.5 Establish support groups for parents of learners with disabilities.	6.5	HoS Teachers	Parents	X	X	X	X	\$0
1.6 Develop annual school-level plans which incorporate SIE Policy and Implementation Plan priorities.	6.5	SMCs HoS	MoE SIE	X	X	X	X	\$0
1.7 Strengthen classroom inclusion by initiating a buddy system for students with disabilities.	6.5	HoS Teachers	MoE – SIE Parents	X	X	X	X	\$0
1.8 Develop school disaster management plans which incorporate provisions for learners with disabilities.	6.11	SMC HoS	Teachers Parents	X	X	X	X	\$0
1.9 Incorporate the SIE roles of School Management Committees in the next review of the School Management Handbook.	6.13	MoE SIE, Finance						\$0

Monitoring Plan

Indicator	Means of Verification
Number and proportion of verified learners with disabilities enrolled in school (disaggregated by type of school, location, sex and impairment)	FEMIS
Number and proportion of verified learners with disabilities completing primary school (disaggregated by type of school, location, sex and impairment)	FEMIS
Number and proportion of annual school-level plans which incorporate SIE Policy and Implementation Plan priorities.	
Number and proportion of school disaster management plans which incorporate provisions for learners with disabilities.	

2. Ministry of Education leadership to promote a special and inclusive education system.

Priority Action	Policy Procedure	Responsibility – leading	Responsibility– support	2024	2025	2026	2027	Estimated Cost
2.1 Update the MoE website with new SIE tools and resources and keep the SIE dashboard up to date.	6.1	MoE SIE, IT		X	X	X	X	\$0
2.2 Finalise an SOP for the identification and verification of learners with disabilities, and provision of the SIEG, including timelines and narration of the funds once deposited.	6.3	MoE SIE, IT, Finance, Policy, Primary, Secondary, Districts		X				\$0
2.3 Develop a standard operating procedure regarding the disbursement, use, monitoring and reporting of the SIEG by special and inclusive schools; review and update the mandated proportional allocation of the SIEG in the school management handbook and communicate this to District Offices and HoS.	6.5 6.13	MoE SIE, Finance Districts HoS		X				\$0
2.4 Develop a standardised process to guide the procurement of assistive devices and communicate this to special and mainstream schools (in collaboration with OPDs and FHO).	6.6	MoE SIE, Finance Districts HoS	MHMS Service Providers OPDs		X			\$0

2.5 Revise MoE policies to ensure they mainstream the SIE Policy, with a focus on those in development. ¹	6.14	MoE SIE, Policy,	MoE Primary, Secondary, EAU	X	X	X	X	\$0
2.6 Undertake a cost analysis to support the establishment of an SIE Department. ²	6.14	MoE SIE	Ministry of Economy OPDs					\$0
2.7 Establish an SIE Section with its own Director, 2 Education officers to support the SIE SEO and an admin officer to support administration of SIEG, budgeting and other work.	6.14	MoE SIE		X	X	X		\$317,420 (see table below)
2.8 Establish an SIE dashboard incorporating FEMIS disability and SIEG data, and relevant research.	6.14	MoE SIE, IT, Finance	TTIs SPC – EQAP	X				\$0
2.9 Incorporate FEMIS disability data in MoE annual reports.	6.14	MoE SIE, Policy		X	X	X		\$0
2.10 Undertake an annual progress review of implementation of the SIE Policy, submitting a report to the Permanent Secretary and EdCom.	6.14	MoE SIE	Heads of School MoE Parents EdCom members ³	X	X	X		\$1000 Per year
Justification: Funding can be added to SIE SEO administration costs for monitoring and training purposes.								

¹ For example: the Early Childhood Education Policy, the Enrolment Policy, the Assessment Policy, and the Child Protection Policy.

² This would incorporate: SIE officers at district level; incorporating SIE at ECE, primary, secondary, vocational and tertiary levels; increased budget allocation for departmental operations; the SIEG; special and mainstream school costs relating to maintenance, fuel, and transport in rural and remote areas.

³ This includes: Specialist Support Services, OPDs, MHMS, MWCS and Development Partners.

Explanation of estimated cost of activity 2.7:

Special and Inclusive Education Proposed Section - Additional Staff and Cost			
(Incremental recruitment from 2024 – 2027)			
Title	Number of Officers	Scale	Total
Principal Education Officer	1	\$55,000.00	\$55,000.00
SIE Education Officers	2	\$28,605.00	\$57,210.00
Executive Clerical Officer	1	\$19,000.00	\$19,000.00
Total			\$131,210.00

Monitoring Plan

Indicator	Means of Verification
MoE website updated at least annually with the latest special and inclusive education policies, procedures, tools and resources.	MoE website
Number and proportion of schools with verified disability data in FEMIS (disaggregated by type and location of school).	FEMIS
Number and proportion of schools with accessible infrastructure (disaggregated by type and location of school). By 2026, SIE department established with personnel in each division.	FEMIS FESA
Annual increase in MoE's allocation of budget to the SIEG.	MoE Budget
Annual progress review of the SIE Policy Implementation completed and presented to EdCom.	Reports
Number of reviewed MoE policies which incorporate procedures from the SIE Policy.	Reviewed policies

3. Ensuring relevant and responsive curriculum delivery and assessment

Priority Action	Policy Procedure	Responsibility – leading	Responsibility – support	2024	2025	2026	2027	Estimated cost
3.1 Develop an FHEC-accredited curriculum for vocational subjects offered at FVTTC.	6.7		APTC					\$0
3.2 Strengthen and fund gender-equitable delivery of technical and vocational education and training to learners with disabilities in urban, rural and maritime locations by mainstream training providers.	6.7	MoE SIE, CAS, TEST	FHEC	X	X	X	X	MoE to work with donor partners
Justification: There is a need to improve access to technical and vocational programs for girls. The Ministry of Education could employ more TVET teachers and work with development partners to fund infrastructure and equipment. A feasibility study and appropriate approvals must be undertaken and granted before staffing can be confirmed.								
3.3 Review and redevelop holistic IEP templates to guide curriculum delivery and assessment, and train teachers in their use.	6.7 6.9 6.13	MoE SIE, CAS Teachers	HoS Parents School Communities		X			\$0
3.4 Develop a bank of IEP goals which can be used by teachers to support educational outcomes for learners with disabilities.	6.7 6.9	MoE SIE, CAS, EAU			X			\$0

3.5	Develop a procedure / guidance on the use of IEPs, including guidelines for which learners with disabilities require them ⁴ .	6.7 6.9	MoE SIE, EAU				X			\$0
3.6	Establish a process for recognising the achievements of learners with extensive learning needs according to their IEPs, including certification / accreditation. Utilise this as an alternative to national exams for these students in years 8 and 12. ⁵	6.9	MoE SIE, CAS, EAU				X			\$0
3.7	Make school textbooks and resources available in formats that are accessible for all learners.	6.7	MoE CAS, SIE			X	X	X		Development partners
3.8	Develop a sign language dictionary and disseminate to all special and mainstream schools.	6.7	MoE SIE FAD				X			Development partners
3.9	Strengthen availability of e-learning and/or other remote learning approaches to learners with disabilities who need it, including during or after disasters.	6.7 6.11	MoE CAS, SIE			X	X	X		\$0

⁴ Consider and clarify whether IEPs are required for learners with mild, moderate or extensive educational support needs.

⁵ This could utilise formative and/or competency-based assessments,

3.10	Develop Teaching Guides to support the differentiated delivery of the National Curriculum Framework by teachers and disseminate to special and mainstream schools.	6.7 6.13	MoE CAS, SIE	HoS Teachers	X	X	X	X	Fiji Program Support Facility
3.11	Review the assessment policy so that provisions for reasonable accommodations and formative assessment of learning are clear.	6.9 6.13	MoE EAU, SIE	HoS Teachers		X			\$0
3.12	Develop a Standard Operating Procedure to guide the application of reasonable accommodations and formative assessment of learning and disseminate to special and mainstream schools.	6.9	MoE EAU, SIE			X			\$0
3.13	Develop Individual Transition Plans and guidelines to support learners with disabilities when they transit between special and mainstream schools, and between ECE, primary, secondary, tertiary, vocational education and work. ⁶	6.10 6.13	MoE SIE, CAS Teachers	HoS Parents School Communities		X			\$5000 for consultation (One off)
Justification: Consultations will need to be conducted with special and inclusive schools before the documents can be finalised.									

⁶ Individual Transit Plans should link to Individual Education Plans.

Monitoring Plan

Indicator	Means of Verification
Number and proportion of learners with disabilities who complete assessments using reasonable accommodation or formative approaches (disaggregated by type of school, location, sex and impairment).	FEMIS
Number and proportion of learners with disabilities who transit to higher year levels ((disaggregated by type of school, location, sex and impairment).	FEMIS
Number of teaching guides provided to special and mainstream schools.	Dissemination records

4. Strengthening the special and inclusive education workforce

Priority Action	Policy Procedure	Responsibility – leading	Responsibility – support	2024	2025	2026	2027	Estimated cost
4.1 Develop and implement a school staffing formula system to ensure adequate number of teachers and classroom assistants/teacher aides per student based on educational support needs in special and inclusive schools.	6.12	MoE HR, SIE	HoS	X				\$0
4.2 Utilise staffing formula to fund additional teachers and teacher aides in special and inclusive schools.	6.12	MoE HR, SIE	HoS	X	X	X	X	To be determined after 4.1 is completed
Justification: There is a need for MoE to employ more teaching staff. There are currently 2006 students who have been identified to have disabilities in 490 schools throughout Fiji.								
4.3 Develop and implement a competency-based monitoring and evaluation framework to assess and improve the performance of teachers in special and inclusive school classrooms and inform pre-service training.	6.12	MoE HR, SIE HoS	Teachers TTIs MFAT ⁷	X	X	X	X	\$0
4.4 Develop Role Descriptions and complete Job Evaluations to support the establishment of positions to support special and inclusive schools, including qualified classroom assistants/Teacher Aides, sign language teachers and brailleists.	6.12	MoE HR, SIE	HoS MoE HR	X				\$0

⁷ MFAT is supporting the project *Building Teaching Capacity in Inclusive Education in the Pacific* in Fiji.

4.5	Develop and implement a process for recording SIE training undertaken by teachers and Heads of Schools.	6.12	MoE HR, SIE			X				\$0
4.6	Meet with Teacher Training Institutes to support establishment of compulsory pre-service training to strengthen ECE, primary, secondary, vocational and special school teacher skills and confidence. ⁸	6.13	MoE L&D, SIE TTIs	FHEC		X	X	X		\$0
4.7	Develop e-learning modules regarding SIE policies, procedures and approaches, targeted for Heads of School, teachers, classroom assistant/teacher aides and School Management Committees. ⁹	6.13	MoE L&D, SIE		X	X	X	X		\$0
4.8	Provide annual in-service SIE training for special and inclusive school teachers and Heads of School.	6.13	MoE SIE Curriculum Officer	Head of Schools		x	x	x		\$50 000 per year
Justification: The SIE Curriculum Officer will be conducting annual training due to high turnover of special school staff and transfer of new graduates and mainstream teachers to special schools.										
4.9	Establish regular opportunities for peer-learning between special and	6.13	MoE L&D, SIE HoS	Teachers		X	X	X	X	\$0

⁸ Priority topics include: awareness-raising regarding relevant policies and procedures, a practicum in special schools, awareness of the rights of person with disabilities, appropriate disability language, differentiated approaches to curriculum delivery, use of Individual Education Plans and Individual Transit Plans, completion of the SLP in FEMIS and use of FEMIS data, SIEG utilisation and reporting.

⁹ Priority topics include: use, reporting and monitoring of the SIEG, introduction to disabilities, rights-based approaches to education for learners with disabilities, awareness of the rights of students with disabilities, strategies to promote gender equality for students with disabilities, the SIE Policy, differentiation – how to adapt the curriculum in order to teach children with diverse disabilities, IEPs to support learning and transition, behaviour management, use of the Student Learning Profile, Disability-inclusive Education Toolkit and Handbook.

mainstream schools in geographical clusters.											(This will occur during cluster meetings)
4.10 Conduct school visits to monitor teaching and learning approaches used to deliver the curriculum.	6.13	MoE SIE	Heads of Schools	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	\$5000 a year
Justification: The SIE Curriculum Officer will be visiting schools to monitor teaching and learning for students with disabilities.											
4.11 Establish SIE coordinator positions in special schools to support and coach surrounding inclusive schools (within clusters).	6.13	MoE, SIE		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	\$380,000 per year (total salary for 4 extra staff)
Justification: There is a need to employ an additional staff member (an SIE Coordinator) in each of the special schools (total 17). The SIE Coordinator position is different from that of a classroom assistant or teacher aide, and will:											
i) work with surrounding mainstream schools that enrol students with disabilities. In this way, progress of students transitioning from special schools to mainstream schools will be monitored and intervention provided.											
ii) support verification of children with disabilities in surrounding/ cluster mainstream schools.											
iii) coach teachers on inclusive teaching practices and classroom management.											
Note: Below is the breakdown of schools that currently enroll students with disabilities in each district. There will be a need to increase the number of SIE coordinators in the future to ensure that enough support is provided.											
	District	Number of Schools									
	Ba/Tavua	47									
	Cakaudrove	41									
	Eastern	33									
	Lautoka/Yasawa/Nadi	78									
	Macuata/Bua	79									
	Nadroga/Navosa	45									
	Nausori	53									
	Ra	28									
	Suva	86									
4.12 Collaborate with relevant service providers and Teacher Training	6.13	MoE L&D, SIE	FAD FSB	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	

Institutions to provide professional development / in-service training in specialist skills for teachers and classroom teachers/ teacher aides of learners with extensive support requirements as required. ¹⁰			FHO MHMS Project Heaven				\$10 000 a year
Justification: Funding allocated will be used to co-fund some of these training to support service providers such as Frank Hilton Organisation and Fiji Society for the Blind.							

Monitoring Plan

Indicator	Means of Verification
School staffing formula in place and utilised each year to determine teacher and classroom assistants/teacher aides required in special and mainstream schools.	FEMIS
Number and proportion of learners with disabilities who complete assessments using reasonable accommodation or formative approaches (disaggregated by type of school, location, sex and impairment).	FEMIS
Number and proportion of learners with disabilities who transit to higher year levels ((disaggregated by type of school, location, sex and impairment).	FEMIS

¹⁰ For example, sign language, braille, JAWS, provision of care and support, lifting, seating, wheelchair use, transfers from a seat to a wheelchair.

5. Improving access to specialist supports to maximise the benefits of special and inclusive education

Priority Action	Policy Procedure	Responsibility – leading	Responsibility – support	2024	2025	2026	2027	Estimated cost
5.1 Develop and implement guidelines for the provision of information in accessible formats to learners with disabilities and disseminate to special and mainstream schools.	6.4	MoE SIE	FSB			X		\$0
5.2 Establish a Memorandum of Understanding between MoE, MHMS, MWCAP, OPDs and specialist support services to strengthen school-level access and referrals to health specialists for learners with disabilities. ¹¹	6.6	MoE SIE	MHMS MWCAP OPDs Specialist support services	X				\$2000
Justification: Funding will be used for consultation costs.								
5.3 Update referral pathway documents and provide to special and mainstream schools.	6.6	MoE SIE		X	X	X	X	\$0
5.4 Develop guidance for Heads of Schools on assistive technologies, their use and availability in Fiji, and communicate to schools.	6.6	MoE – SIE	MHMS OPDs Field Ready			X		\$0

¹¹ Improved referral pathways seek to promote early childhood development, early detection of disability, early intervention, provision of assistive technologies and specialist therapy support for learners with disabilities and their parents / caregivers, and advocacy for tertiary courses in specialist areas. These include Occupational Therapy, Speech Therapy, Physiotherapy, Educational Psychology etc.

5.5	Collaborate with the social welfare department to support the establishment of early intervention services for children with disabilities.	6.8	Department of Social Welfare MoE SIE, ECE		X	X	X	\$0
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Monitoring Plan

Indicator		Means of Verification
Number of learners with disabilities who receive relevant specialist support services (disaggregated by type of school, location, sex and impairment).		FEMIS
Number of schools that have made referrals to specialist support services (disaggregated by type of school, location, sex and impairment).		FEMIS