

Aspect Comprehensive Approach for Education: Building Evidence Informed Practice

The Aspect Comprehensive Approach for Education (ACAE) is an evidence informed approach which has been developed over 45 years of providing education programs for students on the autism spectrum. The focus is on teaching functional skills related to the autism specific areas of learning (social communication, social interaction, behaviour and sensory processing) which are delivered through the NSW BOSTES curriculum.

Ten elements make up the ACAE (individualised planning, curriculum, environmental supports, structured teaching, positive behaviour support, mental health and wellbeing, transition and inclusion, learning support team, family involvement and support, and professional learning).

Aspect schools use the ACAE as a basis for their work. The ACAE Continuous Improvement Review process which includes a self-review component, development of a School Continuous Improvement Plan and an audit, ensures Aspect Schools embed excellence in implementing the approach and a consistent approach across schools.

The Autism Spectrum Disorder Evaluative Education (ASDEE) model provides a framework for trialling new interventions or devices which have some evidence in Aspect schools. If new interventions trialled prove to have a positive outcome for students on the autism spectrum these interventions are embedded in the approach through the development of model classrooms and Aspect wide professional learning. Current model classrooms include; iPad, Pivotal Response Training (PRT), Secret Agent Society, Language Acquisition through Motor Planning (LAMP) and TEACCH.

A measure of success is the transition data which shows 97% of students who transition from Aspect schools remain in the new setting for their education.

This presentation will highlight the key features of this approach, the distinct elements and practical implementation within Aspect Schools. Educators, other professionals and parents will leave this presentation with an understanding of this sound approach to supporting students on the autism spectrum to engage in school life and improve outcomes across environments to maximise success.