

## School Enrolment Policy

### Policy Summary – Key Points

- NextSense is dedicated to providing high-quality, individualised education for students with sensory impairments. NextSense School operates specialised programs to support, deaf, hard-of-hearing, blind, low-vision, and deafblind students, ensuring they receive tailored instruction suited to their sensory needs.
- While upholding the principles of inclusion, NextSense prioritises accessibility by offering adapted learning resources, multi-sensory communication strategies, and individualised support. This ensures students can fully participate in their education, empowering them to achieve their potential.
- NextSense Schools fosters students' academic, social and emotional growth by enhancing their communication skills, cognitive abilities, and independence. Through specialised programs, students gain confidence, cultural awareness, and essential life skills to navigate both educational and social environments successfully.

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## Part 1 – Purpose

This policy provides directives for consistent and fair enrolment based on selection criteria that are consistent with the NextSense mission and governing principles. Its purpose is to identify the criteria and procedure for admission to NextSense School, to ensure we provide high quality educational programs to children whose educational needs are related to a sensory impairment.

## Part 2 – Scope

This Policy applies to NextSense Schools.

## Part 3 – Policy

NextSense is committed to providing a high-quality education to children and young people with a sensory disability. While acknowledging and supporting the principle of inclusion for students in keeping with the Disability Discrimination Act and Standards 2005, our mission is to provide specialist education to students with a **significant** level of sensory impairment, who are expected to require individualised support.

The School will meet with parent/carer(s) and the student before offering enrolment.

Parents/carer(s) must disclose all relevant information about their child's disability and additional needs. Failure to disclose at the time, or during enrolment, may result in an offer being revoked.

- Non-Australian citizens can be admitted as full fee-paying students if they meet the general entry criteria and visa requirements.
- NextSense requires an immunisation certificate on enrolment and a record of each child's immunisation status will be recorded. Copies of immunisation certificates will be retained for a minimum of three years after the child has ceased to attend the school.
- Continued enrolment at the school depends on the student and the parent/carer(s) observing all behavioural codes of conduct and other requirements of the school.
- In all cases, a duty of care to students is paramount. NextSense reserves the right not to enrol students if a threat to the school's capacity to meet its duty of care to students and staff is considered.

NextSense school operates as three (3) separate programs each program separately registered with the NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA). This includes the following:

1. Sign Bilingual Program
2. Spoken Language Program

### 3. Blind and Deaf Blind Program

## Sign Bilingual Program

Specialist Auslan bilingual program for deaf and hard of hearing students who meet the criteria for enrolment.

### Enrolment Criteria:

- *Sensory Disability* – permanent hearing loss with threshold of three frequency average of 30dB or greater in the better ear.
- *Cognitive Ability* – No greater than mild to moderate cognitive intellectual impairment subject to appropriate assessment/s to determine reasonable adjustments for the child to the specialist instruction offered by the Sign Bilingual Program.
- *Children of Deaf Adult (CODA)*.

**Specialist Instruction:** Specialist Auslan bilingual program.

Through the Auslan bilingual program, students typically will have a better understanding of how language works, which improves their ability to communicate effectively. They also develop a greater awareness of non-verbal communication, enabling them to develop higher levels of social adaptability, making them more comfortable in diverse social settings and enabling them to bridge gaps between different groups.

Attending an Auslan bilingual school offers a range of benefits for students, both academically and socially.

Key advantages include:

#### 1. Enhanced Communication Skills

- **Bilingual Proficiency:** Students can develop language skills in both Auslan and English, allowing them to communicate in diverse settings.
- **Early Language Acquisition:** Early Auslan exposure fosters greater fluency, which is an important skill for effective communication within the Deaf community.

#### 2. Cultural Competence

- **Cultural Awareness:** Students will gain a strong understanding about Deaf culture and history, encouraging a sense of identity and belonging.
- **Community Connection:** Students will become a part of the Deaf community, understanding its norms, values and social practices.

#### 3. Academic Growth

- **Improved Cognitive Skills:** Bilingual education can lead to stronger cognitive abilities, such as problem-solving, multitasking, and memory.
- **Academic Achievement:** Due to the diverse learning strategies and enhanced cognitive skills that result from the bilingual program, students often achieve better results in academic subjects.

#### 4. Social and Emotional Development

- **Inclusion and Confidence:** When students are included in a supportive, understanding environment, they experience a stronger sense of inclusion and self-confidence.

- Peer Relationships: The bilingual program helps build relationships between peers who share similar experiences.

## Spoken Language Program

Specialist Spoken language program for hard of hearing students who meet the criteria for enrolment.

### Enrolment Criteria:

- *Sensory Disability* – Permanent hearing loss with threshold of three frequency average of 30dB or greater in the better ear, taking into consideration the nature of the hearing loss, level of audiological management, and type of assistive listening device e.g. bone conductor/in ear hearing aid(s)/behind the ear hearing aid(s)/cochlear implant(s)/FM etc.
- *Cognitive Ability* – No greater than mild to moderate cognitive intellectual impairment subject to appropriate assessment/s to determine reasonable adjustments for the child to the special instruction offered by the Spoken Language Program.
- *Children of Deaf Adult (CODA)*.

**Specialist Instruction:** Specialist spoken language program for hard of hearing students.

NextSense provides a language rich school program which not only strengthens students' academic abilities but also helps them grow into confident, communicative, and thoughtful individuals. It supports cognitive development, enhances social and emotional well-being, and prepares students for success in an increasingly complex and interconnected world

Accessing the spoken language program for hard-of-hearing students will support language acquisition in several key areas:

1. Improved Listening and Comprehension Skills
  - Auditory Processing: Students will enhance their ability to interpret and make sense of spoken language through specialised auditory exercises and practice.
  - Contextual Understanding: Improved listening skills enable students to understand context and nuances of conversation, leading to stronger overall comprehension.
2. Enhanced Spoken Language Proficiency
  - Articulation and Pronunciation: The program helps students refine their pronunciation and articulation, allowing for them to communicate more clearly and confidently.
  - Vocabulary Expansion: Students will acquire a broader range of words and develop the ability to use language more naturally across different situations.
3. Effective Communication in Diverse Settings
  - Integration in Mainstream Environments: Strong spoken language skills empower students to engage more effectively in both educational and social environments.
  - Social Interactions: Enhanced verbal abilities support more fluid and meaningful interactions with peers, fostering better relationships.

## Blind and Deafblind Program

Specialist program for students with vision loss/blindness or who are deafblind and meet the criteria for enrolment.

**Enrolment Criteria:**

- *Sensory Disability (Vision)*
  - Permanent vision loss of 6/48 or less after correction in the better eye; or
  - Vision loss of a vision acuity of 6/24 or less after correction in the better eye with an associated diagnosis of a progressive vision condition diagnosed by an ophthalmologist in Australia; or
  - A visual field of 10 degrees or less.
- *Sensory Disability (Hearing)* – Permanent or progressive hearing loss with threshold of three frequency average of 30dB or greater in the better ear.
- *Cognitive Ability* – No greater than mild to moderate cognitive intellectual impairment subject to appropriate assessment/s to determine reasonable adjustments for the child to the special instruction offered by the Deaf and Deafblind program.

In cases of dual sensory impairment, NextSense may determine that a lesser level of one impairment satisfies prescribed eligibility requirements subject to appropriate assessment/s.

**Specialist Instruction:** Specialist program for students with vision impairment/blindness or who are deafblind.

Accessing a specialist program for Blind and Deafblind students offers numerous benefits that address their unique needs and support their overall development.

The program can support these students by providing them with:

1. Enhanced Communication Skills
  - **Multi-Sensory Communication:** The program equips students with tailored strategies to communicate effectively using different sensory methods, such as tactile communication, braille, and specialised assistive technologies.
  - **Personalised Techniques:** Each student receives personalised guidance to develop communication techniques that align with their sensory needs.
2. Improved Access to Education
  - **Adapted Learning Materials:** Educational materials are adapted to support Blind and Deafblind students, incorporating tools like braille books, audio-based content, and tactile learning aids.
  - **Inclusive Curriculum:** The curriculum is designed to be fully accessible, enabling students to engage in academic activities and reach their learning objectives without barriers.
3. Enhanced Orientation and Mobility
  - **Navigational Skills:** Students acquire vital skills to move safely and confidently within their surroundings.
  - **Environment Awareness:** Instruction in environmental navigation helps students interact with and manage their physical spaces effectively.

## Part 4 - Policy Status and Details

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## Part 5 - Revision History

Revision Date	Version No.	Amendment Type	Change	Reference Sections
NA	1.0	NA	Update to existing document	N/A
NA	2.0	NA	Administration only change: rebrand	NA
NA	3.0	NA	Updated to include the fourth dot point under the level of sensory impairment. Enrolment decisions are now made by the Enrolment Assessment Committee. Changes	

			to reflect that there is now a single school	
30/03/2026	4.0	Major Amendment	Implementation of the Policy Framework Template. Revision of the enrolment criteria following registration as a School of a Kind.	Part 3