



Ashdale
Secondary College



"Achieving a Positive Future"

ASHDALE SECONDARY COLLEGE
SPECIALISED AUTISM
LEARNING PROGRAM

Ashdale Secondary College is one of 12 selected State Secondary Schools to provide a Specialist Learning Program (SALP) for students with autism spectrum disorder in years 7-12 to enhance their academic, social and emotional outcomes. Other locations for the SALP are Alkimos College, Baldivis Secondary College, Coodanup College, Eaton Community College, Fremantle College, Hammond Park Secondary College, Hampton Senior High School, Kelmscott Senior High School, Ocean Reef Senior High School, Southern River College, and Kiara College (2025). The evidence-based program endorsed by the Department of Education reflects contemporary academic research and is supported by the School of Special Educational Needs: Disability (SSEN:D).

Students in the Specialised Autism Learning Program have the academic potential to participate and achieve success in mainstream schooling and beyond, and through addressing the learning and engagement barriers, the SALP supports autistic learners to meet their potential and achieve positive school outcomes.

Ashdale Secondary College's Specialised Autism Learning Program supports each autistic student as a unique individual to foster learning, engagement, academic achievement, and adaptive life skills. The SALP environment nurtures and supports autistic students' learning and school experience by recognising their individual strengths, challenges, interests and identity. In our dedicated SALP Homeroom space, trained teachers and Education Assistants use evidence-based approaches with students while also supporting staff in general learning environments. This ensures students receive consistent strategies and support across their school setting.



WHAT ARE THE MAIN OUTCOMES?

Maximise independence.

The aim is to create a supportive environment that enables students to confidently and successfully transition from secondary school into tertiary education and employment. The Specialised Autism Learning Program aims to support the learning and school experience for autistic students by;

- Increasing attendance and retention rates.
- Increasing curriculum access and engagement.
- Improving academic and non-academic outcomes.
- Prioritising early identification and target approaches to address academic and non-academic barriers while recognising the unique learning needs of students with disabilities and tailoring instruction accordingly (Department of Education Western Australia).

PROGRAM STRUCTURE

Students attend mainstream classes with flexible and unrestricted access to the SALP homeroom environment supported by a program coordinator, experienced teachers and education assistants. Students access their homeroom on a need basis for targeted activities and teaching programs to address their strengths and barriers to accessible learning in mainstream classes. The program is offered from Years 7 –12 and can accommodate 15-18 students.

The Specialised Autism Learning Program supports students and staff through:

- Knowledge and awareness of Autism Spectrum Disorder across the College.
- Explicit training on social skills – Social Emotional Learning (SEL).
- Provide a safe place to come to take breaks during the school day.
- Develop documented plans.
- Develop ComPPAS (Comprehensive Planning People Autism Spectrum).
- High degree of communication between SALP staff and home.
- Accessing and becoming familiar with the wider community.
- Work placement support as required.

DEDICATED HOME ROOM

Home Room is a key feature of the program providing:

- Experienced staff (Teacher and EAs).
- Attend Homeroom for Mentor Group.
- Room is an accessible, comfortable, supportive and a safe place.
- Structured and unstructured learning.
- The amount of time in the homeroom is determined in the best interest of the student, guided by their unique learning needs and individualised program.

LESSONS

Social Emotional Learning (SEL)

Examples of topics may include:

- self regulation.
- dealing with feelings including stress and anxiety.
- personal grooming.
- developing relationships (friends, family, teachers).
- understanding others.
- awareness of autism and self advocacy.
- social thinking (expected and unexpected behaviours).
- hidden curriculum.

Community Access Program (CAPs)

- shopping.
- hidden etiquette/rules, e.g. eating out at cafes, restaurants, food halls.
- transport training.
- accessing community.
- excursions.
- meet up with other SALP schools.

CAPS Example Plan

Activity	At Home	At School	Outcome
Buying items needed for cooking	Pre plan - what is for dinner - whether ingredients need to be bought - money needed for purchases	SEL lesson - discuss how a meal is planned and put together	Student is contributing to family meal. May even participate in the cooking of the family meal.
Identify items to save for	Perhaps chores at home can be used to earn pocket money	SEL lesson - How to achieve goals. - Discussing common interests. - locating and visiting stores where items are sold	Goal setting Earning money for a reason.
Grocery shopping	Pre plan - together to identify a few items needed for the household - money needed for purchases	SEL lesson - expected/ unexpected behaviours at shopping centres - unspoken rules	Developing independence
Lunch outing	Money for item to purchase	SEL lesson - expected/ unexpected behaviours at lunch location - unspoken rules	Social skills and etiquette when eating out

Years 11 and 12

- Aim for students to reach a level of independence that enables them to complete Senior School courses with minimal support.
- Continue to support barriers to learning and engagement as required.
- Mentor students to provide them with the skills to achieve positive school outcomes independently.
- The transition coordinator supports senior students with future pathway options.
- Future successful/purposeful/meaningful pathways to further education/training/employment.
- Coordination with external providers to support possible future opportunities.

KEY POINTS

- Students attend mainstream classes with SALP utilised as a support mechanism.
- The SALP Homeroom is accessed for SEL lessons, catch-up work, tests, regulation breaks.
- Contacts list will be collated and managed by Program Coordinator.
- Transition into the program can occur periodically across year levels as places arise.
- Students must complete Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) program as negotiated in IEP meetings.
- Students are required to participate in Community Access Program (CAPs).
- Students will be assisted by the Program Coordinator, Teachers (including the Transition Teacher) and Education Assistants.
- Dedicated Homeroom.
- **Placements are reviewed every year.**
- Students **may exit the program once success criteria have been demonstrated.** Staff will work in consultation with parents and stakeholders when it is deemed suitable for the student to exit/transition out of the program or the program is no longer meeting the individual needs of the student.

Please note: The student may remain at the host school or return to their local high school. Program Staff will provide each student with a comprehensive, individualised transition to ensure a seamless transition.



ELIGIBILITY AND SUITABILITY

The SALP is designed to be individualised, flexible and responsive to the complex variety of engagement barriers experienced by autistic students. Students eligible for the program will have a formal diagnosis of autism spectrum disorder (without an accompanying intellectual disability) and be entitled to enrol in Western Australian public schools in accordance with general enrolment requirements.

The Program is suited to meet the needs of students who, with support, are anticipated to work at or near year-level academic standards and are independently able to self-manage personal care. The SALP is designed to address and support the unique needs of autistic students who may be experiencing barriers related to their diagnosis, such as challenges posed by social and/or communication differences, sensory preferences, limited capacity to engage in areas outside their focused interests, difficulties with change or unpredictability, and challenges with emotional regulation.

Suitability for eligible students is determined through assessments across multiple modes, including informal and formal observations, student voice and parent/carer consultation, and communication with allied health professionals and other appropriate stakeholders by the Program Coordinator. School reports, IEPs, NAPLAN results and Individual Behaviour Plans (IBPs) are considered.

Suitable students are exempt from local intake zones.

Please note: Bus services are not provided to the program, and families are expected to facilitate transport.

The individual school manages applications for enrolment into the SALP, with support from SSEN:D and the School Psychologist as required.

The program may only be suitable for some eligible students, and placements will be directed to students whose needs will be best met in the SALP.

Placements are reviewed each year. Students may exit the program once success criteria have been demonstrated. Staff will work in consultation with parents and stakeholders when it is deemed suitable for the student to exit/transition out of the SALP or the program is no longer meeting the student's individual needs.

To be eligible, applicants must meet the following criteria:

- Diagnosis of autism spectrum disorder without an intellectual disability diagnosis
- Academically capable of understanding and coping with grade level content and tasks
- Manages behaviour independently or using predetermined strategies
- Independently manages personal care requirements

ENROLMENT CONSIDERATION PROCESS

Applications for Enrolment in the Specialised Autism Learning Program at Ashdale Secondary College are required to provide an Expression of Interest application pack and attach the appropriate documents;

Documents required:

- Most recent School Report
- Most recent NAPLAN Report
- Diagnostic Assessment for Autism Spectrum Disorder (from Paediatrician, triaged with Clinical Psychologist and Speech Pathologist)
- Clinical Psychologist and Speech Pathology reports (if available)
- Signed permission to release and/or exchange information

Verbal Expression of Interest	From Term 1, 2025
Preliminary Tour (optional)	On request to Program Coordinator
Expression of Interest closes	Friday, 16 May 2025 - Term 2, Week 3
Assessment of Expression of Interest	Term 2, Weeks 5 - 6
SALP Student Observations in Current School Setting	Term 2, Weeks 6 - 10
Advisory Panel Finalised / Outcomes to Parents	Friday, 22 August 2025 - Term 3, Week 5

Please do not hesitate to contact with any questions regarding the Specialised Autism Learning Program at Ashdale Secondary College on 6207 1300 or email ashdale.sc@education.wa.edu.au.

Renee Tyler
Program Coordinator – SALP









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An Independent Public School

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