

Case Study 2: Support provided within quality differentiated teaching practice

Quality teaching practice is responsive to the differential needs of all students. Some students with disability may not need educational adjustments beyond those that are reasonably expected as a part of quality teaching or school practices to address disability related needs. These students should be counted under the 'support provided within quality differentiated teaching practice' level of adjustment for the purposes of this data collection.

These students would have been considered for some level of active support (i.e. active monitoring or provision of adjustments) and their identified needs would be subject to close monitoring and review. They may have been provided with a higher level of adjustment in the past or may require a higher level of adjustment in their future schooling.

Corey

Corey is a Year 9 student in a large metropolitan secondary college. Corey wears hearing aids as a result of his diagnosis with a mild sensor neural hearing loss. Corey's hearing loss is permanent and may deteriorate in the future. Corey undergoes annual re-assessment of his hearing thresholds to ensure his hearing aids continue to meet his needs.

When Corey initially enrolled in the school, his parents informed the Year 7 coordinator of his hearing impairment and the need for Corey to wear his hearing aids for all activities while at school. When wearing his hearing aids, the amplification enables Corey to hear people's voices clearly and to access the full range of sounds in his environment. The major difficulty for Corey occurs when there is a large amount of background noise, making speech sounds difficult for him to differentiate.

At the start of Year 7, Corey's parents and school submitted a referral to the regional visiting teacher service for support and advice. A visiting teacher was able to assist the school to understand the nature of Corey's hearing loss through reviewing the most recent audiograms provided by his family. The visiting teacher also provided general advice and strategies for all of Corey's teachers, focusing on simple classroom modifications and adjustments. This included providing a report containing recommendations such as:

- optimal class seating arrangements for Corey
- facing Corey when speaking with him
- checking with Corey that he is wearing his aids
- prompting Corey to ensure they are functioning properly.

Each term the year level coordinator met with Corey's parents and the visiting teacher to evaluate the effectiveness of the recommended educational strategies to help Corey participate on the same basis as other students without disability in the classroom.

During Year 7, Corey required frequent prompts and reminders from his family and school staff to wear and maintain his aids. He was also not independently seeking clarification and repetition when unsure of the instructions being provided in class. The visiting teacher provided regular support throughout Corey's first year of secondary school, targeting these independence skills and raising staff awareness of the need to support Corey to practice them. This support continued into the first semester of Year 8.

Now in Year 9, Corey is consistently and independently able to wear and maintain his hearing aids. He is also able to alert teachers when increased background noise prevents him from being able to differentiate instructions. All of Corey's teachers now ensure that the class is quiet prior to providing important instruction or sharing information. This class behaviour is encouraged and reinforced throughout the school as an active listening skill.

The school team, in consultation with Corey and his parents, has agreed that Corey's needs are being met through quality differentiated teaching practice.

Though Corey is now managing his hearing impairment independently, and there is no current need for the school to provide additional adjustments, his condition needs to be monitored every year. If Corey's hearing deteriorates or his educational needs change it may be necessary to implement additional educational adjustments.