

Highly Structured Teaching Commitment Christie Downs Primary School

<p>Definition</p>	<p>Highly Structured Teaching (HST) is a visually based approach to teaching which consists of 4 main elements: Physical Structure, Visual Schedules, Individual Tasks and Work Systems. The goal of HST is to create individualised, meaningful and predictable learning environments which promote independent, successful and motivated learners.</p> <p>At Christie Downs Primary School we believe that Highly Structured Teaching leads to changes in teachers and students' behaviour and achievement standards and benefits our learners by promoting a clear understanding of-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schedules and timetables • Learning goals and activities • Expectations and success criteria <p>And creates</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meaningful learning situations • Predictability • Spontaneous communication • Independence
<p>Rationale Why is it Important?</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><i>“Being an effective teacher begins by providing structure in the classroom. Most students respond positively to structure, especially those who have little structure and stability in their home life. A structured classroom often translates to a safe classroom, one where students can enjoy themselves and focus on learning. In a structured learning environment, students are more likely to thrive and experience personal and academic growth.”</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">(Derrick Meador, 2019)</p> <p>At Christie Downs Primary School we are committed to implementing consistent, sustainable and quality differentiated teaching practices that provide engagement for students with a particular emphasis on developing higher band potential (2020 PIP)</p>

PHYSICAL STRUCTURE

Why Physical Structure?

“There is more than 1 teacher in a classroom” (Reggio Emilia 2015)

At Christie Downs Primary School we believe-

- the physical environment needs to be structured and ordered so as to address all students learning needs and styles
- the environmental variables need to act as cognitive organisers so that a visually organised room communicates learning and behavioural expectations

What is Physical Structure?

“Physical structure refers to the way of arranging furniture, materials and general surroundings to add meaning and context to the environment.

An effective physical structure helps to decrease the visual and auditory stimulation that can be distracting and troublesome for students”

(Mesibov & Howley, 2003)

At Christie Downs Primary School we ensure that every learning space-

- Has clear physical boundaries within the room
- Is free from clutter
- Has designations to differentiate areas
- Has organised visual schedules
- Has visual schedules free from distraction
- Has visual supports for learning and transitions
- Has individualised work stations (as required)

VISUAL SCHEDULES/SUPPORTS

Why Visual Schedules/ Supports?

“Verbal language and gestures are often not enough” (Phillip Yaffe 2011)

Visual supports have been used to teach children literacy skills (Broun, 2004); to cook (Orth, 2003); to encourage positive behaviour (Crozier & Sileo, 2005) and for signalling change and transitions (Dettmer et al., 2000; Schmit et al., 2000)

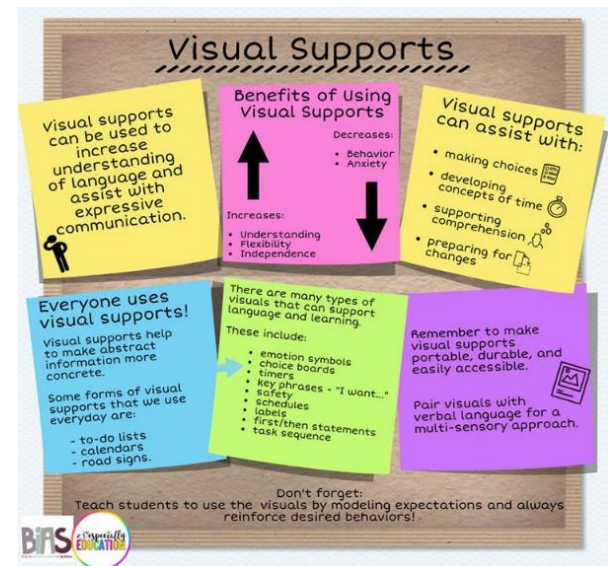
Highly Structured Teaching relies strongly on Visual Schedules/ Supports to promote engagement in productive activities and to reduce the confusion and distress of too much language processing.

When we present information visually, it can be there for as long as the student needs it. The students can refer back to it whenever he or she needs, and it allows students to independently complete the task, request or activity.

Visual supports allow the student to have a clear pathway of expectations and to know what he or she should be doing in a particular environment. This can lead to increasing levels of independence

At Christie Downs Primary School we believe visual schedules/ supports -

- are part of everyone’s communication system
- can attract and hold a student’s attention
- enable the student to focus on the message and reduce anxiety
- make abstract concepts more concrete for the student
- help bring structure, routine, and sequence for the student
- assist the student to process language



What visual schedules/
supports?

At Christie Downs Primary School we believe a consistent and whole school approach is the key to creating powerful learners.

At Christie Downs Primary School we ensure that all staff will only use visuals from the following:

- Symbolstix
- Proloquo-2-Go
- Specific Site Photographs (see Appendix- obtained in HST file)
- Specific photographs based on students learning needs
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At Christie Downs Primary School we ensure that visual supports are used:

- In every classroom to display a class daily timetable which is visible to all students and staff
- To communicate and display School Values and School Rules in all classrooms and common spaces across site
- In all common spaces (playgrounds, kitchen, gym, hall) to create predictability
- To enhance understanding of whole school programs ie WOW
- To support students to access Intervention Programs ie Clicker 8 (refer to *Christie Downs Primary School- Literacy Commitment*)
- To support transitions
- To encourage independence
- To support students to know what is expected
- To support social communication and emotional regulation
- To encourage consistent procedures, expectations and routines across all people working with the student



INDIVIDUAL TASKS AND WORK SYSTEMS

Why Individual Tasks and Work Systems?

“Students who can follow their visual schedules and their work system independently are not as frequently overstimulated as students who are constantly prompted and cued as this generally confuses them about where they are going and what is happening”
(Mesibov & Howley, 2003)

At Christie Downs Primary School we believe that individual tasks and work systems-

- Help the individual student to start and complete tasks
- Provide the student with a meaningful and organised strategy
- Support students practice skills they have previously mastered
- Support students to generalise skills to new materials and situations
- Support students to learn to work without the assistance of others



What are Individual Tasks and Work Systems?

An Individual Task helps students to-

- Start and complete tasks
- Practice skills they have previously mastered
- Generalise skills to new materials and situations

A Work System is-

- An organisational system that provides the student with visual information about what to do
- Commonly set up in a left-right format
- Able to answers questions about what is to be done once the student arrives at the scheduled location

At Christie Downs Primary School we ensure that-

- All students at capacity have access to Individual Tasks and Individualised Work Systems
- All students working within ABLES have access to Individual Tasks and Individualised Work Systems

APPENDIX

1) Site Specific Photos

Kangaroo Paw



Bonsai



Pippa- school dog



CDPS



2) Site Specific Visuals

