

About Direct Instruction

Good to Great Schools Australia supports schools to deliver the Direct Instruction (DI) program which combines explicit instruction pedagogy with a comprehensive curriculum, student assessment and scripted lessons.



The program covers literacy and numeracy from Foundation to Year 5 and aligns to the Australian Curriculum. Direct Instruction ensures that students learn more efficiently and effectively and is also used as a remedial response for students who have fallen behind in both primary and secondary school.

The National Institute for Direct Instruction (USA) pioneered explicit instruction practices when designing the Direct Instruction program. Many providers now offer explicit and direct instruction models but the Direct Instruction program is the original and achieves the highest student gains.

Key features

- Comprehensive set of teacher materials, student textbooks and workbooks
- Instruction targeted to individual students learning level
- Embeds positive behaviour practices
- Continuous monitoring of student progress ensures all students master content through guided and independent practice

Additional benefits

- Facilitates closer focus and student engagement
- Significantly improves classroom behaviour
- Stretches advanced students and stops lower performers falling behind
- Provides learning continuity for students where teacher turnover is high

What schools receive

Good to Great Schools Australia provides a comprehensive support program to schools implementing Direct Instruction including:

- Five days annual training for teaching staff.
- On-site coaching.
- Other opportunities for professional development.

Suitability in Australian schools

In 2009, Professor John Hattie published an internationally acclaimed synthesis of research on 'what actually works in schools to improve learning', covering over 800 meta-analyses and millions of students. It assessed the relative effectiveness of a range of approaches, interventions and actions on student outcomes. The results found that Direct Instruction caused students to progress one-and-a-half times faster than an average intervention and was one of the most effective instructional methods of the 130 influences studied.

DI has been used in thousands of schools across the USA, Canada, the UK and Australia over the past 50 years. Its curriculum and teaching methods have been continually improved and refined through rigorous field-testing.

More information

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Managing behaviour

The successful implementation of Direct Instruction requires effective behaviour management. The program that Good to Great Schools Australia supports is based on Positive Behaviour Interventions and Support (PBIS).

This ensures the school is fully supported to integrate behaviour management so that instruction is effective and there is a positive school culture that supports all students to achieve social, emotional, and academic success.

This preventative approach focuses on actively teaching, expecting and acknowledging appropriate behaviour in the classroom.

Key features

- Sets clear rules and systematically teaches school-wide behavioural expectations
- Predictable, multi-tiered consequences (rewards, corrections and sanctions) that are understood by all students, teachers and parents
- Accurate information about student behaviour so teachers can design supports
- Regular reporting on behaviour

Program benefits

- Reduces classroom disruptions so the focus stays on learning
- Enables more intensive support for students exhibiting problem behaviour
- Ensures students who need it can have appropriate, individualised consequence and reteaching plans
- Provides learning continuity for students where teacher turnover is high

Suitability in Australian schools

PBIS was developed over twenty years ago, and is now internationally recognised and used in over 13,000 schools across Australia, the United States, New Zealand and Canada. Studies show that when schools implement the program with fidelity, they can achieve up to a 50 per cent reduction in discipline referrals, increased time for teaching, improved school climate and higher teacher and student satisfaction*.

What schools receive

- Facilitation to customise behaviour management to school and build the school-wide behaviour management plan and lesson plans
- Assistance to set up the school-based behaviour management team that includes the principal, teachers and assistants, student liaison and family representatives
- Training for behaviour management team members in key practices, goal setting and ongoing monitoring
- Training for teachers and teaching assistants in applying behaviour management in the classroom and coaching on how to respond to specific behavioural issues and individual behaviour management plans
- Ongoing monitoring of behaviour data and suggested interventions
- Information and support to parents on how they can align behaviour management to their parenting approaches to enhance cohesion between home and school life

* Skiba, R. & Sprague, J. (September, 2008). Safety Without Suspension. Educational Leadership, 38-43.

