

# Direct Instruction: What it means for teaching assistants

**Our vision at Good to Great Schools Australia is ‘Great teachers delivering effective instruction and every child reaching their full potential.’**

Direct Instruction (DI) was chosen as an effective teaching practice to respond to the requirements of all students, and overcome the challenges faced in high needs schools. It has been supported by research from Professor John Hattie and confirmed by practices recognised by McKinsey & Company in their landmark report ‘How the world’s most improved school systems keep getting better’, 2010, By Sir Michael Barber and Mona Mourshed.



The Direct Instruction (DI) Program delivered by Good to Great Schools Australia ensures students learn faster, more efficiently and more effectively. It combines well-crafted explicit instruction pedagogy with a comprehensive curriculum and student assessment, and scripted instruction on how to deliver it.

The program covers literacy and numeracy from Foundations to Year 5 and aligns to the Australian curriculum. DI can also be used as a remedial response for students who have fallen behind in both primary and secondary school.

## What is Direct Instruction (DI)

**Direct Instruction is an education program with a very comprehensive curriculum and scripted lessons that the teacher follows. It was originally developed for students with high needs, especially those who don’t have English as their first language.**

- Comprehensive structured curriculum
- Scripted lessons that teachers must follow
- Covers literacy and numeracy from Foundation to Year 5
- Aligns to the Australian curriculum
- Students are grouped by learning level rather than age following an assessment test
- Effective for students of all abilities – no student is left behind and advanced students can be accelerated
- Students are tested weekly to assess how well students are understanding lessons and whether they need to repeat them
- Only 10 per cent of new material is introduced in each lesson so each one builds on the last
- Students must master each lesson before moving onto the next one (90-100 per cent score on their test)
- Students answer questions together in class so it is easy to identify who needs extra support
- Students with disabilities and learning disorders are well supported
- Supported by a behaviour management program
- Teaching staff are given significant support and professional development

## Background

Direct Instruction was implemented in Cape York schools (Aurukun, Coen and Hope Vale) in 2010 and since then we have seen a major turnaround. Students are more excited and confident and the culture in the schools is more positive and hopeful.

This success has come about because of our 'No Excuses' approach. Everybody – principals, teachers, parents, students and the community – take responsibility for ensuring our children do well in school.



## The role of teaching assistants

### Comprehensive support to successfully implement DI in your school

- Classroom support: Teaching assistants support the teaching of language and numeracy in K-1 programs. These classes are taught foundations of learning in three small instructional group rotations. While the teacher concentrates on reading with one group, the teaching assistant supports the second group with language while the third group does independent work
- Student support: Help support students at their own individual rates of learning and help them track their own progress
- Teacher support: Data review: Help collect data, assist in planning, reviews and student reporting
- Parent engagement: Building relationships, informing them about progress and talking to them about how they can support their children to perform even better
- Commitment to the program: Successful implementation of DI requires a commitment to delivering the program as it was designed and with full fidelity

***With Direct Instruction, I'm very proud to see the big, BIG difference it has made in the classrooms with the children. And most importantly, that they are reading and it will help them when they do go on to boarding school.***

– CYAAA Aurukun Community Teacher

## Professional support for teaching assistants

### Comprehensive support for your team to successfully implement the program

- 5 days annual group training through simulated practice in Direct Instruction, Positive Behaviour Management (PBIS) and NAPLAN preparation
- In-school expert training, observation and coaching sessions in Direct Instruction, Positive Behaviour Management (PBIS) and NAPLAN preparation
- Weekly in-classroom coaching and modelling, feedback from data analysis and collegial knowledge-sharing and professional learning

