

Submission
No 114

**INQUIRY INTO THE PROVISION OF EDUCATION TO
STUDENTS WITH A DISABILITY OR SPECIAL NEEDS**

Name: Mrs Helen Swinton

Date received: 16/02/2010

I have a child in Year 6 and another in Year 2 at a public school in Sydney. Both have been diagnosed with learning difficulties.

The eldest was only diagnosed by a paediatrician in the last year, and really we have struggled for years with school routines, communication, and poor school results.

She is very well behaved and quiet in class, very shy and doesn't attract any attention. She also fails to finish almost everything she does and frequently loses track of time and things.

The teachers had little background information or training in inattentive disorder and one told me that because she was quiet, and seemed to be working, she didn't think anything was wrong. My daughter would pretend to know what was going on in class and at home dissolve in tears at what she failed to understand, and I would spend the time catching her up.

My son has hyperactivity and is often bullied and the perpetrator of bullying behaviour. Luckily, the teachers recognised he had learning difficulties and he has been getting assistance in that area. He is more organised, but focus and attention is poor. He is terribly compulsive, and unless he is supervised carefully continually gets himself into scrapes!

I would like to see more teacher education in ADD/ADHD and learning disabilities such as memory disorders to at the very least, raise the discussion with parents of children who may have these problems to get some extra support. It is fantastic that our school can employ another half teacher a week to help 1 of my kids, but wouldn't it be great to see this for all schools?

Thanks