This Month At

Vis-CAT

Official Newsletter of Visual Cognition Assessment tool

Date : 18th Aug 2025

Updates

Dear Vis-CAT Community,

We hope you had a restful Easter and a meaningful ANZAC Day, taking time to reflect and recharge. As students return to the classroom for Term 2, educators across the country are reconnecting with learners and re-establishing routines. This fresh start is also an opportunity to take a closer look at students who may be quietly struggling, not because they aren't trying, but because of challenges that often go unseen.

Every teacher has met a student who seems bright and articulate, yet mysteriously struggles with reading, writing, or staying focused. These students are often mislabelled as distracted, lazy, or even defiant. But in many cases, the true challenge lies deeper: visual processing disorder (VPD).

VPD happens when the brain has trouble interpreting what the eyes see. Vision itself may be 20/20 — but processing that visual input is confusing, slow, or overwhelming.

What this can look like in class:

- Skipping words or entire lines when reading
- Reversing letters or numbers (e.g. b/d, 6/9)
- Struggling to copy from the board
- Missing key information on worksheets
- Difficulty staying on task in visually "busy" classrooms
- Bumping into things or appearing disorganised

These challenges are often mistaken for ADHD or lack of effort — yet traditional interventions may not help unless the visual processing issue is addressed directly

What Can Schools Do?

Once VPD is identified, many students can thrive with a few smart adjustments. Here are some school accommodations and modifications that can make a world of difference:

- Simplify visuals – Reduce classroom clutter, use clean handout designs
- Give alternatives – Oral reports, audiobooks, or speech-to-text tools
- Provide supports – Reading strips, highlighters, slant boards
- Use spacing and clarity – One task per page, lots of white space
- Allow time and quiet – For reading, writing, and testing
- Offer clear notes and summaries– Instead of long written instructions

These are not drastic interventions — they're simple, evidence-based practices that give students with VPD a fair chance to succeed.

As Term 2 begins, it's the perfect time to support the kids who may be falling behind for reasons we can't see at first glance. With Vis-CAT and thoughtful accommodations, we can help every student feel seen and Set Up For Success.