



Mrs Julie Butler  
Eskdale Priamry School, Omeo Highway,  
Eskdale,  
Vic 3701

Re: Ms. Karen Starkiss

To Whom It May concern,

I am happy to provide a reference for Karen Starkiss to be considered by the Victorian Government and Department of Education to train principals, teachers, educational psychologists and advisory staff in the multi-tiered approach to the early identification and support of students with learning and behaviour needs. (Response to Intervention)

In 2017 I employed Karen to run professional development around Dyslexia and other learning difficulties for my staff and the staff from our cluster of small schools in the Upper Hume Region of NEVR. Right from the outset Karen was very obliging and only too happy to travel to our region as she realised the difficulty staff in rural areas of Victoria have in accessing quality professional development.

Karen was easily contactable and always responded in a timely manner. She is an excellent communicator and clearly described what we could expect as well as what she would require for the day. Karen travelled from Melbourne the day prior and arrived early on the day, with all the handouts, demonstration materials and references that she needed for the successful conduct of the day. Her power points and presentations were excellent. The information Karen shared was very much what staff needed to help them understand what to expect from students with different learning needs. Her ability to make the content of her presentation interesting and fun was really appreciated by the audience, which consisted of teachers, aides and parents. She was able to resonate with each and every participant. Questions were able to be asked at any time and always answered with clarity.

Staff from every school commented to me at the end of the day how much they had learnt and how much they enjoyed Karen's frank, informative and humorous presentation. Everyone went away from the day with activities and strategies to try with all students, not just those with learning difficulties. Teaching aids that were demonstrated by Karen were purchased by each school that attended. After the professional development day staff from the different schools were conversing via email to let each other know how successful they found the different activities.

I hired Karen on the recommendation of another teacher who spoke very highly of her and her knowledge. Since our professional development day she has been sought after to provide PD for other schools in our region. I know that she is scheduled to present at Kiewa Primary School on 24<sup>th</sup> April. The fact that she is prepared to travel is greatly appreciated.

Karen is passionate about upskilling staff about learning difficulties and is well known for her advocacy for change and PD to be provided in rural Victoria I feel that she would be an excellent candidate to train principals, teachers, educational psychologists and advisory staff in RTI and I sincerely hope you will consider her application favourably.

I am happy to be contacted to discuss this reference personally if you wish. I can be contacted on 0260720402 or 0413188182.

Kind regards,

Julie Butler,

Principal