

**Protecting and Supporting Young People Procedure**

*Anson Street School is committed to responding to and reporting students at risk of harm.*

# Anson Street School

**Reviewed: 21/02/2023**

**Purpose**

The NSW Department of Education (DoE) requires all NSW public schools to have a Mandatory Child Protection Plan which details the training required by all staff and procedures implemented to respond to and report students at risk of harm. Anson Street School is committed to student safety and wellbeing.

## Context

At Anson Street School we recognise that care and protection for children and young people is a shared responsibility. It begins with parents and caregivers, but when government support becomes necessary, it is not the sole responsibility of community services but a collective responsibility. We are committed to implementing the Keep Them Safe action plan: A shared approach to child wellbeing which provides the framework for parents, communities, government and non-government agencies to work together to support children and families.

## Policy Statement

Education has an important role to support children and young people and to identify where problems arise that may put their safety, welfare or wellbeing at risk. All staff at Anson Street School have a responsibility to report risk of harm concerns about children and young people, within their roles, and to provide support to children and young people.

## Audience

This plan applies to all staff members, which includes employees, contractors and volunteers of the School. The safety, protection and welfare of students is the responsibility of all staff members and encompasses:

* a duty of care to ensure that reasonable steps are taken to prevent harm to students which could reasonably have been foreseen; and
* obligations under child protection legislation.

## School Procedures

**Principals and workplace managers**

* **Training**

Systems are in place which ensure all staff have participated in an initial child protection induction and an update at the beginning of each school year. The executive team are responsible for checking on MyPL that all staff have completed their mandatory training by week 3 of Term 1 each year.

* **Reporting**

The principal uses appropriate tools to inform decision-making, such as the online Mandatory Reporter Guide, advice from the Child Wellbeing unit, professional judgment and specialist advice, where there are concerns about risk of harm. These help to determine whether concerns about the safety, welfare or wellbeing of children or young people constitute risk of significant harm and, if they do, report these to Department of Communities and Justice.

The principal is also responsible for contacting the Child Wellbeing unit about the safety, welfare and wellbeing of children and young people where:

* there are concerns about risk of harm, that do not meet the threshold of significant harm but are not trivial
* the Mandatory Reporter Guide indicates this should be done
* a case has been reported to the Department of Communities and Justice and did not meet the risk of significant harm threshold
* there is an observable pattern of cumulative harm that does not meet the threshold of significant harm.
* Supporting children and young people

**Employees**

* **Training**

All staff participate in a child protection induction prior to their first day of work at Anson Street School and in annual updates. This includes all staff – principals, workplace managers, teaching and non-teaching staff, part-time, temporary and casual staff and those who join during the year. Staff are responsible for maintaining their own mandatory training record and are provided with a template outlining which updates they are required to complete and where to find them.

* **Reporting**

Where concerns about the safety, welfare and wellbeing of students arise during the course of their work, employees adhere to mandatory procedures for conveying risk of harm concerns to the principal or workplace manager. If the allegation involves the Principal, a report should be made to the Director.

Employees must ensure, where they have reported any risk of significant harm concerns to the principal or workplace manager, that the principal or workplace manager has reported those concerns to the Department of Communities and Justice. Principals are to provide the employee who reported the risk of harm concerns with a report identification number within 24 hours of them conveying their concerns as confirmation that a report has been made.

Employees should report directly to the Department of Communities and Justice if they believe the principal or workplace manager has not reported risk of significant harm concerns to The Department of Communities and Justice, and they still have concerns about risk of significant harm.

Employees are to ensure that any relevant information that they become aware of, subsequent to a report being made to the Department of Communities and Justice or following contact with the Child Wellbeing unit, is provided to the Department of Communities and Justice or the Child Wellbeing unit respectively. If the additional information forms concerns about risk of significant harm, a report must be made to the Department of Communities and Justice.

* **Supporting children and young people**

Curriculum planning shows evidence of implementation of child protection education in each stage of learning.

Staff are taught indicators of abuse and neglect of children and young people and their obligation to advise the principal or workplace manager of concerns about the safety, welfare and wellbeing of children and young people that arise during the course of their work.

## Record Keeping

Deputy Principals are responsible for maintaining a register of staff participation in annual updates and induction of new staff. Administration staff are responsible for sighting individual records of casual staff, contractors, volunteers and para-professionals. This applies to all staff, including teaching staff, part-time, temporary and casual staff.

The principal keeps a record of reports to the Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ) as confirmation that mandatory reporting requirements have been met. The report reference number is recorded and where applicable communicated to the party who reported the risk of harm to the Principal. All records and related papers are retained in secure storage and kept confidential in the administration building.

If serious safety issues remain after a report has been made to, and accepted by, Department of Communities and Justice, principals or workplace managers will refer the matter to the departmental regional officer responsible for student services so the case can be taken up at a senior level within Department of Communities and Justice.

## References

The Mandatory Reporter Guide (MRG) can assist staff in making decisions regarding the seriousness of concerns about a student suspected to be at risk of harm.

* The MRG is available at: <https://reporter.childstory.nsw.gov.au/s/mrg>
* Useful information is available at: Guide to selecting a decision tree
* If employees are unsure about the outcome after running the decision tree they should contact the Child Wellbeing Unit on 9269 9400 between 8:30am and 5:30pm for further advice.

Child Protection Policy

<https://education.nsw.gov.au/policy-library/policies/pd-2002-0067?refid=285776>

