



PARRAMATTA EAST PUBLIC SCHOOL

Child Protection Procedure A

Responding to and reporting students at risk of harm

This procedure sets out roles and responsibilities of staff in relation to child protection including training, reporting on safety, and supporting children and young people, as well as monitoring, evaluation and reporting requirements.

1. Objectives – Procedure Statement

- 1.1 Staff at Parramatta East have 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.
- 1.2 All staff 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.
- 1.3 Child protection reforms introduce an obligation for government and non-government agencies to coordinate decision making and delivery of services.
- 1.4 This procedure applies to all department employees working at Parramatta East Public School.

2. Rationale

- 2.1 Parramatta East Public School recognises that care and protection for children and young people is a shared responsibility. It begins with parents, but when government support becomes necessary, it is not the sole responsibility of community services but a collective responsibility.
- 2.2 Keep Them Safe: A shared approach to child wellbeing provides the framework for parents, communities, government and non-government agencies to work together to support children and families.

3. Relevant Legislation

- 3.1 Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998; Crimes Act 1900, Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998.
- 3.2 Privacy And Personal Information Protection Act 1998; Health Records And Information Privacy Act 2002; Commission for Children and Young People Act 1998; Ombudsman Act 1974, Education Act 1990

4. Forms of Harm

- 4.1 Students may present differing risks of harm. Harm can be caused at different levels of severity and in different forms. Teachers and employees must be aware of the various forms of harm that may be caused to a child or young person. Any concerns related to the following areas must be reported immediately to the school principal.
- Physical Abuse
 - Neglect – Supervision; Shelter/Environment; Food; Hygiene/Clothing; Medical Care; Mental Health Care; Education (non-enrolment or habitual absence)
 - Sexual Abuse – Child or Young Person, Problematic Sexual Behaviour towards others
 - Psychological Harm
 - Danger to Self or Others
 - Relinquishing Care
 - Carer Concern – Substance Abuse; Mental Health; Domestic Violence
 - Unborn Child

5. Responsibilities and Delegations

5.1 Principal

5.1.1 Training

- ensure all staff have participated in an initial child protection induction and an update during the past year.
- ensure all staff are aware of the indicators of abuse and neglect of children and young people.
- ensure all staff are aware of their obligation to advise their direct supervisor of concerns about the safety, welfare and wellbeing of children and young people that arise during the course of their work.

- ensure that all staff are aware of their mandatory obligation to report suspected risk of significant harm and of the procedures for doing so.

5.1.2 Reporting

- use appropriate tools to inform decision making, such as the online [Mandatory Reporter Guide](#), professional judgment or specialist advice, where there are concerns about risk of harm.
- 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 Family and Community Services.
- seek advice from the Child Wellbeing Unit where there is uncertainty about whether concerns amount to risk of significant harm.
- contact 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 Family and Community Services 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.
- maintain communication with the reporting employee, informing them of where the process is up to throughout.

5.1.3 Supporting Children and Young People

- establish effective systems at Parramatta East Public School for:
 - child protection concerns to be identified in the course of the work of staff, reported and action taken, where appropriate, so vulnerable children and young people are supported.
 - reasonable steps to be taken to coordinate decision making and coordinate services to children and young people and their families with other local service providers, if required.
 - collaborative work with other agencies for the care and protection of children and young people in ways that strengthen and support the family and in a manner that respects the functions and expertise of each service provider.
- exchange relevant information to progress assessments, investigations and case management as permitted by law.
- use best endeavours in responding to a request for a service from Family and Community Services provided that the request is consistent with departmental responsibilities and policies.

5.2 Teachers, Administration and Support Staff – All Department Employees

5.2.1 Training

- participate in a child protection induction and in annual updates. This includes all staff – principals, executive staff, teaching and non-teaching staff, part-time, temporary and casual staff and those who join during the year.
- hold current Working With Children Check (WWCC). This includes all parent helpers and/or volunteers.

5.2.2 Reporting

- All employees are Mandatory Reporters
- In the event of a suspected child protection concern, employees of Parramatta East Public School must report their concerns directly to the school principal
- ensure, where they have reported any risk of significant harm concerns to the Principal, that the concern has been reported to Family and Community Services.
- report directly to Family and Community Services if they believe the principal has not reported risk of significant harm concerns to Family and Community Services, and they still have concerns about risk of significant harm.
- ensure that any relevant information that they become aware of, subsequent to a report being made to Family and Community Services or following contact with the Child Wellbeing Unit, is provided to Family and Community Services or the Child Wellbeing Unit respectively. If the additional information forms concerns about risk of significant harm a report must be made to Family and Community Services.

5.2.3 Supporting Children and Young People

- cooperate with reasonable steps to coordinate service delivery and decision-making with other relevant service providers.
- avoid undertaking any investigation of the circumstances giving rise to a report where risk of significant harm has been reported, without the express prior approval of the relevant Family and Community Services case officer.
- inform students, including apprentices or trainees, of their right to be protected from abuse and of avenues of support if they have concerns about abuse.
- teach the NSW Department of Education Child Protection unit appropriate for each stage of learning, once a year, to support children in recognising abuse and provide strategies for protection.

6. Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting Requirements

- 6.1 Principals must maintain a workplace register of staff participation in annual updates and of inductions of new staff, or they must sight individual records of staff inductions. This applies to all staff including non-teaching staff, part-time, temporary and casual staff.
- 6.2 A record is to be kept of reports to Family and Community Services as confirmation that mandatory reporting requirements have been met. The report reference number should be recorded.
- 6.3 The record and related papers are to be retained by the principal in secure storage and kept confidential. These records are to be provided to any successor.
- 6.4 Where a reference number has been provided by the Child Wellbeing Unit it must be recorded and kept.
- 6.5 If serious safety issues remain after a report has been made to, and accepted by, Family and Community Services, the principal 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 Family and Community Services.

7. Contact

Leader, Child Protection Services ph (02) 9269 9454.

8. Evidence of Policy Implementation

- 8.1 This procedure reiterates the roles and responsibilities of the principal, teaching staff, administration and support staff in relation to the mandatory reporting of child protection concerns.
- 8.2 The school principal is responsible for monitoring the implementation of the department policy and keeping records and evidence of implantation.
- 8.3 Implementation of the policy should include:
 - mandatory staff participation in a child protection induction and annual child protection training by principal or nominated staff member. (Documentary evidence to upload can include entries in staff handbooks and induction procedures).

<https://education.nsw.gov.au/wellbeing-and-learning/child-protection>

- Records of attendance in/completion of the mandatory child protection training are maintained including documentary evidence of following-up staff that haven't attended training e.g. MyPL or other school-based register.
- Students at risk of harm are identified and reported to FACS Child Protection Helpline when concerns constitute suspected risk of significant harm, or the Department's Child Wellbeing Unit (CWU) where there are concerns that do not meet the threshold of significant harm but are not trivial, or supported in other ways locally at the school e.g. through the school Learning and Support Team.
- Curriculum planning shows evidence of implementation of child protection education in each stage of learning.

8.4 Evidence of Implementation should include:

- outcome report from the Mandatory Report Guide (MRG)
- evidence of contact with FACS, CWU, supervisor, Educational Services, or other agency
- documentation from the school's Learning and Support team.
- referral forms for student/family members referred by school to services
- information exchange under provisions of chapter 16A of the Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act
- records of staff attendance at interagency meetings.

8.5 Processes to review the school's implementation should include:

- Staff training registers are reviewed by the principal yearly
- Training of casual or temporary staff is confirmed through citing of certificate or MyPL record of completion of relevant training e.g. 2017 Mandatory Child Protection training.
- Child protection is included in the school plan and annual report.
- Internal Audit report in relation to Child Protection (if applicable), and where applicable evidence of the school's response to the audit report.

9. Helpful Websites

- 1.1 Mandatory Reporters Guide <https://reporter.childstory.nsw.gov.au/s/>
- 1.2 Keep Them Safe <http://www.keepthemsafe.nsw.gov.au>
- 1.3 NSW DoE Child Protection Policy <https://education.nsw.gov.au/policy-library/policies/child-protection-policy-responding-to-and-reporting-students-at-risk-of-harm>

10. Reporting Guide for all Teaching, Administration and Support Staff

