

Student Safety and Dignity Policy

Rationale:

Children and Young People with intellectual disabilities may lack an understanding of social norms and engage in a wide range of physical and overtly sexualised behaviours towards themselves. This may put our students at risk. Staff may need to engage more often in physical contact with students as a means of meeting their duty of care. Therefore, staff need to be more vigilant and thoughtful in their physical interactions and supervision of the students.

Duty of Care is a common law principle that refers to the responsibility of staff to provide an adequate level of protection against harm to children and young people.

Duty of care to our students is the legal, professional and moral responsibility of all staff at ANSS. All staff are mandated notifiers and are required under the Children's Protection Act 1993 to report their concerns to line managers and potentially the Child Abuse Report Line (CARL 131 478), irrespective of who is implicated: a colleague, stranger, volunteer, parent or other young person.

OUTCOMES:

Staff at Adelaide North Special School (ANSS) will:

- Support each other by modelling and reminding each other about best practice in professional and respectful ways
- provide a safe, supportive and respectful teaching and learning community that ensures the physical and emotional welfare of students is safeguarded
- make sound professional judgements for the safety and dignity of students in relation to the variety of learning contexts and individual student needs
- provide students with a reasonable level of protection against foreseeable risk of injury, physical and/or emotional harm
- report all incidents and potential incidents to site leader as soon as possible for the purposes of mandated child protection and staff health safety and welfare
- meet their mandated duty of care of students with intellectual disability in a manner that respects the dignity of all children and young people as well as their vulnerabilities due to their disability.

References:

1. **Responding to abuse & neglect** – *Education and Care training 2012 – 2014 Participant’s handbook*
Government of South Australia
2. **National Safe Schools Framework** – *National Principles for the promotion of student wellbeing through safe, supportive and respectful teaching and learning communities.*
MCEECDYA December 2010
3. **Protective practices for staff in their interactions with children and young people** – *Guidelines for staff working or volunteering in education and care settings*
Government of South Australia Department of Education and Children’s Services 2011
4. **National Standards for teachers** – *Standard 7 – Engage professionally with colleagues, parents/ carers and the community*
7.2 Comply with legislative, administrative and organisational requirements.

ANSS Student and Staff Safety when on and offsite:

Rationale:

Non- physical intervention is the recognised means of managing the behaviour of students with intellectual disabilities in most circumstances.

Staff may make legitimate use of physical restraint if non-physical interventions have been exhausted or are impossible and only posing an immediate danger to him/herself or others. The restraint must be reasonable and in proportion to the circumstance of the incident.

NON-PHYSICAL INTERVENTIONS INCLUDE:

- redirecting the student’s attention to another activity (4Ds defuse, deflect, defer, deal with it)
- offering choices of alternative behaviour (when -----then)
- directing others to move away from the situation (remove the audience)
- talking with the student and asking that they stop the behaviour and telling the student what will happen if he/she does not stop
- directing the student to a safe place
- directing others to a safe place
- sending for assistance from other staff
- presenting a barrier between student and others

STUDENT SAFETY PROCEDURES:

All staff will wear high visual vests on entry to buses, and at all times, when near water at swimming pools and aquatics events to ensure ease of identification as adults with responsibility for ANSS students

1. When walking with student offsite:
 - class teacher walks at the rear of the group at all times in order to supervise both the students, and the SSOs supporting students
 - the SSO will lead the group from the front of the students and under the direction of the class teacher.
2. Class teachers will attend offsite activities with the class (*as per 2013 NIT Policy*). In the event of class teacher absence, the site leader will determine if the TRT has the knowledge of all students and context to provide an adequate level of supervision. Offsite activities can be postponed or cancelled by site leaders.
3. At large events that include students and adults unknown to ANSS staff, name and school identity tags (*type at discretion of class teacher*) will be worn by all students and staff.
4. School name tags must be worn by all staff at all times when responsible for students offsite.
5. In the event of a student displaying challenging behaviour in public, staff apply appropriate interventions and use the mobile phone to inform school leaders and seek advice.
6. Students with identified challenging behaviours will require written and up to date risk assessments that clearly outline support needs and management strategies.

STUDENT HEALTH CARE PROCEDURES:

Class teachers will ensure:

1. All Emergency Consent forms or Health Care Plans and medication is readily available and taken on excursion
 2. Storage and use of medication is adequately supervised
 3. Health Care plans for each student are reviewed, updated and documented, in consultation with the Admin SSO responsible for student data management to ensure all plans are always up to date
 4. Students who do not have an up-to-date compliant Health Care Plan will not be included in offsite activities until such time as the plan has been compliant (the most current is the last plan updated until such time as the next review)
 5. Risk assessments are current and regularly reviewed using:
 - parent information
 - current anecdotal information
 - information from previous class teacher
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ANSS Student Dignity when onsite and offsite:

Rationale:

Students displaying inappropriate behaviours in public require additional support from trusted adults to minimise the effect of the behaviour on others and maintain their dignity. Staff play an influential role in supporting students at all times at school and during offsite activities.

RELATIONAL EXPECTATIONS:

- Respectful dialogue with students at all times using positive tone and respectful comments
- Affirming comments are provided to students as often as possible
- Calm and encouraging manner in all interactions
- The use of humour as an encourager and not at the expense of student's self esteem
- Conversation between staff regarding a student or their family should not be conducted when near any students in any circumstance
- Conversations of a personal nature about matters not related to work, between adults, are to be conducted away from students

STUDENT DIGNITY PROCEDURES: TOILETING:

See Continence Care support guidelines attached & link below

<http://www.decd.sa.gov.au/speced2/pages/health/continenceFAQ/>

- Teacher is to manage the environment and circumstance to minimise the risk of potentially embarrassing situations
- Toileting - soiled nappies are to be changed as quickly as practicable and in a private location
- Students are assisted with toileting prior to each playtime in order to minimise embarrassment from incontinence incidents
- In the event of students self-exposing, staff respond quickly, respectfully and with discretion (*with a no blame approach*)

PRIVACY:

- All students in primary and secondary years are changed in change rooms at the pool and aquatics sessions at all times (JP students as per family requests and teacher judgement)
- Disabled toilets and family change rooms to be used as a priority. (Swimming pool staff will assist staff with access to these rooms if required)
- High risk of sexualised behaviour in a public place by some students requires close supervision by staff
- A risk assessment needs to be conducted and recorded for identified students



Cam Wright
Principal

2nd February 2024