

Reporting School Accidents

✓ This policy outlines the purpose of school accident reports and the responsibilities of principals and school staff in relation to the completion, storage and use of school accident reports and provision of information concerning accidents to parents and students.

1.Objectives - Policy statement

1.1

School accident reports are crucial to the Department's ability to assess, and if necessary, defend claims made against it by students and visitors who suffer injuries. School accident reports are prepared solely for this purpose.

2.Audience and applicability

2.1

All government schools.

3.Context

3.1

Students sometimes suffer injuries on school sites while engaging in activities that may or may not be authorised. They also sometimes suffer injuries while engaged in authorised activities away from the school site, such as sporting events, excursions and other educational visits.

3.2

From time to time, visitors to school sites and volunteers assisting in authorised activities on or away from the school site may also suffer injuries.

3.3

It is well established that students and visitors injured while on school sites or during the course of authorised school activities may pursue claims for compensation against the Department even when the accident may initially be considered minor in nature.

3.4

The Department's legal advisers rely on school accident reports to assess and or defend claims as a result of persons being injured on school sites or during school activities and the reports are created for this purpose.

3.5

Document history and details

4.Responsibilities and delegations

4.1

Principals are responsible for ensuring that procedures are in place so that school accident reports are prepared when appropriate and as soon as possible after the accident occurs.

4.2

Principals can sub-delegate responsibility for the preparation of school accident reports to other staff. If sub-delegated, generally such sub-delegation should be to a member of the school executive.

4.3

Principals are responsible for ensuring that all staff are aware of the requirements in relation to the preparation of school accident reports and their purpose. If individual schools develop written procedures for dealing with the preparation of school accident reports, parents should be made aware of their content.

4.4

Any individual school's accident report procedures must include a statement which reinforces that they are prepared solely to defend and assess claims for compensation and that legal professional privilege is likely to apply.

4.5

Principals can apologise to any person injured on school sites or during school activities without any negative impact on the potential liability of the Department.

4.6

Any person seeking a copy of a school accident report must be advised that they will need to make an application to the Department under the *Freedom of Information Act*. Applications can be sent to the Manager, Freedom of Information Unit, Level 7, 35 Bridge Street, Sydney 2001. A fee of \$30.00 applies.

5.Monitoring, evaluation and reporting requirements

5.1

The Legal Services Directorate will monitor and review implementation of this policy.

6.Contact

Principal Legal Officer, Legal Services Directorate (02) 9561 8538

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