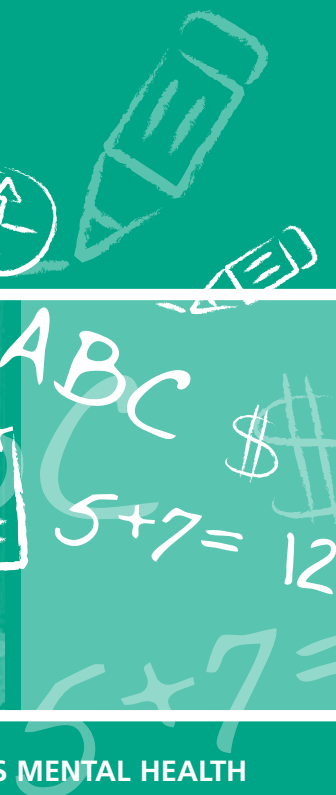


Who's Who in Primary School?

For Parents



CENTRAL COAST CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S MENTAL HEALTH

NORTHERN SYDNEY
CENTRAL COAST
NSW HEALTH

This document has been designed by the School Link (P) worker as a guide for parents. It is designed to assist parents to work with schools in supporting their child if they are having problems at school or their behaviour at home is causing concern (depending on the seriousness or sensitivity of the matter you may go straight to the Principal or the School Counsellor).

1 Contact your child's classroom teacher to do this either ring the office and make an appointment or see the teacher in person to make an appointment. Teachers may be 'on duty' or involved in school meetings during recess/lunch or before/after school so they may not be able to ring immediately back to confirm a time and date but will ring back as soon as conveniently possible. The interview can be done over the phone or in person.

2 At the meeting: be prepared, have written notes of the concerns about your child, state what your child has told you or private details of their behaviour that are causing concern. The teacher may be aware of the situation and have further information concerning your child. On the other hand this may be the first time the teacher has been made aware of the situation. The teacher will work with you to come up with the best possible plan to solve the situation. Before you leave arrange a time for a follow up meeting/phone call to get an update of the situation. Get a transcript of the meetings notes or written outcomes.

3 If you are dissatisfied with the outcome: If you felt there have been no changes to your child's situation and it is becoming worse; arrange a time to contact your child's grade supervisor (the people in the front office will have this information, these are usually the Assistant Principals). Again tell the grade supervisor of the original concerns and the outcome of the talk with the classroom teacher. At this stage if you feel there is no satisfactory outcome, you would contact the Principal or if there is still no resolution contact a Senior Education Officer in your local office of the Department of Education and Training on **4348 9100**.

4 General Information: The following information provides some strategies that the school may use for your child in certain circumstances; you may raise them as a way of responding to your child's needs. The school will then best determine the appropriate course of action required for your child as some services are governed by their own referral criteria which may not be appropriate for your child.

MONITORING CARD

- Your child may be placed on a monitoring card where they give it to their teacher who states how they behaved and achieved during the lesson. This is usually signed by an executive and a parent daily and is a useful communication system.

INCIDENT REPORT

- After an incident has occurred at the school, your child will be asked to write or provide a statement. This is used so the teachers involved (usually executives) can investigate and follow up the incident. If the incident involves other students there may be direct follow up with them that your child is not aware of as the information will need to be kept confidential.

MENTOR

- If your child is having concerns around issues such as bullying or anger one strategy a school may use is to organise a teacher/student mentor, who your child feels comfortable to go to when a situation occurs. Some schools use 'time out cards' for students to use to go to a staff member to discuss current concerns.

SCHOOL COUNSELLOR

- Students may refer themselves to the school counsellor or may seek an interview at the suggestion of a teacher, a parent or carer, or a friend. Usually parents would be involved in primary school.
- Parents or carers may seek advice from school counsellors about their child's school progress, educational options, including access to special education services, behaviour and for information about help available from other agencies.

LEARNING SUPPORT TEAM

- Your child may be referred to the school's Learning Support Team (LST) if your child has learning difficulties, behaviour issues or welfare concerns. This is usually initiated by a teacher. The meetings usually consist of an Assistant/Deputy Principal, School counsellor, Support Teacher – Learning Assistance and possibly Support Teacher – Behaviour. Here a plan is organised and put into place and the outcomes are reviewed at the next meeting. These meetings usually occur once a week/fortnight. It is likely that parents are contacted and provided with feedback regarding their child's progress.

LEARNING SUPPORT MEETING

- You may also be asked to attend a Learning Support Meeting where several staff who are involved in working with your child. This could consist of an Executive teacher (Principal/ Deputy Principal/Assistant Principal), Classroom teacher, Counsellor, STLA, STB, HSLO etc. This is where all the staff come together and organises a plan to suit the needs of your child **(you can take a support person with you)**

CASE CONFERENCE

- A case conference is a meeting where there are ongoing concerns about a student. Local school staff attend but so do interested outside agencies who may be working with your child and family. These may include: parents, Department of Health, Department of Community Services (DoCS), Department of Housing (DoH), outside counselling agency etc. The conference will begin by outlining everyone's role and their knowledge of the child, family and any issues. The aim of the conference is to plan for future support and will probably set a review date.

SUPPORT TEACHER LEARNING ASSISTANCE

- If a child is having problems academically they may be referred to the Support Teacher Learning Assistance (STLA). This may occur through the school's learning support team meetings identified by the classroom teacher or by the results of the schools testing procedures such as Basic skills Tests. If you have concerns about your child's learning contact their classroom teacher and discuss the matter.

HOME SCHOOL LIAISON OFFICER

- If a child is refusing to go to school: After the school has exhausted all school strategies then the school makes an application to Home School Liaison Officer (HSLO) (see separate sheet on staff roles and responsibilities). Schools may have a Phone In Program (PIP) operating. This is where a person is employed by the school to ring students at home who are absent from school to confirm reasons for being absent. The schools may target year groups or the amount of days absent eg. call students who have had 3 days in a row absent from school and where there has been no contact made to the school.

SUPPORT TEACHER BEHAVIOUR DIFFICULTIES

- If a child is having behaviour difficulties: After school has exhausted all local strategies the school can contact Support Teacher Behaviour Difficulties (STB) (see separate sheet on staff roles and responsibilities).

5 The above information is to be used as a guideline only as some of the processes will be different depending on the size of your child's school. But feel free to ask about the options that are available for your child. Remember; having a clear and open communication between you and your child's school will help to make your child's time at school an easier process.



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Roles and Responsibilities of School Staff

PRINCIPAL

The Principal has overall responsibility for the whole school – students, staff (teaching and administrative), teaching and learning and all associated areas. This includes the education and welfare of all students, all educational programs, learning outcomes, the management of staff and staff welfare development, financial management of the school, the management of the school property and the development of partnerships between the school and the school community.

DEPUTY PRINCIPAL

Many infants/primary schools have a deputy principal. The deputy principal is responsible for the day-to-day organisation of the school and for the welfare of all students and staff. The deputy principal along with the principal is responsible for overseeing the teaching and learning programs in the school.

ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL

Assistant principals are responsible for the day-to-day organisation of the school and for the welfare of all students and staff. However, as most assistant principals also have a class to teach their responsibilities are shared with the principal.

CLASSROOM TEACHER

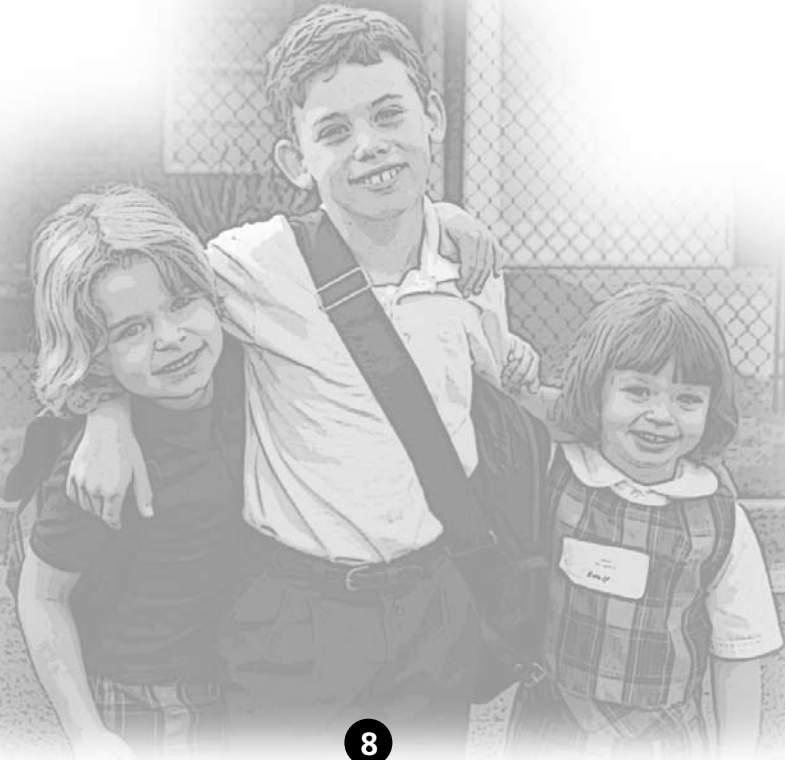
Teachers are very important people for students. The classroom teacher becomes the surrogate parent/caregiver accepting responsibility for your child's learning and welfare while at school

LIBRARIAN

The teacher-librarian is a member of the school's teaching staff and is actively involved in teaching/learning processes. Teaching is an integral part of the work of the teacher-librarian. An awareness of teaching activities in the classrooms enables the teacher-librarian to be a more effective teacher. The teacher-librarian provides relevant resources (books, videos, tapes, computer programs, internet access and other resources) for students and teachers.

ESL TEACHER (ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE)

ESL teachers provide specialist assistance to students from non-English speaking backgrounds. They teach ESL students the English language and literacy skills needed for learning in all subjects. Often they work on a one-to-one basis with students while supplementing this by also working in the classroom alongside the classroom teacher.



SCHOOL COUNSELLOR

School counsellors are experienced teachers who have a degree in psychology and post-graduate qualifications in school counselling. They work with students of all ages, and their families, from pre-school to Year 12.

Their work includes:

- counselling students
- assisting parents or carers to make informed decisions about their child's education
- assessing students' learning and behaviour
- assisting schools to identify and address disabilities that affect students' learning
- liaising with other agencies concerned with the well-being of students.

School counsellors are members of schools' student welfare and learning support teams.

Parents or carers may seek advice from school counsellors about their child's school progress and for information about help available from other agencies.

Except when students refer themselves to the school counsellor, parents or carers will be involved from the outset.

Whether working with students, parents or carers, or teachers, school counsellors will explain how they work, listen carefully to what is said, help clarify options and encourage informed decision-making.

School counselling is a confidential service and school counsellors will check with students, parents or carers before passing on information (such as the results of tests of learning difficulties) to others. Confidentiality will be maintained unless legal requirements, eg. child protection legislation, override it. Nor will confidentiality be maintained where someone may suffer serious harm from information being withheld.

School counsellors are not at every school every day. It is necessary for parents or carers to make an appointment by telephoning the school.

Students will be told of the arrangements applying in their school as to how they can see the school counsellor.

HOME SCHOOL LIAISON OFFICERS (HSLO)

Home School Liaison Officers may be called upon to assist students and their parents/caregivers when students are not coming to school every day. Initially where there is a problem in maintaining regular attendance, the school's student welfare and counselling services should be used. When school personnel have difficulty restoring the regular attendance of students, the principal may request the assistance of home school liaison officers to support the school's attendance program.

SUPPORT TEACHER BEHAVIOUR DIFFICULTIES (STB)

Every school in the state has access to a support teacher behaviour (STB). The STB may provide direct support to the student or may assist the class teacher in behaviour management, social skills development or small group work.

SUPPORT TEACHER/LEARNING ASSISTANCE (STLA)

These teachers help students who are having difficulty in learning. They work with regular classroom teachers to help them make the classroom work more manageable. They also help students to be more confident and independent in their learning.

ABORIGINAL COMMUNITY LIAISON OFFICER (ACLO)

ACLOs work with Aboriginal students, their families and schools. These officers operate across the Region and assist student welfare and home school liaison officers to restore and maintain the regular school attendance of Aboriginal students. They can be contacted at the local Department of Education and Training office and work to resolve issues on 4348 9100.

ANTI-RACISM CONTACT OFFICER (ARCO)

Racism in all its forms is rejected by the Department. Each school has appointed an anti-racism contact officer (ARCO) to help parents/caregivers, students or staff experiencing problems with racism and to provide interested parents with copies of the Department's policies on this issue. The ARCO will listen to the problem and, with the principal, find ways to resolve it as quickly as possible. Contact your principal or the school's ARCO for help.

ANTI-DISCRIMINATION CONTACT OFFICER

Schools have developed procedures for dealing with complaints about discrimination against students based on race, sex, marital status, disability (including HIV), age and transgender or homosexuality. These procedures complement the existing Anti-racism Policy and related grievance procedures. Each school has an anti-racism contact officer and an anti-discrimination officer; they may be the same person.

ABORIGINAL EDUCATION ASSISTANT (AEA)

AEAs are placed in schools where large numbers of Aboriginal students are enrolled. They work closely with teaching staff to develop culturally appropriate resources and programs. They promote Aboriginal education, encourage students and support parents. They provide role models for Aboriginal students. AEAs work with teachers to assist Aboriginal students achieve to their best potential. AEAs keep the Aboriginal community informed of students' progress and achievements, school activities, new programs, changes and parent meetings.

School Administrative and Support Staff

SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION MANAGER

Senior school assistants are employed in all schools. They assist the principal in planning and maintaining school routines and are responsible for the efficient management of the school or centre's financial and administration functions. Their role also requires them to supervise other school assistants and promote training opportunities.

SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION OFFICER

The first person to greet you when you arrive at the school will probably be the school assistant or senior school assistant. The school assistant supports the Principal or the supervisor maintain school routines. They also assist in classroom activities and financial administration matters. Their range of duties includes: assisting in the school library, science or home science areas; and assisting in the school office or reception area.

After appropriate training, the school assistant can also volunteer to administer first aid or prescribed medications to students.

TEACHERS' AIDE (SPECIAL)

Under the supervision and direction of a teacher, a teachers' aide (special) assists in classroom activities, school routines, and the care and management of students with disabilities and behaviour disorders.

Their role includes assisting teachers in school and community centres in:

- the implementation of individual education programs;
- providing opportunities for students to develop personal, social independent living and pre-vocational skills;
- and attending to the personal care needs of students.

