

Playground supervision

Duty of care

The duty of care given by department staff to students arises directly from the special relationship between teachers and students. Duty of care requires teachers to take measures to protect students against risks of harm or injury which reasonably could have been foreseen.

Reasonable care should be taken to prevent risks of harm or injury. Teachers need to be vigilant about identifying potential hazards and dangerous conduct as well as pro-actively promoting student safety and wellbeing.

Classrooms are relatively ordered, defined and structured environments, with clear rules and the visible presence of a teacher. Transitioning students from the classroom to the playground, and handing responsibility to the duty teacher, requires consideration of professional accountability and collegial support. The younger the student, the greater the supervisory needs.

Components of effective playground supervision

Being observant and responsive when on the playground, whether officially 'on duty' or just passing through, is essential. It is important to consistently practise:

- active movement and visibility around the grounds
- proactive intervention to avoid potential problems
- positive interaction with students
- regular acknowledgement of appropriate play
- checks for the correct use of play equipment
- encouragement for keeping a clean, safe environment
- regular reminders to students about the expectations, rules and responsibilities
- fair and consistent implementation of school policies.

Improving the playground

The playground is an important learning environment for students. A well-structured and well-equipped playground promotes positive interactions between students and between

staff and students, which is beneficial for social competence, for cognitive development, and for promoting a positive school culture.

Survey students and staff to identify any playground issues and determine where and how to make improvements. Visit the [NSW anti-bullying website](#) for related resources.