



Media Release

For immediate Release

“Our heart goes out to the Manly West Public School community”

The Australian Science Teachers Association (ASTA) and the Science Teachers Association NSW (STANSW) were saddened to hear the news yesterday of the incident at Manly West Public School which resulted in a number of students and teachers injured during a science experiment.

“Our thoughts are with the students and the teachers who were injured in the incident and we wish a speedy recovery for everyone involved.” said Ms Anderson, President of the Australian Science Teachers Association

“An incident like this affects the whole school community and we are thinking of the extended Manly West community at this time.” said Dr Lauren McKnight, Vice President of the Science Teachers Association NSW.

ASTA and STANSW support evidence-based approaches to teaching science, using hands-on, practical experiences to facilitate learning.

“It is important for school students to get hands-on science experience in the classroom in a safe environment. This deepens the learning experience, making science more engaging and relevant for students. The key to getting this right is the managing of risks through sensible risk mitigation.”

Science practical activities are diverse covering the many disciplines within science: biological, chemical, physical, earth and space sciences. Within each discipline, there are a range of hazards to consider. Teachers and laboratory technicians follow strict risk profiling and undertake risk assessments to maintain safety for their students; however, sadly no activity is completely risk free.

Whilst schools have safety policies and procedures in place to address the management of the risks associated with delivering a practical science curriculum, our experience is that science teachers and laboratory technicians often need support and resources to make sure that students and staff remain safe.

The Australian Government Department of Education is currently supporting ASTA to deliver Science ASSIST. Science ASSIST is the only service of its kind in Australia. It is a dynamic portal that provides school science educators with information, resources and consistent, well-researched, authoritative technical advice on school science laboratory safety and procedures in line with relevant state and territory requirements. The resource includes an advice service, where teachers are able to receive personalised technical advice on specific issues. (<https://assist.asta.edu.au/>)

Science Safety Matters and the state Science Teachers Associations across Australia along with the national Federation the Australian Science Teachers Association (ASTA) have highly experienced teachers and educators ready to help.

Media Contact

Australian Science Teachers Association
Ms Jane Powles - 0424 350 748

Science Teachers Association NSW
Ms Irena Tasevska - 0449 863 354