



ST. PATRICK'S PRIMARY SCHOOL

CRITICAL INCIDENT POLICY

Rationale

The school may become directly or indirectly involved in a tragic or traumatic event to which it must respond appropriately. These guidelines provide a framework for action and would not necessarily be followed in all cases.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide a framework for action should the school need to respond to a critical incident.

Definition

A critical incident denotes a disaster or crisis situation that causes people to experience strong emotional or psychological distress which has the potential to interfere with their ability to function either at the time of the event or later.

Among the critical incidents that may affect the school community are:

- The death or critical injury of a student, staff or prominent school community member
- The destruction of the whole or part of the school
- Major vandalism
- Students witnessing serious injury or death
- Natural disasters
- Terminal illness of a member of the school community
- Use of violent weapons in the school
- Media coverage of issues in a way that creates concerns in the school community

Implementation

Gather Information

The Principal needs to be notified immediately the Critical Incident has occurred. The Principal (or delegate) will then confirm the incident and collect information about the incident from reliable sources as soon as possible.

Confirmation may be obtained by contacting:

- People involved
- Police
- Hospital
- Parish Priest

Details required may include:

- Who
- Where
- When
- Student
- Family members
- Staff
- Visitors At school
- Away from the school During school hours / After hours
- On holiday

Plan

The Principal will convene an urgent meeting of the Crisis Co-ordination Team

The latter may include:

- Deputy Principal
- Student Welfare Leader
- Religious Education Leader
- Members from the Executive Team
- Classroom teachers
- Other staff
- Outside agencies
- CEM personnel
- Parish Priest
- Staff member to be responsible for setting up of recovery

If the incident occurs during the school holidays, the Principal (or delegate) will contact the relevant personnel to convene said meeting in order to plan the immediate response and what should be done the first day of return to school.

From this meeting, a person will be appointed to coordinate the Action / Management plan devised.

When appointing coordinators, care should be taken to ensure that these persons are not traumatised by the event to the extent that their capacity to facilitate response or recovery will be impaired.

Inform/Consult

Immediate Notifications

1. Appropriate emergency services
2. Victorian Emergency Management Coordinator (Harry Allard) by phone: 92670404
3. As soon as possible forward Incident Report via fax or email to Harry Allard & Sale Emergency Management Contact Person (Bernie Myors)
4. Education Consultant
5. Neighbouring schools (if appropriate)

Brief Staff

The Principal will call a full staff briefing and provide the correct, up-to-date facts of the incident and outline the proposed Management Plan.

(If the incident is during the School Holidays, the Principal's Office will coordinate a response which provides the opportunity for a full staff briefing, especially in reaction to the Action Management Plan).

These meetings may also suggest sources for personal support for teachers, especially if the incident is on campus.