



ST CECILIA'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL CRISIS MANAGEMENT IN SCHOOLS 2-D2

DEFINITION

A 'critical incident' is a major traumatic event which impacts on the psychological, emotional and physical functioning of those directly or indirectly involved. Critical incidents are extremely distressing incidents that interfere with people's abilities to cope and problem-solve. Sudden death, an accident, a natural disaster affecting the school, drowning, murder, suicide or a hostage situation are examples of critical incidents that a school may need to respond to. Critical incidents have a major effect on family, friends and school staff associated with those experiencing the crisis.

RATIONALE

St Cecilia's has a responsibility to provide a safe and supportive environment for staff, students and members of the community.

Learning outcomes for students and the wellbeing of students, staff and community members can be adversely affected by crisis events. Appropriate planning and intervention can reduce the likelihood of such events and mitigate the impact should a crisis occur.

A Crisis Management Plan enables the school to respond in a planned and thoughtful manner in a crisis. We acknowledge that as a social system any crisis will impact throughout the community and that our planned response will assist members in their period of turmoil.

GUIDELINES

An effective response requires the:

- Crisis Management Team to respond in an organised and efficient way (as outlined in the Crisis Management Response Plan)
- Formation and training of a crisis management response team (see role outlines)
- Familiarisation of staff with the crisis management response plan and its implementation
- Review of the plan after a critical incident to identify further training needs and adjustments to the plan
- Plan overview be displayed alongside evacuation procedures in each classroom
- Inclusion of the complete policy in the staff handbook, with the administration team and the Administration Officer
- Regular updating of contact details for team members
- Development of individual action plan for situations where there is a known risk (for example: attempt by a non-authorised person to contact a child)

PREVENTION

Staff will aim to prevent risk or injury by:

- Carefully planning excursions and using well serviced transport
- Comprehensive coverage of play areas during lunch and recess breaks
- Clear school rules which are periodically revised with students
- Instructing parents in the pick-up and drop-off area arrangements in the school newsletter
- Familiarity with family circumstances where free access is denied to one parent or restraining orders exist
- Knowledge of school health policies (first aid, sun protection) as outlined in policy file.
- Visible display of students with allergies or illnesses in high traffic staff only areas

CRISIS MANAGEMENT RESPONSE PLAN

OVERVIEW

Teacher Tasks	Teacher Caregiver at the scene	Principal's Tasks
*Assess situation and response for example; first aid evacuation		*Gather information
*Organise necessary emergency services		*Liaise with police, emergency services, CEO, media, social worker, School Board and Parish Priest as appropriate
*Ensure the welfare and safety of all students and staff	Principal	*Information and support for affected families
*Inform Principal of critical incident as soon as possible		*Arrange contact with school crisis response team (or subset)
		*Principal to meet with team (or subset)
Team Tasks (examples)	Crisis Response Team	
*See role statements		
*Document for staff and children		
		Agenda (examples)
*Allocate tasks		*Prayer
*Establish support centre		*Briefing on incident
*Inform staff of meeting	Staff Meeting	*Counsellor input on grief reactions/activities
*Organise refreshments for staff		*Prepared information for students
*Ensure support for helping personnel/Principal		*Access to support centre
		*Relief for distressed staff
Teacher Tasks	Advise Students	
*Withdraw special friends 'at risk' children to support area		
*Advise rest of children as a class group	Support Service	Support Tasks
*Very distressed children to be accompanied to support area		*Social Worker to co-ordinate the service and organise additional support if required
*Letter sent to parents	Inform Parents	*Provide support and counselling for children and staff
		*Monitor children in 'at risk' groups
Agenda etc.		*Arrange with parents for children to be collected if necessary
*Review	End of Day Staff Meeting	*Inform parents of how they can support their children re trauma/loss
*Support planning		
*Daily meeting initially and then as required		

CRISIS MANAGEMENT TEAM

The Crisis Management Response Team

Depending on the nature of the incident, the co-ordinator (usually the Principal) may require the involvement of the entire team or a small subset of the team.

The team may consist of:

†	Principal	Peter Allen	0427 006 636
†	Assistant Principal	Mandy Sheen	0419 196 120
†	School Psychologist (office hours)	Fiona Currans	0477 301 280
†	Parish Priest	Fr John Martin	0417 436 714
†	Board Chairperson	Dean Rehn	0418 953 416

EMERGENCY NUMBERS

FIRST AIDERS- Hilary Rozario, Peter Allen

POLICE, FIRE BRIGADE, AMBULANCE 000 or mob: 112

PORT HEDLAND POLICE 9173 8100

SOUTH HEDLAND POLICE 9160 2100

HIGH STANDARD SECURITY 9240 4122

Specific Incidences:

Suicide

Accident

Bomb Threat – outside school grounds in close proximity

Natural Disaster - Earthquake, Cyclone

Chemical Spill

Kidnapping / attempted Abduction

Unknown person on grounds

Threats made to staff, students or parents on school grounds

CRISIS MANAGEMENT

DETAILED CHECKLIST

The First Twenty-four Hours

- † Maintain confidentiality of all parties
- † Gather information
- † Decide on level of response required
- † Ensure the welfare and safety of all students and staff
- † Notify the relevant authorities eg: School Improvement Officer – Geraldton 0417975763
- † Contact CEWA Schools Consultant - 08 63805126
- † Contact the school Crisis Management Response team
- † Keep written record of events
- † Find out facts from the police and when the facts can be released
- † Is parental permission required to release information? Liaise with family
- † Make contact with families of victim and arrange to visit as soon as possible
- † Prepare an information release for staff, children, parents and the media
- † If there are siblings at other schools their schools should be informed
- † Inform staff
- † Support distressed staff
- † Arrange for relief teachers if necessary
- † Decide on means of information transfer to students
- † Give staff guidelines for supporting and informing students
- † Give secretary an accurate detailed statement for incoming calls
- † Refer media enquiries to the Principal
- † Establish a support centre for distressed students, parents and staff
- † Ensure critically involved school personnel have support
- † School staff to meet for support, to review the day and plan for next day
- † Crisis Management Response team to meet for further planning

The First Week

- † Restore normal routines as soon as possible
- † Maintain confidentiality of all parties
- † Arrange for relief teachers as needed
- † Provide opportunities for staff and children to talk
- † **Attend to victim's desk/personal belongings**
- † Decide who will attend the funeral (children need parent consent to attend)
- † Discuss the possibility of a school memorial service
- † Arrange ongoing support and counselling if required
- † Continue to monitor reactions within the school community and provide support
- † Organise group debriefings or diffusions if required
- † Update staff, students and parents with new information
- † Maintain contact and support to families of victims
- † Monitor those in caregiver roles

The Longer Term

- † Provide advice, back-up and support for staff and parents
- † Monitor students in 'at risk' groups for emotional or behavioural problems
- † Monitor staff coping
- † Note anniversary date and consider how school will respond
- † Help staff/students to understand the coronial enquiry process and deal with issues this may precipitate
- † Crisis Management Response Team to reconvene and review the response and make any necessary adjustments to the Crisis Management Policy
- † Acknowledge the contribution of those with special roles and provide support if necessary
- † Review each crisis to establish best practice procedures for possible future incorporation

Crisis Management Roles and Tasks

Co-ordinator	Principal or Assistant Principal if Principal absent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Direct initial response (for example emergency services, evacuate students, contact CEO) *Gather facts and keep a written record of events *see appendix *Prepare statement *Liaison with media *Inform other team members
Assistant Co-ordinator	Assistant Principal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Assist in logistics of management and support of children *Assist Principal with fact gathering and with preparation of statements, informing staff, gathering relief staff *Organise appropriate liturgy or whole school assemblies
Counselling Co-ordinator	School Psychologist	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Consult with Principal – immediate support to child/family if appropriate *Assist in supporting children, staff and parents as relevant *Co-ordinate support service and involve school psychologist or external counsellors as needed *Provide information to staff/parents on trauma, loss and grief
Pastoral Support	Parish Priest	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Provide pastoral support for staff and parents *Liaise with co-ordinator re. school liturgy/ services
Additional Team	Selected Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *As directed by coordinator eg (teacher with class member involved in incident) *Answer telephone enquiries with reference to prepared statement
Contact and Liaison	Receptionist	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Contact staff, families as requested by co-ordinator *Prepare letters/statements as requested
Occupational Health & Safety	School Officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *To identify risks and improvements

LOCK DOWN PROCEDURE

1. A call is made over the PA System, and it is announced that, "Mr Smith you have a phone **call**" to signal staff they need to initiate lockdown procedures
2. Teachers lock classroom doors and make secure and all other entry points to rooms. Move students to a central part of the room away from windows. Teachers to advise office staff if there is a student out of the room giving their name and location.
3. Principal and Assistant Principal, check the grounds to ensure all students and staff are in classrooms. This is done together, never to be only one person. (This is only followed if considered safe and is at the discretion of the principal and assistant principal.)
4. Toilet blocks checked and locked.
5. Administration Officer calls local Police (Port Hedland) 9173 8100, (South Hedland) 9160 2100 or Triple 000 and report incident.
6. The person of concern is monitored and approached if deemed safe to do so. Eg. a parent who wants to pick their children up, may be happy to sit and speak with the principal.
7. All documentation recorded on the incident.
8. Police contacted as part of procedure, even if the person leaves the school grounds and is no longer considered a threat.

Crisis Management Checklist

Action Required	Yes	No
<i>The First Twenty-Four Hours</i>		
Gather concise and accurate information		
Decide on level of response required		
Keep written record of events		
Notify the relevant authorities		
Contact the school Crisis Management Response team		
Ensure the welfare and safety of all students and staff		
Find out facts from the police and when the facts can be released		
Is parental permission required to release information? Liaise with family		
Make contact with families of victim and arrange to visit as soon as possible		
Prepare an information release for staff, children, parents and the media		
If there are siblings at other schools their schools should be informed		
Inform staff		
Support distressed staff		
Arrange for relief teachers if necessary		
Decide on means of information transfer to students		
Give staff guidelines for supporting and informing students		
Give secretary an accurate detailed statement for incoming calls		
Refer media enquiries to the Principal		
Establish a support centre for distressed students, parents and staff		
Ensure critically involved school personnel have support		
School staff to meet for support, to review the day and plan for next day		
Crisis Management Response team to meet for further planning		
<i>The First Week</i>		
Restore normal routines as soon as possible		
Arrange for relief teachers as needed		
Provide opportunities for staff and children to talk		
Attend to victim's desk/personal belongings		
Decide who will attend the funeral (children need parent consent to attend)		
Discuss the possibility of a school memorial service		
Arrange ongoing support and counselling if required		
Continue to monitor reactions within the school community and provide support		
Organise group debriefings or diffusions if required		
Update staff, students and parents with new information		
Maintain contact and support to families of victims		
Monitor those in caregiver roles		
<i>The Longer Term</i>		
Provide advice, back-up and support for staff and parents		
Monitor students in 'at risk' groups for emotional or behavioural problems		
Monitor staff coping		
Note anniversary date and consider how school will respond		
Help staff/students to understand the coronial enquiry process and deal with issues this may precipitate		
Crisis Management Response Team to reconvene and review the response and make any necessary adjustments to the Crisis Management Policy		
Acknowledge the contribution of those with special roles and provide support if necessary		

FIRE EVACUATION

OUTCOMES

- Identify any areas of weakness within the Fire Evacuation procedure.
- Identify problems with physical movement of children in and around the school.
- Determine the adequacy of accounting procedure re student, staff, visitors and contractors.

TEACHERS QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Did you have any difficulty in recognizing and responding to the evacuation signal?
YES/NO

If YES please comment

2. Were you able to move the children you were responsible for to the designated assembly area without difficulty? YES/NO

If YES please comment

3. Were you able to account for all the children you were responsible for without difficulty? YES/NO

If YES please comment

4. Are there any suggestions that you can make which would improve the efficiency and effectiveness of our evacuation plan?
