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**
- Assess situation and response for example; first aid evacuation
- Organise necessary emergency services
- Ensure the welfare and safety of all students and staff
- Inform Principal of critical incident as soon as possible

**Teacher Caregiver at the scene**
- Assess situation and Caregiver at the scene

**Principal’s Tasks**
- Gather information
- Liaise with police, emergency services, CEO, media, social worker, School Board and Parish Priest as appropriate

**Crisis Response Team Tasks (examples)**
- See role statements
- Document for staff and children
- Allocate tasks
- Establish support centre
- Inform staff of meeting
- Organise refreshments for staff
- Ensure support for helping personnel/Principal

**Crisis Response Team**
- Agenda (examples)
- Prayer
- Briefing on incident
- Counsellor input on grief reactions/activities
- Prepared information for students
- Access to support centre
- Relief for distressed staff

**Team Tasks (examples)**
- See role statements
- Document for staff and children
- Allocate tasks
- Establish support centre
- Inform staff of meeting
- Organise refreshments for staff
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**Staff Meeting**
- *Prayer*
- *Briefing on incident*
- *Counsellor input on grief reactions/activities*
- *Prepared information for students*
- *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
  - Very distressed children to be accompanied to support area
  - Letter sent to parents

**Support Service**
- Support Tasks
  - Social Worker to co-ordinate the service and organise additional support if required
  - Provide support and counselling for children and staff
  - Monitor children in ‘at risk’ groups
  - Arrange with parents for children to be collected if necessary

**Inform Parents**
- *Inform parents of how they can support their children re trauma/loss*

**Agenda etc.**
- Review
- Support planning
- Daily meeting initially and then as required

**End of Day**
- Staff Meeting
The Crisis 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 Curans 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

Porthedland 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

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<tr>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Responsibilities</th>
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| Co-ordinator          | Principal or Assistant Principal if Principal absent | *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                                | *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                              | *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                                      | *Provide pastoral support for staff and parents  
                          |                                                    | *Liaise with co-ordinator re. school liturgy/services |
| Additional Team       | Selected Staff                                     | *As directed by coordinator eg (teacher with class member involved in incident)  
                          |                                                    | *Answer telephone enquiries with reference to prepared statement |
| Contact and Liaison   | Receptionian                                       | *Contact staff, families as requested by co-ordinator  
                          |                                                    | *Prepare letters/statements as requested |
| Occupational Health & Safety | School Officer                              | *To identify risks and improvements |
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

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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 QUESTIONNAIRES

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?

Written 2013
Reviewed 2016
Due for review 2019