



Crisis Management Policy

Effective Date	May 2012
Review Date	May 2014
Associated Documents	• N/A

It is the responsibility of all members of the Catholic school community to collaborate in the provision of a caring environment.

A critical incident may be defined as an event that is outside the range of normal experience and has the potential to affect the wellbeing of staff and students and have a negative effect on the normal running of the College. It includes any event that causes disruption, creates significant danger or risk and which creates a situation where staff, students and parents feel unsafe, vulnerable and under stress.

Incidents vary in type and complexity. However, the following four principles apply to all situations:

- Provision of clear accurate information.
- Description of action to be followed.
- Provision of help for all affected.
- Maintenance of normal school program.

The guidelines below provide a framework for the development of a response plan.

1. Obtain accurate information (family, Police etc). Deal only with substantiated facts.
2. Establish an open line of contact with the family or families directly involved.
3. Meet with key support personnel to plan the management of the situation.
4. The team may include: Principal, Deputy Principal, School Counsellor, LOPC, Homeroom and Pastoral teachers, OH & S coordinator.
5. As soon as possible inform staff including all ancillary and voluntary workers in the school at that time at a full staff meeting. Allow questions and discussion as they arise. Dispel rumours. Prepare staff for briefing students.
6. Inform students in small groups/homeroom groups giving facts about the incident, school actions, counselling available, media involvement.
7. Assist students to express their thoughts and feelings in a caring, non-judgemental environment. Assure them that their responses are normal emotional responses to an abnormal situation. Give information regarding support options available throughout the day.
8. Identify 'at-risk' students and staff. Discuss support options – counselling, referral etc.
9. Prepare a statement for parents and provide information to the community as to what has happened, and what is being done.
10. The Principal will deal with all media requirements. A written press release may be useful. If necessary, protect others from contact with the media.
11. Continue normal routines where possible and encourage a return to the normal school day as quickly as possible. Be flexible with those in need of help. Be aware that many people may be deeply affected, eg. An event may cause a person to recall some traumatic event involving them in the past. The anniversary may also be a difficult time.
12. Offer the opportunity for staff to debrief at the end of the day.

After the event:

1. Continue contact with the family/ies. Identify their expectations of the school and how the school might be of further assistance to them.
2. Continue to keep staff, students and parents informed.
3. Monitor, be sensitive to, and respond to staff and student's needs over a period of time.
4. Provide on-going counselling and support as required.