

ST EUPHEMIA COLLEGE

K-12



CRITICAL INCIDENT POLICY

2014

1. Policy Statement

This Policy outlines the purpose of School critical incident reports and the responsibilities of the Principal and school staff in relation to the completion, storage and use of school critical incident reports and provision of information concerning accidents to staff, parents, caregivers and students.

A critical incident is a traumatic event or threat which causes extreme stress, fear, physical and/or emotional distress or injury.

2. Audience and applicability

The Critical Incident Policy covers staff, students, visitors to the school and volunteers assisting in authorised activities, such as sporting events, excursions and other educational visits on or away from the School that may suffer critical incidents and injuries.

3. Context/Rationale

Critical incidents are often unexpected and sudden and have a profound impact on the well-being of those related to the incident. The response made by the College at such times can have a major impact on those experiencing distress. A coordinated and informed approach can provide a sense of control and cohesiveness during a time of crisis.

A critical incident requires immediate responsive action beyond that which could be reasonably expected from the College's management team during the day to day running of the School. The purpose of this Policy is to provide procedures to normalise the activities of the College in the event of an emergency with minimal disruption to all concerned.

The Critical Incident Management Team (CIMT) referred to throughout this Policy and Guidelines and Procedures comprises of:

- the Principal and Director
- High School Administration Coordinator
- the Counsellor
- School Executives
- High School Year Coordinators.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

Responsibility of the Principal/Delegated Authority

The Principal/Delegated Authority is expected to:

- initiate and supervise the Critical Incident Policy and Procedures
- determine immediate course of action depending on circumstances
- gather factual information on the incident
- arrange for contact with emergency services if required
- arrange and chair a brief meeting of Executive and Student Welfare staff (as a matter of urgency) to consider implementation of action plan
- formulate a statement for staff and students
- arrange and chair a meeting of all staff to inform them of the situation and to advise action to be taken
- be the only School contact with the media
- contact parents and caregivers of students directly involved
- liaise with external authorities eg police, ambulance, etc

- collect and impart particulars of those involved to authorities where necessary eg excursion accident
- contact parents and caregivers where responsibility does not involve external authorities eg police involved in case of fatalities
- contact appropriate authorities to inform them of the crisis and arranging for them to visit the College to discuss needs/assist in the management of the situation
- arrange an assembly to speak to students about the incident
- determine and arrange staff assistance in debriefing room(s) as requested by the Student Welfare team
- ensure that new staff members are made aware of the Critical Incident Policy
- provide resources for professional development in Critical Incident Management
- arrange for ancillary staff to contact parents and caregivers
- supervise/brief ancillary staff
- assess whether legal assistance might be required after the emergency response and refer accordingly.

Responsibility of the School Executive

The School Executive is expected to:

- mobilise extra staff (not teaching at the time) where possible to assist in any way required
- be mobile around the school throughout the day to assist staff in handling any problems that may arise
- supervise and ensure sensible evacuation procedures of the School buildings if necessary
- liaise with other executives to discover areas of need (where indicated).

Responsibility of the Grade/Year Coordinators

The Grade/Year Coordinators are expected to:

- ensure that staff members are aware of students who may be in emotional distress affected by trauma / critical incidents and in need of special consideration, taking into account privacy concerns
- observe students in their groups and help determine level of assistance required
- identify students 'at risk' and record names of all students with 'Special Needs' identified during the day
- meet with other Welfare team members and Executives to consider the management of the critical incident in the short and long term
- direct students with 'Special Needs' to designated debriefing room(s).

Responsibility of the Staff

The Staff is expected to:

- attend staff meeting and be familiar with the facts of the incident, the School's response and their roles and actions
- direct all outside media enquiries only to the Principal
- support the Principal/Delegated Authority, all staff members, students and parents and caregivers, especially those 'at risk'
- liaise with the Principal/Delegated Authority and Critical Incident Management Team to facilitate an intervention plan
- provide information to class groups as agreed with Critical Incident Management Team
- monitor own responses to the incident and seeking support as appropriate
- make themselves aware of the relevant policy and procedures relating to critical incidents
- follow mandatory reporting requirements as required.

Responsibility of the School Counsellor

The School Counsellor is expected to:

- meet with other Welfare team members and Executives to consider the management of the critical incident in the short and long term
- coordinate counselling activities in debriefing room(s)
- assist community health staff in assessing readiness of students involved to return to the College
- assist the Principal/Delegated Authority with debriefing.

Responsibility of the Ancillary Staff

The Ancillary Staff is expected to:

- contact parents and caregivers of students who need to go home
- handle enquiries from parents and caregivers (not the media)
- attend staff meeting/s to become familiar with the facts of the incident
- support the Principal/Delegated Authority, teaching staff and students
- liaise with Critical Incidents Management Team to supervise, telephone/fax and email communications
- direct all outside media enquiries to the Principal
- monitor own responses to the incident and seek support as appropriate.

5. Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting Requirements

All critical incidents must be reported to the Principal who will provide clear guidelines and procedures to all staff members.

A report will be prepared by the Principal or workplace supervisor or delegate. It is preferable, wherever possible, that the collation of accident reports be undertaken by a senior staff member who has not been directly involved in the incident.

After each critical incident, a meeting of the Critical Incident Management Team (CIMT), will be held to evaluate the Critical Incident Report and evaluate the effectiveness of the School's response.

The Principal will identify, plan and oversee any training that may be required to improve the School's response to the critical incident and modify the Critical Incident Policy to correct problems and implement necessary improvements.

6. Policy Review

The Principal/Delegated Authority and the Critical Incident Management Team (CIMT) will monitor and review the implementation of this Policy as required.