



Critical Incident Management Policy 2015



Our Lady Queen of Peace Greystanes



Our Lady Queen of Peace, Greystanes

Critical Incident Management Plan

At any time of the day a critical incident may occur at the school creating a situation where staff, students and parents feel unsafe, vulnerable and under stress. The following are examples of incidents which may necessitate the implementation of a Critical Incident Management Plan (C.I.M.P.) The plan moves through six phases.

Phase 1 – Identification

- The sudden death of a student, teacher or other member of the community.
- The sexual assault of a student.
- The abusive or inappropriate actions of a person at school.
- Students who witness death, serious accident, etc.
- Students being injured whilst on a school excursion.
- Significant vandalism of school property – fire, break-in.
- The terminal illness of a member of the school community.
- Bush fire, high winds, environmental disasters.
- Unusual and unfavourable media attention.

Sudden death or a crisis such as an accident can have a major effect upon family, friends and school staff who know the person/people involved. The school by its very nature is a major part of the student's social, cultural and emotional system.

Some incidents may require evacuation or lockdown (see Evacuation Policy) or may require the attendance of Police or other emergency services.

The early identification of a potential/actual critical incident will help in creating a situation where the grieving process can begin, where students, staff and parents can talk about the situation in terms, of readjustment, acceptance and faith.

If a critical incident is not addressed adequately, a significant amount of unresolved grief can develop within the individual regardless of his/her age. Unresolved grief can lead to severe emotional difficulties, physical illness and contribute to a crisis later in life.

Phase 2 – Critical Incident Management

Within 24 hours after the incident.

The following checklist needs to be followed once a critical incident has been identified.

This phase deals with the initial impact through to the area of post-incident.

It is essential that these steps are discussed and amended so as to provide the maximum amount of management.

1. Obtain factual information eg. Police/family/those involved
2. Leadership Team Meeting – Appoint Crisis Co-ordinator
3. Activate Intervention Team –
Team will consist of:
 - a) School Leadership Team
 - b) Student Support Officers
 - c) Parish Priest/Parish Assistant (see phase 4)
4. Staff Meeting (full Staff) – staff refers to teaching and non-teaching
Office staff will provide one line for incoming calls and one for outgoing calls.
5. Students will be informed in one class only size groups, at the same time. All bells will cease.
Class teachers will receive a written statement.
Information will include:
 - a) the facts
 - b) School's response – Mass date/time, changes to regular timetable/classes, meeting venue.
 - c) Counselling facilities that will be available.
 - d) Any other arrangements.
 - e) Rolls will be checked for absentees, to ensure all children are notified, rolls will then be sent to the office.
 - f) Absent students will be informed by Principal or Assistant Principal on arrival at school.
6. Distressed students should not be allowed to go home unless parents are contacted beforehand.
7. Relief teachers will be given relevant information regarding critical incident.
8. Contact P & F Executive for meeting.
9. Letter to parents to inform them of
 - a) facts

- b) the school's response
- c) facilities available to parents

School will be open with Counsellor, coffee/tea.

Parents are encouraged to come up and talk with executive and counsellors.

10. CEDP will be informed (DOSP and Communications Director)
11. Identify those 'at risk' (monitor children's behaviour) – Students, Staff and Parents.
Refer to – Counselling Team
Principal
Assistant Principal
12. Contact will be made with the families of those at risk.
 - a) Information given re: counselling facilities
 - b) School support and prayer
13. Within classrooms allow discussion of the incident with either the Principal or Assistant Principal in attendance.
14. Staff should intermingle with students before and after school and during recess and lunch time to provide extra pastoral care and evaluate students 'at risk'.
15. Provision will be made for Small Group counselling and individual counselling.
16. Staff to meet and be de-briefed DAILY.
17. Representation at funeral or other appropriate places will be discussed.

Phase 3 – Counselling Team (Intervention Team)

Within 48 to 72 hours after the incident

Throughout the six phases, students, staff and parents will engage with varying forms of MULTIPLE CUMMULATIVE GRIEF and consequently will require ongoing support both at school and at home.

When incidents require that support be provided for children, the support officers from other schools may attend.

Phase 4 - Deals with the establishment of a counselling/intervention team under the direction of the Principal. It is essential this team be appropriate to the 'Critical Incident'.

- 1) Parish Priest
- 2) Student Support Officers
- 3) Additional Services from CEDP

The counselling team may be required for an intensive week and the possibility of 'follow up' sessions.

Long term intervention requires that the individual be referred to an appropriate outside agency.

Areas designed as a focal point for counselling team.

* Counselling Area - Seminar Room/Conference Room

When incidents occur which require Staff Support, outside agencies may need to attend - Centacare or Access Counselling Service.

A final report from the team must be submitted to the Principal and forwarded to CEDP.

Procedures will be established for:

- Masses
- Prayer
- Celebration of Life

Phase 4 – Re-establishment of Staff and Students

The point has been reached when there is a need to re-establish a sense of normality within the school. Although there has been a significant 'Critical Incident' students, staff and parents will feel 'safe' once the regular patterns of management have been re-established.

The following are examples of re-establishment boundaries:

- Rules that were relaxed are now enforced
- School bells return to normal
- Regular classes and activities take place

- Homework as usual
- Appropriate consequences are given for inappropriate actions
- Staff meetings, social functions etc re-established
- Newsletters carry positive aspects of the school
- Parents are encouraged to visit the school

Phase 5 – Debriefing – Parents and Staff

Once boundaries for students and staff have been re-established, it is essential that the parents and staff be formally de-briefed, bringing closure to the ‘Critical Incident’.

De-briefing could take the following format:

- Formal meeting with professional input given by an appropriate qualified presenter.
- Question time to address any unanswered questions that parents or staff may have.
- Two sessions to be held – one for staff, one for parents.
- Each session will provide opportunities for those in attendance to seek additional information or join a support group.

These de-briefing procedures will be done within three weeks of the implementation of the Critical Incident Management Plan.

Significant Contact Persons

Organisation	Name	Phone
Principal		9631 1500
CEDP		9840 5611
Parish Priest		9631 8135
Special Education Team		
Executive Director of Schools		9840 5600
Police	Merrylands	9897 4899
Fire Brigade	Smithfield	000

Westmead Hospital		9845 5555
CEO Public Relations		9840 5680
State Emergency	Parramatta	9683 1402
Family and Community Services		9895 7777
Grief Support Inc		9489 6644
Student Support Officer	St Paul's Catholic College	8868 3700
	Cerdon College	9632 8759

References:

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Hutchinson Education, Melbourne, Victoria
- Beyond Sympathy – 1990, Janice Harris Lord. Pub. Pathfinder
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- Grief, Dying and Death – 1984, **Therese Rando**, Pub. Research
Press, Illinois, U.S.A.
- Hearing the Cry – Suicide Prevention, 1990, **M. Condonis & M. Appleby**,
Pub. T. Wolf & Sons, Narellan, Aust.
- Learning to Grieve – Life Skills for Coping with Loss. 1992

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Printing, South Dakota, U.S.A.

No Time for Goodbyes – 1987, **Janice Harris Lord**, Millennium
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Shadow of Loss – A Mother Remembers – 1986, **Joan E. Blair**,
Pub. Joan Blair, Kiama, N.S.W.

Suicide Prevention Training Package – 1991, **M Coundonis & M.
Appleby, Pub, R.O.S.E.** Narellan, N.S.W.

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