



St Lawrence Primary School

***Crisis
Management
Plan***

Rationale

Events that cause severe emotional distress may occur at any time and without warning. While experiencing or witnessing highly traumatic events within educational contexts is still relatively uncommon, the frequency of such occurrences is growing.

Schools and school communities can be de-stabilised by tragic events where students and staff have been seriously injured or killed. The normal functioning of the school may be disrupted and some of those in the school are likely to experience serious emotional distress in the short and/or long term. Schools have a responsibility to manage the reactions of students and teachers, to foster physical, social and psychological well-being after a traumatic event. Such occurrences have been variously called Traumatic Incidents, Critical Incidents, Crises, Disasters and Emergencies.

There is a clear need, arguably a legal obligation under ‘duty of care’ for all schools to establish a Crisis Management Plan. Rapid and organized intervention, especially if based on pre-determined contingency plans, can do much to lessen the impact of traumatic events and speed the recovery process at both the individual and system level.

The management of such crisis can be undertaken at four levels.

Prevention – taking steps to eliminate sources of risk

Pre-parathion – planning, training, education and practice

Response – prompt implementation of effective actions and the mobilization of appropriate resources

Recovery – providing support and counseling services for significant groups and individuals to assist recovery of individuals and communities.

The aim is to have interventions that are proactive and preventative, innovative and flexible rather than simply reactive. The organizational focus should be on minimizing risk and ensuring a state of effective preparedness.

Definitions

A crisis is defined as any event that causes immediate harm, threat, injury or will develop long term stress for the child or staff member.

A crisis may involve:

- A Medical Incident:

- In which case the nature of the injury and the appropriate first aid should be implemented immediately.
- An intruder or adult.
 - Who causes the teacher concern for the safety and well-being of student/s.
- Psychological a person may be displaying symptoms that cause concern for the safety and well being of other students and / or staff.
- Severe behaviour problems.

Principles

- To ensure that crises are resolved in a manner that provides a safe environment for each individual.
- To provide the most appropriate processes to resolve each crisis.
- To provide processes which reduce the stress for those involved in the crisis.

Procedures

Notes:

1. It is essential that throughout the management of the crisis the following procedures are adhered to and all instructions from the Principal or delegate are obeyed immediately and in full.
2. Additional support and guidance may be sought at any stage from the Industrial and Community Relations Team of the Catholic Education Office. 92129212; Non Government Schools Psychology Service – Northern Region 9301 6809 or Access Emergency Counseling Services 1800 676 099.

TIME LINES

0 – 10 Minutes

At the onset of the crisis the staff member must:

- Establish what the nature of the crisis.
- Stabilise the situation.
- Immediately notify the Principal or delegate.

Notification should be via:

- The school duress button which is held by the duty teachers or stored in Year 2, Year 4 and Year 7 during teaching time.
Between 9.00am and 3.00pm the monitoring company will ring the Principal and provide the location of the duress button. Outside of these times the monitoring company will notify the Police who will respond.
- Another staff member.
- As a last resort by a responsible child.

The notification should include:

- The nature of the crisis.
- The degree of urgency.

- The location of the crisis.
- The staff and / or parent support already on site.

Upon arrival the Principal or delegate is to be notified of all matters relevant to the crisis.

10 – 30 Minutes

Having established the nature of the crisis the Principal will:

- Assess the crisis.
- Do a primary survey to establish:
 - The risks.
 - Prioritise procedures that will be implemented which may include:
 - Summon the police, fire or ambulance service as appropriate. This may be via the school mobile phone, secretary or other staff, if directed by the Principal.
 - The person summoning the authorities will ring 000, speak to the appropriate service and provide them with the:
 - * Callers name.
 - * Location.
The nearest corner to the school is Albert and Beryl Streets. Tell the operator that Albert Street runs parallel to Main Street off Karrinyup Road.
 - * The nature of the crisis.
 - * Additional information may include:
 - Victim's/casualty's:
Name/ Age/ Symptoms
 - First aid administered to date.
 - Return to the Principal and inform of the expected time of arrival of the service.
- Commence First Aide or intervention as required.
- The School Secretary will upon instruction from the Principal:
 - Notify the victim's/casualty's parents.
 - Arrange for the gates near the Church to be opened to allow the service vehicles access to the school buildings.
- The children not involved in the crisis will be removed from the immediate area to the Classroom or Learning Centre where a staff member will be assigned to stay with them.
- The Assistant Principal will arrange for a teacher assistant to assist the teacher in the Learning Centre with the children and reallocate their own class to other staff to provide supervision.
- The Assistant Principal will ensure the service vehicles have access through the car park and lead them to the site of the crisis.
- If the victim/casualty requires hospitalization and a parent is not on site the Principal will travel with the child to the hospital until the parent arrives.
- The Principal or delegates will remain available to all parents to ensure accurate information is disseminated and panic averted.

Beyond 30 Minutes

The Principal will inform all of the staff:

- Of the crisis.
- Its current status.
- What information:
 - is to be provided to the children and parent population.
 - and by whom

This control of information is to be strictly adhered to.

- No staff member may speak to the media.
- This role remains solely that of the Principal

A DEATH OF A STAFF MEMBER, STUDENT OR PARENT

Rationale

The impact on the community of the death will vary according to whether it is a staff member, child or parent and according to the persons' notoriety within the community.

The community reaction to a death of a parent may vary between minor sadness and comment through to devastation and a failure to understand.

At all times the primary considerations although:

- The immediate family
- The privacy act and its implications
- Pastoral care of:
 - The children
 - The staff
 - The community

Aim

The actions of the school staff should enhance a healthy grieving process and recovery of all involved following a death within the community.

Procedures

1. The Principal is to be informed immediately of all deaths occurring within the community. This may involve notifying the Principal via the mobile phone 041 795 4798 or email or in person.

Information required on the initial report is:

- The name of the person.
- The cause of death if known.
- The source of information and its reliability.

2. The Principal will:

- inform immediately:
 1. The Parish Priest 9344 7066.
 2. Director of CEO 92129212 – if appropriate.
 3. The Catholic Education Office Industrial and Community Relations Team – if appropriate.
 4. Non Government Schools Psychology Service at CEO 9212 9310 – if required.
- inform as soon as possible:
 - a) Leadership Team. Call meeting.
 - b) School staff.

Meeting for all staff to be called by Principal or if not present, one of the Assistant Principals. An Assistant Principal to go on duty in the Undercroft area.

Staff gather in staffroom for notification and prayer for person and family to be said. An e-mail will be sent to all staff to ensure everybody is informed. A public address announcement should be made ensuring that all staff read the e-mail.

If notification of death occurs outside of school hours the Principal will call the Assistant Principals and they in turn will contact the staff.

c) Chairperson of the School Board and School Board Members if appropriate.

- Review Principal appointments for the next week and instruct the secretary as to those that are to be cancelled, rescheduled and relocated.
- Arrange for the secretary to order flowers and notices if required in the newspaper. These notices should be signed on behalf of the School Board, staff and parent community and aid for by the School Board. Condolence card to be sent and notification in newsletter if appropriate.
- Ensure all staff members have a copy of the phone number for the Access Counseling program.
- Represent the school at the funeral and/or visits to the family.

3. The Secretary will:

- Arrange for a wreath, as directed by the Principal, for delivery to the house or church as agreed.
- Arrange for the newspaper notice as agreed.

4. The School's Psychology service will provide support for staff, students and parents as required and requested.

5. The Catholic Education office Industrial and Community Relations Section Officers will provide support as required. Their advice will be followed if there are industrial or legal implications for the death.

6. Assembly called or teachers to return to classroom and explain situation to students as simply and clearly as possible. Principal or Assistant Principal to do this if teacher is unable.

7. School/Class Prayer to be said. If help is needed for any student it is to sought immediately.

8. Letter to parents to be sent home to all families in the school, via the eldest child, explaining the situation and notifying them of Rosary and Funeral arrangements.

9. Staff/Community will be informed of Rosary and Funeral arrangements. If funeral is in school time, the Principal or Assistant Principal will arrange a roster of staff to attend.

10. Students may attend if they are accompanied by their parents or guardians.
11. Principal will arrange for morning/afternoon tea for parent community and staff in staffroom/courtyard. School Psych will be made available at this time.