



Critical Incident Management Policy

Rationale

In any community, situations occur which require an unexpected and immediate response. The St Michael's Critical Incident Management Policy is largely based on the Archdiocesan Guidelines and provides a framework from which to begin dealing with such an event. We have, however, endeavoured to add a degree of flexibility, which, in doing so, makes the policy specifically appropriate for the community of St Michael's, Kaleen.

Aim

To provide a clear process by which the School Leadership Team, together with the Parish Priest, Catholic Education Office and local authorities, may guide the school community through a major crisis.

Definition of a Crisis

A crisis could be defined as an unexpected event resulting in trauma and a high level of concern for the community. The Macquarie International English Dictionary defines 'crisis management' as 'the business or process of working through a crisis to solve or cope with problems as they arise.'

Implementation and Procedures

Having to face a crisis such as an unexpected death, accident, suicide or natural catastrophe is extremely difficult to cope with both as an individual and in a family setting. For the most part, people are totally unprepared for such a situation yet the support of family, friends, church and the community is vital.

When large numbers of people are faced with an unexpected crisis, special strategies need to be put into place to ensure that all concerned can be assisted in processing their individual and collective reactions to the crisis. These special strategies need to be readily available for immediate implementation in order to minimise reactions that have the potential of getting out of control. This is particularly important where a large group is involved such as in a school setting.

- In writing this policy it is assumed that the situation and subsequent needs of every crisis will always be different. We have however, grouped immediate crisis (Hostage Situation) with crisis of a longer-term nature (Child/Parent Suicide). We have reasoned that many of the support structures, which will be in place in an immediate crisis situation, will also be required for a long-term crisis.
- Crisis Management Team – Principal, Parish Priest, Assistant Principal, Religious Education Coordinator, Classroom Teacher, Counsellor.
- Opportunities for the Crisis Management Team to receive counselling should also be provided.
- An appropriate Rite of Passage or Memorial should be arranged following the crisis, both for staff and other members of the school community.
- Classroom teachers should receive assistance with regard to appropriate resources and teaching strategies.

- Individual children should continue to be monitored in the weeks and months after the crisis.
- Release from face to face teaching duties for classroom teachers should be provided if the need arises.

General Procedure for Critical Incidence Action Plan

PRINCIPAL

- Inform Crisis Management Team
- Inform Secretary
- Inform Parish Priest
- Arrange and lead media liaison if necessary
- Inform any parents or guardians whose child/children are directly involved

ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL

- Divide number of staff between Leadership Team and telephone each member informing of crisis as soon as possible.

CRISIS MANAGEMENT TEAM

- Meet as soon as possible
- Organise support and counselling for staff/student
- Organise relief staff
- Write and distribute a letter to parents (if appropriate)
- Provide documents for staff
- Arrange Police liaison (if appropriate)
- Arrange media liaison if necessary (if appropriate)
- Monitor staff and students
- Identify close friends – contact parents

EXTRAORDINARY STAFF MEETING

- Principal's briefing
- Counsellor (if available) input on grief reactions and strategies
- Details of access to support centre for staff
- Priest input

CRISIS MANAGEMENT TEAM

- Updates to staff and parents from Principal
- Set up support centre for children/staff and parents

STAFF MEETING

- Debriefing
- Support
- Continued Action Plan

Kidnap/Hostage Crisis Action Plan

TEACHER OR CHILD IN ROOM

Inform next door teacher and Principal of situation by red card

TEACHER ON DUTY

- Seek immediate help from staffroom by sending red card to staff room with responsible student (*See Red Card Emergency Procedure: details this section*)
- Leadership Team member moves directly to crisis scene
- Staff to contact Principal if not in the staff room.

PRINCIPAL

- Inform Police
- Inform other staff
- Inform relevant parents/spouses/next of kin by telephone
- Inform Crisis Management Team
- Inform Catholic Education Office
- Letter to all parents at end of day

STAFF MEETING

- Police briefing
- Police Action Plan
- Counselling input
- Debriefing

Disruptive/Disturbed Child Crisis Action Plan

For situation which exceeds general agreed practice for behavior management in the classroom

TEACHER

- Call for immediate assistance from Principal/Assistant Principal
- Attempt to make the immediate environment safe plan:
 - Remove child
 - Remove class
- If child is endangering him/herself attempt to restrain.

PRINCIPAL

- Inform parent(s) of child
- Inform Counsellor and other members of the Crisis Management Team.

FOLLOW THE GENERAL PROCEDURE FOR CRISIS MANAGEMENT ACTION PLAN WHERE APPLICABLE.

'RED CARD' EMERGENCY PROCEDURE

In each classroom, a laminated red card is located by the classroom door. The red cards are to be used as a warning signal for a teacher whom requires immediate assistance in the classroom or with his or her group somewhere in the school, or on supervision duty on the playground.

When any staff member sees a child carrying a red card in the school, the staff member, if possible, is to go immediately with the child to the teacher requiring assistance or get immediate help for this teacher.

Below are some examples of when a red card may need to be used:

- A child may have seriously injured themselves in the classroom and the teacher may need assistance to help the child and to ensure the other children are properly supervised;
- A child may be in a state where they could cause harm to themselves or others. The classroom teacher may require assistance to control the child and ensure the other children are safe.

In the event of needing to use a red card, the teacher should direct a responsible child to get the red card and take it straight to the front office for help. By using a recognised visual signal such as a red card, staff members in the school can be alerted to the fact that help is required immediately. This saves the child having to wait to ask for help.

If teachers are conducting a lesson out of their classrooms, such as on the oval or in the hall, they need to take a red card with them in case it is needed during the lesson.

Special considerations

As the need for crisis management is not a regular event, in order to maintain familiarity with the procedure, we undertake as a staff to regularly revisit the crisis management policy, with students and staff, on the same day as we hold our fire drills.

Related School Policies:

Evacuation Policy
Lockdown Policy

Related CEO Policies:

CEO Fire Drill and Bomb Evacuation

http://www.ceo.cg.catholic.edu.au/policies/fire_drill.htm

Approved by: St Michael's School Community Council

Date: 2010

Revision Date: 2014