



Crisis Management Policy

Revised: 2010

Due for Review: 2015

In Response to a sudden, tragic or traumatic incident

Response Team

Principal: Ashley Arnold 9337 7018/0419 951 068

Assistant Principal: Diane Scriven 9291 9173/0430 544 004

Assistant Principal: Ronan Kelly 0411 890 689

Definition

Crisis can be considered as any situation faced by staff or students that causes them to experience unusually strong emotional reactions, which may have the potential to interfere with their ability to perform at the scene or later and will have an affect on the wider school community.

Crises tend to be way outside normal experience and the individual has little by way of guidelines based on past experience about how to deal with the event or the reaction to it. Remembering children have less experience to draw on than adults and usually have a more restricted repertoire of coping responses.

Sense of control and self-efficacy are reduced. Children will be looking to those adults who usually provide support, guidance, direction and leadership to continue to fulfil these roles.



Matthew Gibney Catholic Primary School

Problems can arise from a single highly traumatic event or from several less severe but emotionally taxing events spread over time.

Exposure to crises can trigger normal but strong reactions responses. These should decrease in duration and intensity over time. Appropriate support can minimize the duration and intensity of such reactions. Some individuals may require more support over a longer time than others. This applies to both students and staff.

Crisis Response - Leadership Team Responsibilities

The Leadership Team (LT) is responsible for:

- The implementation of all procedures within the school to a crisis involving a student or other members of the school community
- LT is responsible for coordination of and liaison with all outside agencies eg. Police, Counselling
- Media Liaison – The Principal alone has the responsibility of liaising with the media

A trauma has an effect on the whole school community. The focus of the document is to help the school community deal with the trauma, assign clear roles and responsibilities and assist the school to function and return to 'normality' as soon as possible.

Purpose

- A return to normality within the School
- To enable the collective process of healing by staff and students
- To enable students to achieve a better understanding of death and dying in a supportive and controlled environment.

Guidelines

Guidelines for action to be taken when news of a tragic or traumatic event occurring to a member of the school community is received.



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- a) Staff member receiving the news immediately contacts the Principal or, if unavailable, another member of the LT. The Principal arranges for all members of the LT to be informed.
- b) The LT meets as soon as possible (that same evening or the next morning before school) to allocate tasks for each member and decide on the action to be taken by the School.
- c) Implement phone tree for staff notification (See appendix 1)

Areas to be considered:

- Liaison with parents and family
 - Appropriate manner of contact with the affected family
 - Identifying those members of the school community most closely involved
 - Arrangements for informing appropriate staff and students and other organizations associated with the school
 - The Principal will disseminate information to staff, students and parents.
- d) The Principal should convene a special staff meeting at the earliest possible time.
 - e) The Principal will provide guidelines about handling student reactions and the referral of distressed members of the School Community.
 - f) The Response Group will reconvene on the same day to consider
 - On-going support for the affected members of the Matthew Gibney Catholic School Community
 - Arrangements for the next week
 - g) The Principal or designated member of the LT will keep all staff fully informed of further arrangements
 - h) Follow-Up The Principal should conduct a one week and then one month follow-up meeting with LT to ensure all actions have been followed and to provide additional support and assistance to any member in need.
 - i) Review the Response Plan



Crisis Response Team Tasks

Principal – Team Leader

Tasks:

- Contact CEO
- Contact Leadership Team
- Initiate Phone Tree
- Brief Staff
- Contact NGPS
- Provide pastoral support for staff/children /community
- Update Staff (ongoing)
- Liaise with families/ priests/CEO
- Liaise with Media
- Liaise closely and brief AP's as to what information is to be passed on
- Contact CCI

Assistant Principals – Team Members

Tasks:

- Contact Relief Teacher for AP's Classrooms
- Set-up support centre in Literacy Support Room
- Brief Office Staff re handling of information over the phone and face to face (as per Principal's instructions)
- Document information for staff
- Document information for parents & students
- Liaise with Psychologists – re counselling sessions for Children, Staff, Community members
- Monitor staff/student reactions
- Provide pastoral support for staff
- Provide relief teachers
- Document and provide ongoing information to parents and staff if required

Crisis Management Planning

