

	Critical Incident Plan	Endorsed by School Council: March 2018 Developed: March 2018
Information: 02 6076 1566 Manager: Principal	DET Schools Reference Guide: Associated Policies: Emergency Management Plan	Next review: March 2019 or after a critical incident Issue No: 1.4

Rationale/Aims:

The Critical Incident Plan is designed to provide a framework for the school on how to respond to a traumatic or critical incident, to best support the safety and wellbeing of all school community members.

Implementation:

The Critical Incident Plan is communicated to all staff through the Staff Handbook and forms part of the annual briefing on the Emergency Management Plan. Key staff involved in the Critical Incident Recovery Team, who would lead the response to a traumatic or critical incident are given a hardcopy.

Policy and Procedures:

RESPONDING TO A TRAUMATIC OR CRITICAL INCIDENT IN WHICH THE SCHOOL IS INVOLVED

At any time, Corryong College may become directly or indirectly involved in a tragic or traumatic event.

The incident may involve loss of life, serious injury or emotional disturbance. The incident may occur in the school environment or outside. It may involve staff, students or those close to them. The network of those involved in a traumatic event can be wide, especially if it directly involves the school. Feelings of grief and loss can continue over long periods of time.

Counselling should be provided for all those who need it. This may include many who do not seem to be closely connected to the event or the individuals involved. The school may be in a position to help grieving families at difficult times, eg. through the school's participation in the funeral service.

While school should operate as normally as possible, some degree of flexibility should exist.

It is essential that people be given clear, accurate information at all times. It is essential that a Critical Incident Recovery Team be formed to manage the short and long term effects.

ACTION TO BE TAKEN AS A RESULT OF A TRAGIC/TRAUMATIC EVENT WHICH INVOLVES THE SCHOOL

2.1 Incidents vary in complexity. These guidelines provide a framework for action and would not necessarily be followed in all cases.

2.2 However, the following 4 principles must be followed:

1. Provide clear, accurate information.
2. Describe the actions to be followed.

3. Provide help for all affected.
4. Maintain a normal school program as close as possible.

2.3 Obtain accurate information. Deal only with substantiated facts.

2.4 As soon as possible, the Principal, or their delegate, will inform staff, especially those most directly involved. Inform close friends and family individually. Allow questions and discussion as they arise. Dispel rumours.

2.5 The Principal will assemble the Critical Incident Recovery Team to assist in the management of the incident. Additional members with skills specific to the incident may be appointed as needed. The team may include staff members, psychologists, counsellors, external DET personnel, support agencies etc. The size and composition of the team will be related to the nature of the incident. The Principal will distribute names of the Critical Incident Recovery Team members, and inform others of the role of the team.

2.6 As soon as possible, the Principal, or their delegate, will provide information to the community as to what has happened, and what is being done.

2.7 The Principal will appoint a skilled Critical Incident Recovery Team member as the Media Coordinator, to respond to media enquiries. A written press release may be useful. If necessary, the Media Coordinator will protect others from contact with the media. Advice regarding this may be obtained from the DET Emergency Communications Centre and the DET Media Unit.

(See Appendix A for a List of Contacts).

2.8 The Principal, or their delegate, will establish an open line of contact with the family or families directly involved.

2.9 The Principal, or their delegate, will provide out of school hours contact if necessary. This could be as simple as circulating the Principal's telephone number. In more complex situations it may mean maintaining telephone contact at the school.

2.10 The Principal, or their delegate, will continue contact with the family to identify their expectations of the school, eg. student participation in a funeral or memorial service.

2.11 The Critical Incident Recovery Team will try to identify those most likely to need help, eg. classmates, teacher, special friends. Some students not directly affected may become distressed.

2.12 The Student Safety and Wellbeing Coordinator will ensure that counselling help is available and will contact the Regional Office and/or DET if necessary.

(See Appendix A for a List of Contacts).

All emergency or criminal activity, in which the safety or well-being of staff or students is at risk, or where there is a threat to property, must be reported immediately to the Department's 24 hour Emergency and Security Management Unit on **(03) 9589 6266**.

2.13 The Principal, or their delegate, will continue to keep staff, students and parents informed, especially about what has happened and what the school is doing about it.

2.14 As soon as possible, the Principal or their delegate will call students together and provide information about what has happened and what the school is doing about it. A follow up letter home may be important.

- 2.15** The Student Safety and Wellbeing Coordinator will provide counselling services for all. They, or their delegate, will ensure that there are suitable places in which this can take place. Be prepared to modify the timetable and other arrangements so that people are free to make use of available help.
- 2.16** A class teacher may be the person to whom students first turn for help.
- 2.17** Children wishing to attend funerals should do so in the company of their parents. Provide meaningful participation for those not actually attending the service.
- 2.18** Continue normal routines at school but acknowledge the effect of tragedy on the school community. Be flexible with those in need of help. Be aware that many people may be deeply affected, eg. an event may cause a person to recall some traumatic event involving them in the past. The anniversary may also be a difficult time.
- 2.19** The Principal or their delegate will maintain links with the family. The school and family may wish to develop a memorial garden, erect a memorial plaque, or display a photo in a prominent position in the school.
- 2.20** Be sensitive to staff and student's needs over a period of time.

APPENDICES (including processes related to this policy)

- Appendix A: List of Contacts.
- Appendix B: Critical Incident Recovery Plan (CIRP).
- Appendix C: Critical or Traumatic Incident Plan – First 24 hour Short Term Tasks.
- Appendix D: Emergency Message Record Form – Template.

Definitions:

Nil.

Review Process:

The Critical Incident Plan will be reviewed annually and following any critical incidents if they occur.

References:

Critical Incident Sample Plan:

<https://edugate.eduweb.vic.gov.au/sc/sites/SchoolReorganisation/minimumregistrationrequirements/Exemplar%20School%20Policies/Forms/AllItems.aspx>

DET's *Managing School Emergencies - Minimising the impact of trauma on staff and students*

Related Policies and Documents:

CORRYONG COLLEGE Emergency Management Plan

Links which are connected with this policy are:

- [DET Emergency Management Planning](#)
- [Emergency and Critical Incident](#)

Appendix A: List of Contacts.

Contact	Contact details
<p>Emergency Services Management Unit (formerly SSU) Provides assistance to schools and regions to help reduce potential long-term adverse psychological and emotional impacts arising from an emergency, critical or traumatic incident.</p> <p>All services provided by ESMU are available 24 hours a day, seven days a week throughout the year.</p>	(03) 9589 6266.
DET Media Unit	(03) 9637 2871 or (03) 9264 5821
<p>Regional Office North East Victoria Region</p>	<p>General Enquiries</p> <p>Email: nevr@edumail.vic.gov.au Phone: 1300 333 231 Phone: 03 8392 9300</p> <p>Benalla office</p> <p>Phone: 03 8392 9500 Fax: 03 8392 9502</p>
The Department's Information and Referral Service	1800 809 834 edline@edumail.vic.gov.au
<p>Student Support Services Officers (SSSO) Respond to critical incidents involving students, staff and school communities</p>	<p>Student Support Services Implementation Manager</p> <p>Caroline Evans</p> <p>(03) 8392 9500</p> <p>0418 551 173</p> <p>evans.caroline.a@edumail.vic.gov.au</p> <p>SSO: Emily McGillvery mcgillvery.emily.j@edumail.vic.gov.au</p> <p>0418762829</p>
Linda Jamieson Manager, Operations & Emergency Management	Linda Jamieson (03) 8392 9336.

Critical Incident Response Team Members 2018:

Position	Name	Contact
Principal	Fran Heath	02 6076 1566
Assistant Principal	Sarah Klippel and/or Chrissie McKimmie	02 6076 1566
Student Safety and Wellbeing Coord	Chrissie McKimmie	02 6076 1566
Ed Support Staff (first aid trained)	Helen Malitz	02 6076 1566
DET SSSO	Emily McGillvery	0418 76 2829

Critical Incident Recovery Plan (CIRP)

Responsibilities and Procedures

1. PLAN STATEMENT

This Plan is an integral part of the Emergency Management processes of the school.

2. IMPLEMENTATION

- 2.1 The Critical Incident Recovery Team will be responsible for coordinating and implementing the Plan (refer to 4.3 for the composition of the team and Appendix A for the Team details).

It will need to consider:

- establishing the facts as soon as possible
- developing an action plan of short, medium and long term tasks
- contact with the Department of Education and Training (DET)
- liaising with external bodies including the media
- communicating with the whole staff as soon as possible
- meeting with staff both as a whole and with individuals or groups for debriefing
- communicating with the student body
- meeting with students in groups or individually for debriefing
- contacting parents/guardians
- short term and long term counselling requirements for groups or individuals

The relevance of each of the above will depend on factors such as the nature and magnitude of the incident, the intensity of the impact on the School community and the number of people affected.

3. DEBRIEFING

Critical Incident Stress Debriefing has three components:

1. initial discussion about feelings and an assessment of the intensity of the stress responses
2. detailed discussion of signs and symptoms of stress responses
3. closing stage - provides overview and information with referral to an outside agency if required

- 3.1 The Critical Incident Recovery Team will assist the Principal to facilitate the recovery of staff and students and those of the School community affected by the critical incident.

- 3.2.1 The debriefing meeting of the Critical Incident Recovery Team should include a mental health professional and one peer who were not involved in the incident.

- 3.2.2 The Critical Incident Recovery Team will decide the structure and composition of debriefing meetings; such meetings should be held within **eight hours** of the critical incident. These meetings will review the impressions and reactions of the persons involved during or following the incident.

3.3 Counselling support and referrals for students and their families will be provided initially by the Principal, or their delegate, and a Regional Guidance Officer.

4. REVIEW

4.1 The Critical Incident Recovery Team will meet to review the implementation of the Critical Incident Recovery Plan within **seventy two (72) hours** of the critical incident.

4.2 As part of the Critical Incident Recovery Plan, the Principal will set up a Critical Incident Recovery Team at the beginning of each year.

4.3 Following a critical incident, the Principal will convene the Critical Incident Recovery Team as soon as possible.

The composition of the Critical Incident Recovery Team will be:

- the Principal
- the Assistant Principal
- the Student Safety and Wellbeing Coordinator
- a member of the Educational Support staff (first aid trained)
- other support staff as appropriate
- as necessary, psychologists, counsellors and DET personnel.

4.4 The Principal will convene the Critical Incident Recovery Team once each semester to review planning and strategies for the Critical Incident Recovery Plan.

5. EVALUATION

Evaluation of the Plans will follow any critical incident at the school.

Critical or Traumatic Incident Plan – First 24 hour Short Term Tasks

Responsibilities and Procedures

1. Emergency Record

Record Information

- nature of the incident
- location of the incident, number and names of persons involved
- name of the person reporting the incident
- time incident reported
- contact telephone number if away from school

Verify all Details

- confirm that the information given about the event is accurate

Record the Incident

- notify principal workplace coordinator
- ensure emergency services have been called notify the Department's 24 hour Emergency Services Management Unit on **(03) 9589 6266**

2. Ensure students and staff are safe from harm or injury

- Year Level Coordinators cordon off any 'crisis' area and keep students away from there
- manage the grounds while staff are briefed and ensure media do not intrude
- check corridors, toilets etc. for stray students - try to prevent students leaving on their own particularly if distressed
- send (accompanied) all very stressed students to the Recovery area in the Library (see note at 4.1)
- ensure that students do not make hysterical calls out of school
- ensure the school continues as normally as possible

3. Establish Critical Incident Recovery Team

The composition of the Critical Incident Recovery Team will be:

- the Principal
- the Assistant Principal
- the Student Safety and Wellbeing Coordinator
- a member of the Educational Support staff (first aid trained)
- other support staff as appropriate
- as necessary, psychologists, counsellors and DET personnel.

4. Allocate responsibilities

- emergency message register
- emergency contact list
- evacuation and assembly of staff and students
- cordon off area of 'crisis'
- establish a Support Team and Communications Centre to:

- manage information and phone calls
- coordinate media requests for information
- provide information to parents arriving at school
- coordinate routine school activities – maintain where practical
- notify students, staff and ancillary about the emergency
- notify parents first, and then siblings in the school
- establish a recovery room and supervisor for affected students
- establish a waiting room for parents
- inform students
- inform School Council
- inform School Community by newsletter
- monitor School Community's reactions
- liaise with outside agencies and emergency services
- brief key personnel and review responses

4.1 Recovery Room(s)

Set Up Recovery Room

NB: Minimise the number of students grouped together. Larger groups can contribute to stress and can cause hysteria.

- set up Library and offices, Student Safety and Wellbeing Office and if necessary the Staffroom
- empty adjoining rooms if possible and relocate to other rooms
- screen windows
- have available pens, textas, paper, envelopes, tissues

Appoint Recovery Room Supervisors

- First Aid staff
- Chaplain
- Librarian

Recovery Room Supervisors' Responsibilities

- keep calm
- monitor students for shock reactions, provide first aid if necessary
- encourage students to gather in small friendship groups rather than bigger ones
- keep a list of students attending the recovery room
- give the students a task to undertake such as making a card or writing a letter
- contact parents of students who remain in the recovery room and alert them to possible concerns

5. Informing Staff

- provide teachers and ancillary staff with a brief outline of the incident
- Restate to ensure that staff understand and it sinks in
- outline recovery management arrangements
- discuss procedures to be followed by staff during the day
- discuss the general procedures that Critical Incident Response Team will be following
- discuss guidelines for informing students and ways of answering questions from them
- give staff time to discuss this among themselves
- provide a brief factual outline to others in the community on a need to know basis
- inform staff as soon as possible about a serious emergency involving death or injury which occurs after hours, on the weekend or during the school holidays
- inform staff as soon as possible about arrangements for holding a brief meeting before informing students at the start of the next school day
- review with staff afterwards any issues and needs
- provide staff with contact numbers for counselling or support services for themselves

6. Allocate responsibilities

Principal or senior staff

- contact the bereaved family or police to ascertain what information may be released within the school
- prepare a written factual statement, without graphic detail, for use as a reference by teachers when discussing the incident with students
- determine whether to tell students about the incident at a whole school assembly, by year levels or individual classes, depending on the nature of the incident
- discuss with teachers who feel uncomfortable raising the event with students and arrange for support from another teacher or a member of the Critical Incident Recovery Team
- identify staff who may be too distraught to take classes and arrange replacements
- inform students soon after briefing staff
- ask teachers to mark a roll to identify who has been informed and who has not

Teachers

- provide a factual account of the incident at the beginning of the first class in a way that ensures all students hears the same information
- limit speculation and rumours
- inform students about arrangements of counselling and recovery rooms
- inform students about arrangements for services, and appropriate ways to express condolences
- outline the arrangements for the day

Notifying close friends

- notify close friends especially girlfriends/boyfriends prior to making an announcement to other students
- take these students aside when they arrive at school and inform them privately
- consider contacting their parents prior to the start of the day
- ensure individual attention is given to intimate friends who are likely to have special needs beyond those of other students

7. Communication Centre

Organise the following to be on hand:

- telephone - dedicated line in case of jamming by incoming calls
- telephone message if necessary
- message records
- phone lists
- rolls
- excursion list
- timetable
- maps
- computer and printer
- photocopier
- this plan

8. Media Coverage

- nominate a media coordinator, prepare the School Council President and Principal to provide on camera interviews
- contact DET Media Unit on (03) 9637 2871 or (03) 9264 5821
- prepare a three paragraph report:

- briefly outline the facts
 - outline what the school has done to assist those affected
 - outline support and recovery arrangements
 - include a name and contact number for the school media coordinator
- liaise with the family about any statements made to media
 - exclude discussion of policy matters, limit comment to the emergency and the school response
 - set rules for persistent media
 - keep a record of media enquiries
 - offer scheduled interviews in return for media commitment not to seek uninvited access to staff, students and parents
 - negotiate accepted areas for filming eg. school/church boundary and not within
 - check that information provided does not conflict with court requirements or police proceedings
 - anticipate renewed interest arising from anniversaries, court proceedings

9. Long Term Actions

- monitor and support members of the school community, particularly on significant dates such as anniversaries
- consider longer term intervention activities such as counselling or specialist support
- consider establishing an area within the school as a place of remembrance
- reconvene key people at regular intervals to review the school response and effectiveness of planning arrangements
- review the school emergency management plan in light of experience gained
- consider a ritual of marking significant dates
- prepare for legal proceedings if necessary
- remove students name from the roll if deceased
- consider article in school magazine

10. Reference

- DET's *Managing School Emergencies - Minimising the impact of trauma on staff and students*



Managing School
Emergencies Booklet.

Appendix D: Emergency Message Record Form – Template.

Emergency Record Form – Template

Date: /__ /

Time of notification: __ : __ am/pm

Name of person taking the call _____

Position: _____

Name of person reporting the incident _____

Contact telephone number _____

Details

Describe:

Where everyone is now

What action is being taken to help?

Who: _____

When: _____

Where: _____

How: _____

Nature and extent of injury: _____

Immediate Actions Required

Principal notified? Yes Time: _____ : _____ am/pm

Other school staff? Yes Time: _____ : _____ am/pm

Emergency Services notified? 132 500 Yes Time: _____ : _____ am/pm

Emergency & Security Management notified?
(03) 9589 6266 Yes Time: _____ : _____ am/pm

Emergency Contact Telephone Numbers

POLICE	000
AMBULANCE	000
FIRE BRIGADE	000
STATE EMERGENCY SERVICES (SES)	132 500
LOCAL HOSPITAL	(02) 6076 3200
REGIONAL DIRECTOR (Judy Rose)	(03) 5761 2174
EMERGENCY SECURITY MANAGEMENT UNIT	(03) 9589 6266
SEIL (Jody Grimmond)	(03) 8392 9500 or 0437 072 830