



PURPOSE OF THE POLICY

The purpose of this policy is to outline procedures for action to take to manage critical incidents at Coomera Anglican College.

Scope

The policy applies to all staff and students of the College, and provides information about areas of responsibility, reporting, communication.

Responsibility

Principal

Point of Contact

Principal/Critical Incident Management Team

DEFINITION

A critical incident is a traumatic event, or threat of such, which causes extreme stress, fear or injury. This may include, but is not limited to:

- Natural disasters such as flood, fire, earthquake, storm
- Student or staff suicide or accidental death
- Bomb threat, explosion, gas or chemical hazard
- Violent assault
- Terrorist attack
- A missing student
- Student or staff witnessing a serious accident or act of violence

POLICY

The Coomera Anglican College critical incident management plan applies in the event of a disaster which may cause confusion and stress amongst the College community. Critical incidents may include, for example, natural disasters, such as flood, fire or earthquake; a student suicide or accidental death; a bomb threat; the death of a teacher; a violent assault; a terrorist attack.

If a member of the College staff/community becomes aware of a critical incident, he/she should report the nature of the incident to the Principal, or the Principal's nominee, who will immediately convene the Critical Incident Management Team and set up an incident management room.

In making the report the member of staff/community should identify:

- location of incident
- nature of the incident
- number and names of those involved
- name of person reporting the emergency
- time of report
- emergency service contacted and by whom
- phone contact if the incident is remote from the workplace (e.g. on College camp)

Critical Incident Management Team (CIMT)

The Critical Incident Management Team will consist of The Principal, Deputy Principal, Business Manager, Head of Junior Secondary, Head of Primary, Director of Early Learning Centre, Student Counsellor and Chaplain. The Workplace Health and Safety Office, Heads of Year and others may be required depending on the nature of the Critical Incident.

Procedures when a critical incident occurs

When the Principal or designee is notified of an emergency or fatal crisis situation he/she will:

1. Tell the person giving the information not to repeat it anywhere in the College, unless notification is critical for the **immediate** safety of staff and students.
2. Tell office staff not to repeat or give out information within or outside the College until instructed by the Principal.
3. Verify the reported incident with police. Verify with police the timing of notification to family and the College if there has been a death. This notification will be made by police and it is critical that no announcements are made by the College until the families of victims of any incident are notified.
4. Verify with police who the College-Police liaison person is and provide 24-hour contact details.
5. Notify the CIM Team who immediately initiate the actions assigned to their roles.
6. Direct the Campus Communication CIM team member to locate, gather and inform closest student friends of the deceased or injured **BEFORE** any general announcement, and **AFTER** parents/families have been notified.
7. Notify the Chairman of the College Council.
8. Prepare a formal statement to use for initial notification to the whole College. Include minimal details and note that additional information will be forthcoming.
9. Prepare a statement for telephone inquiries directed to office staff.



10. Decide on a time for an emergency staff meeting at which the injured/deceased student/staff member is identified, if applicable; the facts of the crisis are reviewed; support to staff is offered and guidelines are provided for helping students. Encourage staff to return their classes to normal routine as soon as possible and, whenever possible, to dispel rumour and discourage sensationalising of the crisis. Ask staff to identify those students who may require additional support. Request staff to meet 30 minutes earlier the next morning to update them on any additional information, review procedures and debrief.
11. Provided that the privacy of members of the College community is not infringed, send home a letter at the end of the day/crisis outlining what has occurred and what has been done.
12. Inform staff and students of the outcome of the crisis.
13. Supply the media with a fact sheet on the College and district as well as on the crisis outcome.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Critical Incident Management Team consists of nine (9) members, who take responsibility in the following areas:

- the Principal (or the Principal's nominee) - leads team, liaises with media, liaises with police, disseminates information
- Deputy Principal - campus communication
- Heads of Campus (3) - parent communication
- the student counselor/chaplain (2) - counselling
- College Nurse or First Aid Officer - medical
- Business Manager - security

Training for the Team is undertaken on a regular basis and clear procedures are in place to ensure that team members understand their roles.

Role of Team before a Crisis Occurs

1. *Develop necessary forms and information sheets, including incident report forms, sign-in and out forms, lists of people to be notified (including siblings, bus drivers, feeder schools where students may have friends), de-briefing sheets, phone lists etc.*
2. *Develop a plan for emergency coverage of classes.*
Teachers who will play a significant role in a crisis response need to be assured that their classes will be covered.
3. *Establish a code to alert staff.*
A code that can be used over the public address system or in notes to alert staff to the nature of an emergency situation will clarify a problem without unduly alarming students.
4. *Have the College lawyer review the College's Policies and Procedures.*
Adjust procedures to comply with any liability concerns.

5. *Hold a practice 'crisis alert' drill.*
Provide in-service training for all staff to explain the crisis management plan and exactly what to do in a crisis. Where appropriate include police, community workers and other community members in presentations to staff.
6. *Undertake an annual review of the Crisis Management Plan.*
Such a review might outline any emergency situations that have occurred throughout the year, identify weaknesses in the management plan and allow time for refining procedures and policies.

Role of Teachers during a Crisis

1. Remain calm.
2. Follow directives/instructions from the appropriate members of the Critical Incident Management Team or the Principal.
3. Provide accurate information to students, answer questions and lead class discussion if appropriate.
4. Dispel rumours and discourage speculation.
5. Model an appropriate response to the crisis.
6. Identify students who may need extra support.
7. Provide activities, through art, music and writing, to reduce stress and express emotions; and, as much as possible, ensure that students feel secure and remain calm.

Roles and Responsibilities of Critical Incident Management Team

The Principal

1. Mobilise the Critical Incident Management (CIM) Team quickly.
2. Direct the team and take charge of the situation.
3. Be visible, available and supportive to all.
4. Dispel rumours by giving everyone the facts.
5. Communicate with the College Council.
6. Contact families of students involved in the crisis.
7. Liaise with media.
8. Provide updated information to all concerned.

Deputy Principal

1. Decide who should receive information and how information will be disseminated to staff and students - public address, note to each class, assembly, alarm system (fire, flood etc) - or if a lockdown procedure is warranted.
1. Be aware of privacy and confidentiality in releasing information and remind staff of privacy and confidentiality issues.
2. Release follow up information as agreed upon with Principal, following the Principal's initial announcement.

3. Release only **necessary** details and make sure information is **factual**.
4. Include in communication information with regard to when and how students will be released to parents/caregivers, if applicable.
5. Make general announcements via public address system or note to classes when appropriate.

Parent Communicator/Heads of Campus

1. Use previously prepared emergency telephone contact list to ring the three parent liaison people and arrange for them to begin 'telephone tree' process. That is, these three ring five designated people who ring five more, and so on, until all parents, or all of a particular group, are contacted.
2. Ensure parent liaison group receives a succinct and factual statement about the crisis, approved by the Principal.
3. Remind parents of the importance of confidentiality, where possible, and of dispelling rumour and speculation.
4. Organise and manage a hotline for parents to provide information and control rumour.
5. Inform office staff that parent inquiries are to be directed to the hotline.

Counsellor

1. Be available.
2. Cancel other activities and appointments.
3. Designate a counselling space.
4. Get extra assistance if warranted.
5. Support the College staff and students; and offer assistance to parents, if appropriate, after the Principal has made initial contact.

Medical Contact Person

1. Before any event:
 - Keep a register of where the College can access advice and assistance.
 - Build a personal relationship with health and other resource groups such as police, fire, and rescue, social welfare, mental health services, juvenile justice and family support systems
2. Be available to assist staff and students who may require medical assistance.
3. Be available to parents who may need assistance/advice or referrals to health services.

Security/Business Manager

1. Check that substitute teachers are in place in classes where CIM members were on duty.



2. Notify police liaison person if the need for extra security needs to be transmitted to police.
3. Ensure that personnel are in place to prevent encroachments onto the College campus.
4. Coordinate WHS, maintenance staff as required.

POLICY RELEASE DETAILS

Date of Policy

August 2009

Approved by

College Council 2009

Review Date

Annually

RELATED POLICIES AND DOCUMENTS

Duty of Care Handbook
Child Protection Policy
Lockdown Procedure
Risk Management Policy



Crisis Management 1

1. Who is involved?

Principal

Key Admin Staff:

Deputies:

Counsellor / Guidance Officer

Appropriate Department Heads:

Year Level Coordinators

Others:

2. What are the facts?

3. Instructions for Receptionist

◆ This person will need clear advice and direction to cope with telephone and other desk enquiries.

◆ Who will be the contact person for enquiries:

4. Briefing to be prepared for:

◆ staff by _____

◆ students by _____

◆ parents; a letter by _____

◆ media by _____

5. Administration Matters in need of immediate attention:

◆ Special timetable, if required

◆ Keeping students away from certain areas, if required

◆ Contact emergency support personnel eg: counsellors, medical etc

◆ Any parents who need to be notified

◆ Inform other schools; students from other schools coming here

◆ A staff member from other schools to monitor students who come here

6. People to contact outside the College for advice/assistance

District Office

Lifeline

Police

Other

Crisis Management 2

INFORMING STAFF

- a) Inform staff of management plan
- b) House Leaders or Department Heads to inform absent staff.....
- c) Counsel staff about how to cope with this situation.....
- d) Counsellors available for staff who may need help
- e) Remind staff to be alert for each other; prepare for grief signs
- f) If possible, bring staff together for a short time before going out to students; observe ‘coping’ levels of each staff member.....
- g) Find out who are friends of those at centre of the crisis among students and staff; they may need special attention e.g. to be told privately or in small group, a special room for grieving, being allowed to respond to this news.....
- h) Explain routine for the day; where possible, return to usual routine as soon as possible.

INFORMING STUDENTS

- a) This is best done in small groups so that:
 - individual students’ responses may be observed.
 - students are allowed more freedom to express their grief.
- b) All students should be informed at the same time.....
- c) Find out who are friends of those at centre of the crisis among students and staff; they may need special attention e.g. to be told privately or in small group, a special room for grieving, being allowed to respond to this news.....
- d) Have a prepared statement read out in each group so that there is no confusion or misinformation.
- e) Things that will need to be explained to students:
 - be prepared for feelings in response to this situation.....
 - how further information is to be passed on (to help avoid problems resulting from rumours, gossip).....
 - routine for today.....
 - letter to parents.....
 - what to do if approached by media
- f) Give students adequate and appropriate time to respond; set up a recovery room for students and staff