



CRITICAL INCIDENT POLICY

'The School is committed to safeguarding and promoting safety, welfare and wellbeing of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.'

CRITICAL INCIDENT POLICY

Policy document information

Policy Name	Critical Incident Policy
Supervisor	School Principal
Other Policy Relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Crisis Management Policy • School Ground Duties – Guidelines for teachers • Child Protection Policy-Non-Mandatory Reporting • Child Protection policy – Mandatory Reporting • Custody Arrangements/Court Orders • Reporting Policy • Bullying Prevention (Includes Cyber-Bullying) • Child Protection • Criminal History Checks • Duty of Care • Staff Induction • Volunteers- obligations • Surveillance in the school policy
Audience	All Staff of Emmanuel Christian Community School

Key Dates

Date of issue	December, 2016
Date submitted to the Board	March, 2017

1. INTRODUCTION

Emmanuel Christian Community School is committed to maintaining a ministry, work and student environment that manifests Christian relational values and practices.

This policy is directed specifically at ensuring that all our community (student, parents, staff and their respective families) feel safe.

The Department Education Services (DES) website states that:

'The policy and procedures should be benchmarked against the Department of Education's policy and procedures for emergency and critical incident management.'

Critical Incidents

There are now five types of circumstances that the Department of Education Services (DES) considers to be representative of reportable Critical Incidents. The first three are existing, while the last two are new, as of 2016. The five are:

- Circumstances that pose a critical risk to the health, safety or well-being of one or more students or staff;
- Incidents requiring school closure, lockdown, or reduction of number of students or staff attending;
- Death or life-threatening injury of a student or staff member at school, following an incident that occurred while being educated, or through a related school-based activity or circumstance;
- Receipt of an allegation of child abuse, including but not limited to sexual abuse, against a student by a staff member or student or other person, whether the abuse is alleged to have occurred recently or in the past; and
- Issuing a formal warning to a staff member or ceasing the employment of a staff member for a breach of the staff Code of Conduct suspected to be grooming behaviour.

Notification to the Chair of the school's governing body and to the Department of Education Services, via an online form, is required as soon as practicable or within 48 hours.

Principal to provide a report to the governing body outlining the incident, the school's response, outcome and the date and time that the DES was notified. Receipt of this report needs to be reflected in the governing body meeting minutes.

It is important to note that there is now a new Critical Incident Report form, available from the [DES](#) website. When completing and submitting a report the DES also requires information on the policy (or policies) that was invoked during the school's response to the incident. This information includes the title of the policy (policies) and the DES may also

request a copy of the relevant text from the policy (policies).

Note that reports made to the TRBWA are now reportable critical incidents to DES.

Making a report to the Teacher Registration Board of WA is now included on the Critical Incident Form as a reportable critical incident to DES.

Critical incidents are:

- Critical Incidents are to be reported to the Chair of the School Board and DES (Appendix 1)
- The Critical Incident needs to be reported as soon as is practicable and, in any event, within 48 hours of the incident.
- Circumstances that pose a critical risk to the health, safety or well-being of one or more students or staff.

Procedures

This policy needs to be read in conjunction with the Crisis Management Procedure policy together with all the policies listed in page 2 when dealing with incident/accidents situations.

Emmanuel Christian Community School is required to have a Critical Incidents Policy and procedures that cover:

- Prevention and mitigation
- Preparedness
- Response to a critical incident
- Recovery from the incident
- Recording of the incident
- Review of procedures

1. Prevention and mitigation

1.1 Risk assessment

The Principal must:

- Identify on-site and off-site situations that have the potential to become emergencies or critical incidents affecting the site's operations;
- Determine potential risks associated with particular situations; and
- Use the risk policies, listed in page 2, to assess the potential risks and develop mitigation strategies.
- Guidelines: Emergencies or critical incidents can include natural disaster (for example, bushfire or floods) or human disasters (for example, arson).
The policies listed in page 2 can be used to select which emergency or critical incident plan is required.

- Consult with the Senior, the school Occupational Safety and Health officer and external agencies such as local government or WA Police, as part of the risk assessment process.

2. Preparedness

2.1 Prevention and preparedness

The principal will implement strategies to eliminate or reduce the likelihood of the occurrence of emergencies or critical incidents.

2.1.1 *Emergency and critical incident management plan*

The principal will develop and maintain an Emergency and Critical Incident Management Plan. Refer to the policies listed in page 2 of this document for each situation management plan to support the school overall planning. Refer to point 4.2.2 for the check list of the management plan.

2.1.2 *Communication, training, testing and review*

The Principal must confirm that the Emergency and Critical Incident Management Plan of the school is:

- communicated to all staff;
- publicly accessible for both inspection and use in the event of an emergency or critical incident;
- implemented by staff trained for their roles in managing emergency situations;
- tested and reviewed (for example, evacuation drills) on at least a term basis and, where necessary, after an emergency or critical incident;
- modified in accordance with information gained from testing and actual experiences; and
- developed in consideration of the services provided by other agencies such as the WA Police, the Fire and Emergency Services Authority, the Department for Child Protection and the Department of Health, including mental health services.

The Principal in bushfire prone areas must:

- Confirm that the Emergency and Critical Incident *Management Plan* of the site requires practice evacuation drills prior to October and at least once per term during the bushfire season.

2.1.3 Other responsibilities

The Principal will:

- Maintain the Online Incident Notification System and use this to plan improved prevention, preparedness and response strategies
- Maintain a process for the system level coordination of the prevention, preparedness, response and recovery
- Confirm that the school has an Emergency and Critical Incident Management Plan through the staff meetings
- Ensure that the School Board members obtain and hold copies of school Emergency and Critical Incident Management Plans
- Facilitate opportunities for key personnel (eg. Senior staff and school psychologists) to develop emergency management and critical incident related knowledge, skills and experience
- Analyse information and data and use this to develop improved prevention, preparedness and response strategies

3. Response to a critical incident

3.1 Response

The Principal or his/her delegate will facilitate appropriate support to the school when experiencing an emergency or critical incident, including but not limited to:

- assistance with the selection of the appropriate response
- provision of school psychologist support as required
- assistance with inter-agency liaison as required and
- notification or possible request for support from external agencies.
- respond to a particular emergency or critical incident in accordance with the actions outlined in the management plan policies.

As well as tailoring the nature and level of responses to the emergency or critical incident, the principal or his/her delegate, must also modify the responses as the situation changes and must recognise the varying needs of students and staff.

The selection for each incident should be based on a consideration of the complexity of issues to be managed and the expertise required.

Information related to emergencies and critical incidents.

Following an emergency or critical incident, the Principal will act promptly to:

- Contact WA Police if the particular incident warrants
- Contact the parent or guardian of any student who has been harmed or threatened with harm
- Submit a Critical Incident Report of any emergency or critical incident to the Director General of Department Education Services (DES) and the School Board chairman within 48 hours
- Inform staff and students about any potential danger
- Prepare communications for parents and the wider school community about any potential danger

3.1.1 Evacuation

The principal will:

- Plan for both on-site and off-site evacuation as part of the *Emergency and Critical Incident Management Plan*;

3.1.2 Closure

The principal will notify the School Board Chairman and DES immediately after any order is made to temporarily close all or a particular part of the school's premises.

3.1.3 Lockdown

The Principal will:

- Plan for lockdown as one aspect of the Emergency and Critical Incident Management Plan
- Initiate lockdown based on an assessment of risks to students and staff;
- Make the decision to initiate lockdown informed by advice from other agencies (for example, WA Police or the Fire and Emergency Services Authority), or other information available at the site;
- Maintain records and documentation associated with a lockdown.

4. Recording of the incident

4.1 Recovery

Following an emergency and critical incident, the Principal will:

- take appropriate actions to return the school infrastructure to normal;

- develop and implement medium to long-term strategies in conjunction with the Senior Staff, School Board and the school psychologist to identify and manage the ongoing social and psychological needs, and (in the case of students) the educational needs, of those affected;
- modify specific procedures of the plan as determined by the debriefing.

5. Review procedures.

5.1 Review of processes

The Principal will:

- organise a debriefing, as appropriate, to evaluate the implementation and effectiveness of the Emergency and Critical Incident *Management Plan*; and
- maintain documentation associated with management of the emergency and critical incident.

Notifications:

- The Principal notifies the governing body of all critical or emergency incidents.
- Critical and emergency incidents are managed in such a way as to give highest priority to the best interests of the student or students affected.
- The governing body ensures the Director General is notified as soon as practicable and, in any event, within 48 hours of the incident using the Critical and Emergency Incident Report form, available on the DES website at des.wa.gov.au
- The procedures should clearly stipulate notification of the governing body and of the Director General and require records to be kept of each notification. Where the principal knows that a mandatory report has been made in regard to a student at the school, the Director General is to be notified as this falls within the definition of a critical incident. Such a notification only needs to record that a mandatory report has been made to the Department for Child Protection and Family Support and provide the report receipt number. Similarly, where the Principal has issued a formal warning to a staff member or terminated the employment of a staff member for a breach of the Staff Code of Conduct suspected to be grooming behaviour, a critical incident notification must be made to the Director General. (Note that the Teacher Registration Board may have to be notified in addition: refer to *Teacher Registration Act 2012*, s. 42.)
- Notification of the Director General must be on the approved form and sufficiently detailed to enable the Director General to scrutinise the school's responses in line with the purpose of making this standard. It will generally be insufficient notification to advise the Director General that the incident was 'resolved in line with school policy' or similar. The actual outcome in practice must be outlined, the relevant school policy must be referred to by title, and the text of the relevant section of that policy must be provided.
- As resolution of a critical incident may not be achieved until some time after the occurrence of the incident, and if the school is required to report critical incidents within 48 hours, the Director General may request further information as to the resolution of the matter by way of an update. When critical and/or emergency incidents occur, a key focus of the Director General will be to understand whether non-observance of a registration standard or other requirement contributed to the occurrence of the incident and how effectively the school has responded.
- The critical incidents policy should support and be consistent with the school's child-safe environment arrangements including policies and procedures developed to prevent the occurrence of any form of child abuse. An effective risk assessment and review procedure will enhance the levels of care afforded to students at the school.

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