
Emmaus Catholic College

Kemps Creek



Critical Incident Management Policy

2016

**November 2015
To be reviewed December 2016**

Emmaus Catholic College Kemps Creek Critical Incident Management Policy

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1.0 Critical Incident Management Plan – General Guidelines

1.1 Critical Incident – Definition

A critical incident can be defined as any situation faced by members of the College Community that causes them to experience unusually strong emotions which have the potential to overwhelm their ability to cope, either then or later. They are traumatic, causing emotional turmoil and behavioural changes. The effects of a critical incident can be lasting and depend in part on the extent of support given by caring people in dealing with the experience.

1.2 Examples of Critical Incident

- Sudden death of a student or staff member
- Suicide of a student or staff member
- Murder of a student or staff member
- Groups of students and staff who witness sudden death, severe injury or disaster whilst on the premises or whilst travelling to or from the College or on excursion.
- Major vandalism of College property
- Natural or community disasters
- Unusual and unfavourable media attention

Schools like all other organizations are potentially subject to sudden, destructive and tragic events. It is impossible to predict the nature or timing of a critical incident but it is possible to predict some of the likely consequences and prepare to some degree to meet them effectively.

Hence the College has developed a Critical Incident Management Plan and established a Critical Incident Management Support Team. The plan outlines a general response and provides resources and a checklist to assist members of the team as they undertake the work of caring for the school community whilst orienting the school back to normal operations as soon as is appropriate.

The Principal is responsible for immediate contact with the Catholic Education Office in the event of a Critical Incident and for the management together with the CEO of all contact with the media. No staff member or student is to speak with the media without the specific sanction of the Principal.

The Critical Incident Management Team which has been trained to undertake specific responsibilities in a period of crisis is made up of the Leadership Team, the School Counsellor and selected other staff. Members of this group have delegated authority during the period of the critical incident to direct and monitor relevant procedures.

Where an event occurs overnight or during weekends or holiday breaks, a member of the CIMST will contact each staff member at home giving details of the occurrence. A ‘standard script’ will be developed at the first meeting of the CIMST to ensure consistency of information to all parties.

1.3 Critical Incident Team

- Principal - Peter Brogan
- Assistant Principal - Melinda Bowd
- Religious Education Co - Briony Mowbray
- Director of Learning - Darren Conway
- Director of Welfare - Robert Simpson
- School Counsellor - Helen H/Lauren
- Teaching Staff Rep 1 - Steven Bauer
- Teaching Staff Rep 2 - Ross Ashdown
- Support Staff Rep 1 - Laraine Lawton
- Support Staff Rep 2 - Barbara Biermann

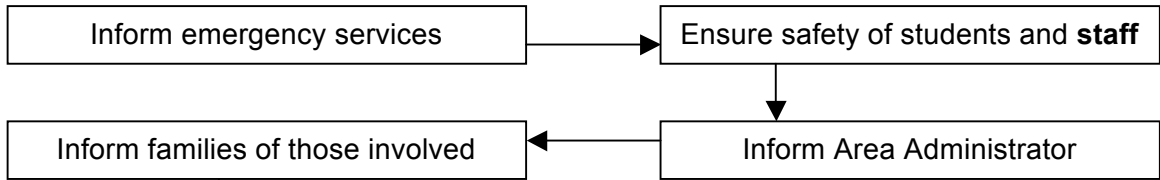
1.4 Responsibilities of Team Members

- Assessment of the situations which may require emergency action;
- Analysis of the requirements of the school to address these situations;
- Development of preventative strategies and/or specific plans to respond to situations considered particularly likely to occur at a given school (due to specific circumstances of the site or for other reasons), including allocation of specific responsibilities to staff members.
- Arrangement for checking of specific plans by relevant authorities;
- Establishment of liaison with all relevant emergency and support services and preparation of contact lists for these services;
- Establishment of liaison with the Diocesan School Counsellors through the school's Area Administrator.
- Familiarisation of staff with the potential incidents identified and the arrangements made by the school to address these situations, including the C.I. checklist included in this policy;
- Organisation of trials of evacuation or other management procedures;
- The identification of specific Professional Development needs related to potential critical incidents (e.g. dealing with the media) and the organisation of staff attendance at appropriate courses;
- Regular review of the school's Critical Incident Management Plan.

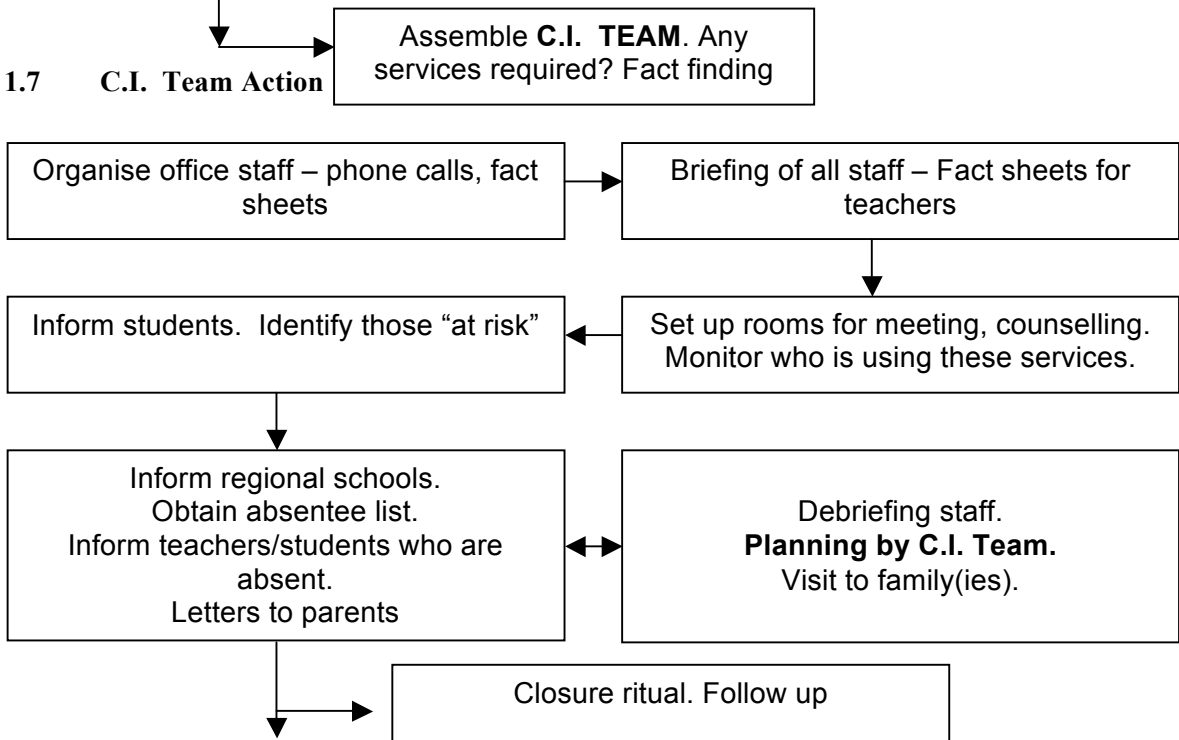
1.5 Immediate Response at the time of a Critical Incident

**Principal informed of
CRITICAL INCIDENT**

1.6 Immediate Action: by the Principal or Delegate



1.7 C.I. Team Action



Refer to checklist for full details

1.8 Critical Incident Checklist

1.8.1 Phase One - immediate action by Principal

	Person/s responsible	Notes
Inform emergency services.		
Ensure safety of students, staff and visitors.		
Alert the School Critical Incident Management Team.		
Meet with the School Critical Incident Management Team.		
If event occurs overnight or on weekend inform all staff via phone tree in plan.		
Inform Director and Consultant at Catholic Schools Office.		
Contact families of those involved (news of a death should not be given by phone).		
Provide office staff with information necessary to contain the situation. Give a printed statement of details to be used without change or embellishment by all.		
Inform all staff and students that they are not to speak to the media and direct all media and emergency services calls to the Principal or Catholic Schools Office.		
Contact the relevant clergy.		

CRITICAL INCIDENT RESPONSE CHECKLIST

1.8.2 Phase Two - immediate action by Team

	Person/s responsible	Notes
Check that all members of the team are okay to undertake the responsibilities as detailed in the plan.		
Refer to the Critical Incident Management Plan.		
Assess the situation and consider the most appropriate response.		
Decide what resources are needed, eg counsellors, relief staff		
Prepare, type and distribute "Standard		

Script Statement’.		
Organise office staff to: attend to visitors, receive phone calls, fax updated information to Catholic Schools Office, know details of response to possible media contact.		
If students are likely to find out about the situation, for example, at the train station or bus stop, organise staff members to monitor situation at school etc.		
Decide what information will be communicated to students.		
Decide what information will be communicated to staff. Use of “Phone Tree”.		
Identify students/staff who should be told separately.		
Brief all staff. It is very important that no one be overlooked.		
Arrange to contact absent staff , staff on extended leave and perhaps regular casuals.		
Ensure that all staff are able to function and complete their tasks.		
Inform students in Homerooms grouping or smaller groups if needed.		

1.8.3 Phase Three - immediate action by Team

	Person/s responsible	Notes
Establish Sacred Space and/or other spaces for use by staff and students.		
Provide tissues, drinking water, perhaps heaters if rooms are designated for meetings and counselling.		
Ensure that visiting counsellors and relief staff insist on diary notes so that students are supervised and accounted for at all times.		
Cater for the needs of the visitors to the school (provide cups, mugs, ordering lunch).		
Contact supportive community agencies.		

Contact local doctors to inform them of the incident.		
Phone parents whose sons/daughters need to be collected from school or are likely to arrive home in a very distressed state.		

1.8.4 Phase Four - Ongoing tasks

	Person/s responsible	Notes
Make sure all students and staff are where they should be (as per announcements).		
Ensure there are sufficient leave slips and insist on following of normal leave procedures.		
Support the affected families, including visits by appropriate members of the school community.		
Be visible and accessible in the support of staff carrying out their duties.		
Provide updated information to staff.		
Be vigilant to indicators that members are not coping with the incident.		
Have all staff attend a staff debriefing at the end of the day.		
The Critical Incident Management Team should meet regularly to review, access, plan and support.		
Keep appropriate documentation.		

1.8.5 Phase Five - Closure, follow-up and evaluation

	Person/s responsible	Notes
Co-ordinate appropriate commemorations like plaques and tree planting.		
Organise the time and ritual closure of the Critical Incident Response and return to normal routine.		
(Where a student/staff member will not be returning) – Arrange for appropriate removal of name from rolls and lists, transfer of any personal property to family – including unmarked assignments, etc.		
Arrange for mail, certificates etc.. to be handled appropriately.		
Formally close the daily briefing with staff.		

Set up a debriefing for the Critical Incident Management Team.		
Acknowledge the offers of support and the assistance provided throughout the Critical Incident, for example, write letters of thanks.		
Document and evaluate the process and make necessary changes to the Critical Incident Management Plan.		
	Person/s responsible	Notes
Modify structures and procedures and arrange for further training where necessary.		
Provide a teaching resource for teachers to be used in RE.		
Make a list of students and staff considered “at risk” and arrange appropriate follow-up 5 weeks and 10 weeks later. Document follow up.		
Write brief report of Management of the Incident.		

1.8.6 In the event of death

	Person/s responsible	Notes
Plan appropriate school involvement in the funeral with consultation with the family.		
If the school is to be involved, arrange for <u>one</u> liaison person to work with the family, priest and funeral director.		
Be careful and sensitive to inclusion of “special” friends in funeral or other memorial rituals.		
Meet with students attending the funeral and provide information on what happens at a funeral.		
Collect parental permission slips for students who are attending the funeral.		
Arrange for counsellors to be present at funeral to support staff and students.		
Ensure that students and staff feel composed after the funeral, particularly before driving.		
Ensure that relevant staff are present at the family home after the funeral to support		

students if appropriate.		
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1.9 Post Incident Procedures

- The Principal or delegate keeps staff, students and community informed of the changing circumstances.
- Siblings and friends of the injured or deceased person/s are monitored.
- Principal establishes the need for outside agencies i.e. C.E.O.; counsellors. Counsellors may be required for staff, students, parents
- After hours help line to be given to staff, students and others.
- Establishment of areas within the College where students and staff can receive support.
- Support person/s to be placed in this area.
- Provisions for tea/coffee set up.
- Staff and students have access to this room for several days.

1.10 Re-establishment of Normal Routines

Restore school to regular routine as soon as practical.

- Teachers encourage discussion in class about the incident and the students' reactions.
 - Teachers are encouraged to use available and suitable literature to discuss the incident.
- Teachers to inform Principal of any persisting reactions among the students in their class.
 - Depending on the person, some people may not react immediately, reaction may occur weeks even months after the incident.
- When a death has occurred the school will provide a public expression of farewell
 - Acknowledgement made on the anniversary of the death.
 - Reactions monitored on the anniversary.

1.11 Evaluate the Crisis Management Plan

- The following questions to be addressed
 - What aspect of the Plan worked well?
 - What aspect of the Plan needs changing?
 - Was the Plan effective enough for the situation?

2.0 Dealing with the Media during a Critical Incident

2.1. The Media is involved

- Refer any media to the Front Office immediately. Do not speak to them about the incident unless you have delegated authority to do so.
- The media officer or Principal delegate prepares a statement for the media.
- Statement is placed at the Front Office. This statement is the only statement to be given.
- Statement to be updated as the need arises by the same person who wrote the statement.
- The same statement is used face to face.

2.2 Where an accident has occurred away from the College and the media arrive at the scene.

- A statement is given by the Senior teacher. The statement only includes that an accident has occurred and some people have been injured.
- A further statement to be obtained from the school.

2.3 Information is requested by a parent/member of the community

- The Principal or delegate prepares the statement.
- Statement is placed at every telephone in the school. This statement is the only statement to be given.
- Statement to be updated as need arises by the same person who wrote the statement.
- The same statement is used in all circumstances.

3.0 College Community and C.E.O. Contacts and Sample Letters and Fact Sheets

3.1 Contacts

Team Members' Names and Numbers are with each team member

Phone trees and staff numbers are with each team member

POSITION/ORGANISATION	NAME	PHONE	FAX
Director of School Performance (DOSP), Catholic Education Office	Mrs Christine Howe	9840 5611	
Parish Priests			
Holy Spirit Catholic Church St Clair	Fr Michael Bellonio	9670 1752 9670 8222 (Priory)	
Our Lady of the Rosary Church St Marys	Fr Brendan Murphy	9623 1962	9637-2644
Regional Schools			
Trinity Catholic Primary Kemps Creek	Mr Scott Buchan	9834 3212	9834 3597
Holy Spirit Primary St Clair	Mrs Anne Hinds	9670 5379	9834 3209
Our Lady of the Rosary Primary St Marys	Mr Alan Jones	9623 2500	9623 2597
Loyola Senior High School	Mrs Catherine Larkin	9832 4455	9832 1839

3.2 SAMPLE LETTERS

Important Note:

The following letters and fact sheets dealing with the death of a student are examples only. Each school C.I. Team should use these as a guide to writing letters and fact sheets which meet the needs of the situation and reflect the culture of the school community. Appropriate protection of the privacy of bereaved families should be an important priority.

When passing on information to staff, parents or students, err on the side of **caution** in any matters which may have legal implications or be subject to misinterpretation. **For legal reasons, schools are advised to have the wording of such notices checked by either the school's Head of School Performance or (if the HOSP is not readily available) the Department of Human Services at the CEO.**

Parent Information Letters - Example A

Dear Parents,

With this letter your son/daughter will have told you that one of our Year X students, , has tragically died. While it appears that may have taken his/her own life yesterday morning, we are not in a position to be sure of this.

Our heartfelt prayers and thoughts go out to his/her parents, brothers/sisters, and to his/her friends, especially over these days as they struggle with the hurt that his/her death has brought. May they find comfort in our support and in God's love for them?

It is time of shock for all of us and it would be quite normal that feelings of sadness, anger and even guilt could be experienced at this time. Your son/daughter may wish to share some of his/her feelings or thoughts with you. I would encourage you to be open to this, even if it may be uncomfortable for you. He/she may also wish to talk about the situation amongst his/her friends. Additional support and counselling is available at the School, for students, their parents and teachers. As well as our own counsellors, we have a number of local Priests available along with a team of counsellors from other schools within the Diocese. Many have already been helped by the expertise of these people, and I recommend them to you.

Please pray for , that he/she will be at peace with God, and for his/her family that they will be strengthened by the God who loves them.

Yours sincerely,

Principal

Parent Information Letters - Example B

Dear Parents,

This week our school community was shocked and saddened by the very tragic death of The suddenness and very nature of his/her death are very difficult for us to comprehend and accept.

I believe it is important that you are informed of the response of the school and of what support is being given to our students in enabling them to work through their many and very different feelings and reactions of this news.

The Catholic Education Office has offered support through the counsellors who are leading a team of support staff at the school for as long as they are needed. These trained counsellors are here to work with both staff and students and their experience and expertise ensure that the appropriate care is given to all who need it.

Since (day) this team has worked with me and other staff at the school, especially in the planning for the return of our students today. All the students were informed of the circumstances of death at roll class this morning and were given the opportunity for follow-up discussion with teachers and counsellors individually and in groups.

Our Year (Y) students and a number of teachers then represented the school at the Requiem Mass this afternoon.

Your sons/daughters may want to talk with you about their reactions to this overwhelming tragedy. It is important that they are encouraged to do so freely and honestly. Later we will have a meeting with parents to discuss these events.

At such a difficult time of grief and sadness, as a Catholic school community we turn to our faith for solace and for strength. We share a belief in a loving God who knows and cares for each one of us and who gives us the promise of Eternal Life. It is this belief that enables us to see at peace with God who created him/her and loves him/her.

I ask you to keep in your prayers’s family, in particular his/her sister/brother who is at this school. May they find comfort in our support and in the God who loves them.

To begin a school year in such difficult circumstances is indeed very hard. We will grow through this experience by supporting each other and by responding as a Community of Faith.

*“Do not let your hearts be troubled.
Trust in God.”*

Yours sincerely,

Principal

3.3 Student Fact Sheet

(For use by teachers in informing students orally. *Not* for distribution in writing.)

Example A

Date:

Lastday evening,(date).....,, one of our Year Z students, died tragically. His/her mother found him/her unconscious on the floor with a tablet bottle nearby. Mrs called an ambulance, but was already dead. We do not know if s/he meant to harm her/himself, or just made a tragic mistake. His/her sister/brother, will need our love and support. S/he doesn't need lots of questions, though, because s/he knows no more than we do.

Student Fact Sheet

(For use by teachers in informing students orally. *Not* for distribution in writing.)

Example B

On(date)..... one of our Year X students were involved in a very serious car accident with his/her family at(location)..... at approximately(time).....

..... was killed as a result of the accident. His/her funeral will be held onday at Church at ...(suburb).....

.....'s father is currently in hospital in a serious but stable condition. It is not helpful at this time for any students to be passing around rumours about the accident, nor making judgements, especially when we do not know the full story.

At this very sad time we can only offer our prayers and support to 's family, especially for the recovery of Mr., and to the people who knew, particularly the Year X students.

Staff Fact Sheet

Example A

Date:

Onday,(date).....,(name)....., one of our Year Z students, was involved in a car accident at(location)..... at approximately(time)..... The car left the road and hit a tree, and died as a result of injuries s/he sustained. It is believed that s/he died almost immediately.

.....'s parents and sister (.....school/year/age.....) were in the car. The car was being driven at the time by 's father is currently in hospital with serious injuries, but it is believed that he is out of immediate danger.

Onday afternoon a meeting of the school Critical Incident Management Team was held to formulate a procedure for dealing with this tragic situation.(HOSP)..... has been in frequent contact with the immediate friends of and is available to provide support to any members of the school community who need help at this time.

The funeral will be held at(church)..... onday. Staff, students, parents and friends will be invited to gather at the school after the service if they wish.

At this time we can only offer our prayers and support for the family and for the quick recovery of Mr..... . Our focus now turns to the other students of Year Z and all those in the school community who have been affected by this tragedy.(HOSP)... will now explain the involvement of the school in the funeral and the follow-up structures that we have put in place.

4.0 Type of Crisis and Emergency Contact Numbers

Assess Vulnerabilities

A school in a bush setting is more likely to face the crisis of a bushfire than one on a busy intersection, where there is the likelihood of a truck crashing through the playground. While it is not possible to prepare for every crisis situation, an awareness of a school's vulnerabilities can help with specific preparations and even prevention.

Type of crisis	Probability			
	High	Medium	Low	Nil
Arson				
Serious infectious disease				
Bushfire				
Violent assault				
Car accident				
Electrical fire				
Suicide				
Building collapse				
Hostage taking				
Explosion				
Bus or train accident				
Extortion				
Murder				
Unfavourable media attention				
Major vandalism				
Sexual abuse				
Bomb threat				
Harassment				
Hazardous chemical spill				
Natural disaster				
Abduction				
Sudden death				
Camping mishap				
Drug overdose				
Armed robbery				
Drowning				
Intruder				

Emergency Contact Numbers

Emergency Police / Fire / Ambulance Phone 000

Local Services:		
Organisation	Location	Telephone
Ambulance 000	COLYTON	000
Police 000	ST MARYS	9677 5099
Fire Brigade 000	ST MARYS	9623 3897
State Emergency Services 132500	MT DRUITT	9625 3000
Poisons Information Centre		13 1126
Department of Community Services Area Disaster Welfare Office 1800 018444	PARRAMATTA	9683 2388
Area Administrator, District Superintendent or equivalent role	PENRITH ST MARYS	4721 9444 9623 3999
Hospital	NEPEAN HOSPITAL MT DRUITT HOSPITAL BLACKTOWN HOSPITAL	4734 2000 9881 1555 9881 8000
Security Company	SNP Security	1300 303 132
Telstra Interface Team (Malicious calls trace e.g. bomb threats) 000		1800 805996
Telstra Conferlink (Setting up an emergency teleconference)		1800 011080
Telstra 3 Way Chat (3 person conference)		

5.0 Quick Reference Guide for Staff

If a crisis occurs in the classroom, on the playground or outside the College, these procedures are to be followed by the staff present at the time of the incident. At all times remain calm.

5.1 An accident has occurred – Action

- Do not remove victim unless they are in danger
- Staff member remains with the injured
- Send another staff member or student for the First Aid officer using the following message – *Emergency on the playground, classroom, etc.*
- Send for the Principal or delegate – *Emergency on the playground, classroom, etc.*
- Principal or delegate makes following decisions:
 1. Is an ambulance required?
 2. Are the police needed?
 3. Contact parents – who?
- Victim's emergency phone numbers and details are obtained from the office by the secretary and sent to the Principal or delegate (normally receptionist).
- Injured person to be kept comfortable until further assistance arrives.
- Principal or delegate accompanies person to the hospital if parents are not present.

5.2 A Death has occurred – Action

- Notify Principal or delegate immediately.
- Principal notifies staff, students and community. Principal uses own discretion on how and when to notify the various groups.
- The Principal puts into place support for the immediate family.
- Community message to be left at all phones. This message only is given in response to enquires.

5.3 An Accident has occurred on an Excursion

- Teacher in charge of the excursion determines the extent of the injury.
- Apply emergency first aid.
- Senior teacher contacts ambulance (000) and school. The following information to be given to the **PRINCIPAL** or delegate when contacting the school:
 - what has occurred
 - where the accident has occurred
 - who has been injured
 - what course of action has taken place.
- The Principal will give any other instructions and course of action if needed.
- If possible or required the Principal or delegate attend the incident.

- The school notifies parents.
- The school organises transport for children to be transported back to school.
- The Principal or delegate informs staff and students.
- Any children that need to be taken to a hospital to be accompanied by a teacher. Head teacher delegates which teacher is to go with child in the ambulance. Remaining teachers stay with other children.

6.0 A Guide to assist in Critical Incident Management

A GUIDE FOR TEACHERS

Some ideas to assist teachers facing the task of informing and supporting students during a critical incident involving the death of a member of the school community

INFORMING STUDENTS OF A DEATH

Initially the students will be given information about the critical incident in groups by teachers. This is crucial step and is very demanding. If you feel that you cannot do this at the present time, then do not feel any pressure to do so. Simply let someone know so that alternatives can be arranged.

INFORMATION GIVING: GIVE A SPEECH

Start the session by talking to the students. It would be best to get through all in this box before taking questions or allowing comment. This is negotiable, but if you feel the need for structure, this is a good one. The speech part should go on for about five (5) minutes.

1. Tell the facts

Here you tell the students the official information as per the fact sheet. Careful attention to the wording is important. If you are asked for clarification, simply repeat the part of the information that is relevant to the question. It would not be appropriate to be placing interpretations or attributing motives at this point.

2. Mention some possible responses

Feelings: Sadness, fears, confusion, guilt anger etc. Thoughts: Why?, If only..., What if...?
 Actions: Crying, loss of focus, irritable, unreasonable, withdrawn

3. Tell them the plan

a. After this lesson, normal classes will resume and normal participation is expected but if people need to opt out, they should feel free to do so with permission.

b. Counselling support is available at the school for as long as it will be required.

Simply ask to be referred or directed. Inform students they are doing the right thing if it is with permission and is supervised

ALLOW DISCUSSION, COMMENT AND QUESTIONS

It is entirely unpredictable what the students will do at this point. If the response is subdued, thoughtful or very weak, let it go and get on with a planned task and monitor reactions.

If students have things to say, the following may guide your responses:

- Acknowledge feelings clearly. No feelings are unacceptable of themselves and tend to be a more positive influence when acknowledged.
- Try to make a response (verbal or non-verbal) to every student statement which has a significant feeling content.
- Take all issues calmly and assertively. Being truthful engenders recovery better than cover-ups.

- Challenge and firmly debunk all rumours that are contrary to the fact sheet or that have the effect of apportioning blame or motives on anyone. Encourage students to do the same.
- Write down the names of students who appear to be experiencing distress and pass the list on to the CIM team immediately after the session.
- If hysteria arises, move quickly to calm upset students or have them accompanied to support personnel for further debriefing. Call someone in rather than lose the battle with hysteria.

CONCLUDING / MOVING ON

As feeling settles, begin to wind up. If it looks like going on without settling, warn that you will be concluding in a few minutes and that those who still need to talk should seek further support as outlined in the plan.

Recap the plan. Restate what will be expected of students next and remind them of the individuality of the grieving now in progress. Try to have a concrete activity ready should it be the most appropriate thing to do.

THE AFTERMATH

After the initial meeting with students, the process of grieving will continue and may escalate. At this time the teacher role is to provide the ordinary curriculum structure for the vast majority of students who prefer to get on with it. Distressed students need to be referred to more specialist counselling for debriefing. They need to be allowed to seek help within the constraints of teacher-granted permission (eg. permission slip from the teacher who would normally have them). Students should be (as always) supervised in their activities at school.

Any student whom you feel needs follow up should be referred. Giving their name to the CIM team is essential. Directly invite distressed students to seek help. If they do not want to, affirm their decision, but still refer them.

Possible student reactions to critical incidents:

- * disbelief and shock
- * crying and sadness
- * talking
- * holding
- * questioning
- * withdrawing
- * shaking
- * loss of appetite
- * rage
- * aloneness
- * covering up feelings
- * rationalising
- * guilt
- * fatigue
- * self preoccupation
- * anger
- * others ?

GRIEF AWARENESS

DO's and DON'Ts

1. Do spend time with grieving people.

Don't try to do everything for them - be with them

2. Do accept their behaviour e.g. screaming, crying, being quiet, laughing.

Don't inhibit them. e.g. through lecturing, reasoning, giving advice.

STOPPING THE BEHAVIOUR DOESN'T STOP THE FEELING

3. Do accept their feelings, even negative feelings. e.g. anger, guilt, self-accusation.

Don't stop them through reasoning, pep-talks, lectures

FEELINGS SHOULD BE ALLOWED TO BE EXPRESSED

4. Do let the grieving person choose their own way of experiencing grief

Don't expect specific behaviours/feelings

GRIEF IS INDIVIDUAL

5. Do let grieving people choose how long they grieve

Don't expect stages of grieving

GRIEF DOESN'T ALWAYS FOLLOW THE SAME PATTERN

6. Do share your concern with a trusted colleague when anxious about a person's management of grief

Don't try to provide all the answers

AFTERWARDS:

Certain situations such as sporting events, birthdays, the anniversary of the incident itself may awaken distress. The school may need to be prepared to reintroduce additional assistance as required and provide opportunities for inservice and training as required.

Information about adolescent and childhood suicide

Suicide is a major cause of death among 15-19 year olds (but can also occur at earlier ages). It can be prevented in many cases. The following information is offered as a brief guide to teachers in the recognition of possible signs of suicide. More detailed risk assessment information is available to secondary student support officers. Teachers who have reason to believe that a student may be considering suicide should immediately contact their SSSO or principal to gain specialist help.

Danger signs that someone may be considering suicide include:

- a previous suicide attempt;
- verbal threats;
- changes in behaviour (e.g. withdrawal);
- unusual purchases (e.g. weapons, rope);
- giving away personal possessions;
- signs of depression (anxiety, restlessness);
- problems in school (drop in grades, emotional outbursts);
- preoccupation with/themes of death (artwork, essays).

A person who is considering suicide needs to know that others care.

DO :

- be direct (talk openly, ask direct questions);
- be a good listener (don't make judgements);
- make time available;
- get help (act quickly) - always take any threat of suicide seriously.

DON'T :

- sidestep the issue;
- keep what you know a secret (do not allow yourself to be sworn to secrecy, do not keep such a promise);
- leave the person alone;
- feel responsible for saving the person (you cannot control another's decisions).

Preparation for a funeral

In the event of the death of a member of the school community, it is a natural expression of the community's faith to be represented at the funeral and, if the family of the person who has died wishes, for the school to participate in appropriate ways in the liturgy. The CIM team should appoint someone to liaise with the family and with those who have responsibility for funeral arrangements.

Students who are to attend a funeral should obtain written permission from their parents (or attend in the company of their parents). They need to be prepared by a member of the CIM team for the emotions they may experience and be forewarned of any aspects of the ceremony which may be disturbing, including even the usual practice of having the coffin present in the church, since many students may never have attended a funeral before. Special features (such as the delivery of a eulogy, the carrying of the coffin by relatives of the dead, the lowering of the coffin into the grave or the procedure followed at a crematorium) should be spoken about in advance.

Prayer

Catholic schools in the Parramatta Diocese strive to be communities of hope which reflect God's love for us and our love for each other. This should be especially true in a time of crisis. The community's shared faith in God, expressed through prayer, is a major source of support at such a time.

Some appropriate prayer resources include:

Praying Our Goodbyes , Joyce Rupp OSM, Ave Maria Press, Indiana 1988. (Available from the library of CEO, Parramatta.)

Prayers for Peace ISBN 0 281 04265 9

I Will Lift Up Mine Eyes B. Bishop, Hallmark.

Brief Prayers for Australians ISBN 0 859 10 588 1

Travelling Together ISBN 0 86716 120 5

150 Opening and Closing Prayers ISBN 0 88489 2417

Family Prayer Book ISBN 0 909986 15 0

7.0 Fire and Evacuation Management

7.1 Assembly Area

- First preference for assembly would be the Basketball Courts and this preference would be indicated by a continuous siren sound.
- Second preference would be the old Bus Bay on Bakers Lane and this preference would be indicated by short sharp sounds – like the sound of a bus/truck reversing.

7.2 Administration Staff

- Administration Staff are to collect roll pouches for their year group homerooms from the Warden (easily recognised by hat). When roll call is completed the Leader of Mission collects pouches and returns ALL pouches to Warden.
- Ensure that all students SIT.

7.3 Teaching Staff

- Students to leave bags in room but ensure that students who have medication in their possession, takes it with them.
- CLOSE WINDOWS BUT DO NOT LOCK CLASSROOM DOOR - Only lock the main building door.
- Move directly to the assembly area.
- Students to be told to sit in the appropriate line as soon as they arrive at the evacuation spot.
- If you are a homeroom teacher, your Leader of Mission will collect and bring to you your homeroom pouch.
- Absentee sheet for the evacuation can be found in the plastic sleeve in the roll pouch.
- Write on the absentee sheet the names of students who are NOT PHYSICALLY PRESENT in the evacuation line who were present at homeroom. (Work experience students at the College should go to homeroom each day.
Students off site for work experience should be marked with 'a' then changed to L when they return.
Sheet listing missing students (if any) collected by LOM and given to Warden for checking (to see if student has signed out).
If all students present and accounted for, fill in a slip with 'ALL PRESENT')
- DO NOT LEAVE your homeroom group.
- EVERYONE MUST BE INVOLVED THERE ARE NO EXCEPTIONS.

7.4 Support Staff

- All support staff are required to meet in the administration building as soon as the siren is heard. If you are part time and are unsure, please see a member of your department BEFORE THE NEXT EVACUATION who will be able to show you what to do and give you a guided tour of the school.
- All support staff are asked to bring their mobile (if you have one) with them. This is a precaution only to ring ambulance, fire etc.

General Fire and Evacuation

FLOWCHART

