



CRITICAL INCIDENT POLICY

Rationale:

Tragic or traumatic incidents do happen in school communities. A well-organised response plan can assist in the management of people's reaction and provide a means for those affected to begin the healing process.

Goals:

- To provide an environment where there is stability and reassurance for the broader community.
- To minimize the trauma for all concerned.

Implementation:

- Obtain accurate information. Deal only with substantiated facts.
- Inform Staff as soon as possible. This may involve a staff briefing or home phone call. Phone Tree will be implemented. Principal to contact Deputy Principal. Deputy Principal to contact Specialist Teachers. Principal to contact Level Leaders.
- Inform Parish Priest.
- Inform close friends and family individually. Allow questions and encourage discussion. Keep to the facts and dispel any rumours.
- As soon as possible, convey to the students appropriate information regarding the incident and inform them of what the school is doing about the situation.
- Notify relevant external personnel or authorities. The following personnel must be contacted.
CEO Central Office. Emergency Management Staff
CEO Eastern Regional Office
- Appoint a support team to assist with the response to the situation.
- Assist staff to plan an appropriate response within the classroom.
- Assist students to express their feelings. ie memory table, poems, drawings
- Provide information to the general community as soon as possible ie letter to parents.
- Allow opportunities for those involved to participate in de-briefing sessions
- Ensure counselling is available should this be required
- Set aside a recovery room.
- Keep in touch with those immediately involved and offer appropriate forms of support.
- Principal or Parish Priest to deal with media requirements. A written press release may be useful.
- Provide out of school hour contact if necessary. This may involve providing Principals' phone number or the situation may require maintaining telephone contact at the school.
- Continue normal routines at school but acknowledge the effect of the tragedy on the school community. Be flexible with those who may need help.

In the event of a death -

- Students wishing to attend funerals should be encouraged to do so in the company of their parents.
- Provide resources to allow Staff to participate in funerals.
- Provide meaningful participation for those not attending funeral.