



## CRITICAL INCIDENT POLICY

### Purpose

The effective and efficient management of emergency incidents is critical to the safety and wellbeing of students, staff and school visitors. Such events can impact considerably on the psychological wellbeing of all members of the school community causing adverse effects in areas such as learning, occupational performance and family interactions.

Good Shepherd Lutheran School aims to minimise the traumatic effects of crisis situations both in the short and long term. This is best achieved by a coordinated, systematic response that restores stability and creates a sense of safety and security for members of the community.

### Scope

This policy applies when managing critical events and crisis situations which affect any staff, students, volunteers, parents/carers and other individuals involved with the school.

### Definitions

A **critical incident** may be defined as any event which causes disruption to an organisation, creates significant danger or risk where staff, students and parents feel unsafe, vulnerable and under stress.

A **crisis situation** can derive from sudden, unexpected events (or series of events), or chronic or accumulative (perhaps one or more longer term stressful event/s). Critical incidents may impact on a few students and/or staff, or they can significantly affect the whole community.

Some examples of a critical incident or crisis situation within the school community are:

- ▶ death or serious injury
- ▶ fire
- ▶ bomb threat
- ▶ violent threats or actions against an individual or group
- ▶ any situation that evokes a strong emotional reaction

### Relevant Legislation

[Children's Protection Act 1993 \(SA\)](#)

[National Safe Schools Framework 2010 \(revised 2013\)](#)

[Work Health and Safety Act 2012 \(SA\) - South Australian Legislation](#)

### Policy Statement

Good Shepherd Lutheran School is committed to responding with precision and sensitivity to critical incidents as they affect members of the school community:

- ▶ Keeping members of the community informed of events and aware of follow-up procedures.
- ▶ Being inclusive of all who are affected by a critical incident.
- ▶ Being mindful of the safety and well-being of all members of the school community.
- ▶ Accessing professional support from agencies who are trained to deal with critical incidents.

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GOOD SHEPHERD LUTHERAN SCHOOL PARA VISTA

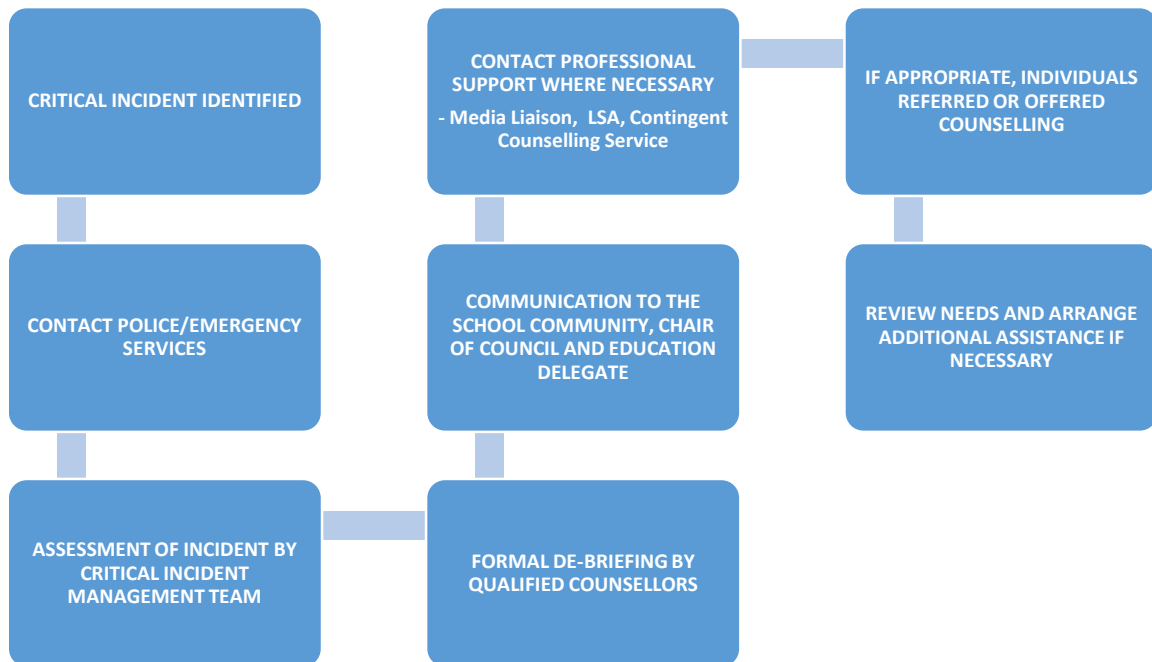
Any person charged with implementation of this policy may, in circumstances which require special consideration, waiver from the procedures set out in this policy so as to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all relevant persons at the time of implementation, whilst ensuring the spirit of this Policy is not compromised.

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## Procedures

Procedure for management following a critical incident



### Critical Incident Management

The Critical Incident Management Team (School Executive) shall meet as a matter of urgency to respond to the crisis, in accordance with the procedure outlined in Appendix A

As soon as possible after the incident the staff member closest to the event is to complete a Safety Improvement Request/Critical Incident Report.

### Emergency Evacuation and Lock down Procedures

Staff and students at Good Shepherd Lutheran School will regularly undertake Emergency Evacuation and Lock In procedures to protect the community against unforeseen consequence of critical incidents.

### Implementation Responsibilities

Procedural Guidelines - School Executive - See Appendix A

First response by a Staff Member - see Appendix B

First response by a Student - see Appendix C

### References/Related Policies

Child Protection Policy

Risk Management Policy

Safety Policy

### Forms

Safety Improvement Request/Critical Incident Report

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|--------------------------|--|
| Development/Review Team: | School Council Review Team   |
| Policy Approved:         | Date: _____<br>School Council Signature: _____ Management Signature: _____ |
| Review Period:           | 5 years  |
| Created:                 | May 2017   |
| Review History:          |  |

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## APPENDIX A – PROCEDURAL GUIDELINES – School Executive

### *Information Gathering*

- Confirm incident/collect reliable information
- Contact Emergency Services (see attached list)

### *Plan*

Principal (or delegate) convenes a meeting of the Critical Incident Response Team and appoints relevant staff to:

- Co-ordinate the management plan
- Assign tasks (as below) to appropriate personnel
- Appoint press/media liaison person (all communication must be through Principal's office)
- Appoint coordinator of counselling support
- Appoint contact persons for staff students and parents (where necessary)

### *Inform/Consult*

- Staff - Briefing and Management Plan
- Students who need to know – assembly or specified group meeting
- Parents who need to know – phone/letter /email twitter/ Facebook
- Chairman of School Council
- School Pastor
- The LSA and AISSA (where necessary)
- Other schools and agencies (where necessary)
- Legal Representation

### *Allocate Resources*

- Control use of phones – allocate specific lines for incoming and outgoing calls (Business manager)
- Arrange for school security as required (Business Manager)
- Designate Assembly point for - parents, Media Room, Recovery room for staff and/or students

### *Intervene (Pastoral Care Staff)*

- Liaise with outside agencies (re defusing, debriefing, counselling)
- Defuse affected staff/students (within 8 hours)
- Identify staff/students needing further support
- Provide initial support/defusing for parents (within 8 hours)
- Arrange debriefing where necessary (after 5-7 days)
- Communication of sympathy/concern etc. to affected parents

### *Communication*

- Information/letter to affected parents
- Information to Press/Media
- Supportive information handouts for parents
- Supportive information handouts for staff

Re: Personal response

Understanding student responses *Faith Response (Pastor)*

- Liaise re funeral arrangements
- Students and staff attending
- Memorial Service/Ritual

*Ongoing Recovery needs to be considered including:*

- Support for Principal/School Executive
- Support for affected staff, including office staff
- Support for Intervention Team (Daily debriefing)
- Long-term initiatives (Community and Curriculum)
- Long-term monitoring/counselling of those affected

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## APPENDIX B – FIRST RESPONSE BY A STAFF MEMBER

When a critical incident occurs the physical safety and psychological protection of everyone involved are the immediate priorities. The staff member should take steps to end the danger and limit further physical and/or psychological harm.

**However this must NOT involve putting oneself at risk.**

### *Assess*

- ▶ Assess the situation to determine whether a whole school response or a limited response is required.

### *Whole School Response*

- ▶ Initiate the emergency plan through the Principal or Executive Team, to alert the school via the PA system, activated by Property Manager or Capital Works Manager.
- ▶ Try to keep calm and if possible, secure the area.

### *Limited Response*

- ▶ Try to keep calm, issue clear instructions.
- ▶ Secure the area.
- ▶ Send for back up.
- ▶ Contact the School Executive (through the Reception).
- ▶ Assist any injured (contact the office, call an ambulance)

### *Record*

- ▶ As soon as possible after the incident complete a Safety Improvement Request/Critical Incident Report

## APPENDIX C – FIRST RESPONSE BY A STUDENT

When a critical incident occurs the physical safety and psychological protection of everyone involved are the immediate priorities.

**However this must NOT involve putting oneself at risk.**

### *Assess*

- ▶ Try to stay calm.
- ▶ Attract the attention of a staff member or send someone to alert the Senior Reception.
- ▶ If it is safe to do so, stay with anyone who is hurt until help arrives.

### *Record*

As soon as possible after the incident, assist the relevant staff in completing a report.

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