CRISIS MANAGEMENT POLICY

RATIONALE:
In today’s society, people can be exposed to a crisis situation that could have serious effects on them. A sensitive awareness of the varying needs and circumstances of students, staff and families is important in such a crisis.

It is the responsibility of all members of the Catholic community to collaborate in the provision of a caring environment. The school is a major part of a child and teacher’s social system. The school’s management of a crisis can assist all members of the school community to readjust and accept the situation.

At St Bede’s we believe:
• individuals may benefit from counselling. This can be accessed through the school,
• adults are responsible for identifying students who may be suffering as the result of a crisis and then seeking appropriate means to address this concern;
• teachers need to create a supportive environment within the classroom. This is especially significant during times of crisis,
• children should be sensitive to the needs of others and encouraged to react and respond appropriately,
• times of crisis within the wider community often provide an opportunity for children to be taught about social responsibility,
• students need to be aware of and sensitive to cultural expressions of grief.

Communication is essential, especially in times of crisis. The integrity of the individual should always be maintained and the needs of the community must always be considered in relation to the needs of the individual. To varying degrees, all members of the community have a responsibility for ensuring the welfare of themselves and others.

DEFINITION: WHAT CONSTITUTES A CRISIS SITUATION?
A critical incident may be defined as an event which causes disruption to an organisation, creates significant danger or risk and which creates a situation where staff, students and parents feel unsafe, vulnerable and under stress.

EXAMPLES OF CRITICAL INCIDENTS
• Serious injury, illness or death of a member of the school community,
• Students or staff lost or injured on an excursion,
• Students or staff taken hostage,
• Violent assault of a member of the school community,
• Violent event in the local community,
CRISIS MANAGEMENT POLICY

- Students or staff witnessing a serious accident or incidence of violence,
- Significant vandalism or destruction of part of the school property,
- Fire, bomb threat, explosion, gas or chemical hazard, flood, earthquake, windstorm, hailstones or extremes of temperature.

IMPLEMENTATION:

ST BEDE’S CRISIS MANAGEMENT TEAM
The Crisis Management Team will consist of the following people:
- the Principal as the team leader,
- the Assistant Principal;
- the Religious Education Coordinator;
- the Primary Coordinator; and if appropriate
- the Parish Priest; and
the School Counsellor.

EMERGENCY RESPONSIBILITIES

Teachers
Teachers are responsible for their students during an emergency. They should:
- assess the situation;
- inform the Principal (Assistant Principal, REC, Primary Coordinator) immediately;
- assist anyone in immediate danger;
- evacuate students;
- take students to the designated assembly point;
- account for all students (roll call); and
- supervise students.

Principal
The coordinator during an emergency would normally be the Principal (Assistant Principal, REC, Primary Coordinator), whose role and responsibilities are coordination, control and communication.

Coordination involves:
- assessing the emergency and the danger;
- notifying emergency services;
- liaising with emergency services; and
- identifying and providing resources.

Control involves:
- accounting for all staff and students;
- evacuating the workplace;
CRISIS MANAGEMENT POLICY

• assembling students; and
• supervising students.

Communication involves:

• informing parents;
• communicating with emergency services;
• providing situation reports to the CEO; and
• providing a message service.

ACTION PLAN – SCHOOL STRATEGY

The coordination team, or as many members of the team who are available, need to meet immediately after the school has been informed of the crisis.

• Team leaders take control.
• Principal to verify information from police, family, or other relevant authorities and verify what information can be released to whom and when.
• The coordination team need to meet immediately after the information is verified.
• Contact will be made with the appropriate Catholic Education Office personnel.
• Contact may need to be made with a family or families if appropriate to the situation.
• Secretary needs to be advised to screen incoming calls. Crisis team need to supply secretary with an accurate written statement for incoming calls (decide if the phone needs to be left free for incoming calls).
• Allocate tasks to staff – extra playground duty throughout the day may be required.
• Decide how and when staff and students are to be informed.
• Plan any changes to the timetable that the crisis may require.
• Decide if an opportunity for a time of prayer should be made available for staff/students who wish to attend. The most appropriate form of prayer should be decided upon and prepared with the support of the REC.
• If there are people in the school community reacting with physical signs of stress contact a nurse or staff members with a current first aid certificate.
• Contact Centacare and Community Health to help the team to assist with counselling and debriefing students, staff and families if required.
• The team will need to look at the students most at risk/affected. How will they be identified? Who will work with them? The team will also address these needs in relation to staff members.

• Media requests are to be dealt with by the Principal only, after consultation with the CEO.
CRISIS MANAGEMENT POLICY

- The Principal will prepare a notice to all parents if the team decides it is necessary. This letter needs to include information on signs of distress, the school’s plan and where to come for help.

EMERGENCY/DISASTER PLAN

**FIRE**
- Ring 000 or 112 (MOBILE)

**BOMB THREAT**
- Vacate as per drill
- Contact police on 000 or 112 (MOBILE)

**THREATENING PHONE CALLS**
- Contact police on 131 444
- On other line

**CUSTODY**
- Only release child to known custodial parent. If another person wishes to take the child, contact principal/police and FACS (Family and Community Services)

**MAJOR ACCIDENT/DEATH**
- Phone 000 or 112 (MOBILE)
- Ambulance/police

**POLICY**
- Consult crisis management

**HOSTAGE**
- Vacate area as per drill
- Contact police 000 or 112 (MOBILE)
- Witnesses to be available

For further information, please see the relevant CEO policy;

CRISIS MANAGEMENT POLICY

Child Protection Code of Professional Standards for Catholic School and System Staffs


Drug Education in Schools


Excursions


Fire Drill and Bomb Evacuation

## CRISIS INTERVENTION CHECKLIST

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LEVEL OF RESPONSE DECIDED</th>
<th>IMMEDIATE</th>
<th>MEDIUM TERM</th>
<th>LONGER TERM</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ROLE OF THE TEAM AND ITS INDIVIDUALS DETERMINED</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>FACTS ARE VERIFIED</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>CONTACT APPROPRIATE CEO PERSONNEL</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>CONTACT FAMILY/FAMILIES INVOLVED</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>TELEPHONE:</td>
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<tr>
<td>- DOES IT NEED TO BE KEPT FREE?</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>- HOW WILL INCOMING CALLS BE DEALT WITH?</td>
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<tr>
<td>- SECRETARY TO SCREEN CALLS?</td>
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<tr>
<td>- SECRETARY PROVIDED WITH WRITTEN STATEMENT FOR USE ON INCOMING CALLS</td>
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<tr>
<td>EMPTY THE CHILD’S DESK?</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>PRINCIPAL TO DEAL WITH MEDIA ENQUIRIES</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>CONTACT SCHOOLS ATTENDED BY SIBLINGS IF NECESSARY</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>WHICH STUDENTS ARE MOST AFFECTED? AT RISK?</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>HOW WILL THEY BE IDENTIFIED? WHAT WILL BE DONE?</td>
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<tr>
<td>BRIEF STAFF ABOUT SITUATION</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>GIVE STAFF GUIDELINES ON THEIR ROLE</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>IS A DAILY RECORD OF EVENTS NECESSARY? IF SO WHAT TEAM MEMBER WILL KEEP IT?</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OUTSIDE AGENCIES CONTACTED IF NEEDED – CENTACARE AND COMMUNITY HEALTH</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>DO ALL PARENTS NEED NOTIFYING? WHEN? HOW?</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>DO PROVISIONS NEED TO BE MADE FOR STAFF TO STAY BACK AND CHAT?</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>DO MOST CRITICAL PERSONNEL HAVE SUPPORT? HAS CONTACT BEEN MADE WITH THIS SUPPORT?</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>SET ASIDE TIME FOR TEAM TO GET TOGETHER TO REVIEW RESPONSE SO FAR</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>IF APPROPRIATE, WHO WILL ATTEND FUNERAL? WILL THE SCHOOL HOLD A MEMORIAL SERVICE OR CREATE A MEMORIAL?</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>WHAT FOLLOW UP IS PLANNED FOR MOST AT RISK/AFFECTED CHILDREN WHEN THINGS QUIETEN DOWN?</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>WILL THE SCHOOL DO ANYTHING ON THE ANNIVERSARY?</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>CRISIS MANAGEMENT POLICY</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>WHEN WILL THE TEAM MEET TO REVIEW THE RESPONSE MADE AND EITHER DEVISE A NEW SCHOOL POLICY OR MODIFY THE EXISTING ONE?</strong></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>ARE LONGER TERM INTERVENTION ACTIVITIES NECESSARY?</strong></td>
<td>X</td>
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</tbody>
</table>