All Saints Catholic Primary School

Critical Incident Policy

Developed by: Staff and School Board

Note: All references to ‘Staff members’ include Administration Staff, Support Teachers, Teachers and Temporary Relieving Teachers.

Underlying Assumptions, Philosophy and Rationale:
Our School community may from time to time be faced with critical incidences that affect individuals in the community and/or the life of the school community as a whole. This policy provides families with an understanding of how the school will respond to a critical incident.

- Our school community is characterised by both diversity and interconnectedness, so that the lives of individuals affect the community as a whole.
- The Gospel values invite us to welcome and care for all people, to give special care to the vulnerable, and to practise justice and service. These values call us to respond to critical incidences in the school community with well-planned guidelines that are respectful of all.
- We seek to provide an environment which provides physical, spiritual and emotional security at all times, especially when managing a critical incident.

Purpose/Aims:
Through the application of this policy, we at All Saints Catholic Primary School aim to:

- respond to any critical incident in an informed and supportive manner, which respects the requests of families involved, as well as supporting the needs of individuals and the community
- respond to any critical incident in a manner that reflects the Catholic ethos of the school
- provide support to all members of the school community who are affected, enlisting support from agencies or individuals from the wider community as appropriate
- maintain the healthy functioning of school life at all times
- clarify the responsibilities of those dealing with critical incidences so they can respond in a spirit of co-operation and collaboration and in a way that reflects our mission as a Catholic school.

Guidelines:
In support of this policy:

The Principal will:

- provide clear guidelines and procedures to staff
- form a critical response team that will include the leadership team and other relevant support personnel
- attend relevant professional development in critical incident management
- ensure that the values of justice, service and respect are modeled and supported in all traumatic critical incident procedures
- communicate with families and media in a sensitive manner, which may include text messaging and emails where appropriate
- ensure that the spiritual and emotional needs of the community are met
- encourage those affected by a critical incident to seek help
- ensure all documentation is completed and forwarded to the appropriate authorities.

All Staff members will:

- ensure that they are accurately informed about any critical incident, so they inform children appropriately to combat rumours
- offer support for children and families in their care
- support the school community in managing a critical incident
- allow sensitive discussion of the event, working with counsellors if available
- direct all media enquiries to the Principal
• seek personal and/or professional help where needed to assist their response
• document their own and children’s responses and needs as required.

Children will:
• be involved in the process of implementing the school’s policy
• be aware of, and take responsibility for, their own behaviour in response to traumatic events
• respect and support the rights of other children, staff and themselves to continue to participate as far as possible in the teaching and learning processes when there is a critical incident
• offer care and support to their peers in an appropriate manner, seeking help where necessary.

Parents/Carers will:
• encourage their children to respect and support the rights of others and to be sensitive to the needs of those affected by critical incidences
• inform the school of any critical incident which is likely to affect their children's life at school and/or impact upon others in the community
• read all communication from the school so that they are informed of any critical incident and so respond to their children’s needs effectively
• support the planned implementation of this policy and its regular review.

Implementation:
• All staff members will be made aware of and have access to this policy.
• All parents/carers or volunteers who have direct supervision of children will be made aware of and have access to this policy.
• All parents/carers and community members will be informed of this policy via the newsletter and the school’s website.
• The names of all relevant Government Agencies will be checked and updated on the review date of this policy.

Basis of Discretion:
Nil

Support Documents:
• ‘Coping with Crises in Schools’ M Whitla
• ‘Traumatic Events Management Guidelines and Procedures’
• Critical Incident Report (found on staff common folder under pro formas)
• Suicide Postvention Guidelines - Catholic, Independent and Govt schools document.
• CESA Emergency and Critical Incident Procedure
• CESA Emergency and Critical Incident Policy

Financial Budget:
Nil

Resources:
Nil

Signed ____________________________
(Principal on behalf of School Board)  Date ______________________
May 2014

Date to be reviewed ______________________
May 2017