

CRITICAL INCIDENT Policy, Summary & CHECKLIST

A Critical Incident is:

a 'traumatic event, or the threat of such (within or outside Australia), which causes extreme stress, fear or injury' to a student, including an international student. Some potential events that might be considered a critical incident or might adversely impact international students are:

1. Missing students;
2. Severe verbal or psychological aggression;
3. Death, serious injury or any threat of these;
4. Natural disaster;
5. Issues such as domestic violence, physical, sexual or other abuse;
6. Severe anxiety, physical or psychological harm
7. Other non-life threatening events that impact international students

Brunswick East Primary School will use this policy and checklist for any critical incident, including one involving an international student. This will ensure that all the appropriate steps have been followed and that the safety and well-being of all students is maintained.

Responding to a traumatic or critical incident in which the school is involved

Brunswick East Primary School (BEPS) may become directly or indirectly involved in a tragic or traumatic event.

The incident may involve loss of life, serious injury or emotional disturbance. The incident may occur in the school environment or outside. It may involve staff, students or those close to them. The network of those involved in a traumatic event can be wide, especially if it directly involves the school. Feelings of grief and loss can continue over long periods of time.

Counselling is/will be provided for all those who need it. This may include some who do not seem closely connected to the event or the individuals involved. BEPS may also be in a position to help grieving families at difficult times, e.g. through the school's participation in the funeral service.

While school should operate as normally as possible, some degree of flexibility should exist.

Action to be taken as a result of a tragic/traumatic event which involves the school

Incidents vary in complexity. These guidelines provide a framework for action and would not necessarily be followed in all cases. However, the following 4 principles must be followed:

- form a Critical Incident Recovery Team to manage the short and long term effects. The team may include staff members, psychologists, counsellors, external DET personnel, support agencies and external professionals. The size and composition of the team will be related to the nature of the incident. DET Student Incident and Recovery Unit on **(9651 3622)** if needed. The names of the Critical Incident Recovery Team members will be distributed and the role of the team will be explained to others.
- provide clear, accurate information
- describe the actions to be followed
- provide help for all affected
- maintain a normal school program as close as possible

The Principal or Critical Incident Team will:

- obtain accurate information and only deal with substantiated facts.
- as soon as possible inform staff, especially those most directly involved. Inform close friends and family individually. Allow questions and discussion as they arise. Dispel rumours.
- provide information to the community as to what has happened, and what is being done.

- contact the DET Media Unit (**8688 7776**) for support or Communications Division (**9637 2871**)
- appoint a Critical Incident Recovery Team member to respond to media enquiries (under advice from the media department. A written press release may be useful).
- protect others from contact with the media. Advice regarding this may be obtained from the DET Emergency Communications Centre and the DET Media Unit.
- establish an open line of contact with the family or families directly involved and identify their expectations of the school, e.g. student participation in funeral or memorial service.
- provide out of school hours contact if necessary: 0427 548 137. In complex situations maintain telephone contact at the school: 9387 3361.
- continue contact with the family to identify those most likely to need help, e.g. classmates, teacher, special friends. Some students not directly affected may become distressed. The class teacher may be the person to whom students first turn for help.
- ensure that counselling help is available. Contact the Regional Office and/or DET if necessary. All emergency or criminal activity, in which the safety or well-being of staff or students is at risk, or where there is a threat to property, must be reported immediately to the Department's 24 hour Emergency and Security Management Branch on (03) 9589 6266. Ensure that there are suitable places in which this can take place. Be prepared to modify the timetable and other arrangements so that people are free to make use of available help.
- continue to keep staff, students and parents informed, especially about what has happened and what the school is doing about it.
- as soon as possible call students together and provide information about what has happened and what the school is doing about it. A follow up letter home may be important.
- children wishing to attend funerals will do so in the company of their parents. Provide meaningful participation for those not actually attending the service.

Continue normal routines at school but acknowledge the effect of the tragedy upon the school community. Be flexible with those in need of help. Be aware that many people may be deeply affected, e.g. an event may cause a person to recall some traumatic event involving them in the past. The anniversary may also be a difficult time.

Be sensitive to staff and student's needs over a period of time.

- consider longer term intervention activities such as counselling or specialist support
- consider establishing an area within the school as a place of remembrance
- reconvene key people at regular intervals to review the school response and effectiveness of planning arrangements
- review the school emergency management plan in light of experience gained
- consider a ritual of marking significant dates
- prepare for legal proceedings if necessary
- remove students name from the roll if deceased
- consider article in school magazine

Reference

- DET's Managing School Emergencies - Minimising the impact of trauma on staff and students

CRITICAL INCIDENT SUMMARY & CHECKLIST

Student name:

Student ID:

DOB:

Age:

Host school:

Brunswick East Primary School

ELC (if applicable):

Course start date:

Welfare:

Incident date:

Summary of incident

Checklist of incident response

Student/s immediate safety confirmed	
Incident reported to Emergency Services. Provide details of any Emergency Services involvement. Enter your response below:	
Incident reported to Principal Class Officer	

<p>Incident reported to Security and Emergency Management Division Telephone: (03) 9589-6266 (this is a 24/7 service).</p> <p>Indicate if the incident involved an International Student.</p>	
<p>Parents notified of incident – with use of interpreter if required. Provide details of parent response. Enter your response below:</p> <p>(Note: Any Police direction not to immediately notify parents must be adhered to).</p>	
<p>For International Students notify International Education Division (IED) of incident specifying when update will be provided to IED. Enter your response below:</p>	
<p>Student provided appropriate support, including counselling, if required. Please provide details of follow up action. Enter your response below:</p> <p>(Attach copy of welfare plan if relevant).</p>	
<p>Log kept of communication & actions taken</p>	
<p>Follow up actions noted and diarised</p>	
<p>School Critical Incident Summary & Checklist completed. Checklist placed in student file and if an International Student is involved a copy sent to IED.</p>	

Completed by:

Date: