

John Paul College Policy

**POLICY AND PROCEDURES ON CRISIS
MANAGEMENT**

RATIONALE

1. Tragedy or trauma will not only have an immediate negative impact on individuals but it is often accompanied by prolonged stress response in many individuals. As a result this will form a barrier to learning for those affected by the crisis, as well as others around him/her. People may react irrationally. Other reactions include shock, inertia, forgetfulness, vulnerability, scape-goating, a tendency to believe false information and strong emotions such as grief, anxiety and denial.
2. Research clearly shows that denial is a harmful option and may lead to more severe difficulties later on. Post-vention or sensible actions taken in the wake of the crisis, can have worthwhile outcomes in terms of limiting or preventing the negative effect of the trauma, such as reduced motivation by students and loss of enjoyment of their work for staff. In the case of suicide, post-vention is particularly

important in terms of limiting the chances of scape-goating and imitation.

PURPOSE

1. To be prepared for any crisis, tragedy or trauma affecting the school community
2. To identify appropriate personnel and their roles in a tragedy/crisis situation
3. To have a workable plan in place to respond to the crisis incident
4. To reduce the risk of other trauma that may follow from such an incident, e.g. copycat attempts.
5. To meet N.A.G. (National Administration NAG 5 Guidelines) and N.E.G. (National Educational Guidelines) requirements for a safe school.

GUIDELINES

The management of traumatic events requires a high level of team work, trust and professionalism among key members of the Crisis Management Team. It should also reflect the Catholic Character of John Paul College with the use of prayer and spiritual awareness.

1. If a crisis should occur a team of staff members will meet and evaluate the available information. Such a team will be drawn from the following as appropriate to the circumstances.
 - Team Leader (preferably the Principal)
 - Principal

- Deputy Principal(s)
- Guidance Counsellor(s)
- Dean(s)
- College Chaplain
- BOT Member if available
- Others co-opted by the team, such as Parent Liaison Officer or Student Rep.

Every effort should be made to contact the Guidance Counsellor at the earliest stage. The Counsellor should be present at all meetings.

2. The Principal will prepare a written statement for the media. The liaison with the media will be through the Principal.
3. The counsellors will consult about the use of other support agencies such as Mental Health and Ministry of Education-Trauma Incident(TI) Team 0800-848326 (24/7 service).

PROCEDURES

The following will apply at the times of the crisis:

1. Any staff informed of the death of a student or crisis incident that will have an effect on staff or students will inform the Principal immediately.
2. The Principal will call a meeting of the crisis team to plan strategies for coping with the crisis and possible intervention.
3. The Principal or Team Leader will inform the staff and Board of Trustees as soon as possible. The Team will make a decision as to how the students are to be informed and provided with accurate information (a full school assembly or the students being informed by their Dean). Students may be sent home, arrangements made for bus students, etc.
4. Staff will be told that they are not to discuss the "event" with students.
5. Affected teachers need to be offered "cover" should it be necessary.
6. The Counsellor/Deputy Principal Student Management/Campus Minister will keep in touch with the affected families and update staff regularly.
7. Media requests will be responded to only by the Principal/Acting Principal.
8. The needs of victim(s) or those most affected will be given priority.
9. A prayer assembly arranged if deemed appropriate for those students/staff who want to go.
10. A suitable room e.g. the chapel or library will be made available as a support room for staff, students and families. Arrange a prayer table. The Counsellor will provide any resources needed e.g. remembrance card materials.
11. The crisis team will attend a debriefing session to review the events at the end of each day. They will pray, seek support for themselves and prepare for the following day. It is vital to attend to the needs of the staff, so they in turn can meet student needs.
12. Staff who are required to work with the affected students (eg. homeroom teachers) will be supported with his/her teaching programme. Personal counselling will be available.

13. Liaison with office staff will be maintained as they are the channel through which information moves to and from the school. Their effort should be valued during a time of crisis.

Appendix A – Sudden Death Management Plan
Appendix B - Checklist

Ratified by Board

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D. Smith', written over a horizontal line.

Signed for B.O.T Chair

21.08.2018

Date

Next Review

Signed for B.O.T

2021

APPENDIX A

SUDDEN DEATH MANAGEMENT PLAN

INTRODUCTION

This plan is designed to respond to the death of a student or the sudden death of a teacher or member of staff at the school. It is acknowledged that death affects the spiritual, emotional, physical and intellectual well-being of members of the John Paul College school community.

General Principles

1. The grieving of all students and staff must be accepted as genuine.
2. In the event of a death, especially suicide, students and staff must be given an opportunity to express their grief. A comforting and reassuring environment is necessary for this to happen as is access to professional grief counseling.
3. In suicide cases it is important to de-glamorise the event and stress the waste of life involved. All caregivers should stress suicide is a choice, but a very poor choice.
4. The overall aim of the crisis plan must be to return to the normal routine within the school as soon as possible. This does not mean attempting to hasten the natural grieving processes of staff and students. However, a system is essential to provide a form of security in a time of shock.
5. Normality for as many of the school community as possible should be maintained.
6. The wishes of the parents to be observed wherever possible.
7. All staff must know in advance the nature and purpose of the Crisis Team, and the strategies to be followed.
8. All staff to be kept as fully informed as possible.
9. All contacts with the media to be handled by the Principal.

CRISIS TEAM

Principal as Chair of crisis team or delegated authority
Deputy Principal(s)
Guidance Counsellor(s)
Campus Minister
Appropriate year level Deans

It is important the Guidance Counsellors be present at all meetings.

CRISIS TEAM RESPONSIBILITIES

Principal

- The Principal or delegated authority Chair the crisis team.
- Visit home of the deceased person and maintain continuing liaison with the family with the assistance of e.g. Guidance Counsellor/ Campus Minister/ Kaumatua (whoever is appropriate for the circumstances).
- Inform staff and students.
- Liaise with the media
- Contact with Police.

Deputy Principal

- Arrange for flowers and a card to be sent to the home of the deceased person.
- In liaison with the Guidance Counsellor arrange for students and/or staff to visit the home of deceased.
- Arrange for students in distress to be sent home in the care of a parent in consultation with counsellors.

Year Level Dean

- Represent the year level at the funeral and help support any students who attend the funeral and become distressed.
- Monitor the adjustment of "at risk" students in the year level as the school returns to normality.
- Liaise with crisis team.

Campus Minister

- Organise and facilitate any special prayer meetings/mass.

Guidance Counsellors

- Co-ordinate the counselling programme.
- Counsel close friends of the deceased person.
- In liaison with the Deputy Principal, telephone parents of distressed students who best may be catered for by going home in the care of a parent.
- Organise the checking on and the care of students on the at risk list.
- Organise and set up the time out room for both students and staff.

Year level form teacher

- Ring and visit family.
- Organise and send cards/letters from classmates.
- Collate names of students wanting to attend funeral.

- Represent the form class at the funeral and help support any students who attend the funeral and become distressed.
- Monitor the adjustment of “at risk” students in your form class as the school returns to normality.
- Liaise with Counsellors.

CRISIS PLAN SEQUENCE

Day One

When the school is notified of a sudden tragic death of a student or staff member, these procedures should be followed:

1. The information is checked for accuracy by the Principal, and the Principal and appropriate support staff should visit the family as soon as possible.
2. Permission should be obtained by the Principal from the family to inform staff and students of the situation at an appropriate assembly.
3. Names of other family members (cousins etc) currently enrolled at the college and close friends likely to be affected to be obtained by the Deputy Principal. Also any other organisations already involved.
4. Board of Trustees informed by Principal or Deputy Principal.
5. The crisis team assembled immediately, systems reviewed.
6. Staff are informed of the situation and the crisis plan is to be referred to by each staff member.
7. Deputy Principal and Counsellors to organise the availability of a suitable room or rooms with a prayer table, access to counsellors and any other resources deemed necessary.
8. Interval and lunch time duty teams are doubled in size; staff are encouraged to help support the duty team.
9. Meeting of the crisis team at the end of the day to:
 - Check all allocated tasks have been performed.
 - Establish requirements for the following day.
 - Decision on the funeral procedures, buses to be provided if necessary, staffing etc.

ACTION STEPS ONCE ORGANISATION IS IN PLACE

1. The close friends of the deceased student are called to the support area which has been set up. News is announced.
2. The news is announced at a special assembly. Students are informed of the support arrangements in place to help those in distress. Students will be asked not to speak to the media.
3. A prayer assembly is arranged if deemed appropriate for those students and staff who wish to go.
4. The school returns to normal routine allowing distressed people to make use of the facilities and help that is made available.
5. Every effort to be made to allow distressed students to be sent home in the care of their parents or to be escorted to the counsellor or time out rooms.

6. Staff must ensure that all students that leave school during the day (other than reason for doctor/dentists visits etc.) must check out via the Counsellor with the support of a parent or caregiver.

Day Two

1. Crisis team to meet to ascertain developments overnight and to check procedure in place for the day.
2. At morning briefing staff are updated by the Principal.
3. Where appropriate an evening meeting will be organised for concerned parents.

Monitoring Beyond Day Two

1. Daily morning meetings and review session to continue as long as the crisis team deem necessary.
2. Funeral arrangements to be checked and family wishes to be taken note of.
3. Students to be informed of funeral arrangements during form times.
4. Where appropriate a school memorial service will be organised which can also be used as a signal of moving back into normal school routine for all involved.

End of the week

Review of the week by crisis team, and contingency arrangements over the week should be finalised.

FOCUS ON STAFF

1. In the event of a tragic death of a staff member, the crisis team will initiate special provisions to support close colleagues of the deceased person.
2. Staff who require time out of class or who find part way through a period that they cannot continue will be able to have counselling available to call upon.
3. A room will be set aside exclusively for staff who require a quiet place to help deal with their grief.
4. The crisis team will make a decision on the best way to cope with the running of the school during the funeral of a staff member. The school can be closed at that time.

NEEDS OF THE CRISIS TEAM

1. Special provision must be made to allow the crisis team to meet and facilitate their own time-out and support.
2. Professional supervision must be made available and accessed via the counsellors to provide professional support and advice for the crisis team.

APPENDIX B CHECK LIST

The following checklist outlines the key steps to take in the development and the first stages of the implementation of a response plan for traumatic incidents. This is not a plan in itself but a checklist of the steps necessary to develop and maintain a plan and the first actions in any implementation of it

Traumatic Incident Response Checklist

Principal and senior staff notified	Time:	<input type="checkbox"/>
Staff in the management team all notified	Time:	<input type="checkbox"/>
Crisis team meets	Time:	<input type="checkbox"/>
Media spokesperson confirmed	Time:	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ensure counsellors have sufficient resources and backup	Time:	<input type="checkbox"/>
Community resource professionals identified	Time:	<input type="checkbox"/>
A resource room established	Time:	<input type="checkbox"/>

.All staff informed including:

- Details of the death or injury and what, and how, students are to be told.
- Staff are to identify close friends of the victim
- Staff responsibility for identifying and referring any young people unduly affected by the event or who are thought to be at risk
- Provisions available for student and staff support – including the location and hours of the resource rooms.

Arrangements made for informing close friends and then the rest of the school	Time:	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Review

Deputy Principal Student Management and Counsellor(s) to review the process at the end of the particular crisis.