

## CRISIS POLICY

### SCOPE

This Policy covers all students and staff at the school.

### OBJECTIVE

To manage crises in a consistent manner.

This policy is to be read in conjunction with the Traumatic Incident Response Plan (copy attached).

### PROCEDURES

In the event of a crisis occurring, the Principal, and/or members of the Senior Leadership Team, or the office, must be **notified immediately**.

- The Principal, or her nominee, will immediately convene a meeting of all those staff members involved in the crisis, e.g. subject teachers, form teacher, senior staff member in charge of that House/Houses, and relevant members of the Learning Enhancement Team. If the subject of the crisis is a staff member, the group will comprise senior staff, relevant department heads and personal friends of the staff member concerned. In a case of serious crisis, the Principal will immediately advise the Board Chairman who will contact the other members of the Board as appropriate.
- A plan of action that is appropriate to the crisis will be determined and counselling will be made available to all those who need support. Decisions regarding the management of the crisis will be made by the Principal or her nominee, after consultation.
- Both students and staff members should be kept fully informed (where appropriate parents will be notified by letter), by prepared statements, to ensure that all receive accurate information. It is preferable to avoid large group meetings, particularly in the early stages of the crisis. It is also much easier to check a small group to see whether any person is in distress and needs counselling or wishes to go home. In this latter event, no person, either student or staff member, should be permitted to go home unless it has been confirmed that they will be collected by a caregiver/appropriate family member.

- Any contact that has to be made with the news media will be made by the Principal or her nominee.
- Office Staff should also be informed so that they are able to screen calls, etc.
- If it is a medical emergency, steps should be taken to keep parents and the community informed about the nature of the problem so that speculation can be avoided. If necessary, liaison should be made with the Medical Officer of Health.

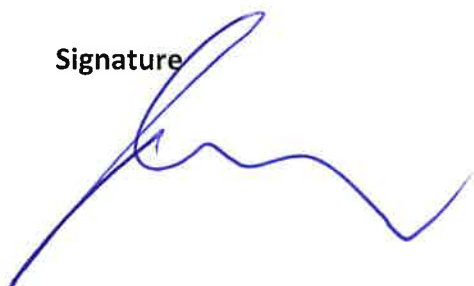
## RESPONSIBILITIES

The Senior Manager responsible for the Learning Enhancement Team will provide a written report to the Principal, on the extent of the implementation of this policy on a triennial basis, or sooner should circumstances dictate this policy be reviewed earlier.

**Date (Policy Effective from)**

**Review Date**

**Signature**



2017

# TRAUMATIC INCIDENT RESPONSE PLAN

## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

It is recognised that the circumstances surrounding the traumatic incident of a student or staff member vary. Accordingly the procedures established by the policy are to be used as a guideline only by the staff involved, with the appropriate action in each case being determined by a team comprising those members identified in Paragraph 3.1.

## 2.0 POLICY

The wishes and feelings of the affected person(s)' family must be respected at all times and they should be consulted on any decision that might affect them.

## 3.0 PROCEDURES

The Principal shall:-

- (i) Verify the information received.
- (ii) Liaise further with family(s) involved (e.g. of deceased) and Police if necessary.
- (iii) Inform staff:-
  - All grieving to be accepted as genuine
  - No assemblies – gauged by Crisis team
  - Media contact only through Principal (Media Liaison person)
- (iv) Inform teachers (in writing) of what to say in class
- (v) Inform parents (in writing) of the traumatic incident
  - Referring to Crisis Policy
  - Discussing when to inform students
- (vi) Include:-
  - Description of event if appropriate
  - Availability of counselling – teachers to watch for response/needs
  - If students leave school or need to contact parents, what official processes must be followed
- (vii) If out of school time, contact staff as necessary (phone tree can be used)
- (viii) Organise daily 8.30 am full staff meetings as required

- (b) Establish a Crisis Team comprising:-
  - (i) The Principal
  - (ii) Senior Leadership Team
  - (iii) Members from the Learning Enhancement Team
  - (iv) Deans of House/Houses involved
  - (v) Form teacher of student (where applicable)
  - (vi) School Nurses
- (c) In the case of a traumatic event occurring to a student/staff member, advise all staff who taught/worked with affected person(s) as soon as possible.
- (d) In conjunction with the Associate Principal and Head of Learning Enhancement Team, maintain contact with the affected person's family.

**3.2** The Learning Enhancement shall:-

- (a) In conjunction with the Principal, maintain contact with the affected person's family if and when appropriate.
- (b) Co-ordinate offers of assistance from outside agencies, in particular GSE and colleagues from other schools, or actively seek such support.
- (c) In conjunction with the relevant Dean(s) and Form Teacher, identify the affected person's friends and where appropriate offer support.
- (d) Assess the need for student(s) to be sent home.

**3.3** The Associate Principal shall:

- (a) Liaise with other schools in the area.
- (b) Arrange information sessions for staff to update incoming information and share any other concerns.
- (c) Attend to administrative data relating to the affected person(s) e.g. exam entry, fees request, report.
- (d) Ensure that all possessions of the affected person(s) still remaining in the school are gathered up and conveyed by a staff member to the family.
- (e) Ensure that relief is available for affected staff, and ensure that relievers are aware of the crisis situation.
- (f) Organise leave arrangements for students wanting to attend funeral/tangi or visiting affected person(s) in hospital.

- (g) Monitor grieving students and colleagues at school.

**3.4** The Crisis Team shall:-

- (a) Co-ordinate the school-wide response to the situation.
- (b) Consult the crisis checklist
  - (i) Identifying the relevant issues
  - (ii) Establishing the action to be taken
  - (iii) Delegating responsibility for that action
  - (iv) Establishing a time-frame
- (c) Offer assistance to those staff who require it, to discuss the incident with their classes and colleagues.
- (d) Ensure all students and staff are aware of the availability of counsellors and other agencies both inside and outside the school, e.g. Community Counselling agencies, Victim Support, Marinoto, the Police and Churches.
- (e) Continue to meet daily, or more often as necessary, for at least a week.
- (f) Hold a daily debrief meeting at the end of each day.

Dear Parents/Caregivers

It is with great sadness that I write to you today about the sudden death of one of our students.

Today \_\_\_\_\_ a Year ( ) student died in tragic circumstances.

Young people react in different ways to such an event. They will experience and observe a wide range of emotions in themselves and others at this time. It is important to be accepting and supportive as each student comes to terms with what has happened.

The school will provide students with opportunities to talk about their feelings and will monitor them closely to identify any who are having difficulty coping.

Students will, in the coming days and weeks, adjust to what has happened with the support and guidance of their parents and their teachers.

If you have any questions or need further support please phone the Head of the Learning and Enhancement Team School Guidance Counsellors on ( ) extension ( ) or ( )

Our thoughts are with \_\_\_\_\_'s family at this time.

Yours sincerely

**PRINCIPAL**