



montessori school

## Critical Incident Management Policy

### 1.1 Introduction

Critical Incidents can happen at any time and these can have an adverse effect on property and the whole School Community. Critical incident management includes the ability to plan for, manage and anticipate a critical or emergency incident that may harm a member of the school community, damage property or disrupt the daily activities of the School. When a critical incident occurs, there is often associated trauma. A critical incident often has strong emotional reactions which may interfere with functioning.

### 1.2 Definition

Critical and emergency incidents are defined as:

1. Circumstances that pose a critical risk to health, safety or well-being of students or staff
2. Incidents requiring school closure, lockdown, or reduction of number of students or staff attending
3. Life-threatening injury or death of a student or staff member at school or in a school related activity
4. Receipt of an allegation of child abuse, including sexual abuse, against a student by a staff member or student or another person
5. Issuing a formal warning to a staff member or ceasing the employment of a staff member for breach of the Staff Code of Conduct suspected to be grooming behaviour.

Examples of critical incidents are: accidents causing serious injury or death, suicide, extreme vandalism, sexual assault, grooming behaviour, child abuse, lost children, injury, intruders, natural disasters, bomb threats and threatening behaviour.

According to the *Guide to the Registration Standards and Other Requirements for Non-government schools* requires that, in the event of all critical incidents or emergency incidents, the principal of the school is to notify the school's governing body (Banksia Montessori School Council). The School Council will ensure that the Director General is notified as soon as practicable, and in any event within **48 hours** of the incident's occurrence. Notification to the Director General is via the Critical and Emergency Incident Report form, available on the Department of Education's website. Notification of the Directory General must be sufficiently detailed to enable the Director General to scrutinise that the School's responses are in line with the purpose of Standard 9.3. The outcome in practice must be outlined, the school policy must be referred to by title, and the text of the relevant policy must be provided. The Director General may request further information as to the resolution of the matter by way of an update. A key focus of the Director General is to understand whether non-observance of a registration standard or some other requirement contributed to the incident and

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how effectively the school responded to the incident. A record is to be kept of each notification and all the details thereof including the School's response. Where a principal knows that a mandatory report has been made in regard to a child at the school, the Director General is to be notified, as this falls within the definition of a critical incident. This notification needs to record that a mandatory report has been made to the Department of Child Protection and Family Supports and provide the report receipt number. Similarly, where a principal has issued a formal warning to a staff member or terminated employment for a breach of the Staff Code of Conduct suspected to be grooming behaviour. A critical incident notification must be made to the Director General and the Teacher Registration Board may need to be notified. The School Council as the governing body ensures that actual breaches of the Staff Code of Conduct, where there are reasonable grounds to suspect grooming, are reported to the Director General in accordance with standards 9.3 of the Registration Standards for Non-Government Schools.

### 1.3 Related policies and procedures

The school is committed to minimising the impact of any critical incident through proper planning, responding appropriately and preventative measures. Policies and procedures in place to assist with this are:

- Emergency Policy – Evacuation and Lockdown Procedures
- Duty of Care Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Child Protection Policy
- Child Abduction Policy
- Occupation Health and Safety Policy
- Admission, Enrolment and Attendance Policy
- School Excursions and Incursions Policy
- School Maintenance Policy

### 1.4 Levels of Responsibility

*The School Council* is accountable for:

- Ensuring that the Director General is notified as soon as possible and at least within 48 hours of the incident occurring;
- Responding to allegations of Staff Code of Conduct breaches, grooming and child abuse in the best interest of the children and in accordance with the policy and procedures which comply with the Council's legal obligations;
- Informing the complainant of an allegation of grooming or child abuse by staff, about advocacy, support and other services that are available to them;
- Consulting with the Department of Child Protection and Family Supports to determine when, what and by whom information related to an allegation of child abuse and its investigation may be given to the person the subject of the allegation, the complainant, affected children and their parents and guardians, and the wider school community.
- Ensuring that this policy is maintained by the Principal and staff;
- Any crisis addressing prevention, preparation, response and recovery.
- Taking on the Principal's responsibility (listed below), when the principal is off-site, for a crisis requiring immediate action.

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*The Principal* is responsible for minimising trauma and distress to students and staff and damage to property and ensuring that the learning program is resumed by addressing prevention, preparation, response and recovery measures. These include:

- Ensuring daily attendance records are current and readily accessible;
- Assessing risk immediate and ongoing risk;
- Ensuring that a system is in place whereby all persons on the School grounds are registered with the Administration;
- Maintaining control throughout an incident and fully recording the incident;
- Ensuring that response plans are understood by all staff;
- Ensuring evacuation plans are displayed and accessible;
- Ensuring the current students list with phone numbers of parents are readily accessible;
- Ensuring equipment like fire extinguishers are maintained regularly;
- Coordinating evacuation and lockdown drills;
- Encouraging calmness amongst other staff during an emergency;
- Communicating and liaising with proper organisations or authorities i.e. police, ambulance, fire brigade;
- Ensuring care is undertaken in employing new staff, external Council members and volunteers by ensuring that they undergo the School's various checks;
- Ensuring that staff know what to do in emergencies;
- Maintaining a current floor plan of the School buildings and its grounds, identifying the exits and assembly area;
- Reporting critical incidents to the School Council immediately and the School Council notifying the Director General within 48 hours, first orally and then in writing;
- Responding to allegations of Staff Code of Conduct breaches, grooming and child abuse in the best interest of the children and in accordance with the policy and procedures which comply with the Principal's legal obligations;
- Ensuring that adequate and appropriate measures are resourced for the School Community to manage and respond to traumatic events assisting with the recovery process;
- Once the critical/emergency incident has passed, reviewing all policies and procedures and updating them with the new learnings.

*The Staff* are responsible for:

- Duty of care;
- Attending all professional learning;
- Ensuring that attendance records are kept in the same place at all times;
- Help with monitoring the effects of trauma resulting from a critical incident.

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Signed by Chairperson:	Council Approval Date: 11th June 2019
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