

PADUA COLLEGE LIMITED
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| Policy Title | Version Number | Date Issued |
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| Critical Incident Management Policy | 2.0 | November 2007 |
| | | Reviewed April 2010 June 2015 |

Definition

'Critical incidents' are defined in this policy as events which have a significant, perhaps dramatic, impact on the daily routine of the College. They will usually create strong emotional and psychological responses in all people who are in some way associated with the incident. They may also attract or threaten to attract undue or negative attention to Padua College. Some examples of critical incidents are:

- Death of a student or staff member resulting from an accident or suicide.
- Tragedy on an excursion or on the way to or from school.
- Floods or fires.
- Criminal activity involving school staff or students on school premises.
- Bomb threats.

Critical incidents often have similar characteristics including:

- rapid time sequences;
- overwhelming of usual coping responses of individuals or the college community;
- severe disruption, at least temporarily, to the functioning of individuals or the college community; and
- perceptions of threat and helplessness and a turning to others for help.

Policy

- (1) Padua College will ensure that systems are in place to deal with critical incidents in the school and that those systems include the provision of appropriate follow up care and counselling as needed.
- (2) Management priorities - the College will:
 - provide planning and response guidelines for the management of critical incidents;
 - develop systems and procedures to ensure buildings and other College facilities are made safe for use following the occurrence of a critical incident;
 - assist in the development of skills for response to a wide variety of critical incidents;
 - raise awareness of issues which may confront counsellors and others in their support of students and staff following a critical incident;
 - assist staff to identify when support programs may be appropriate, and
 - provide some overview of normal human reactions to the abnormal circumstances of a critical incident.
- (3) Guiding Principles - Padua College staff are to be prepared to deal with critical incidents in order to protect the safety and welfare of all students, staff and others involved in the operations of the College. Consistent with the Franciscan ethos and the traditions of Padua

College, critical incidents are to be handled pastorally and appropriately, ensuring that the dignity and privacy of each person are respected.

Responsibility for implementation

- (1) The Rector is responsible for the implementation of this policy personally, and by delegation.
- (2) The College shall establish a standing Crisis Management Team, which will consist of the College Senior Administration Team. Other staff (for example the Student Counsellor and the Workplace Health and Safety Officer) may be included in the team depending on circumstances and needs. The team will be responsible for directing and managing staff, students, parents, the media and other community members, during and following a critical incident.
- (3) The Rector shall use discretion to determine which College stakeholders are to be contacted depending on the nature of the circumstances.

Critical Incident Management Procedure

Managing Crises

There are three main aspects to the management of critical incidents and other personal crisis situations:

- making suitable preparations by deciding on procedures to be followed in the event of a crisis,
- implementing these procedures in a sensitive manner to minimise the trauma should the need arise, and
- providing in-house counselling or access to specialist help if required.

Critical Incidents: The College needs to be able to respond quickly to a critical incident which involves school staff and/or students. To enable staff to prepare for such contingencies Critical Incident Management procedures have been developed. The school community – staff, students, parents - need to be aware in general terms that the school has plans in place for dealing with emergencies and for managing any subsequent staff and student trauma.

Grief Management: Critical incidents can occasion considerable grief to members of the school community. Staff can find themselves confronted with the need to deal with some very emotional reactions as the impact of the incident is felt. The response to a critical incident involving staff or students requires delicate handling to minimise the trauma.

Counselling: The provision of support and counselling will often be required both in response to critical incidents and other personal crises, as well as in day-to-day matters. Counselling is best given by those professionally trained to do so. Teachers should be wary of assuming this role and need to refer students to the Student Counsellors as the first step towards obtaining assistance. The College offers staff the ability to gain professional counselling through Access Counselling.

Responsibilities

- Consistent with the College's policy, the Rector has the overall responsibility for ensuring that an effective management framework is implemented and to:
 - ratify and review this policy;
 - develop and implement Critical Incident Management plans;

- appoint and monitor Critical Incident Management teams as required;
- promote knowledge of the existence and content of the Critical Incident Management Policy and Procedures;
- communicate decisions regarding an incident, in line with the crisis management plan developed for the incident;
- be guided by the policy and procedures when making decisions concerning communication with the media.
- approve additional resources in the event of a critical incident;
- provide training opportunities for staff, and
- ensure compliance systems are in place.

The Rector will act as the media spokesperson for the College.

- Staff are to:
 - make themselves aware of the relevant policy and procedures relating to critical incidents;
 - follow mandatory reporting requirements as required, and
 - follow procedures in the event of a critical incident.

Critical Incident Management Team

The College's Critical Incident Management Team will be established at the commencement of each year and is to be prepared to manage critical incidents from an organisational perspective. The decision to activate the team will be made by the Rector. The team will:

- meet at the commencement of each new school year for the purposes of training and planning;
- ensure that crisis management plans are current and relevant;
- fulfil allocated tasks, and
- advise the Rector on improving and updating plans.

Critical Incident Management Planning

The purpose of Critical Incident Management planning is to:

- provide guidelines for handling of critical incidents and responses by the College;
- raise awareness of issues that may occur following a critical incident;
- ensure that communication channels between relevant groups are clear and direct, to maximise accuracy, efficiency, and ultimately minimise anxiety and speculation;
- ensure that the process of identifying and gathering information about a critical incident or issue is managed effectively, and
- assist staff in identifying what support programs may be appropriate.

The plan should include:

- an outline of key roles and responsibilities of staff;
- clear lines of communications and support;
- identification of potential incidents, or issues, to enable early identification and appropriate responses;
- templates and standard forms to be used for recording, reporting and monitoring communication activity during a critical incident;
- contact numbers for emergency services and other outside agencies;
- a critical incident management flow chart;
- steps to be taken in response to a critical incident, and
- details of legal, media and counselling contacts.

Dealing with the Media

It is important whenever a critical incident occurs effective control of the media be established at the scene. This may involve sending a member of the Critical Incident Management Team to the site and/or the employment of a media consultant to represent the College.

If the media enters College property without permission, they may be requested to leave, but this could result in them employing other methods to get the story or pictures. If the media arrives unannounced they should be referred to the media consultant. If the media consultant is not yet on the scene, the media should be directed to a safe area where they do not disturb the crisis recovery process. They should be informed that their requests will be dealt with as soon as possible.

The Rector is the spokesperson for the College.

Responding to a Critical Incident

Procedures for responding to a Critical Incident are detailed in Appendix 1. Staff who are involved in a critical incident are to use this procedure as the basis of managing the situation until the College's Critical Incident Management Team is able to take control.

The procedures will be the basis of the management plan developed by the Critical Incident Management Team with aspects being added or deleted depending on the level of incident.

The procedure sheet is to be included in the Staff Handbook.

Conclusion

Padua College has a responsibility to be sensitive to and manage the reactions of students, staff and others during and after a critical incident by initiating support programs within the College or in cooperation with external agencies. Whether the incident is of a disastrous proportion or of a relatively small magnitude, a quick and effective response is required. The effective management of such events will enable staff and students to better overcome the crisis and return to a normal life. Control of the media aspects of such events will result in keeping the circumstance surrounding the event in perspective.

APPENDIX 1

| CRITICAL INCIDENT MANAGEMENT RESPONSE PROCEDURES | |
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| A. Survive | <p>Preserve life:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Danger ▪ Response ▪ Airways ▪ Breathing ▪ Circulation <p>Ensure safety</p> |
| B. Immediately | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Account for everyone 2. Tend to injured 3. Render the situation safe 4. Establish the facts 5. Contact emergency services <p>Police 000 Ambulance 000 Fire Brigade 000 Doctor Priest</p> |
| C. ASAP | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Rector to activate Critical Incident Management Team 2. Team to develop Action Plan 3. Inform Minister Provincial 4. Inform Board Members |
| D. Once safety assured | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Notify relatives 2. Inform staff, students and school community 3. Consider closure of school 4. Consult media and legal advisers 5. Identify holding or brief area 6. Document facts 7. Prepare phone contact person to deal with community media calls |
| E. Within 24 hours | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Set up incident room and other rooms as necessary 2. Prepare for counselling 3. Update document facts 4. Plan to return to normal duties asap 5. Access specialist providers |
| F. Beyond 24 hours | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ongoing debriefing 2. Encourage all to access support 3. Prepare for dealing with Post Traumatic Stress 4. Monitor and support survivors and families 5. Monitor admin and care givers 6. Update facts 7. Support absent staff/students 8. Plan for return of injured staff/students 9. Plan for formal proceedings: inquests, court, funerals, liturgies 10. Liaise with Media and Legal advisers 11. Continue with specialist providers as required 12. Recognise different cultures |