



School Critical Incident Policy

1. *Samford Valley Steiner School* recognises the duty of care owed to its students and that planning for the management of a critical incident is essential.
2. A critical incident is a traumatic event, or the threat of such (within or outside Australia) which causes extreme stress, fear or injury that may affect the student's ability to undertake or complete their course. This may include but is not limited to:
 - Serious injury, illness or death of a student or staff
 - Students or staff lost or injured on an excursion
 - A missing student
 - Severe verbal or psychological aggression
 - Physical assault
 - Student or staff witnessing a serious accident or incident of violence
 - Natural disaster e.g. earthquake, flood, windstorm, hailstorm or extremes of temperature
 - Fire, bomb threat, explosion, gas or chemical hazard
 - Social issues e.g. drug use, sexual assault

3. Critical Incident Committee

SVSS has a Critical Incident Committee to assist the School Director in the prevention and management of critical incidents at the school, or off campus in the case of an overseas student for whom the school has undertaken care responsibilities.

The School Director, is the Critical Incident Team Leader.

The Critical Incident Committee also includes:

- Education Administrators
- Economic Development Manager
- Head of College
- Site Manager
- students [if relevant]
- other members of the school community - PAFA
- Enrolments Officer

The responsibilities of the committee include:

- risk assessment of hazards and situations which may require emergency action

Critical Incident Policy

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RSEGB T/A Samford Valley Steiner School



- analysis of requirements to address these hazards
- establishment of liaison with all relevant emergency services e.g. police, fire brigade, ambulance, hospital, poisons information centre, community health services
- 24 hour access to contact details for all students and their families (this will also include homestay families, carers, consular staff, embassies and interpreting services if necessary)
- 24 hour access to contact details for all relevant staff members needed in the event of a critical incident e.g. school counsellor, welfare officer, legal services, school security
- development of a critical incident plan for each critical incident identified
- dissemination of planned procedures
- organisation of practice drills
- regular review of the critical incident plan
- assisting with implementation of the critical incident plan
- arranging appropriate staff development
- budget allocation for emergencies
- ensuring written records of any critical incident and remedial action taken by SVSS are kept on file for at least two years after the student ceases to be enrolled.

4. Critical Incident Plan of Action

- a All critical incident plans assign responsibilities among relevant staff members; cover all the actions to be taken and timelines for doing so.
- b Responding to the Event - immediate Action (within 24 hours)
 - The Committee members are informed. Appropriate steps to be taken are planned.
 - Identify those involved in the incident
 - Check off and prioritise relevant tasks on the checklist
 - Allocate responsibilities,
 - Seeking advice and help from any necessary emergency services/hospital/medical services
 - Establish lines of communication, Dissemination of information to parents and family members
 - Completion of a critical incident report
 - Media response if required (see below)



- Assess the need for support and counselling for those directly and indirectly involved
- c Additional Action (48 – 72 hours)
 - Assess the need for support and counselling for those directly and indirectly involved (ongoing)
 - Provide staff and students, parents / family members with factual information as appropriate
 - Restore normal functioning and school delivery
- d Follow-up – monitoring, support, evaluation
 - Identification of any other people who may be affected by critical incident and access of support services for affected community members
 - Maintain contact with any injured/affected parties
 - Provision of accurate information to staff and students where appropriate
 - Evaluation of critical incident management
 - Be aware of any possible longer term disturbances e.g. inquests, legal proceedings

5. Resources

The nature of critical incidents is such that resources cannot always be provided in anticipation of events. The critical incident committee uses its discretion to provide adequate resources – both physical and personnel – to meet the needs of specific situations. Staff will be reimbursed for any out-of-pocket expenses.

6. Managing the Media

- Manage access of the media to the scene, and to staff, students and relatives
- The School Director should normally handle all initial media calls
- Determine what the official school response will be
- All facts should be checked before speaking to the media
- If accurate information is unavailable or the issue is of a sensitive nature, explain that questions cannot be answered at this time
- Avoid implying blame or fault for any part of the incident as this can have significant legal implications
- The School Director may delegate media liaison to another member of staff

7. Evaluation and review of management plan

After every critical incident, a meeting of the critical incident committee will be held to evaluate the critical incident report and the effectiveness of the management plan and to make modifications if required. If appropriate this process will incorporate feedback from all staff, students and local community representatives