



**(710) Overseas Students Critical Incident Policy and Procedure**



# Overseas Students Critical Incident Policy and Procedure

## Policy (710)

Date Approved		Date of next Review	
Approved By			
Custodian			
Relating documents and Forms	350 School Safety & Critical Incident Policy		
References and Legislation			

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#### 1. Overview

A critical incident is defined as a traumatic event or threat of such which does, or is likely to cause extreme fear, physical and/or emotional distress or injury to staff and/or students and may be regarded as outside the normal range of experience of the people affected.

#### 2. Scope

This Policy is in regards to Overseas Student attending Lorien Novalis School on a 571 Visa.

#### 3. Definitions and/or Legislation

A critical incident may take place at school or outside school. Therefore Lorien Novalis School’s Critical Incident Policy and Procedures are not limited to handling only those incidents that might occur at school.

Incidents can include be those in the surrounding area, and do not necessarily need to pose a direct or indirect threat to the student, but due to media attention or other information, could cause distress to the students and/or to their family in Australia or in their home country.



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### 4. Policy & procedure framework

Critical incidents of a general nature that students may be exposed to as part of the school community may include but are not limited to:

- Bomb threat or explosion;
- Fire;
- Acts of terrorism;
- Death or serious injury to teaching staff and students;
- Natural disasters (floods, bush fires, cyclones etc)

Student centred critical incidents can include but are not limited to:

- Any fatality, near fatality or incident likely to seriously affect a number of staff and/or students;
- Suicide or attempted suicide;
- Diagnosis of a serious medical condition;
- A student's mental health has become a concern (depression, self harm);
- Overdosing of prescribed medication or illicit drugs;
- Serious bullying or harassment (e.g. extortion);
- A female student has fallen pregnant or a male student has been involved in a female falling pregnant;
- Possession of illegal drugs;
- A student has demonstrated addictive behaviour (drugs, alcohol etc)
- Criminal activity;
- Traffic accidents involving students;
- Severe emotional trauma to family or friends;
- Sexual assault;
- Any incident involving a student reported by the police to the school;
- Assault or threats of violence;
- Significant theft or loss of personal property (e.g. value over \$1,000); and
- Trauma as a result of a natural disaster or event in an overseas student's home country.

A critical incident may occur:

- At school directly affecting the community at large (eg a critical accident on the school property, during school hours.)
- To members of the school, outside of school hours, affecting particular groups of the community (school bus accident on the way home, causing serious injury to a number of students)



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- To friends/acquaintances of particular members of the community (the death of student in a neighbouring school, known to some of our students)
- To friends/relatives of an overseas student in their home country.

## 2. Critical Incident Plan Of Action & Checklist

### 2.1 Stage 1 – The Event

- Any critical incident must be reported to the School Administrator.
- Issues of safety are paramount and must be immediately addressed (using school evacuation procedures where necessary, eg. Fire, Lockdown, Bomb Threat etc)
- School Administrator needs to ascertain the facts, particularly when incidents occur away from the school property. The School Administrator must be able to verify what was 'reported to have occurred'. (This will involve community members who reported the incident and those directly involved)

### 2.2 Stage 2 – Responding To The Event

- The College of Teachers are informed. Appropriate steps to be taken are planned. (Functioning as the critical incident team)
  1. Identify those involved in the incident.
  2. Check off and prioritise relevant tasks on the checklist.
  3. Allocate responsibilities.
  4. Establish lines of communication.
  5. Ensure immediate tasks are undertaken and
  6. Ensure secondary and follow-up tasks are undertaken.
  7. Ensure that documentation and recording of the actions taken occurs.

### 2.3 Stage 3 – Communicating With The Community

- Staff are informed by the School Administrator/The College of Teachers or its Representative (as appropriate).
- The College of Teachers' Chair informs the The Board of Directors.
- School Administrator informs school (office staff with information necessary to contain the situation, for example directing media calls to the School Administrator
- Consultants (eg. Community counsellors) are contacted by the School Administrator as necessary.
- The School Administrator prepares for the Student, Parents and School Community being mindful of legal and privacy constraints.
- Siblings and close friends of the victims are told individually.
- The School Administrator informs the rest of the school if appropriate.
- ALL students are informed of counselling and assistance available.
- (It is most important to inform ALL students of this assistance, as we can be certain of the social links that exist. For example, a tragic incident occurring to a Year 10 student, may have a large impact on a Year 7 student who is a family friend of the victim).
- The School Administrator contacts organisations and individuals for additional assistance if required.
- Ensure that staff members have support and counselling if required.
- Maintain a supportive, calm atmosphere, by maintaining normal procedures as far as possible.
- The School Administrator plans the school's response to media, as required.



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- NB: Teachers need to be conscious of not taking on roles which are not appropriate. Staff are generally not trained counsellors, they have organised referral systems and structures in place to protect the integrity of individual staff members and the students.

### 2.4 Stage 4 – Follow Up

- Ensure that 'outside professionals' are able to meet the needs of the school community
- Inform parents of the event AND support available.
- Provide reading/support material to staff, students, and families.
- Aim to get back to the 'normal routine', without a set time frame.
- The School Administrator to debrief Critical Incident response team and other staff involved.
- Review tasks undertaken during the crisis and make any necessary changes to the Policy and procedures.

### 2.5 Critical Incident Management Checklist

#### NOTIFY AUTHORITIES & KEY PERSONNEL

- Notify Emergency Services (Ambulance/Fire/Police) as necessary
- Mobilise any emergency personnel eg Fire Wardens etc
- Notify Management Group Members
- Notify Class Teacher/Guardian (as appropriate)
- Notify Chairman of Board of Directors

#### VERIFY INCIDENT & RESPOND

- Identify all those involved/affected
- Determine outline of incident
- Prepare any necessary statements
- Develop phone and email contact list specific to the incident
- Commence record of the events
- Inform Insurance company

#### CO-ORDINATE PLANNING WITH FAMILY

- Identify a family spokesperson
- Inform family contacts
- Liaise with family and insurance company over dealing with students medical costs

#### IN THE EVENT OF DEATH

- Identify appropriate counselling/support personnel for students and teachers
- Liaise as necessary with Police and family members
- Consider the planning of a memorial service

#### INFORM/INVOLVE THE SCHOOL COMMUNITY (as appropriate in each incident)

- Facts of the event
- Safety issues
- Availability of counselling
- The family/ies' wishes
- Planning of any memorial services

#### IN THE CASE OF AN OVERSEAS STUDENT



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- Inform the homestay family and liaise with them about any arrangements
- Inform family contacts in Australia
- Identify if the family will come to Australia and if so consider reception/accommodation for family and any payment issues
- Notify the Department of Immigration
- Notify CRICOS
- Liaise with family and friends over dealing with the student's personal belongings, bank accounts, medical and legal costs.
- Identify culturally appropriate counselling/support personnel for students
- In the case of death – arrange for funeral or repatriation arrangements
- Obtain death certificate (this may be required to finalise accommodation and banking arrangements)

### 2.6 Key Personnel In The Case Of Different Types Of Critical Incidents

FIRE/ BOMB THREAT OR ANY OTHER EVACUATION OR LOCKDOWN  
Class Teacher or Class Guardian

THREAT OF VIOLENCE FROM STUDENT  
Class Teacher or Class Guardian

ATTEMPTED SUICIDE  
Class Teacher or Class Guardian

### 3. Pre-Crisis Response

This section relates to situations where an incident occurs in a location that could be portrayed in the media (or otherwise, e.g. in social medias) as being related to Sydney (for example bush fires in the Blue Mountains or flooding in the Hawkesbury district), a task group is to be formed of:

- The Educational Administrator
- The Overseas Student Coordinator
- Overseas Student Liaison, or another teacher or staff member directly involved with the students and/or who is capable of communicating in the home language with the family

This task group is to decide and act on:

- What form of communication will be used to communicate with family members (e.g. phone call, skype, email, text message, or other)
- Which family members need to be contacted for each Overseas Student
- Draft the wording to be used in the communications
- The Education Administrator is to approve the wording
- A time-frame for when the communication will take place
- Who will be the staff member to make the communications
- Who will record what communication was made, the time the communication was made and what responses (if any) were received.

### 4. Responsibilities



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All staff are responsible for ensuring that the requirements of this policy are met and the correct procedures are followed appropriately.

The Management Group is responsible for ensuring this policy is adhered to throughout the school.

### 5. Emergency Contacts

#### 2.6 EMERGENCY CONTACTS - EXTERNAL

ORGANISATION	CONTACT	PHONE NO.
Emergency Services	Fire/Police/Ambulance	000 (or 112 from mobiles)
Police	Castle Hill	9680 5399
Fire Brigade	Castle Hill	9680 1282
Bush Fire Brigade	Kenthurst	9654 2341
Ambulance	Bookings	Call 000
Local Hospital	Westmead	8837 9000
State Emergency Services		132 500
Poisons Information Centre		13 11 26
Bereavement Care Centre	(located in Eastwood)	1300 654 556
Centacare Grief Support		9476 8433
Rural Fire Counselling Services		1800 049 933
Salvo Care Line		9331 6000

#### 3.2 EMERGENCY CONTACTS - INTERNAL

ORGANISATION	CONTACT	PHONE NO.
Educational Administrator	Stuart Rushton	9658 0706
Receptionist	Alison Sonter	9658 0700

### 6. Records and Documents

The accurate recording of critical incidents at or involving the school is essential to organisational learning surrounding critical incidents. Organisation learning provides direction for the future and may assist in preventing future critical incidents.

Documentation of critical incidents is required at the identification of the critical incident, during the critical incident and when the matter has been finalised. Documentation is best done as soon as possible after an incident has occurred.

When identifying and managing a critical incident it is important to accurately record all relevant facts and actions taken. Relevant facts may include:

- Student details



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- Date and time of the incident
- Other parties involved
- People notified (see checklists)
- Stakeholders notified or involved
- Decisions made
- Follow up action
- Members of Critical Incident Management team
- Chronological documentation of events

When the critical incident has been finalised the school’s Critical Incident Register must be updated. A formal report on all critical incidents must be made to the School Council.

### 7. Version Control

Version Control	Date Effective	Approved By	Amendment
1			First Version