



# Crisis Policy & Procedure

## PREAMBLE

The Farmhouse Montessori School is committed to creating and maintaining a safe environment for both students and staff. Whilst all care is taken it is recognised that critical incidents can occur at any time.

## DEFINITION:

**A critical Incident can be defined as any event that has a stressful impact sufficient enough to overwhelm the usually effective coping skills of an individual. Critical incidents are abrupt, powerful events that fall outside the range of ordinary human experiences.**

**This policy and procedure is to be read in conjunction with the other school policies that relate to the below listed incidents.**

### Examples of critical incidents are:

- Death of a student or staff member- See Death of Student Policy
- Tragedy on an excursion or on the way to and from school-See Excursion Policy
- Floods and Bushfires/fires & Evacuations-See Bushfire Policy and Evacuation Policy
- Intruders-See-Lockout & Lockdown Policies
- Allegations of misconduct involving students or teachers- See Child Protection Policy
- Criminal activity involving school staff on/or off school premises-See working with children check and staff handbook.
- Bomb threats & Chemical spills -See Bomb & Chemical Spill Policy, Safe storage of Hazard Materials Policy

The school has a clear duty under Workplace Health and Safety legislation to care for staff that may need counselling as a result of their work duties.

The school also has a clear duty under the common law to care for the wellbeing of its students in situations where their presence at the school is a contributing factor in the need for help.

## Managing a crisis

There are 3 main aspects in the management of crisis

- Making suitable preparations, such as procedures to be followed in the event of a crisis
- Implementing those procedures in a sensitive manner to minimise trauma
- Providing specialist intervention

## School Responsibility

The school will ensure that:

- Appropriate confidentiality is maintained at all times.
- Staff are aware of any mandatory requirements for reporting student information (Child Protection Act 1998 and amendments).
- Staff are aware of evacuation procedure in the case of an emergency.
- Emergency telephone numbers are displayed in the classroom and in the office.
- Student contact telephone numbers and details are available in the office and in each classroom.
- Staff hold a current First Aid certificate.
- Specialist personnel are sought to deal with crisis situations and provide follow up care as necessary.
- There is a written report of the incident and written follow up reports as necessary.
- The Principal is to be made aware of any situation that is critical and makes the initial contact with relevant people e.g. parents and/or government bodies and is the direct contact with media and external authorities.
- If the principal is not present the Authorised Supervisor on Duty is to initiate the communication with the parents or emergency facility.

- All employees will be screened prior to permanent employment. (Child Protection (Prohibited Employment) Act 1998.

#### Staff Responsibility

- Staff will support and cooperate with specialist staff responsible for carrying out the objectives of this procedure.
- In the event of an internal investigation upon receipt of an allegation against an employee the employee will cooperate with the ombudsman or delegate.
- Staff have access to the procedure for internal investigations as determined by the (State) Independent Education Union or relevant body. The Principal is available for further information.

#### Parent / Guardian Responsibility

- Parent to notify the school via the Principal and/or the class director of any situation within their family that they consider of importance to their child's welfare whilst at school.
- Parents to ensure that emergency contact details are updated as necessary.
- Parents are to maintain confidentiality and follow the correct procedure should a complaint be made involving a staff member or employee of the school. The procedure for such investigation is clearly defined under the Child Protection and Community Services Act of 1998.

#### Written reports

The format of a written report is determined by school procedures or those of the investigating organisation.

#### Conclusion

The school places a very high priority in its efforts to protect all students in its care from any harm or abuse and to protect staff from mischievous and false allegations.

#### Source

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Policy Review Date	Modification	Next Review Date
Approved: May2009 Reviewed: December 2011 Reviewed: May 2015		Reviewed: January 2010 Reviewed: March 2014
Reviewed Oct 2018	New Format & New Logo	Oct-2020
April 2020	Definition of Critical incident inserted Examples updated with policy names added	2022