



# **St Joseph's Primary School, South Grafton Critical Incident Procedure**

A critical incident may be defined as an event which causes disruption to an organisation, creates significant danger or risk and which creates a situation where staff, students and parents feel safe, vulnerable and under stress.

The school, by its very nature, is a major part of the student's social, cultural and emotional environment. The early identification of, and preparation for a potential critical incident or crisis will help in creating a safe, supportive environment for students and staff members.

Examples of critical incidents....

- serious injury, illness or death of a member of the school community.
- Students or staff lost or injured on an excursion.
- Students or staff being taken hostage.
- Violent assault of a member of the school community.
- Students or staff witnessing a serious accident or incident of violence.
- Significant vandalism or destruction of part of the school property.
- Fire, bomb threat, explosion, gas or chemical hazard, flood, earthquake, windstorm, hail storm or extremes of temperature.

## **Responding to a Critical Incident**

- the Principal takes charge of the management of the incident
- identify the nature of the critical incident
- implement the appropriate management plan or strategy
- Evacuate/lockdown if needed according to the school's plans
- assignment of duties to school staff eg. To check rooms other than classrooms
- being prepared to provide a response to the media preferably with a prepared statement
- determining the Local and State Government regulations and plans concerning disasters
- seeking advice and help from services such as Police, Fire Brigade and State Emergency Services
- making contact with the nearest hospital and medical services centre
- providing regular opportunities (at least yearly) for all staff to be kept informed

## **After the Critical Incident**

- An immediate debrief of all persons involved
- Be aware of the immediate and long term nature of the grieving process in which students and staff may be implicated.
- Evaluate the Critical Incident Management Plan as well as the individual and team roles.
- formulation of debriefing and counselling procedures
- dissemination of information to parents and family members
- informing the Catholic School's Office.