

MORNINGTON PRIMARY SCHOOL



CRITICAL INCIDENT POLICY

Rationale:

At all schools, including Mornington Primary School, there is the potential for a critical incident to occur, which will require an immediate response. Emergencies and incidents, whether natural (such as bushfires, floods, storms or earthquakes) or non-natural (such as chemical incidents, deaths, injuries, transport accidents or major criminal acts of violence), can occur in any community without warning.

When incidents occur, people generally mobilise quickly to assist those affected. A range of government agencies, as well as municipalities and community groups, may respond to the hazard, rescue people, treat the injured, control the immediate consequences of the event and deal with trauma.

Afterwards, people affected by the incident may face complex issues that require advice and assistance. Many people will recover from the effects of a critical incident with little assistance. Others will turn to friends and family for advice and assistance, and some may need formal services.

Emergencies and critical incidents can vary significantly in duration. Some will be discrete and short in duration others may be protracted and last for days or weeks.

Purpose:

To ensure that Mornington Primary School has clear guidelines and procedures in place to respond to a critical incident involving either students, parents, staff or members of the community.

This Policy should be read in conjunction with Mornington Primary School Emergency Procedure's Policy.

Guidelines

In the first instance, the most important action is to ensure that everyone at the school is safe (See Emergency Management Procedures) and that the appropriate emergency services are notified immediately. The appropriate emergency services are:

- ambulance for injury and medical assistance;
- fire brigade for fires (even when fires have been put out);
- police for crime, injury which may not be accidental or assault; and
- State Emergency Service (SES) for floods and wind storms.

After any relevant emergency services have been notified, the Principal or their nominee, must work with the Security Services Unit, emergency services and Regional Office to respond to emergencies or critical incidents at central, regional and school levels.

It may be appropriate to immediately seek support and advice from the Mornington Primary School Wellbeing Officer and Student Support Service Officers who regularly work with the school (eg .Social worker and psychologist). The principal or their nominee will remain in control of response and recovery activity.

Security Services Unit

The Security Services Unit 24 hour service assists schools in meeting their mandatory responsibilities in an emergency or during a crisis. **Telephone:** (03) 9589-6266.

The unit:

- operates a coordination centre throughout the year, which:
 - monitors schools intruder detection systems
 - coordinates support and advice to schools during emergencies and criminal activity.
- is responsible for:
 - providing emergency advice and assistance
 - providing security risk management advice
 - developing state-wide emergency and security management policy
 - security management services to schools including operational response services.
- provides the following support during and after an emergency:
 - support to schools when staff or students may be at risk
 - response and recovery support as part of Victoria's state emergency response and recovery plans (working with schools and the emergency services to maintain staff and student safety until the emergency is resolved)
 - coordination of specialist psychological services to students and teachers following exposure to traumatic events
 - training for school and regional support staff in trauma response and recovery.
- can co-ordinate support from specialist agencies such as the Victoria Police Community Consultation and Crime Prevention Office.
- assists schools in reviewing response and recovery procedures in their emergency management plans.

Regional Support Role

There is an emergency management coordinator in each region responsible for:

- assisting schools affected by emergencies and critical incidents with advice and support
- facilitating the provision of regional resources to work with affected staff and students, including psychologists and social workers.

The Principal or their nominee should continue coordinating with all relevant services and supports until they are satisfied that the incident has been managed in an acceptable manner and the people involved have been provided with all of the necessary assistance and advice.

Evaluation

This policy will be reviewed as part of the school's regular review cycle.

This policy was last ratified by School Council in May 2016