

ST LEO'S CATHOLIC SCHOOL - DEVONPORT

NAG 5: Health and Safety

EMERGENCY INCIDENT POLICY

PURPOSE

The Emergency Incident policy provides guidance to ensure that the school is prepared in the event of an emergency.

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of the emergency incident policy is to ensure that St Leo's Catholic school is prepared to reach out to all those affected by an emergency incident in a Christ like way should the need arise.

Where people are aware of the risks around them and plan their response, then injuries, damage and subsequent trauma are significantly reduced. The Board has a responsibility to ensure that the planning process will ensure that

- a) The safety of pupils, staff and other occupants is maintained
- b) Damage to property is minimised
- c) All occupants are familiar with procedures to be followed

Emergencies may require the school to either close, or to remain open in order to provide safety for pupils and staff.

Communication relating to the policy itself and the associated procedures is critical to ensure that everyone is clear about their role. Clear communication during an emergency incident is also vital.

This Policy has been written in conjunction with the Special Character Policy

DEFINITIONS

Hazards

An emergency incident can be described as a hazardous event that threatens the safety of people or property. Incidents range in size, nature, intensity and duration. They include things such as:

Man made hazards

fires
chemical spills
bomb threats
traffic congestion
death in school
injuries at school

Natural hazards

earthquakes,
volcanic eruptions
tsunami
storms

Medical hazards

disease
epidemic

Reduction

This identifies and assesses the likely events that could occur in or around the school environment, identifies the potential hazards from those events and defines the implement processes for the minimisation of those potential hazards

Readiness

Different hazards can have the same consequences for the school. The consequences have been considered and planned for, since knowing in advance what may happen will reduce stress and anxiety during an emergency. The school's Emergency Response Plan's will prepare the school to respond to the identified emergency event, and minimise the harm to members of the school community.

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Response

Boards of trustees are responsible for the effective planning and coordination of safety procedures; for ensuring that all school occupants are familiar with emergency drills; for establishing effective administration procedures; for maintaining liaison with support agencies and for the protection of property.

Principals are responsible for ensuring that all occupants of the premises are familiar with the procedures to be followed in an emergency and that regular practice sessions are held. The principal should decide whether the buildings are safe to occupy prior to, or after an emergency, and make decisions about the evacuation of the school premises.

Teachers have the responsibility of ensuring that their students are familiar with the correct procedures to be followed in an emergency.

Emergency Management Plans that are appropriate to each type of potential emergency – and are documented as attached procedures (See Associated Procedures – “emergency response plans”)

Recovery.

Once the response phase of the emergency is over there can be a long period of recovery, which may take some time. Some of the issues surrounding the recovery phase include, restoration of communication, property and services; trauma management plan and priorities; Counselling for students and staff, time away from the environment, getting back to normal as soon as possible; loss of essential equipment and reassuring people about plans for the future. This stage will also include a review processes - how well did the plan work?

PRINCIPLES

General

- 1) Policy and associated documentation must be readily available should an emergency incident occur.

Reduction

- 2) At the beginning of each year, parents and caregivers will be advised of the school's emergency plans and procedures.
- 3) A notice detailing evacuation procedures, the position of the nearest exit, and the location of the assembly area must be prominently displayed in all rooms and corridors

Readiness

- 4) Evacuation drills must be held regularly, preferably at least once a term. A log book will be kept which shows the date of all drills
- 5) Fire extinguishers will be regularly tested and are covered by contract.

Response

School closure.

- 6) In the event of a school closure, the Principal takes authority from the Board Chairman for the closure of the school
- 7) Staff take responsibility for the supervision of children until parents are contacted and arrangements are made for uplifting their children
- 8) When appropriate, notice of closure will be broadcast on radio – weather related closures may be announced in blanket statements given for a number of schools in the local area

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Emergency incident

- 9) In the event of an emergency incident, there must be an instantly recognisable signal for evacuation, such as an electric siren or continuous ringing of a hand bell.
- 10) In the initial stages of an emergency, key duties will focus on the safety and well being of staff and students. Initial actions will include:
 - Calm and reassure frightened pupils and staff.
 - Attend to the first aid needs of the injured.
 - Locate any missing pupils or staff.
 - Extinguish any small fires before they get out of hand.
 - Check damage to utility systems and appliances (if necessary shut off main power, water and gas).
 - Keep records of the pupils released to parents or other authorised persons.
 - Establish communications with emergency services.
 - Seal off areas that are deemed to be unsafe.
 - Determine who does what, where and how. Base initial preparation efforts on current capabilities.

Recovery

- 11) Parents are to be advised that during a civil defence emergency incident, they should not telephone the school - staff will be engaged in ensuring the safety of students.
- 12) Pupils will NOT be released from the school unless a parent (or person designated by the parent) comes for their child. All uncollected pupils will remain in the care of the staff and where appropriate, will be handed to civil defence or other suitable authorities, e.g. Police or Children and Young Persons Service.
- 13) Pupils will NOT be released to leave the school with another person or alone until the Police advise the area is safe.
- 14) If it is necessary to leave the school grounds, information will be left telling parents where their children have been taken.
- 15) After an evacuation, pupils and staff must not re-enter the buildings until all rooms have been checked and the Principal is satisfied that the buildings are safe for re-occupation.
- 16) Following a significant emergency incident, the Parish priest will be available to support Staff, pupils and families
- 17) Principal must convene a meeting after an emergency event or exercise to formally review what occurred.
- 18) The school's emergency incident policy will be reviewed on a yearly basis. This presents a good opportunity to remind parents/caregivers and the surrounding community of the school's emergency incident policy and emergency response procedures, and to advise of any changes.

ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTATION AND PROCEDURES

- St Leo's School site map
- Emergency contacts
- First aid checklist
- Emergency response plans (appendices)
 - 1) Evacuation / Emergency procedure
 - 2) Medical Emergency procedure
 - 3) Fire Emergency procedure
 - 4) Earthquake emergency procedure

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- 5) Volcanic Eruption & Ashfall procedure
- 6) Intruder inside the building procedure
- 7) Death Emergency procedure
- 8) Missing Child procedure

LINKED TO:

Special Catholic Character Policy

Pastoral Care Policy

Health and Safety Policy

Policy and associated Procedures last reviewed:

Date: _____ Chairperson: _____