

Emergency & Crisis Management Policy



Emergency & Crisis Management Policy & Procedures
Including Critical Response Plan

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EMERGENCY & CRISIS MANAGEMENT POLICY & PROCEDURES

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1. Policy Statement

In the midst of an emergency or crisis is not the best time to start to decide who will do what and when. Moerlina School has developed well-planned and documented procedures so that the school deals with an emergency or crisis efficiently and effectively.

An emergency or crises, by definition, are rare events that can result in significant negative outcomes for the school if not handled well. There is often inadequate information in a time of crisis however the consequences of the crisis and the school response may be significant. The decisions made in managing the crisis, and the timeliness of action will impact on the outcomes.

In contrast to risk management, which involves assessing potential threats and finding the best ways to avoid those threats, crisis management involves dealing with the threat, or the incident, after it has occurred.

Crisis management begins with good leadership. The governing body and administrative leadership team at Moerlina have established clear guidelines and procedures to ensure effective crisis management of a broad range of potential incidents.

This policy supports response to emergencies or crises that may arise in areas covered more specifically in other policies and procedures developed for the School including: Emergency Management; Risk Management; Health Care; Duty of Care; Excursions, Incursions and Camps; Child Protection; Behaviour Management; and, Occupational Health and Safety.

These comprehensive policies and procedures have been developed and communicated to staff, and where appropriate families, to minimise the risk of critical incidents through considered management and approaches. However, not all emergencies and crises are avoidable and therefore this plan to manage, record and report critical incidents has been developed.

Any emergency or crisis in the school in which there is a high likelihood of traumatic effects or unexpectedly strong emotional reactions, will be treated as a critical incident according to the Guide to Registration Standards and Other Requirements for Non-Government Schools.

2. Crisis Management Team (CMT)

Moerlina School has established a "Crisis Management Team" that will always be ready to initiate, coordinate and monitor the school response to any crisis or critical incident. The Crisis Team – the Principal, Registrar, Chair of Council & nominated Council representative will have standard procedures for certain events as outlined in the relevant policy and procedures and the competence to react appropriately to events that are different or were not predicted. The team structure will depend on the type of crisis they have been set up to manage.

The principal will usually be the person who makes the decision to activate or not activate the Crisis Management Team. The principal will oversee the crisis or incident and coordinate the response, with the support of the Chair of Council. In the principal's absence a nominated delegate will take on this role. The team must be careful to put the safety of the staff and students as their first priority.

3. Crisis Management

Moerlina will approach crises using the principle of *'prudent over-reaction and rapid de-escalation'*. The idea being that it is easier to scale down an over-reaction than to ramp up an under-reaction.

There is legislation that requires schools to respond in specific ways to certain events and this will be adhered to.

Staff will have roles and responsibilities in responding to emergency situations. They will have clear guidelines and practice in responding to situations such as emergency evacuations and emergency lockdowns, which will be scheduled in to the annual planner. Plans for evacuation and lockdown are located in the appropriate sites around the school. The wellbeing of students, staff and other people on the school grounds will always be of the highest priority in responding.

Moerlina School will maintain good practice to reduce the likelihood or impact of critical incidents by maintaining appropriate risk management procedures. However, in a crisis situation the actions taken will follow the Emergency and Crisis Management Flow Chart at Appendix 1.

In responding to incidents which are not covered by school policy or plans, the Crisis Management Team will be guided by the suggested responses to specific emergency situations provided by the Department of Education, WA, at Appendix 2.

The crisis management team will do its best to minimise the damage the incident has caused or may cause to individual students, staff or families and to the school. There may be short term and long term consequences to consider.

4. Reporting and Recording of Critical Incidents

In all incidents that are recognised as an emergency or crisis, the principal will notify the Chair of Council and the Director General of the Department of Education Services (DES), as soon as practicable and in any event, within 48 hours of the incident's occurrence. Notification to the Director General will be via the completion and submission of an online Critical and Emergency Incident Report Form available from the [DoEWebsite](#).

Incidents to be reported will include, but not be limited to:

- circumstances that pose a critical risk to the health, safety or wellbeing of one or more students or staff;
- incidents requiring school closure, lockdown, or reduction of number of students or staff attending;
- death, or life-threatening injury, of a student or staff member at school, or following an incident that occurred at the school, or through a related school-based activity or circumstance;
- receipt of an allegation of child abuse, including but not limited to sexual abuse, against a student by a staff member or student or other person, whether the abuse is alleged to have occurred recently or in the past;
- issuing a formal warning to a staff member or ceasing the employment of a staff member for a breach of the Staff Code of Conduct suspected to be grooming behaviour.

In following the school principle of *'prudent over-reaction and rapid de-escalation'* staff should report any incident that may affect school operations to the principal. This includes incidents that occur at the school or elsewhere and may occur out of school hours. The principal will make a

decision on the risk to the school in determining whether to escalate the reported incident to a critical incident response. A list of suggested incidents for reporting to the principal is at Appendix 3.

The Crisis Management Team will make notifications of, and document all critical incidents in accordance with the AEIOU Crisis Management Plan at Appendix 4.

A table of relevant contact details which may be required in responding to a critical incident are at Appendix 5.

Reporting requirements specific to incidents such as Mandatory Reporting of Sexual Abuse will be followed as documented in the appropriate policy and will include reporting to the Council and DES.

The principal will maintain appropriate records including details of the incident, the school's response and use of relevant policies and procedures, the outcome, subsequent steps taken (e.g. counselling), the school's review of the management of the event in question and associated policies that were enacted. These records will be held in the school's Critical Incident Register.

The principal will provide a report of a critical incident to the School Council.

5. Communication

Reliable, clear communication within the school and with parents during a crisis or as an impending crisis approaches is essential. The principal will contact the Association of Independent Schools of WA for support in managing communications in a crisis situation.

Due to the culture and size of the school, a determination will be made in response to any incident on how best to communicate information to families. Families may be informed in writing via email or in hard copy. A template letter can be found at Appendix 6. As most families drop off and pick up students each day, a face-to-face meeting may be appropriate, with follow up phone calls to parents who may not have been present.

Media management is a crucial aspect of planning. Only the Principal or Chair of Council will deal with the media, or nominate a delegate in their place. Accurate reporting is essential if the school's reputation is to be maintained.

In preparing communications for the media following a critical incident the guidelines at APPENDIX 7: Communication and the Media, will be followed.

6. Information on Hand

Copies of the following information will be kept in a Critical Incident Pack in the Principal's office so that it can be easily carried off site or passed on to emergency services as required.

- Site map of school and surrounds including muster point.
- Aerial photos of school,
- Information on students and staff with special medical needs, mobility, vision or hearing difficulties.
- Master keys
- Mobile phone numbers of staff
- Phone numbers of emergency services.
- Student enrolment register, including family contacts.
- Crisis management team information.

7. International Students

As Moerlina is registered for international students the National Code of Practice will be adhered to.

National Code of Practice for Registration Authorities and Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018 (The National Code 2018)

The relevant standard is 6.8 which states:

6.8 The registered provider must have and implement a documented policy and process for managing critical incidents that could affect the overseas student's ability to undertake or complete a course, such as but not limited to incidents that may cause physical or psychological harm. The registered provider must maintain a written record of any critical incident and remedial action taken by the registered provider for at least two years after the overseas student ceases to be an accepted student.

Critical incidents are not limited to, but could include:

- missing students;
- severe verbal or psychological aggression;
- death, serious injury or any threat of these;
- natural disaster; and
- issues such as domestic violence, sexual assault, drug or alcohol abuse.

The Educational Services for Overseas Students Act 2000 (ESOS Act) requires the School to notify DEEWR and DIAC as soon as practical after the incident and in the case of a student's death or other absence affecting the student's attendance, the incident will need to be reported via the Provider Registration and International Student Management System (PRISMS).

8. Follow Up to a Critical Incident

Once a critical incident is over and the school is declared safe, it is important that the normal running of the school recommences as soon as possible. The principal, in consultation with the Council, will determine when the crisis is over. It is important to note that the recovery stage may vary from a few hours to a few months depending on the circumstances and nature of the situation.

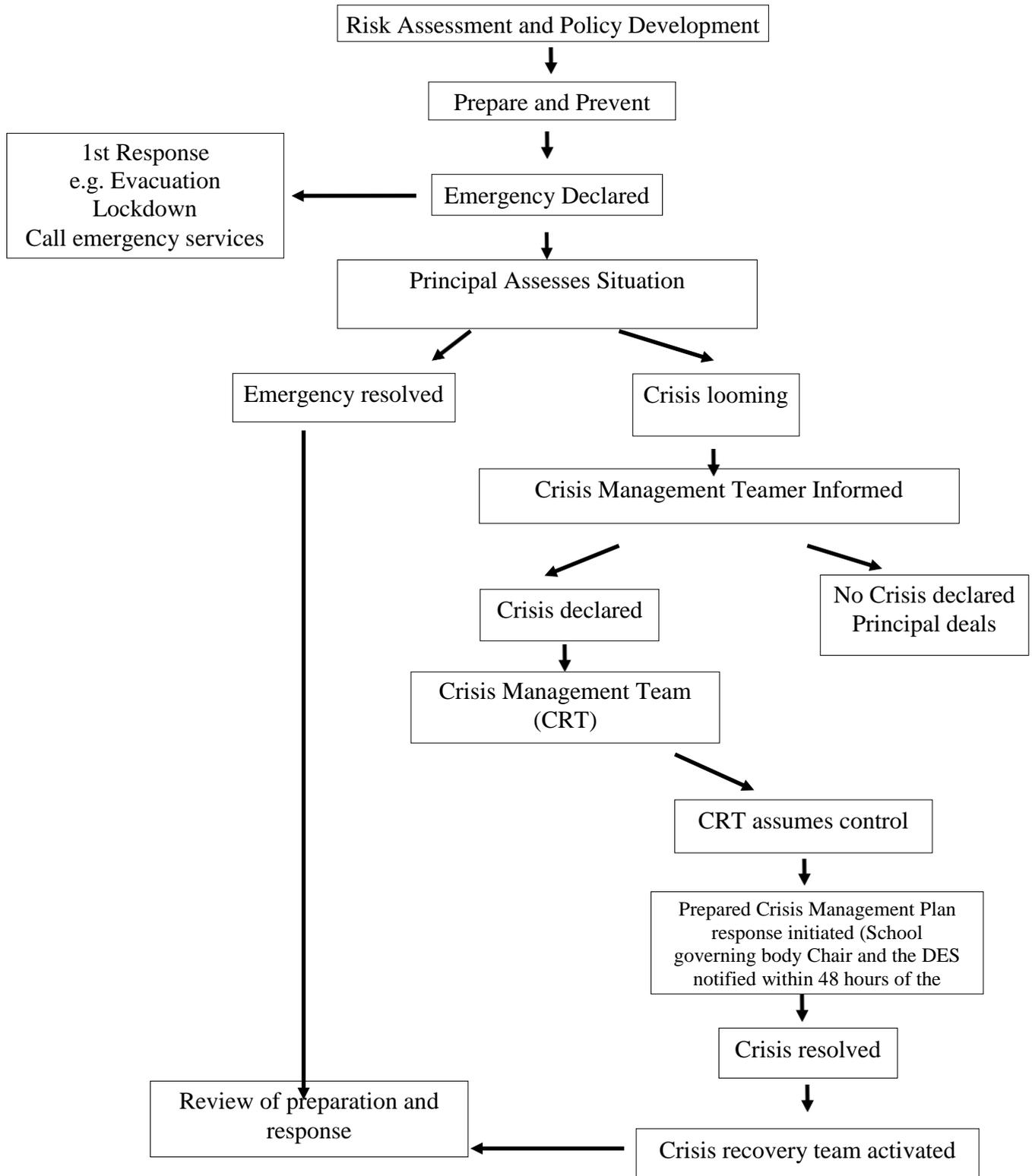
Follow up may be required as a result of the emergency, including:

- Hospitalisation, counselling or legal action as a result of injury to staff or student
- Agencies with legislative power e.g. arrest, search, issue of care order
- Health authorities informed of particular health issues, e.g. infectious diseases.

The principal will:

- take appropriate steps to return the school infrastructure to normal;
- develop and implement medium to long term strategies to identify and manage the ongoing social, psychological and education needs of those affected.

Recovery can be complex. A coordinated, planned recovery will be developed by the Crisis Management Team and others as required, including maintenance, building expertise, legal etc. to coordinate the recovery phase.



Appendix 2 Response to Specific Emergency Situations

The following responses have been reproduced with permission from the Department of Education, Western Australia.

Only those emergencies that the school may not have a specific policy on are mentioned below.

1. **Armed Holdup**

- Comply with the instructions given by the offender at all times. Try to remain calm
- Calmly do what you are told to do: NO MORE, NO LESS
- DO NOT argue with, threaten or stare at the offender
- DO NOT attempt to disarm or otherwise apprehend the offender
- Assume the offender is armed, even if a weapon cannot be seen
- If the offender is carrying a firearm, it should be regarded as being loaded
- Raise the alarm only when it is safe to do so
- Answer any question when asked
- Avoid any sudden movements that could panic the offender
- If students are present, try to shift the offender's attention away from them
- Observe as many details of the offender as possible
- Note any items and surfaces touched by the offender
- Immediately after the incident, the principal/site manager is to:
 - Secure the immediate vicinity (for example, lock the office/room in which the hold-up occurred; do not allow anyone to approach the area in which the offender was located)
 - Notify police
 - Attend to the post-incident needs of students and staff
 - Ensure students who are not in the immediate vicinity of the hold-up are kept away from it.

2. **Civil Disorder and Illegal Occupancy**

Based on the information available, the principal should consider the following operational levels:

Level 1 Normal operation

Level 2 Report of a potential situation

If there are indications that trouble is a distinct possibility and the information has been received from credible sources:

- notify police and request assistance;
- restrict staff and students to quadrangle areas and the immediate surroundings of the buildings;
- secure perimeter gates if the school is fenced;
- prevent people leaving or entering the school or college site except by the main gate.

Level 3 Incident is imminent

- notify police and request assistance;
- evacuate staff and students to a safer location away from the incident. Remain in the room, securing it if possible, or proceed to another room that can be secured;
- keep away from windows. If considered necessary and possible, lie prone on the floor;

- lock all other buildings;
- if the school is fenced, lock all perimeter gates;
- communicate with emergency services personnel (principal/site manager);
- announce resumption of normal operation (Level 1) only after receiving advice from emergency services personnel (principal/site manager).

Detailed information on civil disorder and illegal occupancy procedure guidelines are provided in section 6 of the Standards Australia AS 3745:2010 Emergency Control Organisation and Procedures for Buildings, Structures and Workplaces.

3. Cyclone/Flood

In cyclone-prone areas, the principal/site manager should establish links with the local State Emergency Service (SES) and familiarise themselves with the various actions required under each 'alert stage':

- If flooding is imminent, make contact with local SES as soon as possible
- If the school is still occupied, ensure students and staff are located in the highest sheltered areas
- Wherever possible, ensure that high-value equipment and records are relocated away from impending floodwaters
- Ensure potential electrical hazards have been eliminated (for example, isolate power supply) only when safe to do so
- Remain at the safe location while it continues to offer protection
- Do not allow anyone to enter the floodwaters.

4. Earthquake

In the event of an earthquake, remain calm and reassure staff, students and visitors.

Indoors

- Stay indoors and seek shelter under tables, desks or strongly-constructed doorframes
- Check that evacuation routes or safer locations are safe
- Instruct staff, students and visitors to collect belongings unless the threat is immediate
- Ensure all staff, students and visitors evacuate in an orderly manner on being given evacuation instructions (principal/site manager)
- Stay away from windows and other fixtures that may become unstable
- Provide assistance to people with disabilities or special needs
- Turn off electricity, gas and water only when it is safe to do so.

Outdoors

- Move quickly away from buildings and power poles
- Evacuate to designated assembly areas.

After the earthquake

- Check attendance against class rolls at the designated assembly area
- Liaise with emergency services
- Check for injured people. Apply first aid
- Survey damage
- Turn off electricity, gas and water supplies only when it is safe to do so

- Check for damage, gas leaks, power failure and any other hazards. Ensure that no-one returns to any building unless authorised to do so (principal/site manager).

5. Fire

In the event of a fire:

- raise the alarm;
- alert the principal/site manager;
- evacuate everyone from the immediate vicinity of the fire;
- fight fire with existing equipment only when it is safe to do so;
- sound the evacuation alert if evacuation is necessary;
- allow staff, students and visitors to collect belongings only when it is safe to do so;
- on sounding the alert, evacuate all staff, students and visitors in an orderly manner;
- close all doors and windows;
- arrange for power supply to be switched off at the electrical switchboard (principal/site manager) only when it is safe to do so;
- collect classroom rolls and move students and visitors along designated routes to the designated assembly area;
- assist staff, students and visitors with disabilities or special needs;
- assemble students in groups and mark their names off the rolls;
- confirm rolls with assembly warden immediately after checking;
- remain with students and await further instructions;
- do not leave the assembly area until advised to do so by the incident manager;
- return to classrooms only when it is safe to do so.

6. Handling of Suspect Mail and Packages

It is appropriate that staff handling mail remain vigilant and cautious at this time, but it should be remembered that most reports of suspicious packages are false alarms.

All staff handling mail should be made aware of the emergency procedures for responding to and reporting a suspicious article.

Where possible, the sorting and processing of mail and packages should be conducted in an area that is separate from the main area of business.

The procedures outlined below are to be followed should staff receive a suspicious package or mail item.

If a package or envelope has not been opened:

- place the item in a plastic bag, seal it: place it in a second plastic bag and seal it again;
- keep your hands away from your face and avoid contaminating your eyes, nose and mouth;
- wash your hands if it is possible to do so without leaving your work area;
- stay in your office or immediate work area. This also applies to your co-workers in the same room;
- prevent others from entering the area and becoming contaminated;
- call police on 000 (principal/site manager).

If the package or mail item has been opened:

- do not disturb, move or touch the item any further. If any material has spilt from the item, do not try to clean it up, or brush it from your clothing;
- keep your hands away from your face to avoid contaminating your eyes, nose or mouth;
- if possible, without leaving your work area, wash your hands;
- stay in your office or immediate work area - this also applies to co-workers in the same room – and prevent others from entering the area and becoming contaminated. Remember – you are not in immediate danger;
- call the WA Police for help on 000. Inform the WA Police operator about:
 - exact location of the incident – street address, building floor;
 - number of people potentially exposed;
 - package/device; and
 - action taken.
- wait for help to arrive;
- if there is suspicion that the mail item may contain an EXPLOSIVE DEVICE:
 - follow your normal emergency procedures;
 - ring 000 and report the package to the WA Police;
 - evacuate the area.

7. Sieges/Hostage Situations

Siege and hostage situations are two of the most significant emergencies or critical incidents that a school may encounter. They often develop with unpredictability, speed and lethality. These events may involve armed or unarmed people, using a carefully planned or completely unplanned method. Many of these situations are over within several minutes. It is essential that, if the safety of students or staff is at immediate risk, decisive actions are taken to reduce access to additional victims. This includes immediate notification of the WA Police:

- Before the arrival of emergency services, the decision to instigate lockdown or to evacuate all or part of the school premises is a decision to be taken by the Principal. Where time permits this decision should be made in consultation with the WA Police
- Large scale evacuation will always be a last resort. The decision will need to balance the risks as to whether students and staff are afforded better protection by remaining where they are or by evacuation. If a decision to evacuate is made, the aim will be to evacuate the optimum number of people expeditiously and safely.
- Parents and other persons who arrive on a school site during a siege or hostage situation should be mustered to a safe location
- The preservation of life will take precedence. Perpetrators should not be approached or challenged.

8. Suicide

Schools, particularly secondary settings, need to be mindful of the risk of suicidal behaviour in students and alert to the potential for a contagion/clustering influence in which one death by suicide can increase the likelihood of other suicides. Particular considerations for schools include:

- Providing opportunities for enhancing the health and wellbeing of students and staff is a significant way to prevent suicide
- Any students expressing suicidal thoughts or threats or engaging in self harm behaviour need to be taken seriously. Consultation with parents and district education office Student Services personnel is recommended
- Students with an identified risk of suicidal or self-harming behaviour should be appropriately assessed and supported
- Raising staff awareness of risk factors associated with suicidal behaviour
- Discouraging students from undertaking assignments that focus on suicide
- Maintaining alertness to suicide risk and behaviour in students and staff

- Avoiding any strategies that normalise, glamourise or increase identification with a person who died by suicide. Given the potential for harm and negative outcomes for at-risk students, schools should not include suicide as a discrete topic within the school curriculum. This includes guest speakers and teachers providing discrete suicide education to students; teachers should discourage students from providing suicide education to other students and discourage students from completing assignments focussed on suicide as a topic
- Avoiding screening strategies as a way to identify students at risk of suicide. Evidence has shown that although there have been positive results when using screening strategies; there are also problems when using this approach. Screening activities are often subject to a high number of false positive results and false negative results. A false positive result indicates a person is at risk of suicide when they are not. A false negative indicates a person is not at risk of suicide when they are.

In accordance with the *Guide to the Registration Standards and Other Requirements for Non-government schools*, incidents to be reported will include, but will not be limited to:

- circumstances that pose a critical risk to the health, safety or wellbeing of one or more students or staff;
- incidents requiring school closure, lockdown, or reduction of number of students or staff attending;
- death, or life-threatening injury, of a student or staff member at school, or following an incident that occurred at the school, or through a related school-based activity or circumstance;
- receipt of an allegation of child abuse, including but not limited to sexual abuse, against a student by a staff member or student or other person, whether the abuse is alleged to have occurred recently or in the past;
- issuing a formal warning to a staff member or ceasing the employment of a staff member for a breach of the Staff Code of Conduct suspected to be grooming behaviour.

Based on the school principle of *'prudent over-reaction and rapid de-escalation'* staff should report any incident that may affect school operations to the principal.

Although not an exhaustive list the following incidents should be reported. These events can occur at the school or elsewhere and may occur out of school hours.

The principal will decide on the risk in escalating to a critical incident response.

- The death of (including suicide) or serious injury to, a student, parent, visitor or staff member.
- Allegations of or actual assault of a student, staff member or a visitor.
- A fire on the school property or in an area that may impact the school.
- Siege/Hostage situations
- Suspicious person/s and/or vehicles
- Missing/disappearance/removal of Student/s
- Firearms or other weapons on the school property
- Bomb threat
- Motor vehicle collision
- Impact by machinery, equipment, aircraft
- Fumes, spill, leak or contamination by hazardous material
- Outbreak or incidence of disease
- Flood
- Theft, vandalism and graffiti
- Issues of negligence or legal liability.
- Need for an evacuation or lockdown
- An event that has the potential to subject the school to high levels of public or legal scrutiny.
- Serious threats made against a student, visitor or staff member.
- Unethical behaviour by staff.
- Fraud
- A student, visitor or staff member behaviour that could result in potential risk to another student, visitor or staff member.
- Near misses that could have resulted in injury.
- All OS&H incidents
- Neighbourhood complaint.
- Injury not requiring medical attention.

These tables have been reproduced from the Department of Education’s Emergency and Critical Incident Plan. <http://det.wa.edu.au/policies>

MOERLINA SCHOOL
Critical Incident Response Coordination Checklist

From Moerlina School Crisis Management Policy & Procedures

These tables have been reproduced from the Department of Education’s Emergency and Critical Incident Plan. It forms a part of the School’s Crisis Management Policy.

- A** Assess situation, call emergency services, assist those in danger
- E** Evacuate students, staff and visitors, if appropriate
- I** Inform the DES and AISWA
- O** Organise resources, advise parents
- U** Undertake recovery operations and return site to normal

The following actions are not necessarily carried out sequentially, nor may they all be required.

A	ASSESS THE SITUATION, CALL EMERGENCY SERVICES AND ASSIST THOSE IN DANGER	
	ACTIONS	COORDINATED BY
<input type="checkbox"/>	Verify information.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Take appropriate safety precautions (e.g. turn off gas, water and/or electricity).	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Administer First Aid where appropriate.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Contact emergency services as appropriate: Ambulance, WA Police, Fire Brigade, gas provider, water provider, electricity provider.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Ensure the incident site remains secure and undisturbed where WA Police or FESA are likely to be involved.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Remove people from the scene to an appropriate assembly area or classroom.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Account for everyone in the vicinity.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Activate the Crisis Management Team to plan further actions and enact the response plan. Allocate specific responsibilities.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Record details of event, including the source/s of information. Make notes as information is received.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Gain family/WA Police authority to release information.	

E EVACUATE (ON-SITE OR OFF-SITE) OR LOCKDOWN	
ACTIONS	COORDINATED BY
<input type="checkbox"/> Consider the need to evacuate either on-site or off the school site.	
<input type="checkbox"/> Liaise with school staff, other agencies and AISWA in considering lockdown where appropriate.	
<input type="checkbox"/> Communicate the evacuation or lockdown using predetermined activation signals.	
<input type="checkbox"/> Take the evacuation kit to the designated assembly area/administration area.	
<input type="checkbox"/> Follow specific lockdown actions.	

I INFORM AISWA	
ACTIONS	COORDINATED BY
<input type="checkbox"/> Contact the Chair of Council	
<input type="checkbox"/> Contact school Occupational Safety and Health Representative.	
<input type="checkbox"/> Contact AISWA	
<input type="checkbox"/> Contact DoE WA	
<input type="checkbox"/> Contact DEEWR and DIAC (re FFPOS)	

ORGANISE TO SUPPORT THOSE AFFECTED (as determined by the assessment of the situation)	
ACTIONS	COORDINATED BY
<input type="checkbox"/> Offer immediate comfort and support to those most affected.	
<input type="checkbox"/> Make direct contact with affected staff or families. (In the case of a death, WA Police contact the family.)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Prepare a statement for informing students and determine method of delivery.	
<input type="checkbox"/> Brief all staff of known facts. Ensure everyone knows not to respond to media.	
<input type="checkbox"/> Inform students using a prepared statement and offer comfort and support. Consider siblings and close friends.	
<input type="checkbox"/> Set up a recovery room.	
<input type="checkbox"/> Send the inconsolable to recovery area. Make arrangements for students/siblings/parents to be re-united.	
<input type="checkbox"/> Prepare a written statement related to incoming enquiries and for students to take home to their parents.	

<input type="checkbox"/>	Consider staff and students absent or off-site today, relief staff, ex-students and ex-staff that need to be informed.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Identify and notify others who need early advice (e.g. Council, key community agencies, other schools affected).	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Consider the staff in need.	

U UNDERTAKE RECOVERY OPERATIONS AT THE END OF THE DAY	
ACTIONS	COORDINATED BY
<input type="checkbox"/> Debrief all staff as necessary. Review with the Crisis Management Team and plan for the next day.	
<input type="checkbox"/> Organise necessary relief/additional staff to meet teaching, support, administration and front office needs.	
<input type="checkbox"/> Ensure support for the leaders of the school response and those who have been supporting others.	
<input type="checkbox"/> Liaise with local agencies for possible after hours/weekend support.	

Group		Phone Number
WA Police	Life-threatening or time critical emergency	000
	Non-life threatening incident requiring Police response	131 444
	Local Police Stations	Wembley 9214 7100 Cottesloe 9286 7777
Ambulance		000
Fire and Emergency Services Authority		000
State Emergency Service		132 500
Hospitals – Sir Charles Gairdner		6457 3333
Princess Margaret Hospital		9340 8222
Poisons Information Centre		131 126
Gas		131 352
Electricity		131 351
Water Corporation		131 375
Health Direct		1800 022 222

This letter has been taken from the Department of Education’s Emergency and Critical Incident Plan. <http://det.wa.edu.au/policies>

The principal will consider any cultural issues that may affect the style and information contained in any communication sent to families of the school.

Parents may be notified by email and/or hard copy letter, as determined by the Crisis Management Team.

School Letterhead

Date

Dear Parents

- | | |
|-------------------------------|---|
| The facts | Provide accurate information, in line with family and police wishes, and known facts including:
a) the event;
b) the child/children/staff – death/injuries. |
| What has been done | I have spoken with/visited the parents/families of, and on behalf of our staff and the school community I have expressed our deepest sympathy and caring.
Classroom teachers have told their students, and have provided an opportunity for talking and sharing. |
| How students may react | It would be best for the children’s school routine to continue as normally as possible, and they should attend school as usual. Children’s reactions will vary and may include crying, not wanting to talk or wanting to talk, wanting to be alone, anger, lack of concentration and sleeping or eating problems. |
| Support available | Should you or your children feel the need for professional help or counselling please contact me. District education office school psychologist or social worker support can also be made available. |

Yours sincerely

PRINCIPAL

Only the Principal or the Chair of Council will speak to the media. AISWA will be contacted in the event of a critical incident to support the school in responding appropriately.

The following will be considered:

- Never say “no comment” as most people will assume that means you are hiding something.
- Don’t use jargon or technical terms. Clear communication reduces misinformation and it doesn’t appear you are trying to confuse.
- The media person should be confident, able to speak clearly and fluently, have good eye contact and not appear nervous.
- Some responses can be discussed and pre-drafted by the CMT.
- Communication should be quick, accurate and consistent.
- Have the intranet and school website prepared to accept crisis information and be easily updated.
- Always speak with one voice. Make sure everyone is getting and passing on the same information.
- Express concern, empathy and sympathy with or for those involved.
- Make sure staff are kept up to date. Meet with them as soon as possible after crisis.
- Deliver all information promised.
- Talk to media off site if possible.