

# Critical Incident Management Procedure and Policy

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**Chrysalis Steiner School – Independent School, NSW**

## Preamble

Chrysalis School is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all students, staff, volunteers, and community members. In accordance with NESA, AISNSW, and NSW Department of Education guidelines for registered and accredited non-government schools, this procedure outlines the required responses to a *critical incident* – an event or series of events that significantly impacts the school community and may require emergency management, rapid communication, and longer-term recovery planning.

Critical incidents may include (but are not limited to) natural disasters such as flooding and landslides, bushfires, significant injury or illness, death, accidents, violent or threatening behaviour, or any event that poses an immediate risk to life, wellbeing, or normal school operations.

This procedure applies to:

- All Chrysalis campuses and staff
- Students, volunteers, Board members, and visitors
- Incidents both on-campus and during school-related activities

## Critical Incident Procedures

The following procedures outline a general response to a critical incident, assigning responsibilities among relevant staff members, and cover all the actions given and timelines for doing so.

## Critical Incident Management Plan

The Critical Incident Management Plan (separate to this document) provides detailed responses for incidents most likely to occur in the Chrysalis operational environment. If an incident is outside of the experience “envelope” described, the general response should be adapted to suit the circumstances.

## Incident Management Team

**Jeremy Street – Business Manager (Team Leader)**

0409 079 101 | 02 6655 8616

**Lisa O'Donnell – Education Director**

0409 370 582 | 02 6655 8616

**Rowan Lennox – Board Chair**

0439 477 502

**Onsite Counselling Support**

Nerida Oberg – School Counselling Consultant

0414 801 656



## CHRYSLIS CRITICAL INCIDENT MANAGEMENT TEAM



- Each team member should have a clear backup in case of absence or inaccessibility.
- Regular \*\*training, drills, and plan reviews\*\* should be conducted to ensure readiness.
- A \*critical incident kit\* should be kept accessible, containing contact lists, maps, medical info, and high-visibility vests.



# Critical Incident Management

## Immediate Response

Within First 24 Hours

### Identify the nature and severity of the critical incident



### Dial 000 to notify emergency services



- Continue to communicate with emergency services, hospital, or medical personnel as required.

### Enact Safety Procedures



- If applicable, secure and evacuate the affected area.
- Ensure the safety and wellbeing of students, staff, and visitors.

### Notify the Incident Management Team



- Lisa O'Donnell (Education Manager)
- Jeremy Street (Business Manager)

### Action and Implement Critical Incident Plan



- Implement the relevant Critical Incident Plan, including emergency evacuation or lockdown procedures.
- Identify those most affected and begin psychological first aid (refer to our Counselling Consultant or Mental Health Line if required).

### Communication Channels



- Communicate with emergency services, hospital, or medical personnel as required.
- Inform parents and carers via SMS, phone, and email using the school's communication systems (Sentral - SMS and Email, School App)
- Communicate with Staff the Incident being Responded to and if assistance is required.

### Follow Up



- Record all actions, decisions, and communications.
- Manage media and public information (see Section 5).

# Critical Incident Management

## Specific Natural Hazard Management



### Flooding, Landslides, and Access-Related Closure Procedures

**Monitor alerts from the NSW State Emergency Service (SES), local council, and Transport for NSW.**



#### **If flooding or landslides affect access to the school:**



- Contact bus companies and transport providers to confirm safe routes.
- Assess staff access and determine if a partial or full campus closure is necessary.
- Notify parents immediately using all communication channels.
- If students are already on campus and road access is cut:
- Activate on-site emergency shelter and supervision protocols.
- Assign key staff to remain with students until safe collection or transport is available.
- Coordinate with SES and emergency contacts to arrange alternative transport.

**Where possible, activate alternative learning arrangements (e.g. 'Flood School' or 'Landslide School') to minimise disruption.**







## Secondary Response (48-72 Hours)

- Reassess counselling and wellbeing support needs for students and staff.
- Provide factual, age-appropriate information to the school community.
- Debrief staff, students, and other affected individuals or groups.
- Resume normal school operations as soon as safe and practicable.
- Finalise and submit a **Critical Incident Report** to the Leadership Team and Board.



## Ongoing Follow-up

- Maintain contact with affected individuals or families and monitor recovery.
- Provide additional mental health support or referrals as needed.
- Monitor for delayed trauma or stress responses in the weeks following.
- Organise a memorial, reflection, or ritual as appropriate.
- Conduct an evaluation of the school's response and update procedures accordingly.
- Prepare for potential legal, insurance, or investigative processes.
- Document all actions for future reference and compliance reporting.



## Media and Public Information Management

- All media enquiries are to be directed to the **Business Manager**.
- No staff member or volunteer should speak to the media without prior approval.
- The Business Manager will liaise with the Incident Management Team to determine messaging that protects the privacy of individuals and upholds the integrity of the school.



## Review and Evaluation

- After each critical incident, a formal review meeting will be held by the **Critical Incident Team**.
- Feedback from staff, students, and families will be gathered to evaluate effectiveness and identify areas for improvement.
- Policies and procedures will be updated based on findings.
- The **Critical Incident Management Plan** will be reviewed annually or after any significant event.



## Related Documents

- Chrysalis Critical Incident Management Policy and Guidelines
- Chrysalis Critical Incident Management Plan
- Emergency Management Plan (Fire, Flood, Landslide)
- Student Wellbeing and Mental Health Policy
- Work Health and Safety Policy



## Emergency Contacts

- **Life-threatening Emergency** – 000
- **Bellingen Hospital** – 6659 5800
- **Coffs Harbour Hospital** – 6656 7000
- **Mental Health Line** – 1800 011 511
- **SES (State Emergency Service)** – 132 500
- **Rural Fire Service (RFS)** – 6651 6133
- **Police – Bellingen** – 6690 1100



## Review Schedule

**Responsible Officer:** Business Manager

**Next Review Date:** December 2026 or as legislative changes require

**2025 Update:** May 2025 by Rebecca Le Gresley

**2024 Update:** May 2024 by Jeremy Street