



Critical Incident Management Plan

CANTERBURY
COLLEGE

DOCUMENT CONTROL

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REVISION RECORD

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1. Introduction

To outline the process, actions, and responsibilities relating to a critical incident.

The policy applies to all members of the College Staff and Community.

All staff are responsible for the implementation of the policy and are to follow instructions provided by the Critical Incident team.

2. Definitions / acronyms

[Key terms and acronyms should be explained here, in alphabetical order]

Canterbury College	Canterbury College Ltd or any controlled entities of Canterbury College Ltd.
SLT	Senior Leadership Team Member of the College.

3. Policy statement

What is a Critical Incident?

A critical incident is broadly defined as any situation faced by the College community causing its members to experience unusually strong reactions, which have the potential to interfere with their ability to function either at the time the situation arises or later. The necessity of responding promptly and appropriately in such a situation is important in protecting the mental health of students, staff and families.

Examples of critical incidents that could affect the mental health or cause physical or psychological harm of school community members include:

- The accidental death, serious injury or terminal illness of a student or staff member.
- The destruction of part, or the whole of the College
- The murder of a student or staff member

- A group of students lost or injured on an excursion
- Students and/or staff members being taken hostage
- Student or staff suicide
- Extremely damaging media attention
- A sexual assault
- A natural or other major disaster in the community
- Enforced College closure

MindMatters – School Matters, 2002, p.63

Emergency Procedures for International Students that could affect mental health or cause physical or psychological harm include (to be considered in addition to the examples listed in the Critical Incident Management Plan):

- Accidental death, serious injury or terminal illness of a student, biological parent, or homestay family member
- Destruction of part, or the whole of their home community
- Reports of biological family members missing
- Political unrest, or instability in their home country,

3.1 The Critical Incident Team (CIT) at Canterbury College shall include the following staff:

- Head of College
- Business Manager
- Deans
- Guidance Counsellor
- Chaplain
- Year Level Coordinators of appropriate Year Level
- Co-opted staff where appropriate
- First Aid Officer(nurse) if appropriate

3.2 All Canterbury Staff shall follow the Procedures detailed in Appendix A.

4. Associated documents

N/A

5. Review

This policy and its associated procedures, quick reference guides and protocols will be reviewed on an annual basis. Canterbury College, however, reserves the right to review this policy at any time.

6. Acknowledgements

N/A

7. Guidelines/Procedure/Process

7.1 Responsibilities

The functions of the Critical Incident Team (CIT) are:

- Responsibility for managing the College's response and actions relating to the Critical Incident
- Coordination and communication

Critical Incident Management Plan

- Overseeing the implementation of the critical incident management plan
- Support and debriefing of students (where appropriate)
- Support and debriefing of staff (where appropriate)
- Appropriate support and communication with the College community
- Ongoing review and familiarisation of new staff with the critical incident management plan.

7.2 Procedures

The procedures are detailed in Appendix A of this document.

7.3 International Student Procedure

Standard Operational Procedures as detailed within this Policy apply, with the addition of the following matters:

- Head of College (or representative) confirms the facts about the situation
- Head of College and other representatives ensures that the student/s is safe from harm and supported (student relocated if necessary)
- Head of College (or representative) contacts Emergency Services if relevant
- Student's parents/agents are informed of situation
- Emergency Procedures commence
- If night before, all staff (as necessary) to be contacted
- College Board informed
- Critical Incident Team is called for meeting (as soon as possible)
- Head of College informs staff of incident/emergency
- If necessary, a statement is prepared for use by teachers with their form classes to inform of the situation

Maintain a written record of any critical incident and remedial action taken by the College for at least two years after the international student ceases to be accepted student.

7.4 A list of Consular / Embassy contact details is attached in Appendix B.

Specific details for International Students registered with Canterbury College as at August 2018 is included within Appendix B

Immediate Action

OPERATIONAL CHECKLIST 1:

1	Head of College is told or confirms the facts about the incident. (Verify Information)	
1.1	Head of College contacts appropriate Emergency Services - dial 000 if relevant	
1.2	If the night before – Head arranges for all staff to be contacted (if possible)	
2	Head of College (as Overall Co-Coordinator, prepares statement for use with media, staff, parents and students)	
2.1	College Board, Schools' Commission are informed	
3	Emergency Procedures are started	
3.1	Head of College calls meeting of Critical Incident Team (CIT), Director Corporate and Business services, Chaplain, Guidance Counsellor, First Aid Officer (Nurse) and appropriate Dean of Focus Area	
3.2	Head of College calls meeting of whole staff, including all ancillary	
3.3	Head of College calls meeting of whole school to give early, accurate report Classroom preference – teacher reads prepared statement	
3.4	Year Level Coordinators, Form Patrons and Class Teachers meet as required	
3.5	Critical Incident Team meets with representatives of Community Support Agencies where appropriate	
3.6	Use Board Room as Operational Centre if appropriate	
3.7	Set up "safe room" in Research and Next Centre and Discovery Centre (30 minutes required)	
4	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Dean/s of Focus Areas are relieved if required 2. Selected staff rostered for support duty 3. Duty Roster strengthened if necessary 4. Affected students are directed to Critical Incident team members 5. Arrangements made for students needing to go home 6. Take note of all "at risk" students 7. Open "safe room" allow students to filter in 	
5	Dean/s of Focus Areas <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Try to ensure that students are protected from the media 	
6	At the end of Day 1: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Debriefing opportunity available to all staff • Critical Incident Team to debrief • Management and Critical Incident Team to meet to plan longer term procedures • Counselling and information made available after normal school hours • Make individual contact with student parents if necessary 	

When a staff member becomes aware of a critical incident they need to speak with the Head of College or a member of CIT as a matter of urgency. (NB Procedures relating to harm as outlined in the Child Protection Policy must be adhered to.)

In response to Critical Incidents the following meetings are to be arranged in chronological order:

- Critical Incidence Team (CIT) as soon as possible after the incident occurs – Head of College to chair:
 - To provide information
 - To distribute prepared statement to be read by Class Teachers; student announcement, ongoing releases of information
 - To confirm management plan, perhaps taking note of additional action as details 2.2
 - To assess building security
- Meeting with Staff – Head of College to chair:
 - To provide information
 - To suggest methods of handling problems arising
 - To inform of any changes to College routine
 - To assess staff capacity to cope
 - To organise and appoint leaders for before/after school meetings
- Meetings with students and staff on Assembly – Head of College to speak:
 - To provide information
 - To direct affected students to available support staff, as determined by CIT
- Briefing between appropriate members of Critical Incident Team and Community Support representatives – Head of College to delegate and oversee:
 - To discuss needs
 - To agree on Community Health role
 - To arrange interview procedure

Some Important Points

Responses/Reactions to the incident:

- In the event of an incident occurring during the school day, students and staff may be notified to go to the designated Form Class rooms or Assembly area
- Need to support students/staff privately who are seriously affected
- All adults in College to assist with students (available staff to staff rooms for directions)
- Students leaving school to do so with parents. Staff to monitor students leaving school without parents, e.g. end of day
- Need for extra staff on playground duty
- Combining classes to free some teachers (ego Critical Incidence staff)
- Get parent to school when affected students can leave, and brief as appropriate, recognising Privacy Laws

Additional Action

Not all critical incidents will require professional counselling of students and staff, follow-up and monitoring of outcomes. However, where the incident has been serious, such as death by suicide or other causes of a student or staff member, care and discretion need to be exercised, as guided by the Critical Incident Team.

- Convene full staff meeting of teaching and administrative staff as appropriate to:
 - Present all information
 - Allow staff response
 - Discuss action plan
 - Decide on how students will be informed or given additional information
- Contact other schools for assistance where appropriate
- Set up a recovery room(s) in perhaps in the Research and Next Centre and the Discovery Centre, with necessary support personnel
- Inform students of the facts of the incident, College actions and counselling services; allow student discussion or response
- Identify students and staff at risk: contact their families
- Arrange counselling for students and staff at risk
- Some counselling work with students and staff may be better done away from school

Follow-up

Within three days provision of appropriate material to media after the event regarding “coping with grief” may be done in consultation with Community Health staff; within the first month, or at the time of the first anniversary, some staff and students may need additional support. Ongoing monitoring may be required of their wellbeing. Follow up – staff, parents, students

- Refer to the Year Level Coordinator
- Refer to the Guidance Counsellor
- Refer to the Chaplain

Locating the Crisis Situation within the Appropriate College Sector:

The division of the College into Junior Years, Middle Years and Senior Years will determine some aspects of the management of incidents.

Please note:

1. The Head of College will be the overall manager of the College response, closely supported by the Deputy Head and the Deans.

Where the critical incident involves a defined group of students or staff within a sector, then the Dean of that focus area could assume the second-in-command role to the Head as outlined below.

Role Description

The Role of the Head of College

Please tick when actioned

- Gather information on the crisis
- Arrange for contact with emergency services if required
- Arrange and chair a brief meeting of Management and School Critical Incident Team (as a matter of urgency) to consider implementation of action plan
- Formulate a statement for staff, students and receptionists
- Arrange and chair a meeting for all staff to inform them of the situation and to advise reaction to be taken
- Talk to whole College on assembly – **preference given to class teachers speaking to their classes**
- A statement of fact may be prepared to issue to Form Patrons and Class Teachers – distribute the teacher's guide to debrief students
- Be the **ONLY** school contact with the media
- Contact parents of students directly involved
- VISIT site incident if appropriate or arrange for appropriate Dean of Focus Area to visit
- Participate in debriefing as arranged by the Dean of Focus Area, if necessary

The Critical Incident Team (CIT)

- Initiate and oversee the implementation of the Critical Incident Plan
- Determine immediate course of action depending on circumstances
- Liaise with Class Teachers
- Arrange for parents to be contact where required
- Record “at risk” students nominated by CIT and/or class teachers, (initially those most directly involved in the incident)
- Visit the site of incident if appropriate
- Set up Recovery Room with Tea and Coffee available
- Arrange collection of students/staff’s belongings when requested by immediate family
- Determine staffing needs with Critical Incident Team and to request staff from relevant Dean (specifically staff trained in critical incident stress debriefing and grief and loss, trauma counselling)
- Counselling and coordinating activities where required
- Contact Community Health where required to inform them of the crisis and if appropriate, arrange for them to visit the school to discuss needs/assist in management of the situation
- Assist other Community Support Services in arranging long term service provision to individuals (both students and staff) and families
- Work with Community Health in assessing readiness of students involved to return to school
- Assist with debriefing
- Contact other Counsellors for support, if necessary
- Liaise with Class and/or Form Teacher where necessary
- A statement of fact may be provided for reading to students
- Identify students at risk
- Be available to students or refer to Guidance Counsellor or Chaplain as considered necessary; record names of all students
- Record names of all students identified during the day to be returned to Guidance Counsellor
- Talk with other CIT members to consider management of crisis in short and long term
- Participate in debrief as arranged by the relevant Dean, if necessary

Role of Form Patrons / Class Teachers

- :
- Identify students at risk
 - Be available to students or refer to Guidance Counsellor or Chaplain as considered necessary; record names of all students.

Critical Incident Management Plan

- Participate in debriefing as arranged by the relevant Dean.
- When a critical incident occurs involving the whole College community, a pre-organised procedure will be followed
- Form Patrons and Class Teachers have the responsibility of reinforcing the Head of College's "Statement of Facts"
- In discussion with their students they should make an early assessment of students who may need to be referred to the debriefing team
- Teachers will be the first line of contact with students who could collectively be frightened, grieving, confused, inquisitive or disinterested

In this situation it is best to use certain responses and to avoid others, before sending a student for debriefing, try the following:

TRY TO AVOID	TRY TO USE
<p>You will feel better about it tomorrow. Something like this happened to me once. Try not to be so emotional about it. Forget it. It's nothing to do with you. It is only a one in a million accident. Leave me out of it, I can't cope. Do something to take your mind off it. Just try and get over it.</p>	<p>It is o.k. to feel shocked and helpless now. You must be finding it hard to believe. You would be more comfortable in the Research and Next Centre and the Discovery Centre. We all feel the shock of something like this. It did happen, and this is the result. I will get someone else to take the group. The thoughts will keep coming back at times. If you want to talk, go to or see</p>

REMEMBER: Debriefing should not be done by the untrained.

Role of Support Staff:

Briefed by Director Corporate and Business Services shortly after the statement is ready:

- Receptionist:
 - Refers all media enquiries to the Head of College or Director Corporate and Business Services
 - Answers parent enquiries by reference to the prepared statement
 - Assures enquirers that school is proceeding normally, that students should come and/or stay
 - Thank people offering to help and take contact number if the offer needs to be taken up
 - Participate in debriefing as arranged by the Director Corporate and Business Services

➤ Other Office Staff:

Continue with routine duties and be prepared to assist as required, to handle personal enquiries

Note: Sick Bay is not appropriate for distressed or grieving students. Such students should be taken to a quiet room in the Research and Next Centre and the Discovery Centre where staff are available to talk with and reassure them.

Relevant Guides

Media Checklist

1.	Policy for sense of control. Head of College will invite people onto property.	
2.	Collect phone/fax numbers of all media agencies. Do test run and keep on file.	
3.1	Conduct meeting off campus – set up parameters.	
3.1.1	Ground rules for media: 1. When is your time deadline? 2. Where will we fax you? 3. How do you want information?	
3.1.2	Clarify College’s position: 1. We’ll give, but do not disturb children. 2. File footage (students etc) now when okay, not on day of incident.	
4.	Avoid No Comment ... in-service staff to say ... “I understand your comments and concerns, I’m waiting too. See Head of College”.	
5.	Set up multi-lines 12 or so: “one number to call is... a. media b. parents c. helpers	

Weekend / Holiday Procedure:

1. Not first day back
2. Within two weeks
3. Memories and rituals
4. Use Saturdays/Sundays, if necessary
5. Advertise “safe rooms”
6. Open school 1.00pm – 3.00pm

The Announcement:

1. Word of warning: “We have sad news at Canterbury College
2. Get facts: Who? Event? How?
3. How will Canterbury College help students? “We will offer.....”
4. Sign in/out classroom
5. Funeral arrangements – let people know ASAP
6. Days/3/4/5, keep procedures going after day 1
7. Do not confuse death with sleep (P-3)
8. Memo to parents about how Canterbury College has dealt/will deal with crisis
9. Parent forum
 - How they can help Canterbury College
 - How they can help students

Staff Guide:

Each staff member should be given the following guide on how to initiate the initial conversation:

1. How many have heard about’s death before now?
2. How many knew?
3. How many of you have lost someone through death?
4. How might we help’s family?

B 8.5 Suicide Prevention / Response to

‘Many young people who harm themselves do not want to die... they are looking for a way through, not a way out.’

Suicide Attempts

No suicide attempt should be ignored (refer to Canterbury College Child Protection Policy p. 20 Preventing Student Self Harm), do not pass it off as ‘attention-seeking behaviour,’ refer to the College Guidance Counsellor should you have concerns. It is important to convey to the student that she/he is not alone and that you care, that you would like to help, or will assist in getting help.

Warning Signs

- A previous suicide attempt
- Expressed threats or talk about suicide (e.g. maybe I will not be around to see that, or you are better off without me)
- Expressions of hopelessness or helplessness (e.g. I just cannot see the point in trying anymore)
- Unusually daring or risk-taking behaviours
- Fatigue or major changes in sleep patterns
- Depression or depressive symptoms, unexplained frequent crying, physical deterioration
- Personality changes, (e.g. increased aggression or outbursts, anger, withdrawal)
- Giving away personal or prized possessions
- Increasingly poor school performance and/or increased non-attendance at school
- Preoccupation with death or dying expressed through artwork, essays, poetry or music
- Increased use of alcohol or other drugs
- Exposure to (another) suicide
- Recent personal loss or life events causing intolerable stress

Some of these signs and behaviours are also indicators of other forms of distress, but no single factor in isolation is likely to create suicidal behaviour. Usually there is a build-up of situations and stressors which, over time, lead to a young person’s crisis or ‘flashpoint’.

It is important to convey support. Do not let onto the student that you may be feeling ‘appalled’ by their thoughts or feelings. Never say you will do something that you cannot follow through on. Do not promise to keep it a secret. Explain that as a part of the College’s Child Protection Policy that you need to discuss with the Guidance Counsellor. If the student is stating that she/he feel Suicidal or that self-harm is an option do not leave her/him alone. Take the student with you to sick bay and contact the Guidance Counsellor. If the Guidance Counsellor is unavailable speak directly with the Head of College.

Whitla, 2003, p.96-97.

If a suicide attempt occurs at school:

- Get immediate medical attention. If the student has taken excessive medication try to establish what and in what quantities, it has been taken
- Keep the lines of communication open, encourage the young person to talk, acknowledging their feelings; do not express blame or anger
- Expert advice and support will be arranged for the student through external support agencies

Emergency Helpline

24 Hour Consular Emergency Centre:

1300 555 135 within Australia (local call cost) or +61 2 6261 3305 from outside Australia.

For a full list of embassies:

<http://www.dfat.gov.au>

Australian Consulate-General in Hong Kong, China (People's Republic of)

Address

23/F Harbour Centre
25 Harbour Road, Wan Chai
Hong Kong

China (People's Republic of)

Telephone

+852 2827 8881

Fax

+852 2585 4457

Australian Embassy, China (People's Republic of)

Head of Mission

[Australian Ambassador to China \(People's Republic of\)](#)

Address

21 Dongzhimenwai Dajie
Sanlitun
Beijing 100600

China (People's Republic of)

Telephone

+86 10 5140 4111

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+86 10 5140 4204

Australian Consulate-General in Guangzhou, China (People's Republic of)

Address

12th Floor, Development Centre
No. 3 Linjiang Road
Zhujiang New City
Guangzhou 510623

China (People's Republic of)

Telephone

- +86 20 38140111 (non-visa enquiries)
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Australian Embassy, France

Head of Mission

[Australian Ambassador to France](#)

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Australian High Commission, India

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Australian Embassy, Japan

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Australian Embassy, Korea (Republic of)

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Seoul 110-714

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- +82 2 723 7732 (Public Diplomacy)
- +82 2 734 5085 (Austrade)

Australian Commerce and Industry Office (ACIO), Taiwan

Australia does not have diplomatic relations with Taiwan. The ACIO in Taipei represents Australian interests in Taiwan in the absence of formal diplomatic relations.

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