



## **ST JOSEPH'S SCHOOL PLEASANT POINT**

### **Traumatic Incident Policy**

#### **RATIONALE**

St Joseph's School has a responsibility to ensure that learning environments are emotionally and physically safe for children and staff. The impact of a traumatic event/crisis may cause intense feelings of grief and post-traumatic stress. The way an incident is managed is critical to the recovery of the school and reduces the potential for further risk. The Pastoral Care needs of the entire community will be supported.

Traumatic incidents are broadly defined as events that:

- Cause sudden and/or significant disruption to the operation, or effective operation of the school and/or community
- Have the potential to affect a large number of students and/or staff
- Create significant dangers or risks to the physical and emotional wellbeing of students and people within the community
- Attract media attention or a public profile for the school as a result of these incidents

Examples of traumatic incidents may include:

- The death or serious injury of a student, staff member or family/whanau member
- Witnessing serious injury or death of a student, staff member or family/whanau members
- Threats to the safety of students or staff, including the presence at the school of an individual behaving in a dangerous or threatening manner
- A lost or missing student or staff member
- Floods, fires, earthquakes or other community crisis or natural disaster
- Pandemics

Associated Documents:

- Traumatic Incident Procedure
- Pandemic Planning & Procedures
- Care & Management of Children Procedure
- Emergency Procedure
- Safe Environment Procedure
- Procedure for School Closure after 9.15am
- Procedure for School Closure prior to 9.00am
- Staff Manual – In Case of Emergency Guidelines

## **GUIDELINES**

- The school will have a Traumatic Incident Response Procedure in place. The procedure will not depend on any single person but will promote the coordinated responsibilities of a team of people who will act to support staff and students and the functioning of the school.
- The Board will regularly review the Procedures.
- The Principal will ensure all staff are familiar with the Procedure and know what to do in the event of a crisis. A copy of the Procedure will be in the staff manual.
- The procedure will aim for the resumption of a normal school programme as soon as possible following a traumatic event, to help reduce the intensity and duration of difficulties that children and staff can experience following a crisis event.
- Clear, positive communication will be part of the Procedure as this will act to reduce uncertainty and fear and prompt positive emotional and physical coping.
- All contact with the media will be through the Board of Trustees Chairperson.

**Formulated by:**

**Reviewed:**

**Approved by:** B.O.T. October 2011

**Chairperson:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

***This policy should be read in conjunction with the Special Character***