



Policy Name	Critical Incident & Emergency Policy
<b>Related Policies and Legislation</b>	Accident Policy & Procedure Anaphylaxis Management Policy & Procedure Catastrophic Weather Warning Policy & Procedure Child Protection Policy & Procedure Code of Conduct – Treetops Staff Emergency Evacuation Policy Evacuation Procedure First Aid Policy & Procedure Lockdown Policy Mandatory Reporting Policy & Procedure Occupational Health & Safety Policy Risk Management Policy & Procedure Risk Management Plan Terrorist & Bomb Threat Policy Emergency & Critical Incident Management Plan <i>School Education Act 1999 s.159(1)(i)</i> AISWA Guidelines: Emergency Management
<b>Policy Category</b>	Student Wellbeing & Safety Staff Wellbeing & Safety Planning & Management
<b>Relevant Audience</b>	All Treetops Community
<b>Date of Issue / Last Revision</b>	02 April 2012 23 March 2017 <b>13 August 2020</b>
<b>Date Set for Review</b>	<b>August 2023</b>
<b>Person/s Responsible for Review</b>	Treetops Administration

## Critical Incident & Emergency Policy

**Purpose:**

This policy is intended to provide a framework for the response to, and management of, critical incidents and/or emergency that may occur at Treetops Montessori School.

Under section 159(1)(i) of the School Education Act 1999, the school is required to have arrangements in place for the management, recording and reporting of critical and emergency incidents. The **Treetops Emergency & Critical Incident Management Plan** outlines these arrangements.

**Critical Incidents:**

A critical incident is an incident in which there is a high likelihood of traumatic effects or evoking unusual or unexpectedly strong emotional reactions, which have the potential to interfere with the ability of the individual, group or school to function either at the time or later.

Critical and emergency incidents which are foreseeable which, therefore, should be prepared for in policy and procedure will vary with each school's student cohort, location and other factors. Perhaps the majority of incidents will also be reportable incidents. Incidents which are not 'reportable incidents', but for which preparations should be made, include the sudden death of a student or staff member unconnected with the school premises or a school-related activity.

**Grooming:**

For the purpose of the definition of reportable incidents, grooming is the use of a variety of manipulative and controlling techniques with a vulnerable subject in order to establish trust or normalise sexually harmful behaviour with the overall aim of facilitating exploitation and/or avoiding exposure.

According to the *Guide to the Registration Standards and Other Requirements for Non-government schools 2020* a **Critical Incident or Emergency incident would include:**

- (1) The death of a student or staff member at school or during a school-related activity or following an incident at school or during school-related activity.
- (2) An incident involving injury, illness or trauma to a student or staff member at school or during a school-related activity requiring ambulance or hospital attendance. **Please note that this does not include ambulances called as a precautionary measure.**
- (3) An incident requiring a police or other emergency services response when a student appears to have been taken or removed, or goes missing and cannot be accounted for, from the school or from a school-related activity without proper authority.
- (4) An incident requiring the school to be locked down or to evacuate staff and students, or reduce the number of students or staff attending, or to close for any duration for health or safety reasons.
- (5) The receipt of a complaint or allegation of child abuse, including but not limited to sexual abuse, committed against a student –
  - (a) by a staff member or another student; or
  - (b) by another person on the school premises or during a school-related activity; whether the abuse is alleged to have occurred recently or in the past.
- (6) Issuing a formal warning to or ceasing the employment of a staff member for a breach of the Code of Conduct suspected to have involved grooming behaviour.

The *Guide to the Registration Standards and Other Requirements for Non-government schools* further requires that, in the event of a critical or emergency incident, the principal of the school is to **notify the Chair of the school's governing body and the Director General of the Department of Education** as soon as practicable and in any event, within **48 hours** of the incident's occurrence. Notification to the Director General is via the completion and submission of an online Reportable Incident Notification Form.

It is essential that the school maintains 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. It is also necessary to maintain a Critical Incident Register which would be viewed, by Independent School Reviewers, during the renewal of registration process.

## **Reporting of Critical and Emergency Incidents**

After an incident the school's governing body must be provided with a report, from the Principal.

The receipt of this report needs to be reflected in the governing body meeting minutes. If the report from the Principal concerns a reportable incident the governing body minutes must also include the date on which the Director General of the Department of Education was notified, the date the Chair of the governing body was notified and the date the school's principal was notified if they were absent during the incident.

It is recommended that the school maintains a Critical and Emergency Incidents Register that includes reportable incidents. A school may choose to have a separate register for recording reportable incidents only. One or both of these registers may be requested by an NGRS Reviewer during the renewal of registration process.

As described in the 2020 Guide to the Registration Standards, the school's Critical and Emergency Incident Policy should include Emergency Management Plans for reasonably foreseeable incidents. The school's response plan to these incidents is expected to be comprehensive in detailing how the school will respond in the event of the types of incidents that are reasonably foreseeable. These should be detailed in respect of the action to be taken in the event of an incident, the required follow-up to the incident, and how both the incident itself and the action taken are to be recorded. Please see section 6 over for suggested foreseeable incidents, this is not an exhaustive list and the school may wish to include other possible incidents, unique to its own circumstances, for which it needs to prepare.

A school should be able to evidence that it has undertaken, by self-audit or external review, regular review of the adequacy and performance of the school's critical and emergency incidents management policy and procedures.

### **Emergency Management:**

An emergency is an event, actual or imminent, which:

- Occurs on or off site;
- Endangers or threatens to endanger life, property or the environment; and
- Requires a significant and coordinated response.

The Australian Standard AS3745:2010 lists the types of emergencies and hazards that should be considered by an organisation's Emergency Management Policy and Emergency Management Plans, these include:

- Armed Hold-up
- Bomb Threat
- Building invasion/armed intrusion
- Bushfire
- Casualty or Sudden Death in the School community
- Chemical, biological or radiological spill
- Civil Disorder and Illegal Occupancy
- Cyclone/Flood
- Earthquake
- Evacuation Instructions
- Explosive threat
- Fire
- Hazardous substances incidents
- Letter bomb
- Severe weather/storm damage
- Structural instability
- Suspicious Item
- Terrorism

- Transport accident
- Toxic emission
- (For a school) The death of a student or teacher off campus

Other emergencies/circumstances, relevant to a school, could include:

- the death of a staff member or student
- serious injury or assault (or threat) of a staff member or student
- the disappearance of a student
- damage to the school premises
- cyber attack
- flood, storm or any other natural event
- outbreak of disease
- child abuse
- privacy breach under the Notifiable Data Breach scheme
- motor vehicle collision
- witnessing traumatic events,
- siege, hostage or use of firearms/weapons; and
- server malfunction resulting in damage to or loss of records

#### **Treetops Emergency & Critical Incident Management Plan (ECIMP):**

The ECIMP details the school's planned response to identified risks, critical incidents and emergency events that may occur.

- **Prevention**

The prevention component of the ECIMP is focused on clearly identifying the risks to which the school is exposed and putting in place physical and policy processes and procedures that will mitigate or prevent an emergency situation arising.

- **Preparedness**

The ECIMP has the school's overall strategy for responding to emergencies. In addition, there are specific responses for particular high-risk emergencies such as: bushfire, catastrophic weather, severe weather, lockdown etc.

- **Response**

The emergency response planning in the ECIMP is undertaken with the aim of achieving an effective response to emergency situations.

- **Recovery**

Once the emergency is over and it is declared safe, it is important that the normal running of the school recommences as soon as possible. It is important to note that the recovery stage may vary from a few hours to a few months depending on the circumstance and nature of the emergency situation.

- **Review**

The ECIMP will be reviewed on a regular basis and following any emergencies or critical incidents.