

AUSTRALIAN INSTITUTE OF MUSIC (AIM)  
MORE THAN JUST A MUSIC SECONDARY COLLEGE



## AIM Senior Secondary College

### CRITICAL INCIDENT POLICY

#### Purpose

This policy outlines AIM'S (the school) responsibilities in relation to a critical incident.

#### Relevant To

The Principal  
Head of School  
Chief Operating Officer

#### Reviewed By

The Principal

#### Modification History

Created August 2015

#### Review

The Policy is to be reviewed every three years or in the event of any information or incident that would warrant a review (including legislative or organisational change).

#### A Critical Incident Definition

A critical incident is defined as a traumatic event or threat of such which does, or is likely to cause extreme fear, physical and/or emotional distress or injury to staff and/or students and may be regarded as outside the normal range of experience of the people affected.

A critical incident may take place at school or outside school and either is to be treated equally.

#### Examples of a critical incident

Critical incidents of a general nature that students may be exposed to as part of the school

community may include but are not limited to:

- Bomb threat or explosion;
- Fire;
- Acts of terrorism;
- Death or serious injury to teaching staff and students;
- Natural disasters

Student centered critical incidents can include but are not limited to:

- Any non-direct fatality, near fatality or incident likely to seriously affect a number of staff and/or students;
- Suicide or attempted suicide;
- Diagnosis of a serious medical condition;

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- A student's mental health has become a concern (depression, self harm);
- Overdosing of prescribed medication or illicit drugs;
- Serious bullying or harassment;
- Pregnancy;
- Possession of illegal drugs;
- Addictive behaviour
- Criminal activity;
- Traffic accidents;
- Severe emotional trauma to family or friends;
- Sexual assault;
- Any incident involving a student reported by the police to the school;
- Assault or threats of violence;
- Significant theft or loss of personal property
- Trauma as a result of a natural disaster or event in an overseas student's home country.

**A critical incident may occur:**

- At school directly affecting the community at large.
- To members of the school, outside of school hours, affecting particular groups of the community (school bus accident on the way home, causing serious injury to a number of students).
- To friends/acquaintances of particular members of the community (the death of student in a neighboring school, known to some of our students)
- To friends/relatives of an overseas student in their home country.

**Critical Incident Plan -The event**

- Any critical incident must be reported to the Head of School.
- Issues of safety are paramount and must be immediately addressed (using school evacuation procedures where necessary, eg. Fire, Lockdown, Bomb Threat etc)
- Head of School needs to ascertain the facts, particularly when incidents occur away from the school property. They must be able to verify what was 'reported to have occurred'.

The Head of School may refer to specific sections of the Operations Manual in relation to Security at School, Bullying, Hazard reporting, Fire, accidents or serious emergencies.

Please remember that in the case of immediate threat to life or property, phone 000.

**Critical Incident Plan -The response**

The Principal is informed. The Principal and Head of School must meet to identify and follow up on the following:

1. Identify those involved in the incident
2. Check off and prioritize relevant tasks
3. Allocate responsibilities
4. Establish lines of communication
5. Ensure immediate tasks are undertaken and
6. Ensure secondary and follow-up tasks are undertaken
7. Ensure that documentation and recording of the actions taken occurs

**Critical Incident Plan -Communication**

- Staff are informed by the Head of School or Principal

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- The Principal reports to the Dean.
- The Student Wellbeing Officers are contacted by the Head of School or Principal.
- The Principal prepares for the Student, Parents and School Community being mindful of legal and privacy constraints.
- Siblings and close friends of the victims are told individually.
- The Principal informs the rest of the school if appropriate.
- ALL students and staff are informed of counselling and assistance available.
- Maintain a supportive, calm atmosphere, by maintaining normal procedures as far as possible.
- The Principal and Executive Dean plans the school's response to media, as required.

NB: Teachers need to be conscious of not taking on roles which are not appropriate. Staff are generally not trained counsellors, they have organised referral systems and structures in place to protect the integrity of individual staff members and the students.

**Critical Incident Plan - Follow Up**

- Ensure that 'outside professionals' are able to meet the needs of the school community.
- Inform parents of the event AND support available.
- Provide reading/support material to staff, students, families.
- Aim to get back to the 'normal routine', without a set time frame.
- Review all tasks undertaken.

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