



# Lockdown Policy

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## Related Policies

Student Welfare and Management Policy  
Code of Conduct Policy  
Child Protection Policy  
Evacuation Policy  
Critical Incidents Policy  
Playground Supervision Policy

## Purpose

St Thomas the Apostle is a faith community whose policies, practices and personal relationships reflect the teachings of Christ. Our school recognises the importance and dignity of all individuals by providing them with opportunities in their journey towards wholeness. St Thomas the Apostle Primary School recognises that societal forces can impact on a school in an immediate and potentially dangerous way. Some members of society seek to inflict harm on others, and schools are as potentially vulnerable to this possibility as any other body or institution.

St Thomas the Apostle Primary School recognises that an aspect of its duty of care includes a policy that details the steps to be taken should a situation warrant the lockdown of the school.

## Definitions

**Lockout** is a procedure which prevents unauthorised persons from entering the school and is commonly used when the threat is general or the incident is occurring off the school property. This procedure allows school activities to continue as normal during the outside disruption.

**Lockdown** is a procedure used when there is an immediate threat to the school. Lockdown minimises access to the school and secures staff and students in rooms. As part of this procedure, everyone must remain in the room until the situation has been declared safe by an authorised person such as the Principal.

**Designated Serious Incident Officer** is a member of the School Leadership Team. In most cases this is the Principal. If unavailable, it would be, the Assistant Principal, the Religious Education Coordinator or the Primary Coordinator.

**Code Lockdown** is where there is an immediate threat to the students and staff at the school. When Lockdown is required, staff and students are also required to move away from points that have limited access, such as doors and windows. Staff and students would be required to stay in more secluded areas of the school and to stay out of view. This code would be called for if the immediate threat involved a firearm or simply an estranged parent seeking unauthorised contact with a child.

### **Policy**

- St Thomas the Apostle Primary School holds the safety and welfare of community members within the school as a high priority.
- All students and staff have a right to feel safe when inside the school premises.
- It is the responsibility of the school to ensure an environment which is as safe as possible for all students, staff and visitors.

### **Procedures for Lockdown**

Emergency telephone number                      **000**  
In a less serious situation, ring Police Local Area Command,  
Tuggeranong Station                                      **6256 7777**

### **Lockdown Locations**

**Hall** classes remain where they are. Secure all external doors, and internal smoke doors. Close all windows and curtains and move away from glass windows and doors to central hall area. In Code Lockdown, ensure all personnel are on the stage. In the event of a school assembly, the school stays in the hall.

**Library** classes remain where they are. Secure all external doors. Close all windows and blinds and move away from glass windows and doors to teacher's resource area. In Code Lockdown, sit/crouch down below window height.

**Primary classes & Infants classes** (including Music, Indonesian and Chess classes): Stay in own room and teachers to close all sliding doors, close all windows and shut all blinds. Teachers closest to break out doors ensure all external doors are locked.

Double check with teachers on either side and advise office immediately on 100 or 101 if a class is missing from classroom, by using the phone from the break-out area Infants Block or from the Primary Blocks.

**Front office staff** remain in area: Front office staff to Secure all entry from front door, staffroom and external access to block.

**Canteen** Stay in canteen. Lock door and draw shutters.

**Learning Support** Teacher Assistants to remain with current class at time of lockdown.

**Portables** Close and lock external doors. Ensure all windows are closed and locked. Close and draw blinds.

**Toilets** children in toilets are to leave the toilets and go to the nearest available classroom. The classroom teacher will inform front office via phone of children arriving from toilet. The front office will inform home teacher (via PA) of children from toilet.

**Oval** All classes on the oval are to proceed to the Church. In the event the Church is locked, the classes are to proceed to the Presbytery. In the event the presbytery is locked, the classes are to proceed to the classrooms that border the blacktop.

**Missing children** all class teachers are to report missing children to the front office via the nearest class phone. If the children do not return from the toilet to the nearest classroom, the Designated Serious Incident officer will look for the children.

**The school Janitor** is to stay in the classroom he is in when a Code is called. If he is out of a safe area, he is to move immediately to the nearest safe, secluded area.

### **Principal (or Designated Serious Incident Officer)**

- Check emergency
- Ring 101 or 100 to tell bursar or school secretary to sound alarm.
- Contact emergency authorities.
- Monitors all access to school via front entrance, and if safe to do so, waits outside main entrance for emergency personnel.
- Provides emergency personnel on arrival floor plan of school and locations of staff and students in Code Lockdown.

### **Ancillary Staff**

- Ring police / fire brigade.
- Principal or school secretary to sound alarm (continuous chimes for at least 10 chimes).

Advise staff over PA: **“This is a lockdown. Secure all areas. Lock all doors and windows. Close all blinds. This is a Code Lockdown. (Advise all staff and students to sit/crouch down below window height, and stay away from all windows and doors).**

**Teachers are to take the roll and advise the office immediately of any missing students. Please wait for further advice.”**

- Close doors and windows to staff room and front Admin area.
- Lock access to staffroom. Remain in Admin Office.
- Wait for class teachers to advise office if classes are missing from Block areas. Double check class timetables and LOTE/Music, Library timetables. If class location is unknown, advise Stage Coordinator to hand class over to nearest teacher and locate class and advise them to proceed to nearest lockdown location. When advised situation is now safe, give three chimes and advise staff over PA: **ALL CLEAR.**

### **School Personnel**

Proceed with class to lockdown area (classroom) taking class roll and mobile phone if possible. Lock all doors and windows in classrooms and lockdown area.

After checking rolls, School leadership Team staff or nominated teachers leave the lockdown area to locate missing students, for example, students who have gone to the toilet.

### **Coordinator**

Coordinator to check all classes on oval, advise of lockdown if PA announcement has been missed.

Double check to ensure all doors and windows in corridors have been locked by teachers on either end of corridor.

## **Duration**

If the lockdown lasts for an extended period of time or extends beyond normal school hours, the principal or designated serious incident co-coordinator should notify parents via local media and with the assistance of police.

In the event of long duration, teachers will make appropriate judgements regarding the possibility of toilet visitation. Should teachers decide that is safe to visit a toilet, a teacher will accompany a student to the closest possible toilet. If available, the student/s will have his/her head covered.

In conjunction with local police, the Principal or designated serious incident co-coordinator should arrange for parents to pick students up from school in a designated safe area. The Police and Principal (or designated Serious Incident Officer) will greet the parents. The Police will keep the media away from the pick-up area.

In the event of a lockdown being called, the Designated Serious Incident Officer will place a sign on the entrance of the school indicating that a Lockdown is in place. Parents will be asked to stay in the car park until further notice.

In the event of a Lockdown taking place during pickup time, the Designated Serious Incident Officer will use his/her judgment in assessing the safety of the situation, with the view to venturing outside to inform the parent of the status of the situation.

In the event that the Designated Serious Incident Officer is unable to leave the school, a CEO Representative will inform the parents of the situation and its progress (see 3.17b).

## **Parents**

In the event of a lockdown taking place, a sign will be placed on the entrance of the door informing parents that a Lockdown is in progress and as such parents will be unable to collect their children until the cessation of the Lockdown. The Designated Serious Incident Officer will take all reasonable measures possible to keep parents informed of events.

If the Serious Incident Officer deems it prudent, he/she will leave the school premises to update parents on situation if the Lockdown is taking place during pickup time.

## **Media**

The Principal only, on advice from the Catholic Education Office and emergency personnel, is the only staff member who may deal with media inquiries.

## **Follow up (see also Critical Incidents Policy)**

- Principal is told or confirms the facts about the incident.
- Principal calls meeting of School Leadership Team and school crisis team.
- Principal and Assistant Principal prepare a statement for use with media, staff and parents. (input from counselor may be useful)

Emergency procedures are started

- Director of CEO is informed
  - Principal calls meeting of whole staff (including all ancillary staff)
  - Pupils and teachers meet
  - Crisis Team meets with representatives of Community Support Agencies
- The Library is designated as the location for "affected" children**

Staff are relieved if required. Selected staff rostered for support duty. Playground duty roster is strengthened. Affected pupils are directed to Crisis Team members  
Arrangements made for pupils needing to go home.  
Primary Coordinator/REC take note of all affected pupils who may require additional support.

At the end of Day 1

- Debriefing opportunity available to all staff.
- School Leadership Team and Crisis Team meet to plan longer term procedures.
- Counselling and information made available after normal school hours.

### **Meetings to be arranged (as per Critical Incidents Policy)**

Meeting of **School leadership Team and Crisis Team** members as soon as possible after the incident occurs - Principal or Assistant Principal to chair

Aims:

- To provide factual information.
- To prepare and distribute a statement to be read by Primary Coordinator/REC.
- To confirm management plan.

Meeting with **staff** - Principal to chair - Primary Coordinator/REC to supervise pupils

Aims:

- To provide factual information.
- To suggest methods of handling problems arising in class.
- To inform of any changes to school routine.
- To assess staff capacity to cope.

Meeting with **pupils** - class teachers in charge

Aims:

- To provide factual information.
- To direct affected pupils to available Crisis Team staff.
- To monitor pupils' behaviour.

Meeting between **Crisis Team and Community Support representatives** – Crisis Team Chairperson to chair

Aims:

- To agree on Community Health role.
- To arrange intervention procedure.
- To decide if school closure is required.

## **Counselling**

CatholicCare counsellors offer Archdiocesan school communities support and advice when dealing with critical incidents. Advice can be obtained when liaising with staff, children and parents. In addition, ***What To Expect After A Traumatic Event*** brochures for staff and students may be distributed.

CatholicCare can provide counselling advice and support for all community members.

CatholicCare Counselling **61626100**

CatholicCare Office for the Archdiocese of Canberra and Goulburn **6295 4300**

CatholicCare Head Office **6162 6100**

### **Teachers, when talking to their classes, need to:**

- Be calm when discussing the matter with their class. Take the time to become calm or seek assistance from a colleague or counsellor to address the class.
- Be concise, clear and direct with the children.
- Reassure the children. This may include reassurances that people are safe and well, and that professionals are handling the matter.
- Give correct information, which is age appropriate.
- Children need to see that adults are OKAY. Even if you don't feel okay, reassure them that you are.
- Inform the children that lockdown was a necessary procedure for a school.
- Reiterate these points today, and again tomorrow.
- Tell the children to talk it over with their family.
- You may need to repeatedly reassure your classes over the next few days.
- Teachers need to make sure that they are okay and supporting one another and seek support from loved ones.
- Teachers are to seek support for themselves, their classes and others in the community if there is a perceived need for further support and advice.

## **Practice**

Include all Evacuation/Lockdown procedures in staff orientation, including the use of emergency equipment

Evacuation and Lockdown drills will be held every semester.

Revise Evacuation / Lockdown procedures and use of emergency equipment with all staff at least once during each year.

## References

DET Serious Incident Policy

<http://www.truscottstp.schools.nsw.edu.au/Policies/SchoolOrganisation/Evacuation%20Policy%202005.doc>

CatholicCare, Helen Taylor, 6162 6100, <http://www.centacare-canberra.org>

## Forms

What To Expect After a Traumatic Event *for Teachers*

What To Expect After a Traumatic Event *for Parents*

Letter to Parents Proforma

<b>Approved by:</b>	Principal
<b>Issuing Group:</b>	St. Thomas the Apostle Primary School
<b>Implementation Date:</b>	January 2008
<b>Supersedes Policy Dated:</b>	Nil
<b>Policy Last Updated:</b>	2013
<b>Review Date:</b>	2014

## WHAT TO EXPECT AFTER A TRAUMATIC EVENT

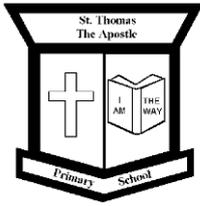
HOW TEACHERS CAN HELP	NORMAL FEELINGS AND EMOTIONS EXPERIENCED	WHAT TO EXPECT AFTER A TRAUMATIC EVENT FOR TEACHERS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Give yourselves time to come to terms with the event before attempting to reassure the children.</b></li> <li>• <b>Don't rush back to ordinary school routines too soon. Give the children time to talk and express their feelings.</b></li> <li>• <b>Children mirror adults, show them calmness.</b></li> <li>• <b>Reassure them and help them feel safe.</b></li> <li>• <b>Be available and open for questions.</b></li> <li>• <b>Help children use creative outlets like art and music to express their feelings.</b></li> <li>• <b>Respect the preferences of children who do not want to participate in class discussions</b></li> </ul> <p>Most children and adolescents, if given support such as that described above, will recover almost completely from the fear and anxiety caused by a traumatic experience within a few weeks.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>SHOCK AND DISBELIEF</b>, the event seems unreal, like a film or dream.</li> <li>• <b>NUMBNESS</b>, your emotions are cut off, there is emptiness.</li> <li>• <b>HELPLESSNESS</b>, feeling that you couldn't change things or stop the event.</li> <li>• <b>FEAR</b>, of death or harm to yourself and those you love, of being left alone, of 'breaking down' or 'losing control,' of a similar event happening again.</li> <li>• <b>SADNESS</b> for the hurt and losses</li> <li>• <b>GUILT</b> for having survived or being better off than others, regret for things not done.</li> <li>• <b>EUPHORIA</b> at having survived, feeling high, excited, close to everyone</li> <li>• <b>ANGER</b> at what has happened, the injustice, and at having been subjected to the event</li> </ul> <p>* You may experience a range of these feelings over time.</p>	<div style="text-align: center;">  </div> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>FOR TEACHERS</b></p> <p>Traumatic events often leave people with a range of feelings. This booklet will help you know how adults and children have reacted in similar situations and how you can help normal healing occur and avoid some pitfalls.</p>

GENERAL REACTIONS UP TO 6 YEARS OF AGE	GENERAL REACTIONS 6-11 YEARS OF AGE	GENERAL REACTIONS 11-18 YEARS OF AGE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Repeated retelling of event</li> <li>• Behavioural, mood and personality changes</li> <li>• Obvious anxiety and fearfulness</li> <li>• Withdrawal</li> <li>• Involvement in trauma related play</li> <li>• Separation anxiety</li> <li>• Sleep disturbances</li> <li>• Complaints about bodily aches, pains or illness.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• May experience same as those up to 6 years of age.</li> <li>• Flashbacks</li> <li>• Distractible behaviour</li> <li>• Lowering of school performance</li> <li>• Concern about personal responsibility</li> <li>• Acute awareness of parental reactions</li> <li>• Wish to protect parents from their own distress</li> <li>• Frightened by intensity of own feelings</li> <li>• Vulnerable to anniversary reactions.</li> </ul>	<p>May experience responses similar to adults including flashbacks, nightmares, emotional numbing, avoidance of reminders, substance abuse, problems with peers, and antisocial behaviours.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Risk taking</li> <li>• Acting-out or flight into driven activity</li> <li>• Withdrawal from others</li> <li>• Action-oriented responses, wish for revenge</li> <li>• Increased self focusing</li> <li>• Sleep and eating disturbances</li> <li>• Pessimistic world view</li> <li>• Fear of growing up.</li> </ul>

## WHAT TO EXPECT AFTER A TRAUMATIC EVENT

HOW PARENTS CAN HELP	NORMAL FEELINGS AND EMOTIONS EXPERIENCED	WHAT TO EXPECT AFTER A TRAUMATIC EVENT FOR PARENTS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Encourage the child to talk about his/her experiences during and after the traumatic event. Older children especially may find this helpful.</b></li> <li>• <b>Do not try to stop the child’s “babyish” behaviours as this may make their anxieties worse. Extra care and reassurance will be needed for a while. Normal behaviour should return once the child starts to feel safe again.</b></li> <li>• <b>Give the child as much information as possible, in a way appropriate to their age. Answer questions as honestly as you can, while giving reassurance.</b></li> <li>• <b>Try to keep routines as predictable and normal as possible.</b></li> <li>• <b>Keep separations from you to a minimum.</b></li> <li>• <b>When the child returns to school, anxieties may be raised as they hear about experiences</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>SHOCK AND DISBELIEF</b>, the event seems unreal, like a film or dream.</li> <li>• <b>NUMBNESS</b>, your emotions are cut off, there is emptiness.</li> <li>• <b>HELPLESSNESS</b>, feeling that you couldn’t change things or stop the event.</li> <li>• <b>FEAR</b>, of death or harm to yourself and those you love, of being left alone, of ‘breaking down’ or ‘losing control,’ of a similar event happening again.</li> <li>• <b>SADNESS</b> for the hurt and losses</li> <li>• <b>GUILT</b> for having survived or being better off than others, regret for things not done.</li> <li>• <b>EUPHORIA</b> at having survived, feeling high, excited, close to everyone</li> <li>• <b>ANGER</b> at what has happened, the injustice, and at having been subjected to the event</li> </ul> <p>* You may experience a range of these feelings over time.</p>	<div style="text-align: center;">  <p><b>FOR PARENTS</b></p> <p>Traumatic events often leave people with a range of feelings. This booklet will help you know how adults and children have reacted in similar situations and how you can help normal healing occur and avoid some pitfalls.</p> </div>

<p><b>of other children. Consult the teacher about any particular concerns.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Look after yourself and have enough support for yourself.</b></li> </ul> <p>Most children and adolescents, if given support such as that described above, will recover almost completely from the fear and anxiety caused by a traumatic experience within a few weeks.</p>		
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## St Thomas the Apostle Primary School

Boddington Crescent Kambah, ACT 2902

Phone: (02) 6231 4144

Fax: (02) 6296 2621

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***INSERT DATE***

Dear Parents

Today we had an incident at our school involving ***INSERT CONCISE CLEAR AND DIRECT RECOUNT INFORMATION***

The school responded quickly by implementing a lockdown to ensure the safety of the children. The police were called immediately.

As a school community we can be satisfied that the matter was handled expeditiously and the safety of all was maintained throughout.

A number of children may experience anxiety or shock. Please be aware that each person experiences and copes with such incidents in different ways. We are able to access Centacare Student and Family Counselling should this be needed. Please advise us should you have any concerns about your child.

Yours sincerely

David Thiele  
Principal