



The Armidale Waldorf School
and Boongaiai Preschool
FOR RUDOLF STEINER EDUCATION

Serious Incident and Emergency Policy

The Armidale Waldorf School recognises the impact that a serious incident or emergency can have and is committed to acting with concern and compassion, to minimise the risk of harm and the impact on all involved. The Armidale Waldorf School is committed to providing a safe and secure environment for the welfare of students.

The procedures in this policy outline how the school is going to respond, manage and report on a serious incident or emergency. The process deals with the physical and emotional welfare of the students, staff and community both over the short term and long term.

The School recognises that each situation is unique and that careful consideration needs to be given to how and at what level the school's Serious Incident and Emergency Procedures may need to be implemented.

Serious Incidents and Emergencies can take a variety of forms however can be described as an event which: (a) causes disruption to a school, or (b) creates significant danger or risk that could traumatically affect individuals within the school, or (c) impacts on the effective operation of the school.

Procedures

The following procedures identify the process of responding, managing and reporting on a Serious Incident or Emergency over the short and long term.

Issues of safety are paramount and must be immediately addressed (using school emergency procedures where necessary, eg. Evacuation, Lockdown and Lockout Procedures)

In the event of a serious incident or emergency a team will be made up of the following people; Business Manager, Education Director and the Chair of the Board and they will function as the Serious Incident Team. This team will be responsible for responding, managing (short and long term) and reporting a serious incident or emergency.

Students and staff are informed of these procedures annually at the beginning of the year by the Business Manager using the school emergency procedures of Evacuation, Lockdown and Lockout. These procedures are also practiced by the students regularly and this will be organised by the Business Manager. Parents and carers will be informed via the Parent Handbook which is distributed to parents each year and available on the school website.

The Serious Incident or Emergency

In the event of a serious incident or emergency

- The event must be reported immediately to the Business Manager or Education Director.
- The Business Manager or Education Director needs to ascertain the facts and determine whether emergency services need to be called.
- Business Manager/Education Director/ Authorised Delegate / Emergency Personnel (eg Fire Warden) will contact the relevant Emergency Services and one of these people will be available onsite to assist Emergency Services.
- The Business Manager or Education Director will contact the Serious Incident Team and also advise other staff members onsite of what will be done
- Contact details of Emergency Services are displayed near each phone in the school office by the Business Manager.

Responding to a Serious Incident or Emergency

Appropriate steps to be taken are planned by the Serious Incident Team and delegated as necessary.

- Maintain a supportive, calm atmosphere by maintaining normal procedures as far as possible and keep people informed
- Identify those involved in the incident
- Check off and prioritise relevant tasks
- Allocate responsibilities
- Establish lines of communication
- Ensure immediate tasks are undertaken
- Ensure secondary and follow-up tasks are undertaken
- Ensure that documentation and recording of the actions taken occurs
- Teachers and staff are to follow directions and need to be conscious of not taking on roles which are not appropriate or have not been assigned to them.
- Only the Business Manager or Education Director will speak to the media.

Managing a Serious Incident or Emergency

Short term

- Business Manager to debrief the Serious Incident Team and staff involved
- Inform parents and carers of the victim of the event if necessary
- The Business Manager informs the Chair of the Board
- All other Staff are informed by the Business Manager or Education Director
- Business Manager informs school office staff with information necessary to contain the situation, for example directing media calls to the Business Manager or Education Director
- Siblings and close friends of the victims are told individually.
- The Education Director, Business Manager or the Chair of the Board informs the rest of the school and parents/carers if appropriate.
- The Business Manager/Education Director plans the school's response to media, as required.

Long term

- The Business Manager contacts organisations and individuals for additional assistance if required.
- ALL students/staff are informed of counselling and assistance available in order to support student/staff welfare
(It is most important to inform ALL students of this assistance, as we cannot be certain of the social links that exist. For example, a tragic incident occurring to a Class 6 student, may have a large impact on a Class 3 student who is a family friend of the victim).
- Aim to get back to the 'normal routine', **without** a set time frame.
- Provide reading/support material to staff, students and families
- The Serious Incident Team will continue to offer ongoing support as necessary

REPORTING

The accurate recording of all documentation relating to responding and managing the event will be recorded and is essential to organisational learning surrounding serious incidents. Organisation learning provides direction for the future and may assist to prevent possible future serious incidents. The Serious Incident Team and staff will review tasks undertaken during the situation and make any necessary changes to the Policy and procedures.

Documentation of serious incidents and emergencies is required at the identification of the serious incident, during the serious incident and when the matter has been finalised.

Documentation is best done as soon as possible after an incident has occurred.

RECORDING

When the serious incident has been finalised the school's Serious Incident and Emergency Register must be updated by the Business Manager and filed in the *Registers Folder* with all information collected during the management of the incident. A formal report on all serious incidents must be made to the School Board.