



# Critical Incident Policy

<b>Status:</b>	Current	<b>Supersedes:</b> All previous Rockhampton Girls Grammar School policies
<b>Authorised by:</b>	Board	<b>Date of Authorisation:</b> May 2024
<b>References:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• RGGS-073-POL-WORK HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY</li><li>• RGGS-071-PRO-EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT PROCEDURE</li><li>• RGGS-058-POL-CHILD PROTECTION POLICY</li><li>• RGGS-079-POL-MEDIA POLICY</li><li>• RGGS-061-POL-CODE OF BEHAVIOUR (STUDENTS)</li></ul>	
<b>Review Date:</b>	This policy will be reviewed every 2 years, or as appropriate, to take account of new legislation or changes to school's operations and practices and to make sure it remains appropriate to the changing environment.	<b>Next Review Date:</b> May 2026
<b>Policy Owner:</b>	Board of Trustees of Rockhampton Girls Grammar School trading as Rockhampton Girls Grammar School CRICOS Provider No: 00508E	<b>Access:</b> All Staff - Policies Procedures and Forms\BOARD RELATED DOCUMENTS\POLICIES AND PROCEDURES



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## 1. PURPOSE OF THE POLICY

Rockhampton Girls Grammar School recognises the duty of care owed to its students and that planning for the management of a critical incident is essential. This policy provides a general overview of Rockhampton Girls Grammar School's approach to critical incidents. Policies will be written for specific critical incidents including the COVID-19 pandemic that arose in 2020.

## 2. SCOPE

Rockhampton Girls Grammar School recognises its responsibilities to ensure that systems and processes are in place that, as far as practicable, will create a safe working environment for its staff, students and visitors to the school. It is therefore contingent that all staff, whether general or academic, who are employed by the school, are aware of their duty of care to students and others and of their responsibility to equip themselves with basic skills which will assist them in times of critical incident.

A critical incident is a traumatic event, or the threat of such (within or outside Australia) which causes extreme stress, fear or injury. This may include but is not limited to:

- serious injury, illness or death of a student or staff
- an outbreak of disease that may spread through one or several communities.
- students or staff lost or injured on an excursion
- a missing student
- severe verbal or psychological aggression
- physical assault
- student or staff witnessing a serious accident or incident of violence
- natural disaster e.g. earthquake, flood, windstorm, hailstorm or extremes of temperature
- fire, bomb threat, explosion, gas or chemical hazard
- social issues e.g. drug use, sexual assault.

## 3. CRITICAL INCIDENT COMMITTEE

Rockhampton Girls Grammar School has a Critical Incident Committee to assist the Principal in the prevention and management of critical incidents at the school, or off campus in the case of an international student for whom the school has undertaken care responsibilities.

The Principal is the critical incident team leader.

The Critical Incident Committee may also include:

- the Executive
- staff members according to the *Rockhampton Girls Grammar School Emergency Management Procedure (RGGS-070-PRO)*.

The responsibilities of the committee include:

- risk assessment of hazards and situations which may require emergency action
- analysis of requirements to address hazards
- establishment of liaison with all relevant emergency services e.g. police, fire brigade, ambulance, hospital, poisons information centre, community health services
- 24-hour access to contact details for all students and their families (for international students this will also include carers, consular staff, embassies and interpreting services if necessary)
- 24-hour access to contact details for all relevant staff members needed in the event of a critical incident e.g. school counsellor, welfare officer, legal services, school security
- development of a critical incident plan for each critical incident identified
- notification of school closure processes (if required)
- dissemination of planned procedures
- organisation of practice drills
- regular review of the critical incident plan
- assistance with implementation of the critical incident plan
- appropriate staff development
- budget allocation for emergencies.



## 4. CRITICAL INCIDENT PLANS

All critical incident plans assign responsibilities among relevant staff members, cover all the actions to be taken and suggest timelines for doing so.

### 4.1. Immediate Action (within 24 hours)

- Identify the nature of the critical incident
- Notify and gather together the Critical Incident Committee
- Principal to notify the Board Chair of the Incident
- Determine and implement the appropriate management plan or action strategy
- Follow ISQ's school closure processes (if required), including notifying the Department of Education Emergency and School Security Unit [ged-emergency@id.ngcomms.net](mailto:ged-emergency@id.ngcomms.net) the following information:
  - School Name
  - School Address
  - School Closure Date
  - Reason for Closure
  - Name of Authorised Person

This information will be displayed on their website <https://closures.det.qld.gov.au> ISQ should be copied into the email so they can offer assistance if needed.

- Assign duties and resources to school staff
- Seek advice and help from any necessary emergency services/hospital/medical services
- Disseminate information to parents and family members
- Complete a critical incident report
- Notify current insurance provider and provide them with a copy of the critical incident report
- Provide media response if required (see below)
- Assess the need for support and/or counselling for those directly and indirectly involved
- Notify the Office of Industrial Relations within 24 hours of the critical incident occurring.
- Notify Workplace Health and Safety Queensland or the Electrical Safety officer if the incident involved a work related death, injury or illness.
- If applicable, notify WorkCover of the critical incident if the incident resulted in injury or illness.

### 4.2. Additional Action (48 – 72 hours or longer, depending on the critical incident)

- Assess the need for support and counselling for those directly and indirectly involved (ongoing)
- Provide staff and students with factual information as appropriate
- Restore normal functioning and school delivery including, if the school closed for a period of time, notifying the Department of Education Emergency and School Security that the school has re-opened.
- Identify any other people who may be affected by critical incident and access of support services for affected community members
- Maintain contact with any injured/affected parties
- Provide accurate information to staff and students where appropriate
- Evaluate critical incident management
- Be aware of any possible longer-term disturbances e.g. inquests, legal proceedings.

## 5. RESOURCES

The nature of critical incidents is such that resources cannot always be provided in anticipation of events. The Critical Incident Committee uses its discretion to provide adequate resources – both physical and personnel – to meet the needs of specific situations. Staff will be reimbursed for any out-of-pocket expenses.



## 6. MANAGING THE MEDIA

The Principal should normally handle all initial media calls but may delegate media liaison to another member of staff. The media liaison person should:

- manage access of the media to the scene, and to staff, students and relatives
- determine what the official school response will be
- check all facts before speaking to the media
- explain that questions cannot be answered at this time if accurate information is unavailable or the issue is of a sensitive nature
- avoid implying blame or fault for any part of the incident as this can have significant legal implications.

Should the media approach a staff member regarding the critical incident, the staff member should not comment but advise the media to contact the Principal or the school's nominated media liaison representative.

Should the Principal delegate media liaison to another member of the Executive, if possible, they should refer to Rockhampton Girls Grammar School's Media Policy before speaking to the media.

## 7. EVALUATION AND REVIEW OF MANAGEMENT PLAN

After every critical incident, a meeting of the Critical Incident Committee will be held to evaluate the Critical Incident Report and the effectiveness of the management plan and to make modifications if required. If appropriate this process will incorporate feedback from all staff, students and local community representatives.