Your Place

MANAGING AND REPORTING (including emergencies) PROCEDURES

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Responsible Person: EO	**Approved by EO on:** 18-02-2022

Overview

These Procedures for Managing and Reporting School Incidents support HPCH to implement the key actions they are required to take to manage emergencies and other incidents.

These Procedures also provide information on reporting to the regulators (i.e. ASEQA) and action required for reporting and responding to notifiable incidents to WorkSafe.

When faced with an emergency or other incident, HPCH, staff, volunteers, contractors and members must follow the 6 incident management stages:

1. Identifying incident and immediate response
2. Reporting an incident (Report for Support)
3. Ongoing support and recovery
4. Investigation
5. Incident review and closure
6. Analyse and learn.

Meaning of incident

Under these Guidelines an 'incident' is any actual or alleged event or situation that:

- causes harm, or creates a risk of causing harm to a student's health, safety or wellbeing either directly or indirectly while under the care or supervision of the school, including international students
- impacts a student's health, safety or wellbeing and is brought to the attention of the school, regardless of when or where it occurred, provided it is impacting on the student or other students within the school setting
- causes harm, or creates a risk of causing harm to an employee's health, safety or wellbeing either directly or indirectly in the work setting
- affects or risks affecting the continuity of school operations, including matters of security (including cyber security), property damage and emergencies
- requires police notification or involves matters of serious conduct
- is a WorkSafe notifiable incident (serious incident or dangerous occurrence).

Roles and responsibilities

Domain Area Managers (and/or Responsible people) are responsible for the initial incident severity rating and reporting, with support from the. This responsibility can be delegated to responsible staff at the EO's discretion. It is recommended that the list of delegates include at least one staff member outside the HPCH leadership team.

Where an incident is rated as either Extreme or High, the Executive Officer and the HPCH Board of Governance will also have governance and oversight of incident management, particularly in relation to reviewing the categorisation of the incident and coordinating supports. The nature of this responsibility will vary depending on the severity of incident and the level of support required by the Domain Manager.

Step 1 – Identifying incident and immediate response

Identification is when an incident is observed by or disclosed to a Domain Area Manager at any location. This can include disclosure by a child, staff member, family member or other person, to the HPCH.

The following outlines immediate actions that should be undertaken by the school after an incident has been brought to the attention of the school.

Ensure safety

- Assess the safety of the situation
- Remove the students and staff from any source of danger
- Administer first aid and/or seek medical attention
- If necessary, contact emergency services on 000 and enact the HPCH emergency management plan
- If a staff member or another student is accused or suspected of harming a student, separate them from immediate contact with the alleged victim
- Provide support to any student or staff witnesses, refer to the Resources tab for further guidance and resources on supporting students and staff following an incident, such as the Managing trauma guide and the Recovery tools form

Record evidence

Preserve and make a record of any physical or documentary evidence
In cases of alleged criminal conduct, including child or sexual abuse, follow instructions on evidence preservation from Victoria Police, whenever instructions are given
If multiple students have witnessed alleged criminal conduct, separate them to preserve the integrity of their evidence until they are interviewed
Contact relevant parties

- For incidents not involving child abuse or student sexual offending contact parents/carers to provide information regarding the incident, unless doing so would place the safety, health or wellbeing of the child at risk
- For incidents involving child abuse or sexual offending, follow the 4 actions under PROTECT identifying and responding to all forms of abuse in Victorian schools
- Notifiable incidents to WorkSafe
- For incidents that are notifiable incidents to WorkSafe, the site must be preserved, except where there is an immediate need to protect the health and safety of persons, provide first aid to any injured persons or to take essential action to make the site safe.

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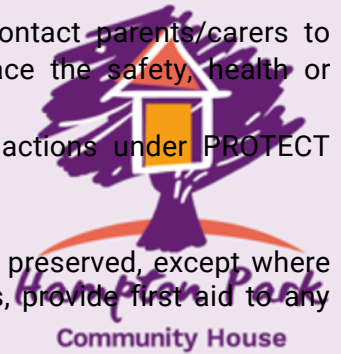
Step 2 – Reporting an incident (Report for Support)

Following notification to 000 (if required), the EO or delegate must undertake an initial severity rating of the incident to determine the applicable reporting requirements.

Rating an incident and corresponding reporting requirements

Managers must use their professional judgement to undertake an initial severity rating of the incident based on impact on student or staff health, safety and wellbeing or on continuity of HPCH operations. Includes should be rated as either:

- Extreme
- High
- Medium
- Low.

The severity rating guides reporting requirements, governance arrangements, and guides the level of additional support provided.

Refer to the Severity rating decision-making matrix (PDF) for guidance on severity rating of incidents.

The Board of Governance can assist the EO or delegate to determine the appropriate severity rating if required. While the severity rating influences the support provided, the EO can request additional support regardless of the rating. This acknowledges that multiple lower order incidents may necessitate support to manage the cumulative impact of incidents on the health and wellbeing of students, staff and the HPCH community.

Note: Manager must carefully consider the local context when assessing the severity rating, such as incident pattern or history, and individual characteristics. These could include a child or clients possible vulnerability (such as age, culture, gender, history of trauma, physical/mental capacity, balance of power between involved parties and relevant medical history).

As an incident is managed, the circumstances may change, resulting in a need to re-rate the severity of incident. While the Manager is responsible for undertaking the initial incident severity rating, an incident severity rating must be updated by the responsible person to reflect any new material facts that come to light. The responsible person will be the staff member leading the incident response, which will either be the Manager principal, EO or BoG, depending on the severity rating.

Incidents for which an 'Extreme' severity rating should be considered include:

- the death or permanent disability of current student or staff that occur in the school environment

incidents that occur that involve:

- a sexual offence or grooming for sexual conduct with a child under 16 years of age (offences under the Crimes Act 1958)
- the infliction of serious physical violence, serious psychological harm
- serious neglect of a child
- serious misconduct of school staff that occurs in the school environment and impacts a current student.

Note: Any incident involving child abuse, including allegations, that does not occur on-site environment must also be rated by the Manager using the Severity rating decision-making matrix (PDF).

Note: HPCH environment means any physical or virtual place made available or authorised by the Hampton Park Care Group Inc. (excursions and so on).

Reporting the incident

When it is safe to do so, the Manager or delegate must report the incident.

The reporting requirements and timelines for the 4 severity ratings are as follows:

'Extreme' requires the school to report immediately EO or Person with Management and Control on the day by calling 0407482315 (within the hour)

'High' requires the school to report to EO as soon as possible (within 3 hours)

'Medium' requires the school to report in staff portal as soon as possible (within 1 working day)

'Low' requires the school to report in staff portal (within 3 working days).

On receipt of a report for an incident rated 'High' and 'Extreme', the EO will notify the Board of Governance. Prompt notification of incidents rated 'High' and 'Extreme' enables HPCH EMC to:

facilitate the provision of relevant place-based and central supports, including those to aid recovery

provide security related support and advice which helps to resolve emergencies and incidents quickly while minimising the risk to personal safety.

Depending on the nature of the incident, there may also be other reporting requirements. The BoG can provide the EO (or delegate) with advice on which obligations apply. Other reporting obligations may arise due to changes in legislation or expectations, so the following list should not be considered exhaustive. The EO, Manager (or delegate) must report the following to other agencies:

• obligations under Child Safe Standards. Refer to: Protecting Children — Reporting and Other Legal Obligations

• alleged criminal acts (including allegations of child abuse). Refer to: Police – Department Protocol on Reporting Criminal Activity

• Employee Reportable Conduct Scheme. Refer to: Reportable Conduct

• WorkSafe notifiable incidents (refer below).

WorkSafe notifiable incidents

The Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004 (OHS Act) requires notification to WorkSafe of serious workplace incidents, referred to as 'notifiable incidents'. Refer to the Guidance tab of the Employee Health, Safety and Wellbeing policy for a definition of 'notifiable incident'.

The principal or their delegate must contact WorkSafe on telephone 132 360 to report notifiable incidents immediately after becoming aware that an incident has occurred and to provide WorkSafe with completed incident notification form within 48 hours. WorkSafe Victoria will provide a reference number on notification and will advise whether the incident site is to be isolated/preserved until an inspector arrives

The OHS Act also requires preservation of the incident site until an inspector arrives or issues a direction, except where there is an immediate need to protect the health and safety of persons, provide first aid to any injured persons or to take essential action to make the site safe subject to some exceptions.

The following minimum protocol should be adhered to in order to protect the notifiable incident scene:

•   Establish a perimeter to protect the scene, for example, temporary barriers

•   Evacuate non-involved persons

•   Prevent unauthorised persons from entering the perimeter or contaminating any evidence

•   Prevent any damage or further damage

For further directions on incident site preservation speak to the WorkSafe inspector when the call is reported to WorkSafe.
Refer to Notifiable incidents to WorkSafe flowchart

Examples of High and Extreme severity rating incidents that are reportable
Examples of incidents that impact or risk impacting on the health, safety and wellbeing of children, volunteers, contractors, community members or staff

- Death or suicide of a child, staff member, contractor, volunteer, client or member of the HPCH community
- Self-harm/injury or threats of suicide
- Injuries requiring treatment by a doctor, transport by ambulance or hospitalisation
- Concerning mental health and traumatic incidents requiring peer, professional or clinical support
- Incidents that did not lead to injury or death but very nearly did
- Abuse or risk of abuse or neglect including online child abuse (mandatory reporting obligations may also apply — refer to Protecting Children – Reporting and Other Legal Obligations
- Missing child
- Incidents involving the use of seclusion or physical restraint of a child or individual, refer to Restraint and Seclusion
- Online bullying, inappropriate use of social media and/or mobile phones

Examples of incidents that impact on the continuity of HPCH operations, including property damage and emergencies

- Damage to parts of the building or its content
- Loss of essential service
- Emergency and warnings
- Bomb threats

Examples of incidents that involve matters of serious conduct

- Alleged criminal activity
- Aggressive and anti-social behaviour or actions
- Forced marriage or human rights abuse
- Family violence
- Human trafficking
- Sexual exploitation
- Suspicious activity within or near HPCH

Examples of Low and Medium severity incidents that are not reportable
The following incidents are not reportable:
- incidents that have an insignificant impact or risk of impact on student health, safety and wellbeing, such as a grazed knee. These incidents should be managed internally and recorded in the incidents form in the staff portal
- incidents where HPCH operations continue with slight interruptions, such as a 10-minute power outage.

Step 3 – Ongoing support and recovery

Following the steps taken as part of the immediate response and reporting of an incident, many incidents will require ongoing response and recovery support.
Following an incident, HPCH Emergency Management Committee (EMC) must identify those most affected and vulnerable, address their physical and psychological needs and provide ongoing monitoring and recovery support, to try to offset the initial distress and responses.
For all severity level incidents, HPCH should plan to:
take active steps to promote and protect individual's safety and wellbeing
develop ongoing risk management strategies
support individuals through any action they or their families take to seek justice or redress, including making a report to Victoria Police
provide ongoing support to all affected individuals and staff, as their needs may change.
This may include assisting to access specialist support services, including treatment, counselling, or trauma and victim support services and debriefing for staff and student witnesses as part of their recovery.
Key ongoing actions in response to the incident should be documented on the relevant individuals (staff, client, child) file.
For incidents that are rated:
- High and Extreme, the Executive or delegate will:
- work with the Manager to ensure confidence in actions undertaken and planned
- identify any needs and coordinate assistance to the Domain Area
- update incident report to the BoG

Low and Medium, Managers can seek assistance or advice directly from other Domain Area Managers or teams, as required.
HPCH policies and guidance to guide ongoing response and recovery for specific types of incidents
In addition to any relevant Domain Area policies (including the HPCH emergency management plan), there are a number of policies that support effective incident response and recovery with respect to specific types of incidents, to ensure the safety, health and wellbeing of children, individuals and staff. These include the following.

Incidents involving child abuse
Child Protection and Child Safe Standards (PROTECT)
Incidents involving emergencies
Incidents involving sexual offending or problem sexual behaviour
Sexual Offending and Problem Sexual Behaviour
Incidents involving suicidal ideation
Self-Harm and Attempted Suicide Response
Incidents involving restraint of child
Restraint and Seclusion
Incidents impacting on child or staff mental health
Mental health support after an emergency or natural disaster
Incidents involving fraud or corruption
Fraud and Corruption Control
Incidents involving Occupational Health and Safety
Emergency Management System (WHS) Overview — Employee Health Safety and Wellbeing Policy

Step 4 – Investigation

Some incidents may trigger internal or external investigations, arising under legislation or government policy, for example by Victoria Police, the Environment Protection Authority Victoria, or other investigatory body.

The purpose of an investigation will vary according to the type of incident and typically involves the planned and systematic gathering and analysis of all relevant facts, including interviewing witnesses, examining documentation, skilled observation and obtaining expert opinion, where appropriate.

An investigation is usually different to an incident review, which does not require formal legislative, regulatory or policy power, but is undertaken for the purpose of either responding to a complaint or concern and/or determining whether an incident was managed appropriately in order to identify learnings to support continuous improvement. Refer to Step 5 – Incident review and closure.

Where an incident is subject to a criminal investigation, the timing of any other relevant Domain Area investigation(s) will be subject to the advice of Victoria Police.

For WorkSafe notifiable incidents, the principal and/or their delegate must conduct a formal incident investigation within 24 hours of the notifiable incident, where possible, using the Hazard and incident investigation template (DOCX) or equivalent. Advice and support are available to undertake this process from the EMC.

For the investigation, the EO and/or their delegate may decide to convene an incident investigation team, comprising HPCH leadership staff, the HPCH health and safety representative, affected employee/s and other employees, depending on the nature of the incident. The EMC or the BoG may also be able to assist, depending on the severity of the incident. The investigation should seek to identify the causes and any potential hazards and provide recommended control and preventative measures.

Overview of potential investigations
This section illustrates the various investigations, the level the investigation is conducted at and the area responsible for conducting the investigation.
Departmental level
Complaints (including child safety) – Internal investigations are managed by EO and Managers
Employment related investigations (including misconduct and Reportable Conduct) – Employee Conduct Branch, People Division
Corruption – Integrity, Assurance and Executive Services Division
Legal or claims based – BoG
Occupational Health and Safety – EMC & Employee Health, Safety and Wellbeing Team
Privacy breach – BoG and Executive

External level
- Child Safe Standards – Commission for Children and Young People (CCYP), the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing (DFFH) and Victoria Police
- Reportable conduct – CCYP
- Mandatory reporting – DFFH
- Criminal – Victoria Police
- Preliminary screening

A preliminary investigation screening should be undertaken within 2 working days of the incident being reported to determine the nature of the incident, in order to determine whether or not the incident may trigger an investigation, in addition to HPCH review. In very serious cases, the responsible person should use all reasonable efforts to undertake preliminary screening in well under the maximum of 2 days.
For incidents that are rated:
High and Extreme – the BoG and Executive will undertake the screening. In this case a Manager may also choose to conduct a domain area inquiry
Low and Medium – the Manager must undertake the preliminary screening.
Where an incident involves an allegation of employee misconduct the preliminary screening will be conducted by the EO & Manager (with HR support as required).

Step 5 – Incident review and closure
Incident review
In the context of these Guidelines, an incident review is defined as 'an analysis of all incidents that should occur to identify what happened and the cause. This is to help determine whether an incident was managed correctly and to identify learnings to reduce the risk of similar events occurring in the future'.
An incident review is discretionary and may be initiated by the Manager, Area Coordinator or EO. It is recommended that a review is facilitated by a peer who was not involved in the incident.
The review should seek to examine what was effective in the incident management, identify opportunities for improvement and develop recommended actions, focusing on:
- people
- process
- organisation
- systems
- training.

Managers or peer reviewers may seek support from the EO or BoG as part of this process.
Incident reviews generally should be initiated within 3 days and completed within 21 days of the incident occurring.

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Incident closure

Incident closure is a formal process of closing an incident. An incident is closed with comments in the staff portal once the responsible authority is confident that appropriate ongoing supports are in place and, if relevant, pending investigations are underway and/or reviews have been completed and recorded. Authority to close an incident is determined by the final severity level in which the incident is rated, as outlined in Step 2 – Reporting an incident. Incidents are closed when current and/or future risk is eliminated, mitigated or accepted.

Step 6 – Analyse and learn

The Emergency Management Committee will undertake regular data analysis and reporting and share this with the BoG and Domain Managers.
Incident data analysis includes the monitoring, interrogating and acting on identified trends.
Data informs policy and program support of the HPCH Services.
Analysing data fulfils 3 core objectives, the purpose is to:

- understand what happened
- understand why an incident happened
- inform what can be done to produce better outcomes for child, client, community members and staff health, safety and wellbeing in the future.

Supporting documents:

Managing and Reporting Incidents Policy and Procedure Attachment 1 Notification types and timeframes ASEQA.
Incident, injury trauma and illness form Attachment 2 Incident injury trauma and illness record (acecqa.gov.au)
HPCH Emergency Management Plan

Authorisation:

Signature of EO

Date of approval by EO _18-02-2022_
Hampton Park Care Group Inc.