



# Stella Maris School

## Critical Incident Policy

Updated: Sept. 2025  
To be reviewed: Sept. 2026

Stella Maris School is committed to Safeguarding and promoting the welfare and well-being of all members of the school. All school staff and volunteers who work in the school are expected to share this commitment and vision.

This Policy was written in consultation with the Trustees, Headteacher and the staff of Stella Maris School with due regard to our mission statement.

*“At Stella Maris we endeavour to put the children at the centre of everything we do. Our mission is to educate, nurture and instil traditional values and cherish our children. We inspire them to achieve their best in every aspect of their lives.”*

## CRITICAL INCIDENT POLICY

### Contingency Plan in Case of a Crisis/Disaster

The staff and Trustees of Stella Maris School are always conscious that an emergency, crisis or disaster, affecting the school community, could happen at any time, either in school, on a school visit or in the local community. No one can predict, when or if, a disaster might occur. This policy (contingency plan) was formulated to assist staff and Trustees to deal with the immediate aftermath of a traumatic incident and with the distress and long-term effects on the pupils, families and staff. It is a Policy that we hope we never have to use.

Copies of this Policy are kept in the school office. Every member of staff and the Trustees have a copy.

If a critical incident occurs during the school day, or while pupils are on a visit, the school emergency procedures should be activated by the members of staff present, who should:

1. Assess the situation.
2. Safeguard the uninjured members of the group.
3. If there are injuries, establish immediately the names of the injured people and the extent of their injuries.
4. Attend to the casualty/ies.
5. Inform the emergency services and everyone who needs to know, about the accident.
6. Notify the police if necessary.
7. Share the problem; advise all other group staff that the accident/emergency procedure is in operation.
8. Make sure **every** member of the group is accounted for.
9. Ensure that the injured are accompanied to hospital (preferably by an adult whom they know).
10. Ensure that the rest of the group understands what has happened, is adequately supervised and kept together.
11. Inform the Head teacher and pass on all the details, including names of casualties, their injuries, action taken and the names of others involved. He/she will initiate this policy, if the accident/emergency warrants.

12. Ascertain telephone numbers for future calls.
13. As soon as possible, write down accurately relevant facts and witness details. Preserve any vital evidence.
14. Keep a written account of subsequent events, times and contacts after the incident.
15. Complete accident report forms, contacting appropriate bodies if necessary.
16. No one in the group should speak to the media. Media enquiries should be referred to The Chair of Trustees or designated person within the Trustee Body.
17. No one in the group should discuss legal liabilities with other parties.
18. **Use cards with key incident words to inform key staff – ‘ACT’ ‘INFORM’, ‘SAVE’ ‘CARE’ ‘ASSIST’ (these may be colour coded) but not worry the pupils.**

**The following incidents set the policy/contingency plan in motion:**

- Death or serious injury of pupils or members of staff during school hours, on a visit or in tragic circumstances out of school time
- Violent assault
- Accident to a school party, or a member thereof, of a visit
- Fire
- Major vandalism
- Any incident that attracts intense media coverage.

**Contingency Plan for Critical Incidents**

Staff and Trustees activate the Contingency Plan:

- The Head Teacher, with the assistance of the Chair of Trustees and named person within the Trustee Body should liaise with the emergency services, visit the site of the incident (if out of school), and communicate with parents of the pupil(s) involved and the critical incident team in school.
- All parents and family members of pupils involved in the incident should be treated with sensitivity. A room will be provided in the school, where the family can wait for news or receive counselling.
- Administration staff will respond to all telephone calls, make contacts and arrange media interviews. The Chair of Trustees/ Head Teacher/authorised person within the Trustee Body nominated as Press Officer is the only person who should give information to the media.
- The senior management team should contact the parents of children not affected. The children not affected should be kept well away from the scene of the incident and sent home as soon as it is safe.
- Parents should be asked to wait off the school site if it is not practical for them to collect their children in the school grounds. They will be kept informed of the **situation**.
- The Incident Team should decide how the media relations are to be managed. This will depend on the incident and the recommendation from the Trustee Body, which might send an officer to help. Options are:
- Keep the media out of the school premises, with the authorised person giving an interview outside the school, only when ready;



## Senior Admin/Non-Teaching Staff

School Administrator	Mrs Lorraine Coen
Site Supervisor	

## Trustees

Chair of Trustees	Mr John Sibbald
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## School Network

### Key Holders

Head Teacher	Mr Stephen Usher 07480 623 443
Chair of Trustees	Mr John Sibbald 07813 061865
ASC Coordinator	Mrs Debbie Curley 07950 302053
School Administrator	Mrs Lorraine Coen 07825 278031

## Crisis Team: Roles and Responsibilities

### *Head Teacher or Nominated Person*

- Visit site of incident/ accident.
- Work with parents, staff and pupils directly involved.
- Liaise with emergency services.
- Liaise with media if appropriate.

### *Chair of Trustees*

- In school to co-ordinate operations.
- Contact and liaise with LEA Officers, Trustees, Parents, etc.
- Talk to the media after collating information.
- Liaise with the Head Teacher and give support.

### *Key Stage Co-ordinators*

### *Teaching Staff*

- Keep the school functioning, teaching classes, etc.
- Keep the school running as normally as possible.

- Look after teaching staff.
- Devise strategies to keep children away from the scene of the incident, media, and so forth.
- Meet parents when children collected.

#### *Trustees*

- Attend site of incident if necessary.
- Give support to staff and parents where applicable.
- Act as nominated persons if required.

#### *School Administrator/ Clerk to Trustees*

- Contact with the media, arrange press conferences, etc.

#### *Clerical Assistant/Secretary*

- Answer the telephones, after conferring with the Chair, Head or Senior Teacher for correct information.

#### *Site Supervisor*

- As key holder, remain on site.
- Assist with any building matters.
- Assist with parking, moving furniture, etc.

### **Plan of Action**

#### **Head Teacher**

1. Assess the situation in school/by telephone.
2. Contact emergency services if necessary.
3. Notify;
  - School Administrator/Bursar
  - Chair/Vice-Chair of Trustees
  - Head of School and Agency Services
  - Parents, if appropriate
  - All staff on premises
  - Site Supervisor
  - Trustees
4. Visit site of incident if out of school.
5. Give support to and gain information from those directly involved.
6. Assist emergency services with information.
7. Keep chair of trustees fully informed.

#### **Chair of Trustees: Stay near a Phone!**

1. Visit school as soon as possible to act as Press Officer.
2. Collate information from Head Teacher, Deputy Head Teacher and School Administrator.
3. Prepare press release after discussing incident with the Police and/or LEA/other Advisory Body Critical Incident Response Team.
4. Assist Head Teacher in informing relevant staff and team members,
5. Take charge if Head Teacher has left the premises.
6. Collate information for Chair of Trustees.

7. Liaise with the Head Teacher at site of incident.
8. Help direct staff in their duties.

#### **Available Trustees**

1. Meet the Head Teacher at the site of the incident.
2. Assist in collating information, contacting school etc.
3. Give support to the Head Teacher at the site of the incident.

#### **School Administrator/Secretary: Stay in the school office**

1. Ensure telephones are kept free.
2. Collate all phone numbers, including all mobile phone numbers.
3. Set up fax line and e-mail.
4. Take telephone calls.
5. Liaise with press for facilitating meeting with Press Officer.

#### **Post-Traumatic Support**

At Stella Maris, we realise that some pupils and staff might suffer from post-traumatic stress disorder, especially if they have been involved in the tragic incident. This can affect children and staff immediately or a long time after the event. The whole school community should be aware of this and provide support.

The following personnel should be able to assist with post-traumatic stress:

- Head Teacher
- Senior Teachers
- Teachers and staff not directly involved
- Trustees
- LEA/ other Advisory Body Stress Support Team if required
- Educational Psychologists
- Local Doctor

#### **Further Information**

##### **Useful Resource**

Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation  
through distributor Turnaround)

Wise Before the Event; Coping with Crises in School (order