



St Joseph's School
Kingswood

CRITICAL INCIDENT POLICY

ST JOSEPH'S SCHOOL KINGSWOOD AND ST JOSEPH'S OSHC KINGSWOOD

Rationale

St Joseph's Kingswood is a Catholic school in the Josephite tradition. We create and uphold a nurturing environment for our children, families, teachers, volunteers, and the wider parish. We are a Catholic community of educators and learners who strive for excellence in education, and we are innovative and collaborative in our approach. Our life long purpose is to maintain a sense of belonging for all our children encouraging them to reach their full potential.

We are committed to ensuring that staff and students are provided with a safe and healthy work environment, which provides physical, spiritual and emotional security at all times, especially when managing traumatic events. As a community we therefore:

- Respond to any traumatic event in an informed and supportive manner, which respects the requests of families involved as well as supporting the needs of individuals and the community
- Provide support to all members of the school community who are affected, enlisting support from agencies or individuals from the wider community as appropriate
- Maintain the healthy functioning of school life at all times

Aims of the Policy

- The purpose of this policy is to ensure that staff members are aware of what to do when a critical incident arises that directly involves staff students and parents
- The procedures support the existing pastoral care offered to employees, students and families
- To support the whole school community in the event of a traumatic event affecting individual/s and therefore the community as a whole

Definition

Critical Incidents are events that occur when a person experiences or witnesses a sudden traumatic stressor that has the potential to harm life or the well-being of an individual. Critical incidents can range from small-scale localised incidents lasting minutes and affecting a single school or section of a school through to large-scale events requiring state level coordination and assistance from external agencies. Critical incidents can also be events, which by their nature have the potential to leave lasting effects on those involved.

Examples: (but not limited to)

- Major injury
- Serious traffic crash/accident
- Death – accidental or following an illness
- Suicide
- Abduction
- Intruder on school grounds
- Siege and Hostage*
- Bomb threat*
- Sexual assault
- Terminal illness – staff or student
- Fire at school or during an external school event i.e. camp or excursion*
- Hazardous substance spill or explosion*
- Natural disaster bushfire, earthquake, flood and Severe Storm*
- Water supply stoppage*

*** See Guides Attached**

Role of the Principal

- Provide clear guidelines and procedures to staff regarding Critical Incidents
- Provide relevant professional learning in traumatic event management
- Ensure that the values of justice, service and respect are modelled and supported in all traumatic event management procedures
- Communicate with families and media in a sensitive manner
- Ensure that the spiritual and emotional needs of the community are met
- Encourage those affected by a traumatic event to seek help
- Ensure recovery plans (contingency plans) are developed for post emergency management where normal work cannot continue e.g. building fire or collapse
- Ensure that all incidents are documented

Role of Staff

- Ensure that they are aware of their roles and responsibilities in the event of an emergency
- Ensure they are accurately informed about any traumatic events, so they inform students accurately and appropriately and combat rumours
- Offer support for students and families in their care
- Support the school community in managing a traumatic event
- Allow open discussion of the event, working with counsellors if available
- Direct all media enquiries to the Principal
- Seek personal and/or professional help where needed to assist their response
- Document their own and student responses and needs as required

Students will:

- Be involved in the process of implementing and reviewing the school's policy
- Be aware of, and take responsibility for, their own behaviour in response to traumatic events
- Respect and support the rights of other students, staff and themselves to continue to participate as far as possible in the teaching and learning processes when there is a traumatic event
- Offer care and support to their peers in an appropriate manner, seeking help where necessary

Role of School Board

- Ensure the policy and procedures are in place in regards to the Critical Incident Policy
- Be actively involved in the discussion and decision making about school policy
- Support the Principal
- Provide any resources needed
- Review the policy

Role of the Parents

- Support the policy
- Encourage children to respect and support the rights of others and to be sensitive to the needs of those affected by critical traumatic events
- Inform the school of any traumatic event which is likely to affect children's life at school and/or impact upon others in the community
- Read all communication from the school to remain informed of any traumatic event

Management of Potential Risks of Natural Disasters such as Bushfires and Floods while on Excursions or Camps

Bushfires

St Joseph's is not located within the Fire Ban Districts so likelihood of a bushfire occurring on site is low. Therefore the procedure in place is for excursions or camps.

Prior to an Excursion or Camp

- Excursions or Camps which are located in bushfire areas must develop a bushfire action plan in consultation with Principal and WHS Officer
 - Be aware of fire audit rating of the area
 - Have an evacuation plan
 - Know where evacuation points are
 - Follow the Bushfire Plan - Attachment 2
- Refer to www.cfs.sa.gov.au

Country Fire Service: 1300 362 361
- If extreme, Very High, High or Catastrophic bushfire conditions are forecast the excursion/camp will be cancelled and groups will leave/evacuate area immediately
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Floods

St Joseph's is not located within a flood zone so likelihood of a flood occurring on site is low. Therefore the procedure in place is for excursions or camps.

Prior to an Excursion or Camp

- Excursions or Camps which are located in flood areas must develop a flood response action plan in consultation with Principal and WHS Officer
 - Have an evacuation plan
 - Follow the Flood Plan - Attachment 3
- Refer to ses.sa.gov.au

State Emergency Service: (08) 8463 4171

SES emergency: 132 500

CRITICAL INCIDENT ATTACHMENTS

There are 11 Attachments within this policy for dealing with Critical Incidents:

- **Attachment 1 - Checklist for dealing with Critical Incidents**
- **Attachment 2 - Bushfire Plan**
- **Attachment 3 - Flood Plan**
- **Attachment 4 - Siege and Hostage Guide**
- **Attachment 5 - Bomb Threat Guide**
- **Attachment 6 – Bomb Threat Checklist**
- **Attachment 7 - Fire Guide**
- **Attachment 8 - Toxic Emissions/Spills Guide (Gas, Fuel or Chemical)**
- **Attachment 9 - Earthquake Guide**
- **Attachment 10 - Flood Guide**
- **Attachment 11 - Severe Storm Guide**

The following attachments are inclusive of:

- **During school hours away from school grounds when engaged in an excursion or community based program**
- **Before or After School Hours Care or during school holidays**
- **Overnight Camps/ Excursions**

Attachment 1

CHECKLIST FOR DEALING WITH CRITICAL INCIDENTS

Immediate Response - To be coordinated by Principal/Teacher in Charge

- Ensure immediate safety of the community**
 - First aid; lock down/evacuation procedures; ambulance; police; quarantining areas or substances
- Ensure that affected students/parents/staff/visitors are not left alone**
- Find out the facts as far as possible**
 - Look for reliable sources; do not ignore rumours; investigate immediately; confirm facts with family and/or police
- Immediately contact the Principal Consultant**
 - Make contact with your PC, and if not contactable, refer to the Critical Incidents Contact list supplied to each school which contains the contact details of all PCs, Directors and Assistant Directors. Contact one of these as appropriate, or ring (08) 8301 6600

First 24 Hours – To be coordinated by Principal with Support of Principal Consultant

- Convene Emergency Response Team (ERT) to establish a management plan**
 - The ERT will generally consist of the Principal, Deputy, APRIM and Administrative Secretary in consultation with the Principal Consultant
 - New members can be added from within and without to suit the issue
 - A responsibilities list of delegated activities should be developed to cover the following
- Determine if additional support for affected staff and students from helping agencies is needed and contact as appropriate**
 - Often, support from Centacare (8210 8200) is sought
- Set up a support room at the school if needed**
 - Door ajar, protected from noise, bright light and student traffic
 - Provide a sign in sheet recording students who access the room
- Inform staff**
 - Brief staff about the facts and details of information that can and cannot be shared
 - Provide staff with support options (ACCESS Confidential Counselling 1300 667 700)
 - If staff are upset provide them with the option of not having to inform students. Both convey and seek information to create a sense of shared responsibility
- Inform students**
 - Year Level Groups are the preferred environments in which to inform students in most cases assuming staff are comfortable to do so
 - Whole school assemblies are not recommended because student reactions are more difficult to manage and it is harder to support individuals
 - Staff maybe provided with a script to help them inform students
- Inform wider community**
 - Giving parents immediate and accurate information often reduces rumour and worry
 - How widely the community needs to be informed may differ according to the circumstances
- Prepare to handle media**
 - Contact with a media Liaison Officer is available through the PC
 - Prepare staff and students. No comments have to be made, or should be made to the media until advice is received

48 – 72 Hours after the Incident – To be coordinated by Principal with Support of Principal Consultant

- Restore school to regular routine**
 - Use of the support room should reduce as time passes
- Keep liaising with affected community members**
 - Ensure one member of the ERT has this responsibility
- Advise staff of all relevant information and actions**
 - Particularly those more directly involved with the incident or students/families
 - Seek staff feedback about observations during regular debriefs
- Monitor staff and student wellbeing**
 - Consider all avenues of sector and interagency support
- Keep parents informed**
 - Advise of any changes to routine, support services available
- Document all actions**
 - This is an important responsibility for a member of the ERT

Principal to monitor and oversee with support of Principal Consultant where necessary

During the First Month

- Monitor staff and student wellbeing**
 - The impact of a Critical Incident stays in the memory of those who were present
- Plan for school events of relevance**
 - Particularly in the case where there has been a student death e.g.: Year Books, Graduation Nights and Student Awards
- Gather relevant information for a Critical Incident review**
 - Given the chance to all staff to contribute via written survey
 - Summarise all data and provide a summary and reflective guide to staff to consider
 - Use review to refine and improve school processes AND acknowledge achievements of the school community for the way they handled the Critical Incident
- Consider offering information/support sessions for parents**
 - Consider all avenues of sector and interagency support
- Continue to document actions**

In the Longer Term

- Continue support and monitoring of staff and students**
- Keep parents, staff and students informed**
- Plan for anniversaries, birthdays and significant events**
 - This is particularly important where there has been a death in the community
 - There may be inquests and legal proceedings
 - Make extra support available as necessary
- Implement recommendations from the critical incident review**
 - Appraise staff of any outcomes and remember to include things of relevance in staff induction

During school hours away from school grounds when engaged in an excursion or community based program (refer to extreme Weather policy):

The responsible staff member will follow necessary action:

- Follow relevant First Aid Procedures
- Contact Emergency Services
- Reassure and comfort
- Inform the Principal or nominate senior staff as soon as practicable
- A staff member to accompany the injured student/staff member to hospital
- Staff member to stay with student until family member takes over responsibility

- Convene a meeting involving Principal as soon as practicable
- Critical Incident Policy to be invoked as soon as practical thereafter
- Principal communicates facts to staff
- Staff advised of information to be given to students
- Staff offered support – Counsellor / Access Services
- Information to parents/ Support offered to parents
- Students given information and offered support/counseling
- Fill in an Incident Report

Before or After School Hours Care or during school holidays

The responsible staff member will follow necessary action:

- Follow relevant First Aid Procedures
- Contact Emergency Services
- Reassure and comfort

Contact Principal then the Principal will:

- Advise Principal Consultant
- Convene Incident Response Team as soon as possible
- Staff meeting as soon as possible or notify staff where possible by phone
- Family visited / offered support

Overnight camp (refer to extreme Weather policy) Teacher in Charge to oversee

- First Aid
- Contact Emergency Services - 000
- Reassure and comfort students and staff involved
- Inform the Principal as soon as possible
- If a student is lost, the police must be informed as soon as possible
- If there is an injured student or staff member, a staff member to accompany the injured person to hospital
- Principal to inform parents/family
- Staff member to stay with student until family member takes over responsibility
- Leadership Meeting
- Staff meeting as soon as possible
- Principal communicates facts to staff
- Staff advised of information to be given to students
- Staff offered support – Counsellor / Access Services
- Information to parents
- Students given information and offered support/counselling

Media

The Principal (or nominee) is the official spokesperson for the school. The Principal will obtain assistance from the Principal Consultant to work with the media.

Attachment 2

Bushfire Plan

Relocating in Advance:

If extreme, very high, high or catastrophic bushfire conditions are forecast the excursion/camp will be cancelled and groups will leave/evacuate area immediately.

The Danger of Last Minute Evacuation:

If you are found in a bushfire, experience throughout Australia has shown lives can be lost when people make a last minute panic stricken attempt to flee a bushfire.

As Fire Front Approaches:

- Call 000
- Check all areas accounted for – move to evacuation point or all students to stay inside
- Contact camp management and follow instructions
- Contact Principal, PC or Catholic Education 08 83016600

Inside

- Dress in protective clothing
- Shut all doors and windows
- Fill bath, sinks and buckets etc. with water
- Place wet towels in any crevices, such as gaps under doors etc.
- Take curtains down and push furniture away from windows
- Place ladder in ceiling access ready to inspect ceiling cavity

Outside

- Remove last minute combustibles from around the building including flammable blinds, wooden furniture and doormats etc.
- Start pump for fire hose and/or roof sprinklers. * camp management
- Wet down all areas on side of house facing the direction of the fire
- Dampen window ledges allowing water to penetrate any gaps
- Plug drains and fill gutters with water
- Wet down any pre-determined problem areas
- Patrol for spot fires and extinguish

When Fire Front Arrives:

- Retreat inside
- Bring buckets, hoses, mops etc. inside with you
- Patrol inside for spot fires and extinguish
- Check ceiling cavity
- Drink plenty of water
- Reassure

After Fire Front Has Passed:

- Return outside when safe to do so
- Evacuate
- Continue drinking plenty of water

What Can You Expect?

There will be a shower of sparks and embers as the main fire front approaches. This shower of embers will continue for several hours after the fire has passed. You should also expect strong winds and heavy smoke, which will make it dark and reduce visibility. When the fire front actually arrives it will generally pass within 5 to 15 minutes. During this time the radiant heat may become unbearable. It is therefore essential that you retreat indoors taking with you any firefighting equipment such as hoses and buckets etc. that may melt if left outside.

What Should You Wear?

Shield your skin from radiant heat. Every member of the household should change into long sleeved shirts, long pants (made from natural fibres) and sturdy leather foot wear at the first warning of fires in the area. After the fire front passes you should also wear a broad brimmed hat, gloves and goggles to protect your eyes from smoke and flying embers. Your nose and mouth should be covered with a dust mask, towel or scarf etc. A special filter mask for people suffering respiratory conditions such as asthma should be included in your survival kit.

Drink Water Frequently:

Remember to drink water frequently, preferably every 10 minutes to prevent dehydration. Your body will be under stress from heat, so fluids must be replenished.

Attachment 3

Flood Plan

If weather forecasts predict flooding in the area you are going **cancel** excursion and return.

- Contact Principal
- Contact SES to ensure it is safe to leave

When you hear a flood warning or if flooding appears likely, tune to your local radio for warnings and advice.

- **Call 000**
- **SES 132 500**
- **Check all area accounted for – leave or move all students to the highest point**
- **Contact camp management and follow instructions**
- **Contact Principal, PC or Catholic Education 08 83016600**
- Collect/take essentials in waterproof bags to be taken with your emergency kit:
 - Warm clothing,
 - Essential medication
 - First Aid Kit
 - Emergency contact details

To prepare in case of flood

- **Turn off power, water and gas and take your mobile phone.**
- If possible put sandbags (what you can find) in the toilet bowl and over all laundry/bathroom drain-holes to prevent sewage back-flow
- **Don't drive into water of unknown depth and current**
- Stay tuned to local radio for updated advice
- Don't allow children to play in, or near, flood waters
- Avoid entering flood waters. If you must, wear solid shoes and check depth and current with a stick. Stay away from drains, culverts and water over knee-deep
- Don't use gas or electrical appliances which have been in flood water until checked for safety
- Don't eat food which has been in flood waters
- Boil tap water until supplies have been declared safe
- When floodwater rises, it is common for spiders, snakes, rats and mice to look for a drier home - often inside our houses. If you have floodwater through your property check for unwanted visitors
-

Siege/Hostage Guide

In the event of a siege/hostage situation the Principal is responsible for ensuring that:

- The facts of the situation are confirmed by personal observation or by another reliable information source
- The Police are contacted by phoning 000 and asking for the Police
- Personnel with a direct knowledge of the following are assembled to impart information to the Police:
 - Preceding events
 - Interior layout/topography
 - The hostage(s)
 - The assailant(s).
- The Principal Consultant is contacted and informed of the situation
- Partial or total evacuation is undertaken/occurs at the direction of the Police
- Cooperate and assist Police as necessary
- A command/communication centre is identified and established from which all personnel can access information

Bomb Threat Guide

The responsibilities of the receiver of a bomb threat call are to:

- Keep the Bomb Threat Checklist by the phone/s used to receive direct calls
- Let the caller finish without interruption.
- Do not to hang up the phone, to keep the line open in order to trace call;
- Fill out as much as possible of the checklist and inform the Delegated Responsible Officer

The responsibilities of the Principal are to:

- Consider the situation with the workplace Health and Safety Representative (if applicable and if time permits) and evacuate to a safe open area if appropriate
- Inform Police, Telephone: 000
- Advise personnel, if evacuation occurs, to take their personal bags and belongings with them, if it is safe to do so
- Conduct a visual inspection to identify any suspicious objects/bags etc. when leaving the premises
- **DO NOT** return to the premises to conduct an inspection
- Leave doors and windows open where possible
- Advise Catholic Education Office
- Do not to return to the buildings or grounds until given the all clear from emergency services

BOMB THREAT CHECKLIST

Wording of the Threat

(Try to record exact words)

.....

Keep the Caller Talking

(Try to obtain as much information as possible)

Do not hang up to keep line open in order to trace call

Questions to Ask

1. When is the bomb going to explode?

.....

2. Where is it right now?

.....

3. What does it look like?

.....

4. What kind of bomb is it?

.....

5. What will cause it to explode?

.....

6. Who placed the bomb?

.....

7. Why?

.....

Caller's Voice

(Tick all applicable boxes)

Calm	<input type="checkbox"/>	Nasal	<input type="checkbox"/>
Angry	<input type="checkbox"/>	Stutter	<input type="checkbox"/>
Excited	<input type="checkbox"/>	Lisp	<input type="checkbox"/>
Slow	<input type="checkbox"/>	Raspy	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rapid	<input type="checkbox"/>	Deep	<input type="checkbox"/>
Soft	<input type="checkbox"/>	Ragged	<input type="checkbox"/>
Loud	<input type="checkbox"/>	Clearing throat	<input type="checkbox"/>
Laughter	<input type="checkbox"/>	Deep Breathing	<input type="checkbox"/>
Crying	<input type="checkbox"/>	Cracking Voice	<input type="checkbox"/>
Normal	<input type="checkbox"/>	Disguised	<input type="checkbox"/>
Distinct	<input type="checkbox"/>	Intoxicated	<input type="checkbox"/>
Slurred	<input type="checkbox"/>	Familiar	<input type="checkbox"/>

If the voice is familiar, who did it sound like?

.....

Background Sounds

Street Noises	<input type="checkbox"/>	Factory Machine	<input type="checkbox"/>
Crockery	<input type="checkbox"/>	Animal Noises	<input type="checkbox"/>
Voices	<input type="checkbox"/>	Clear	<input type="checkbox"/>
PA System	<input type="checkbox"/>	Static	<input type="checkbox"/>
Music	<input type="checkbox"/>	Local	<input type="checkbox"/>
Motor	<input type="checkbox"/>	Booth	<input type="checkbox"/>
Office Machinery	<input type="checkbox"/>	Children	<input type="checkbox"/>

Other

Threat Language

Well Spoken	<input type="checkbox"/>	Incoherent	<input type="checkbox"/>
Foul	<input type="checkbox"/>	Taped	<input type="checkbox"/>
Irrational	<input type="checkbox"/>	Read message	<input type="checkbox"/>
Accent	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>

Number at which call received.....

Time..... Date.....

Name

Position

Phone Number

REPORT CALL IMMEDIATELY TO:
 Police Communications Emergency 13444 and the
 Site Responsible Person

8. Where are you?

.....
.....
.....

9. What is your name?

.....
.....
.....

Estimated age of caller

Sex of Caller.....Other details

Attachment 7

Fire Guide

It is the responsibility of the person detecting the fire to initiate the following:

- Alert persons nearby and request assistance
- Alert the Principal/Manager and Emergency Wardens
- Call the fire brigade
- Use fire extinguishers or hose reels if safe to do so
- Evacuate if necessary, closing the doors to confine the fire

It is the responsibility of the Chief Warden to determine the nature of the emergency and initiate action required to safe guard persons and property.

It is the responsibility of any other Evacuation Control Personnel to:

- Keep themselves up to date on the requirements of students and any mobility impaired persons under their care

In the event of a fire or any other emergency, on the directions of the Chief Warden they should:

- Proceed to the assembly area
- Ensure that all mobility-impaired persons are present
- Maintain a calm atmosphere among their charges
- Proceed with the evacuation when instructed to do so, using the information provided to enable the effective evacuation of the persons in their charge

Attachment 8

Toxic Emissions / Spills Guide (Gas, Fuel or Chemical)

It is the responsibility of the Principal/Manager to ensure that the following occurs with regard to toxic spills or emissions:

For major emissions/spills e.g. tanker spill, train derailment (chemicals) explosion at chemical works:

- Call the police and emergency services (do not assume someone else has)
- Move all people on the site into buildings immediately. Occupy rooms furthest from emission source and upwind if possible
- Close all external doors and windows. Draw curtains/blinds. Seal ventilators and gaps under doors
- Turn off air conditioners and extinguish any naked flames, including pilot lights
- Call SafeWork SA (Phone 1800 777 209)
- Await all clear or further advice from emergency service personnel
- Only attempt to evacuate if directed by emergency services or forced to by extraordinary circumstances – such as a building filling up with fumes – and then to an area upwind of the incident

For minor emissions/spills e.g. chemical spill in cleaner's room, etc.:

- If required move people to a safe area
- If spill is to be cleaned up by workers, protective clothing and appropriate respirator must be worn as required (refer Safety Data Sheet)
- When the person in charge is satisfied that the emergency has been adequately dealt with, the all clear should be given, and people informed that they may return to their area

Attachment 9

Earthquake Guide

It is the responsibility of the Officer during and after an earthquake to ensure the following occurs.

During an earthquake and people are indoors:

- Advise people to stay indoors and ensure that nobody moves about or leaves the building;
- Get people under desks, tables, benches or internal door frames;
- Keep people away from windows, shelves and overhead fittings;
- In multi-storey buildings stay clear of windows and outer walls and do not use elevators.

If people are outdoors, keep everybody clear of buildings, walls, power lines, trees and anything else that may present a hazard.

Following an earthquake:

- Check for injuries and administer first aid. Do not move seriously injured individuals unless they are in immediate danger
- Turn off utilities such as electricity, gas and water
- Evacuate everybody outside, away from buildings, trees and power lines by the safest route
- Listen to local radio and follow any relevant advice given

- Be prepared for after-shocks and ensure that people do not re-enter (even slightly damaged buildings) until they have been checked by the authorities

Attachment 10

Flood Guide

It is the responsibility of the Principal to ensure that they are aware of any local flood history and know where the nearest safe location is and to establish a plan to get there.

For first warning response:

- Listen to local radio/television for warnings

If required (and possible):

- Stack items such as furniture, equipment and books above the likely flood level – books high up and electrical items on top
- Move chemicals, fuel and garbage to a high secure place
- Remove or secure floatable objects
- Remain tuned into radio or television until the flood threat has passed and follow any relevant emergency procedures
- Contact SES/CFS if assistance is required

For evacuation:

- If given sufficient warning, and acting on advice of police and emergency services, contact parent/caregiver to collect any children or other people who may need assistance
- Organise accommodation for those stranded away from home
- Activate prearranged plan for release of workers with homes or property threatened by flooding
- Turn off gas, water and electricity prior to final evacuation

For any post-emergency/disaster, plan to continue to provide services to any person/s who may be isolated for prolonged periods of time e.g. accommodation, food, schooling, medical, etc.

Attachment 11

Severe Storm Guide

It is the responsibility of the Principal to prepare for the possibility of severe storm. This can be achieved by the following:

- Routinely have tree branches trimmed well clear of buildings
- Routinely have roofing, guttering and down pipes checked for blockages and cleaned
- Maintain radio with fresh batteries
- Clear grounds of loose objects that could be flung about dangerously in high winds

For the first warning response:

- If the storm is an electrical storm, disconnect all electrical appliances
- If deemed necessary by emergency services, tape ('X' fashion) or cover windows
- Listen to the local radio for further reports

When the storm strikes:

- Ensure everybody stays inside away from windows and skylights
- If an electrical storm do not use telephones
- Listen to local radio for further reports

After the Storm Passes:

- Check buildings for damage and if in a dangerous condition evacuate
- Before moving outside check for damage to neighbouring buildings, for fallen power lines, fallen branches, debris and local flooding

- For emergency assistance contact SES and/or CFS

If dangerous weather conditions arise with little warning, children in particular, must be kept at or in the premises.