

# Operational debrief reflection guide



## Supporting resource

The following resources are available to you in the staffroom and are intended to provide you with suggestions and information that may assist you to navigate conversations that arise.

- Be You
  - Staff grief after suicide
  - Responding to a death that cannot be referred to as a suicide (appropriate in those instances the bereaved family have not given permission for the death to be referred to as a suicide).
  - Supporting young people after a suicide
  - Grief: how young people respond to a suicide.
- Conversations Matter: community resources
  - When communities are affected by suicide
  - Those bereaved by suicide

Conducting an operational debrief provides schools with the opportunity to:

- Obtain valuable insight and lessons about how to strengthen the school's existing mental health and wellbeing practices and policies to respond in the future. For example, a review might highlight the need to enhance the detail of what is included in the school's induction program regarding the tasks that teachers might be called on to undertake, such as informing students via a pre-prepared script in the event the school is exposed to a suicide.
- Highlight opportunities to build the capacity of staff to identify and support the mental health and wellbeing needs of students by enhancing their mental health literacy and their skills in supporting students in emotional distress.
- Identify and strengthen Departmental relationships, facilitating improved access to appropriate mental health and wellbeing support for students.

Please note your thoughts and any ideas for improvement on the following topics:

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Any additional concerns or ideas that have not been covered in your comments above.

Identify a priority action for:

- your role
- the school, including staff, students and/or parents and carers.

Date: .....

Follow-up actions: .....

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## Planning for the operational debrief

Before engaging in an operational debrief, it is important that members of the IMT are given an opportunity to prepare effectively. It may be helpful to encourage them to consider the following:

### Responsiveness

Did we have the appropriate structures, processes and training in place to ensure we were able to respond in a timely manner?

For example, staff communication tree up to date, staff familiar with the school's EMP and their role in implementing the actions identified, prior consideration of the structures and policies in place to convene staff briefings quickly.

### Communication

- Perceptions on how the school managed informing the staff, student and parent/carer cohorts.
- What modifications would result in improved communication in the future?
- Was the language used safe and consistent with best practice principles ([The National Communications Charter – MindFrame](#))?
- Is this an opportunity for further professional learning?
- Did the pre-prepared scripts support staff to inform their students?
- Would staff benefit from familiarising themselves with this script (not to memorise it) and their role in communicating this information to students annually.

### Support

- Reflections on how we identified, monitored and supported young people at risk of suicide or experiencing a mental health difficulty.
- Do we have the structures in place to appropriately share information about risk and vulnerability?
- Do staff and students understand what to do when they are concerned about a young person's safety?
- Do staff feel confident in their ability and skills to engage students in conversations where mental health difficulties have been observed?
- Is this an opportunity for professional learning? ([SAFEMinds](#) and/or [Suicide Risk Continuum Trainings](#).)
- Do we have coverage over the school week of appropriately trained staff who can conduct risk assessments with young people who have disclosed suicidal ideation and/or suicidal behaviour?
- Are our existing mental health and wellbeing approaches complementary to the activities required to support our community through response, recovery and back to positive mental health and wellbeing?