

Major Emergency Procedures – Information for Parents

In the event of a large-scale emergency the following procedures will be followed by the Dunstan High School Hostel:

1. Emergency Response. Staff and students will attend to the immediate welfare needs of students. Hostel emergency procedures will be followed. This may include the evacuation of the hostel, or parts of the hostel, for extended periods of time and the establishment of temporary emergency accommodation in other buildings on the school site.

2. Situation Report and Action Plan. Once the immediate welfare needs of students have been attended to, hostel staff will compile a report on the situation and the action plan they have developed including any actions required of parents.

3. Communication with Parents. In the interest of ensuring the availability of accurate, up-to-date information for as many people as possible, hostel staff will post regular information using the following distribution channels if available:

1. Registered email addresses of hostel parents and caregiver.
2. Registered cellphone numbers for group text/sms messages.
3. Via twitter feed @dunstanhostel
4. On the hostelive E-blog site. Follow link from www.hostelive.net.nz.
5. On the hostel phone and cellphone voicemail services (if available) 03 4487506 or 021 574441.

NOTE: It is not expected that hostel staff will be able to update parent or caregiver contact information during an emergency. Please ensure you current information is up-to-date at all times.

Staff will be able to answer phone calls or text messages when service levels and staffing levels permit.

4. Attending to the Ongoing Welfare Needs of Students. Hostel staff will plan for the ongoing welfare needs of students. This may include a decision by the Hostel Manager to close the hostel and arrange for parents to collect students if possible. Suitable arrangements will be made for students until they are able to be collected.

5. Parents arriving on-site. All parents arriving on the hostel site (or other place of emergency accommodation) must follow the instructions of hostel staff who will have planned for the safe transition of care from the hostel to parents. This includes proper signing out provisions. Students will only be released to their parents, or another students parents who have an existing authority to collect them, or parents or other persons who we have confirmed written authority to release students to. This maybe very difficult in an emergency situation - however, the co-operation of parents is expected to ensure the safe transition of student care.

6. Recovery Mode. Once the ongoing welfare needs of students have been met, the hostel will go into recovery mode. At this time hostel management will work with DHS BOT to establish a timeline for return to normal operation of the hostel and this plan will be communicated to parents using the normal communication channels above.

Advice for Parents

Before an Emergency

Just as the hostel has a plan to deal with a major emergency it is advisable for parents to plan for their family in the event of a major emergency. This is particularly true when some of the family may live a long way away from you, such as at a hostel. General advice on planning to get thru an emergency can be found at the [>> NZ Civil Defence Website](#).

Some hostel specific planning that will be useful in the event of an emergency:

1. Ensure all of your contact information is up-to-date, and make sure you inform the hostel if this changes. Cellphones are likely to be very useful in an emergency and often cellphone numbers change more frequently than others. Ensure yours is up to date.
2. If you think it would be helpful/likely for other families to collect your son/daughter from the hostel in an emergency you should make sure that you have given permission for that family to collect your son/daughter from the hostel so we have it recorded on file.
3. Be familiar with the ways we will distribute information in an emergency. Bookmark the emergency blog site in case you are unable to use your cellphone or regular email for any reason.
4. Does your cellphone receive E-mail? Text Messages? Can it browse websites? If so it may be good to know how to use these facilities. Cellphone towers may retain power and e-mail and sms-text services may be available during the early stages of an emergency when other telecommunication services may not be available.

During an Emergency

1. Attend to the welfare and immediate needs of the family, friends, and neighbours around you first.
2. Await information from the hostel regarding the situation, the action plan, and any actions required by parents. Do not try to contact the hostel by telephone - it is unlikely we will be able to respond. We will record up-to-date voice messages on our main phone and cellphone voicemail services, if possible, and as time allows for those without access to other information channels.
3. Conserve battery power in your mobile phone (and laptop) if power is out in your area. Use text or email where possible. This will allow you to receive information from us as it comes to hand. Remember - you may be able to use a car charger or laptop (usb) charger to recharge your mobile phone if necessary.
3. If you decide to travel to the hostel to collect your son/daughter, check the following
 - Road routes are open and safe for travel.
 - If you plan to collect other people's children, ensure you have written permission to do so.
 - Students, parents and staff may not have access to hostel buildings so plan to provide for the welfare needs of your son/daughter as you may find them.
4. You may communicate directly with your son/daughter, but you will need to communicate with hostel staff on the ground to sign out your son/daughter. Please do NOT make private arrangements.
5. Be careful about the information you send your son/daughter during an emergency. We will have large numbers of students, all of whom may be affected differently by the emergency situation. Avoid spreading any information which may cause panic or upset. This may become unmanageable and we may have to remove all student cellphones.

After an Emergency

1. Attend to the welfare needs of your family. This may include watching the emotional welfare of your son or daughter who maybe affected sometime after the event.
2. Keep an eye out for communication from us on the website, email and cellphone regarding the recovery process.

Mark Templeton
Boarding Manager