



Emergency Preparedness for Regina Christian School

A Guide for Parents and Guardians

A message from the RCS Emergency Response Team

Regina Christian Schools' first priority during an emergency is the safety of all our students and staff. The school has developed an Emergency Response Plan to deal with a wide range of emergency situations that may impact our school community. The plan works in conjunction with other local emergency preparedness plans. The division wide-plan, including emergency plans, is tailored to each individual school and is reviewed and revised annually and after each emergency.

Each school, including RCS, has an on-site emergency response team composed of school staff. Regina Christian School regularly provides staff with emergency training and practices various emergency drills with students/teachers. A division based Emergency Response Team has also been established to assist schools in responding to emergencies.

While the plan is built using protocols and procedures, the particular actions taken during any emergency depend on the specifics of the incident. The main objective of the response team is to ensure the safety of our students and staff in all situations.

Division and school plans do not replace the authority of law enforcement, fire or EMS. First responders are specially trained to deal with emergencies, criminal activities and extenuating circumstances – school staff will work in full co-operation and consultation with these agencies during a crisis.

Please familiarize yourself with the following guidelines so you are aware of the protocols which we will follow.

Sincerely,

RCS Emergency Response Team

Keeping Safe

When the school is confronted with an emergency situation there are various possible courses of action that may be taken; what that action is will depend on the specifics of the incident. The school may choose to do any or all of the following:

Shelter-in-Place

During a Shelter-in-Place students and staff retreat to classrooms or another safe area to seek shelter. This includes having any students or staff members who are outdoors come back into the school. Generally Shelter-In-Place is used during an environmental emergency such as severe storms or chemical spills affecting air quality. Each school's emergency response plan identifies the safest location for its occupants.

Lockdown and Secure the Building

These are usually in response to acts or threats of violence to students and/or staff, including any such activities in the general vicinity of the school. During a Secure the Building all outside doors to the building are locked. No one is permitted in or out of the school. During a Lockdown rooms within the school are locked. No one is permitted in or out of any area once the area has been locked. Students and staff must respond very quickly to a Lockdown command to ensure they get to a safe location before the doors are locked. Parents are not permitted access to the building or to their children in either case until the situation is over.

Evacuation (Code Red)

An Evacuation requires all students and staff to leave the school and go to an alternate location. In some cases this may mean only going outside and away from the school building until it is safe to re-enter the school. In other cases, students and staff may need to go to an evacuation centre. Parents would be informed of the alternate location. Regina Christian School has made arrangements with the TC Douglas Building and Leboldus High School as alternate evacuation gathering sites.

Dismissal

Under some circumstances it may be determined that it is best to dismiss students to their homes and families as expeditiously as possible. Should this be the case, every attempt will be made to alert the emergency contact for each student. We will ensure students are not left unsupervised.

Regina Christian School conducts drills throughout the year to rehearse emergency procedures. These drills and exercises are precautionary actions designed to prepare students and staff to act quickly and minimize a child's fear should a real emergency occur. Fire drills will take place throughout the year, including the colder months. Children should be prepared with proper footwear at all times.

Reuniting with Your Child

We recognize that when an emergency occurs parents will be worried and want to be reunited with their child as quickly as possible. It is our intention to make this happen; however, to ensure every child's safety, specific procedures have been established for releasing students.

If a situation merits, school staff will set up a **Parent-Child Reunion Area**. **Parents will be required to adhere to specific procedures to pick up their child.** Staff will work hard to ensure this process takes place without delay, however please understand it will not happen instantaneously and we ask for your patience when you arrive at the Parent-Child Reunion Area. Parents will be notified at the time of the emergency where the Reunion Area is located. At this time we have agreements with the TC Douglas Building and Leboldus High School to use their facilities in case an evacuation of RCS is required. The decision to evacuate will be made upon assessment of each situation and in consultation with EMS.

Parents are asked to adhere to the following parent-child reunification guidelines:

Please do not come to the school to pick up your child unless requested to do so. Although your natural instincts in an emergency may be to go to the school to safeguard your child, please understand that doing so may significantly impair the overall ability to respond to the situation. While it may seem logical that every student taken by a parent reduces the number of children the school needs to care for, in a fast moving situation that requires careful coordination, extra vehicles and people at the school actually make the task of keeping track of all students more difficult. *Please follow instructions provided to you through the communication channels*

Students will only be released to an individual designated as legal guardian or emergency contact on the Emergency Contact List which is completed at the time of school registration and updated annually or at your request during the school year. It is **critical** that you ensure that the school has information which is current and correct.

Valid identification may be required to pick up your child. Even if school personnel know you, you must be prepared to present I.D. as the school may be receiving assistance from outside agencies, other schools, emergency personnel or volunteers.

You will be required to sign for the release of your child. This is important, as it is our only means of ensuring all students have been accounted for. Please do not take your children from the school or evacuation center without signing for his or her release.

Once you have been reunited with your child, please leave the area immediately. This is for your own safety and that of your child. It also allows for efficient traffic flow if other parents are coming to collect their children.

If you are unable to pick up your child, he/she will be kept at the Parent-Child Reunion Centre until alternate arrangements can be made. Your child will be supervised at all times.

Keeping Informed During an Emergency

During a real emergency you probably won't be able to reach the school by phone. Staff will be busy responding to the emergency and the needs of the students first. School phone lines will be tied up with personnel communicating with emergency services or the school may already be evacuated. *We will, however, be making every effort to contact parents, either directly, or by one of the methods noted below.*

Please DO NOT CALL THE SCHOOL and DO NOT CALL YOUR CHILD'S CELL PHONE.

Phone lines need to be kept accessible. Parents are asked not to call the school or their child's cell phone during an emergency as the phone lines/system needs to remain available for handling the actual emergency. Overloading the phone system may mean that the school will not be able to communicate with first responders. Calling a student's cell phone may compromise the student's safety, particularly in the case of an intruder alert. The school or your child will contact you as soon as it is safe to do so.

Website and Community Information

The school will also attempt to keep parents informed through our Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and website pages. Recognize that the priority of the staff is to ensure student and staff safety first. Updates will occur as soon as it is safe to do so. In cases of interruption to power or where other priorities take staff time it may not be possible to update the website or phone system.

School Website: www.reginachristianschool.org