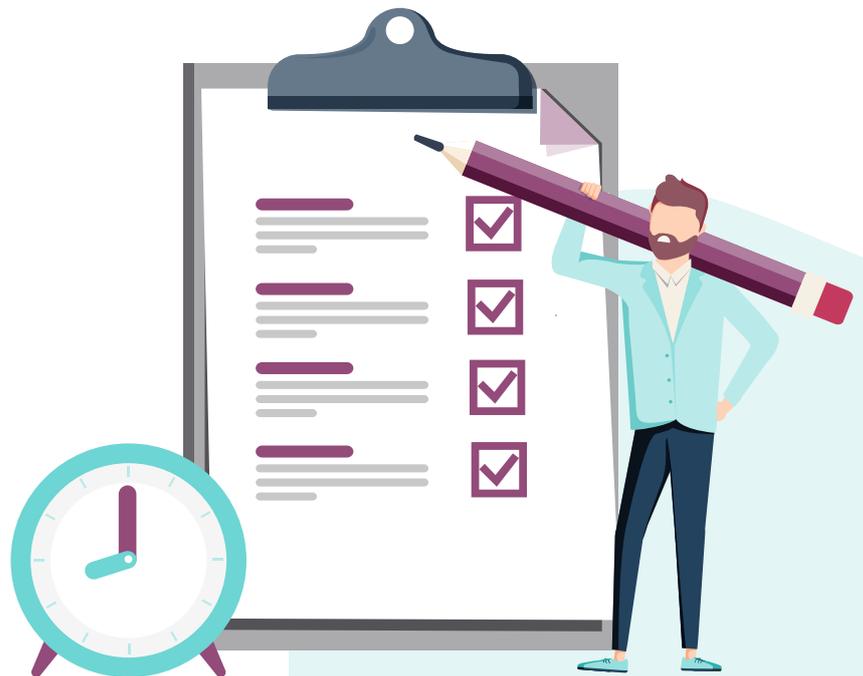# Post-incident checklist

eSafety Toolkit for Schools
Creating safer online environments

This resource provides a series of guiding questions to help schools to assess incident responses, as well as providing suggestions for improved practice. Schools are encouraged to undertake post-incident reviews after any online safety incident and have processes in place to respond to ongoing issues. The type of review will depend on the severity and impact of the incident.

The National Office for Child Safety has developed a complaint handling guide which provides advice about how to develop, implement and maintain a complaint-handling system. The guide's approach prioritises child safety and promotes the right of children and young people to have a voice in decisions that affect them.

Post incident checklist	Yes

Immediate response

1. Did the students involved in the incident know who to ask for advice and/or know how to report the incident?

- Establish specific roles and responsibilities among staff (e.g. an online safety team) so that all members of the school community know who they can report to. Even if a student reports to their classroom teacher, an online safety team can provide additional advice and assistance to resolve the incident.
- Make incident response procedures publicly available. Schools can display these high-traffic areas and on their website.
- Schools can invite suggestions from students about how to make the reporting process easier and should consider having multiple reporting pathways available, such as an anonymous online reporting mechanism or access to student wellbeing support staff.

2. Did the staff member/s responding to the incident try to understand the context to accurately assess its severity and impact?

- Schools are encouraged to provide training for all staff in responding to incidents. eSafety's Responding to online safety incidents - Teacher professional learning presentation can support good practice.
- The circumstances of any particular incident can make it difficult to know how to respond. eSafety's Online incident assessment tool also supports good practice.

Supporting wellbeing

3. Was support provided to all students involved in the incident (e.g. the target, instigator and bystanders)?

- Offer support to students throughout the incident response process and help them to seek support if they need it. Provide support for peers, bystanders and siblings as part of this process.
- Engage with student wellbeing support staff (e.g. counsellors, nurses, pastoral care workers, chaplains) as early as possible to develop an appropriate support plan.
- eSafety's Tips for supporting students involved in an online incident resource can help to support good practice.

4. Have wellbeing checks been scheduled with all students involved in the incident (i.e. target, instigator and bystanders)?

- Schedule follow-ups as part of any response and assign actions to relevant teachers or wellbeing staff. Involve parents/carers in the process and keep them up to date, where appropriate.
- Consider whether the students involved are likely to need or want ongoing support. This might include support that you can provide internally, or with external support services.
- Adjust your response if, during a wellbeing check, you identify that a student requires additional support or is experiencing unintended negative consequences from the incident.
- Check the eSafety website's list of counselling and support services to help those involved in an online safety incident. This list can be filtered by audience, the type of support required, issue and state/territory.

Post incident checklist	Yes
Supporting wellbeing (continued)	
5. Were all parties involved in the incident — target, instigator, bystanders, parents/carers and staff — debriefed and made aware of the resolution? • Debriefing with students, parents/carers and staff shortly after an incident can provide clarity on the steps taken to resolve an issue and aid resolution. • Parents/carers who are concerned for their children can feel frustrated by a lack of communication from schools following an incident. Debriefing provides an opportunity to make them aware of any issues and have their voices heard during the resolution process. • Debriefing can support students to regain a sense of safety and wellbeing, allowing them to re-engage and help develop their sense of belonging with the school. • If the incident occurred outside school hours, but was managed by the school, schools should work in partnership with parents/carers to resolve the issue. eSafety's Tips for responding to incidents that happen outside school hours and Tips for parents/carers after an online safety incident resources can support good practice. • Remind staff that they have access to employee assistance programs, wellbeing representatives and external agencies that can provide additional support when responding to online safety issues.	
External involvement	
6. If the incident involved harmful content circulating online, was the content removed? • A clear first step is to contact the social media site to request the content to be removed. The eSafety Guide has links to the latest games, apps and social media, with tips on how to contact a platform or website directly to request content be removed. • Remember that the eSafety Commissioner can help to take down serious cyberbullying material, image-based abuse material or prohibited online content. • If the incident requires police involvement, schools should seek police guidance about removing content, as it may be considered evidence.	
7. If there was media coverage of the incident, was the situation handled in a way that supported student safety and wellbeing? • Media involvement in a school incident can be stressful for all parties involved. Having clear processes about how to manage this can help to alleviate stress and support student safety and wellbeing. • Depending on your education sector, there may be specific procedures for how schools engage with the media. Schools should contact the relevant media unit/team in their education department/sector or school board for guidance. eSafety's Guide to engaging with the media resource can help.	
8. If police, child protection or other external agencies were involved, have the students, parents/carers and teachers involved in the incident been appropriately debriefed? • External engagement in a school incident can be stressful, particularly if the external agency is managing the incident. Debriefing, where appropriate, and closing the loop with external agencies can help to alleviate this stress and supports the safety and wellbeing of students. **Note:** Depending on the nature of the incident, police may exclude the school from further updates about the matter. However, police may offer external support to students, parents/carers and staff through targeted sessions.	

Post incident checklist	Yes
Finalising the response	

9. Was a record of the incident collected and stored in a safe and secure location?
 	
• Incidents should be recorded in your school incident management system (or via school reporting documents). Information should be captured, and records kept, in line with education department, sector or school policies. When recording incidents remember that:
 	
  - incidents should be stored securely with password or restricted access and be consistent with relevant privacy legislation.
 	
  - detailed records can contribute to a robust and defensible approach to online incidents.
 	
  - Incident records may be used if police or legal involvement is required. In these circumstances, schools, students or their parents/carers may need to seek legal advice.
 	
  - collecting and reviewing incident data and feedback can help to identify trends, wider issues and behaviour patterns in a school. This data can be used to improve procedures and responses.	

10. Has the inappropriate behaviour stopped? • If an issue is recurring or is becoming widespread, more comprehensive and targeted online safety education could help. The eSafety website offers a range of classroom resources, which can be filtered by year level and topic. • Reflect on previous strategies that were used to address recurring issues. Identify what did/didn't work and discuss the strategies the school will implement to proactively address unresolved issues with parents/carers. • Engaging parents/carers to help reinforce positive behaviours at home and guide their children to have safer online experiences may be useful if the issue has not been resolved appropriately. eSafety's Tips for parents/carers after an online safety incident can support good practice. • Seeking external agencies to partner with the school can also assist with ongoing issues. The eSafety website includes a list of counselling and support services that can help those involved in an online safety incident. This list can be filtered by audience, issue, type of support required and location.	
11. Are procedural or policy changes required to prevent this issue from recurring? • Record your 'lessons learned' and use them to inform updates to school policies and procedures. Use this data to brief the school leadership, wellbeing or online safety teams, as appropriate, to support continuous improvement in responses. • Encourage staff to undertake professional learning about how to respond to incidents. eSafety's Responding to online safety incidents - Teacher professional learning presentation can support staff to practice their skills. • eSafety's Online safety self-assessment tool and Checklist for developing effective school policies and procedures can support good practice.	

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