

Morton Church of England Primary School

CRITICAL INCIDENT POLICY

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Reference Points

- Critical Incident Guidance from the Emergency Planning Unit
- Education Visits Policy

Introduction

The handling of crises is a normal part of school life, but some incidents are of a critical, more overwhelming nature, and in recent years such incidents have occurred within schools.

Critical incidents are those likely to cause:-

- Immediate or delayed emotional reactions in large numbers of staff, students and parents surpassing their normal mechanisms to cope.
- Serious disruption to the normal running of the school.
- Significant media attention for the school.

This policy is our school's contingency plan designed to provide a framework for handling a critical incident. The formulation of this policy is intended to define clearly the roles, responsibilities and procedures to follow for school staff dealing with such an incident. Each critical incident is unique, and it is not possible to plan for every eventuality, but similarly each critical incident can be shocking and disorientating, and therefore a prepared procedure is essential to ensure that the school's reaction is effective and efficient.

Co-ordinated support will be available from the Local Authority and LAAT, and it will be practical to contact the Local Authority/ LAAT immediately.

If the incident involves the police, they will take control of certain management issues.

Aims

The aim of this policy is to encourage and support pre-planning to help reduce the impact of an incident, and provide a pre-planned course of basic actions. It is not intended to be prescriptive or to attempt to cover all possible events. In a crisis, the central objective is to safeguard students and

staff, ensure the Head Teacher establishes early control in partnership with appropriate other agencies, minimise disruption, and to recover a full educational programme as quickly as possible.

Critical Incident Management Team

The Critical Incident Management Team will consist of the following staff:

- the Executive Head Teacher and Head of School
- the Administrators;
- the Chair of Governors;
- the Incumbent/ Rector of the Ringstone and Aveland Group
- the Senior Leaders

Appendix 1 contains an emergency contact list. This will be reviewed annually and updated where necessary.

Potential Critical Incidents

A major incident may be defined as:

- An accident leading to a fatality;
- Severe injury or severe stress;
- Circumstances in which a person or persons might be at serious risk of illness;
- Circumstances in which any part, or whole of the school is unable to function as normal due to external influences and
- Any situation in which the national press or media might be involved.

As such, major incidents include:

- Death of a pupil or member of staff;
- Death or serious injury on a school trip;
- Epidemic/pandemic/health risk e.g. meningitis, swine flu etc in school or community;
- Violent incident in school;
- A pupil missing from home;
- Destruction or major vandalism in school;
- A hostage taking;
- A transport accident involving school members;
- A disaster in the community;
- A civil disturbance or terrorism
- Fire or flood or explosion at local factories/petrol stations

- Accident on busy main road adjoining school (A15)
- Computer failure
- Consequences of terrorist or criminal activity;
- Low flying military aircraft;

In the event of an incident, the priorities of those adults in charge of the school or trip at the time must be able to:

- Save life
- Minimise personal injury
- Safeguard the interests of pupils, students and staff
- Minimise loss and to return to normal working quickly

Reaction to a Critical Incident

There is no rigid formula to responding to incidents - this depends on the nature and scale of the incident. Accurate records must be maintained of all decisions, actions and expenditure to assist cost recovery and to inform post-incident debriefs. Once convened the Schools Critical Incident Team will meet regularly to review their actions and provide on-going support for those directly and indirectly involved in the incident.

The school's reaction to a critical incident can be divided into the following categories:

- Immediate action
- Short term action
- Medium term action
- Longer term action

Immediate Action

- Remove people from danger
- Assess the situation and obtain accurate information. A clear and concise record of actions taken MUST be kept by those involved.
- Gather and brief the CIMT (Critical Incident Management Team). Brief the team, and allocate roles and responsibilities
- Make sure other people are safe and looked after
- Arrange first aid for casualties
- Call the emergency services as required and provide the following information:-
 - Precise location (including postcode)
 - Description of the incident
 - Time of the incident
 - Number of casualties
 - Report missing persons

- Nature of injuries
- Total number in the party (if an offsite visit)
- Your name and telephone number
- The name of the school

Evacuation Procedure

In the event of a fire or incident involving evacuation the same routine should be followed as that during standard fire practices. Pupils should exit and go to the nearest safe assembly point:

- All children to evacuate to grassed area at side of school away from school buildings.
- All windows and doors should be left shut if time permits.
- Registers must be taken by teacher where register in class, by administration staff when in office. Roll call will be taken by teacher in charge for each class.
- Staff should ensure pupils do not have to pass obvious danger points to reach a safe area. Classes will wait to be directed following evacuation.
- All staff must review individual route plans which are displayed in each area of the school.

Lock-Down Procedure

Lockdown procedures may be activated in response to any number of situations, but some of the more typical might be:

- A reported incident / civil disturbance in the local community (with the potential to pose a risk to staff and pupils in the school)
- An intruder on the school site (with the potential to pose a risk to staff and pupils)
- A warning being received regarding a risk locally, of air pollution (smoke plume, Gas cloud etc)
- A major fire in the vicinity of the school
- The close proximity of a dangerous dog roaming loose

In this eventuality a codeword (PERICULUM - latin for danger) will be used and senior leaders will quickly disseminate this throughout school. The following procedure will be in place and practiced frequently throughout the year:

- Senior Leader/Administrator will give signal for lockdown
- If children are outside school building a bell will be rung 4 times and all the children will return to their classroom.
- Internal and External Doors, windows and fire escapes will be locked from the inside
- Blinds will be shut and children moved away from doors and windows.
- Furniture can be moved (if safe to do so) in front of doors.
- Children will remain calm and sit out of site and under tables.
- All classes to be aware of an exit door from the classroom in case an intruder gets access.
- Wait for code word (SALUTEM - latin for safety)

- In the event that the school buildings cannot be used and evacuation is necessary staff will escort pupils to St John's Church Morton.
- Relay information to the senior management of the school/Chair/Vice Chair if the incident has taken place off the school site.
- Trigger support from the LAAT/ LA and other contacts on the emergency list. Establish clearly who is going to contact whom.
- Set up an incident management room and a dedicated phone line to deal with calls from anxious parents etc. CIMT should agree a factual statement and avoid speculation.
- Contact families affected. This must be done quickly and with sensitivity. Although mobile phones can be a good method of communication in some situations, they are **NOT** secure and should **NOT** be used to relay information about casualties. Consistency of information is vital. It may be appropriate for families to come to school and immediate emotional support could be a possibility.
- Make arrangements to inform other parents. You may need to take advice from the Police and Local Authority, especially if there is the possibility of legal liability. CIMT may wish to send a letter to parents, or prepare a leaflet.
- Inform teaching and other staff. Staff need to be cautioned about talking to the media or responding to questions from reporters. It is vital that all staff in contact with pupils are kept well-informed and feel secure in handling comments or questions from pupils.
- Inform pupils. This can be done in small or large groups depending on which is most appropriate. Care needs to be exercised to protect both children and adults closely involved in the incident. It is important that children receive a consistent account of the incident allowing for differences in their ability to understand.
- Encourage people involved to talk. The incident may need to be discussed before children go home for the day, for both pupils and adults.
- Deal with the media. No adult should speak to the press/media under any circumstances without the express permission of the adult in charge of the school at the time e.g. The Head Teacher. It is most important to seek advice from the Police and County Office before agreeing to speak to or be interviewed by the media. Media requests for information should be directed to the Headteacher. Any other statements should first be checked with LAAT Public Relations Officer and with the emergency staff at the scene. One person only should be nominated to talk to the media - preferably an LA member as above.
- Devise a plan for handling the reactions and feelings of people affected. The most common reactions will include denial, distress, guilt, anger and helplessness. CIMT need to consider outside professionals to support and debrief staff and pupils affected by the incident. Those providing support also need support. At this point the CIMT will need to plan their short-term reaction to the incident.

Short Term Action

- Reunite students with their families especially where the incident occurs outside school

- **Managing staff.** Support will need organising for all staff, preferably from within the school, but using outside agencies if appropriate. Staff monitoring should be a priority, including members of the CIMT. If a crisis persists over many hours staff will become tired, weary and upset and this will affect their powers to make sensible decisions.
- **Identify strategies for helping students cope with the situation using outside agencies if appropriate.** Staff will need briefing about ways to help the children affected by the incident, and how to identify patterns of behaviour etc. This may have implications for the wider curriculum i.e. training in bereavement counselling for staff, provision of a range of books, PSHE discussions etc...
- **Debrief - staff, students, parents as appropriate to clarify, share information, mobilise resources/agencies for support**
- **Formal and informal recognition of rituals - hospital visits, special assemblies, memorial services, etc.** It is important to remember to express sympathy to families of the hurt or bereaved. Anniversaries are also key times when support and sensitivity are required.
- **Re-establish routines.** Every attempt should be made to provide continuity for the children.

Medium Term Action

- **Reintegration especially where staff or students have had long absences following an incident.** Reintegration will need to be planned carefully, and may involve home visits prior to return, part time attendance initially, reducing workloads, putting in place mentoring process etc.
- **Consultation with professionals for support - e.g. Educational Psychologist**
- **Communication - keeping students/staff/parents informed**
- **On-going support for those involved both directly and indirectly.** CIMT especially will not be immune to reaction from their ordeal.

Longer Term Action

- **Monitor the vulnerable.** The effects of a crisis can reverberate for years and it is especially important that new staff and children are briefed in the school's history to help them understand and deal with potential repercussions, especially at anniversary times.
- **Mark anniversaries.** These difficult times need to be treated with sensitivity. Some suggestions to mark anniversaries are by annual concerts, memorial services, memorial prize-giving ceremonies, memorial gardens, etc.
- **Consider curriculum implications.** It may be appropriate to schedule INSET training for staff in loss counselling, bereavement, etc.

Action Cards (See Appendix 2)

The Action Cards give responsibilities for specified staff in the event of a critical incident

- away from the school
- in the school environs

These should be used in the event of a major incident and be carried by staff on school visits.

Due to the nature of school life, which includes the absence of staff on courses, at meetings etc. the following staff order should be followed.

On Trips (i.e. Out of School) - Action Card 1

Person identifying	(INFORM)	Group Leader informs Head or ADMINISTRATOR
	(SAVES)	Nominated adult (to be shown on risk assessment)
	(CARES)	Nominated adult (to be shown on risk assessment)

Senior Staff who hear of major incident out of school - Action Card 2

Incidents in school - Action Card 3

Person(s) identifying incident should -

(INFORM) George Trafford, Helen Whitfield (Chair), Becci Keep

(SAVE) Paediatric trained first aiders

(CARE) Patrick Winn and Emma Warren

(ASSIST) Other staff who are not immediately needed with their class

Teaching Assistants and class teachers to remain with classes.

Incident Log (Appendix 3)

This is provided to record incidents and agreed actions and is accompanied by a list of what should be asked. A review of procedures should be conducted following incidents to inform future policies.

Computer Back Up and Passwords

An up-to-date (i.e. changed daily), data back-up hard-drive will be retained off-site to cover the eventuality of a critical incident/fire in school. Daily backups are performed of the whole computer network as routine.

Computer data can be updated/amended with ARK IT Solutions (0845 459 4900).

Fires in Schools

Further guidance is contained within the school's fire policy

Location of Critical Incident Pack

Home of - Head Teacher

Home of - Administrator

School Policy Files - paper copies available from Clerk to Governors or electronically available on the website

Critical incident box outside Admin office

Full Critical Incident Pack will include

Critical Incident Policy

Pupil Contact Details (from Scholar Pack)

Staff List Contact Numbers (from ADMINISTRATOR)

Governor List (from Clerk to Governors)

Pupil Medication Records

Other school numbers

Emergency Closure Policy

Local Map identifying public telephone, police station, fire station, ambulance station, alternative parking, hospital, local schools

Back Up Tape - Administrator Home

School Plans showing fire points, isolation points for gas, water services, assembly points, storage areas of flammable products, fire extinguishers, oxygen

Road Map

Pens

Paper

Signed by the Head Teacher:

Ratified by Governors:

Date

APPENDIX 1

USEFUL CONTACTS

As part of the emergency plan, this list of contacts should be obtained as a matter of course. Telephone numbers can be added to this page and the whole list **MUST** be updated regularly and frequently.

As a matter of urgency there will be a need for emergency telephone lines. Contact the Emergency Planning Officer for Lincolnshire who is able to make these arrangements with British Telecom.

CONTACT	NAME	TELEPHONE
LAAT		01522 504014
Director of Children's Services	Debbie Barnes	01522 552222
Emergency Liaison Officer	Contact LA as above	01522 552222
Chair of Governing Body	Helen Whitfield	07951 305772
Police		01522 532222
Emergency Services: Fire, Police, Ambulance		999/112
Insurance	RPA	
Local Hospitals		
School Nurse	School Nursing Team	
Education Psychology Service Central Office		01522 553341
Childline		0800 1111
Home School Liaison Officer	Lin O'Neill	01522 553254
Social Services Area Team Leader		
Counselling Services		01522 552222
Local Religious Groups	Rev Neil Bullen	01778 219626
Samaritans		08457 909090
Citizens Advice Bureau		0870 122 4422

APPENDIX 2

ACTION CARD 1

GUIDANCE FOR GROUP LEADERS ON OUT-OF-SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

There has been a major incident - instruct all colleagues to record their actions as soon as possible:

ALLOCATE KEY RESPONSIBILITIES - as outlined by the emergency action cards

<p>The Group Leader will:</p> <p>Obtain facts and information</p> <p>Call the emergency services using 999 system.</p> <p>Retain any relevant equipment</p> <p>Inform senior school staff who will contact health and safety representatives at county who will prepare to deal with media if agreed where Headteacher will, in most cases, arrange appropriately.</p> <p>Request assistance on site as necessary.</p>	<p>ADULT 1 - INFORMS</p> <p>Group Leader named on Risk Assessment</p>
<p>The nominated adult will</p> <p>Administer First Aid where applicable.</p> <p>Establish a contact point with Emergency Services.</p> <p>Travel with casualties to hospital taking personal medication and contact details.</p> <p>Complete accident forms.</p>	<p>SAVES</p> <p>Nominated adult to be shown on risk assessment</p>
<p>The nominated adults will</p> <p>Call other assistance as necessary.</p> <p>Keep a record of witnesses</p>	<p>CARES</p> <p>Nominated adult to be shown on risk assessment</p>

Keep others informed of the situation	
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Consider abandonment of activities	
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Arrange for non-casualties to return to school	
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Remain available to emergency services and supervising colleagues	
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Maintain vital communications with colleagues at all times

ACTION CARD 2

GUIDANCE FOR SENIOR STAFF ON HEARING OF A MAJOR INCIDENT AFFECTING AN OUT-OF-SCHOOL ACTIVITY

There has been a major incident instruct all colleagues to record their actions as soon as possible:

ALLOCATE KEY RESPONSIBILITIES - as outlined by the emergency action cards

<p>Head, Assistant Head or ADMINISTRATOR</p> <p>Obtain facts and information</p> <p>Ensure emergency assistance has been called</p> <p>Confirm who is charge</p> <p>Contact other senior staff</p> <p>Contact emergency planning officer</p> <p>Contact Chair/Vice Chair of Governors</p> <p>Contact LAAT representative</p> <p>Prepare to deal with the media</p> <p>Decide who and how to tell parents of children on the visit</p>	<p>Group Leader INFORMS</p> <p>Headteacher</p> <p>Assistant Heads</p> <p>ADMINISTRATOR</p>
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<p>Head, Assistant Heads or ADMINISTRATOR</p> <p>Contact other staff</p> <p>Contact parents of children on the visit as instructed</p> <p>Establish incident room</p>	<p>ASSISTS</p> <p>Administrator</p>
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Establish room for relatives	
Remain available for supervising colleagues	

The nominated adults will CARE	CARES
Supervise and monitor pupils and classes remaining in school, or supervise pupil's collection if going home	If not used above, Assistant Head or KS1 Leader
Remain available for supervising colleagues	

ACTION CARD 3 (Page 1 of 2)

GUIDANCE FOR SCHOOL STAFF IN EVENT OF A MAJOR INCIDENT IN SCHOOL ENVIRONS

There has been a major incident - instruct all colleagues to record their actions as soon as possible:

ALLOCATE KEY RESPONSIBILITIES - as outlined by the emergency action cards

Head Teacher and/or ADMINISTRATOR will	Person identifying situation - INFORMS
Obtain facts and information	Head Teacher
Call the emergency services using 999	Assistant Head
Retain any relevant equipment	ADMINISTRATOR
Inform remaining school staff and children as appropriate.	
Contact LAAT	
Contact Chair/Vice Chair Governors	
Contact Health & Safety Reps	
Prepare to deal with media	

First Aider(s) will	Adult 2 - SAVE
Administer first aid where possible	First Aiders
Establish a contact point with emergency services	
Travel with casualties to hospital	
Complete accident forms	

Administrator	CARE
Keep a record of witnesses	Assistant Headteacher
Keep others informed of situation	
Arrange for non-casualties to evacuate school	
Care for relatives arriving at school	
Consider relocation to other premises	
Remain available to emergency services	

MAINTAIN VITAL COMMUNICATIONS WITH COLLEAGUES AT ALL TIMES

