



## **CRITICAL INCIDENT POLICY**

### **DEFINITION**

An incident becomes an emergency (critical incident) when it constitutes:

- A serious incident or disruption arising with little or no warning on a scale beyond the coping capacity of the school operating under normal conditions,
- And requiring the assistance of the Emergency Services and/or others.

The incident or event may be unanticipated, imminent or in progress. It may occur on the school property, in the local community or out of the school area (e.g. a school trip). Where there has been a death or serious injury arising through interpersonal violence, this will constitute an emergency, regardless of the perceived capacity of the school to cope.

### **AIM**

This policy is written to guide staff to deal with an emergency in order to:

- Contain the emergency.
- Maintain clear communications to all parties.
- To minimise disruption to staff and pupils.
- Provide counselling and support services where necessary
- Make a full recovery as quickly as possible

### **POSSIBLE EMERGENCY SITUATIONS**

Each and every possible scenario cannot be anticipated, and nor do all incidents require a full scale response. Possible emergency examples include:

- A deliberate act of violence, such as the use of a knife or firearm on either a member of staff or a pupil.
- A school fire.
- The destruction or serious vandalism of part of the school.
- Public health threats (e.g. pandemic 'flu).
- The loss of water or heating for a prolonged period.
- The death of a pupil or member of staff.
- An incident which affects access/egress for the school.
- A more widespread emergency in the community, for example, the release of hazardous substances, severe weather, etc.
- Death or injuries on educational visits.
- Civil disturbances and terrorism

Some incidents may not initially be classed as an emergency, but may be scaled up to an emergency level if it is deemed necessary by the Head. The criticality of an incident will also alter as the situation develops and circumstances change. Plans must not overlook the long-term effects and wider consequence management issues that can arise during or following on from an incident. Examples are:

- Death of a person associated with the school.

- Expected death of a pupil or member of staff.
- Lower scale health issue.
- Issue outside of school or in the local community.
- External incident/event requiring increased awareness.
- Short term loss of a number of staff.
- Short term loss of infrastructure systems

## **EMERGENCY PROCEDURES (SECURITY)**

**Fire Alert.** The continuous two-tone ringing of the alarm indicates a fire alert. The fire evacuation plan as described in The Staff Handbook is to be followed.

**Intruder Alert.** School buildings are protected by intruder alarms. Various parts of the site are also protected by CCTV cameras and coded locks. If strangers are seen on school premises in circumstances where a direct approach is not appropriate (e.g. in numbers, too far away, clearly hostile, etc) MPS Reception is to be notified as soon as possible. Reception staff will first attempt to notify the Site Officer as well as contacting the police. If there is any suspicion that strangers intend to cause damage, create a public nuisance or use or threaten violence the police should be notified immediately. Lockdown may be called by any member of staff.

**Bomb Alert.** The Emergency Services should be contacted for advice and called immediately if any suspect packages are reported through, for instance, a telephoned bomb threat or found on site. Suspect packages should not be moved. Staff will need to check the buildings for suspect packages if any calls are received suggesting a bomb has been planted in school.

**Lockdown.** A communication over the fire alarm tannoy, of 3 short recorded messages “This is a lockdown” alerts staff and children to a lockdown situation. All pupils are to remain in teaching rooms or, if outside, to return to the location where registered for the period. Pupils should return to classrooms if the event occurs during break/PE. Teachers are to record presence/absence of pupils and report this to the office, and log in to emails to receive further information. They may lock classroom doors if instructed to do so, shut windows and draw blinds. Children to sit quietly and remain calm. Children and staff may leave when given the verbal all clear from designated staff.

**Evacuation in Case of Emergency.** Parents should be notified asap of the reason why the school is being evacuated. School mobile phones are to be taken. Careful note must be taken as pupils leave or are collected from school.

## **EMERGENCY PROCEDURES (INJURY AT SCHOOL)**

**Emergency Involving Injury to Staff or Pupil(s) at School.** The SLT will have been called to deal with this immediately and appropriate action in calling the ambulance service and/or the police will have been taken.

## **EMERGENCY PROCEDURES (TRIPS)**

### **On trips**

Home telephone numbers should be held by the Trip Leader for all trips. A copy of the photo-page on the passport should be held when abroad. The Trip Leader or staff member in charge of a sub-group out of immediate contact with the Leader should

- Establish the nature and extent of the emergency.
- Establish the extent of any injuries and administer appropriate first aid.
- Establish the name(s) of the injured and call whichever emergency services are required.
- Make sure all other members of the party are accounted for and are safe.
- Advise other staff of the incident and that the emergency procedures are in operation.
- Ensure that an adult from the party accompanies casualties to hospital.

- g) Ensure that the remainder of the party are adequately supervised throughout and arrange for their early return to base.
- h) Arrange for one adult to remain at the incident site to liaise with emergency services until the incident is over and members of the party are accounted for.
- i) Control access to telephones until contact is made with the Head, emergency contact point or designated senior member of staff and until they have had time to contact those directly involved. Give full details of the incident.

Name

Nature, date and time of incident

Location of incident

Details of injuries

Names and telephone numbers of those involved

Action taken so far

Telephone numbers for future communication

- j) Write down as soon as practicable all relevant details whilst they are still fresh in the memory as should any other party staff members if asked to do so.
- k) Keep a record of the names and addresses of any witnesses. Legal liability should not be discussed or admitted.
- l) Complete all accident forms. The school will contact the insurers and the Health and Safety Executive.
- m) Where the media may become involved, no Leader or other party member should discuss the incident and no casualty names must be divulged. The Head or other designated spokesperson will alert the Executive Chair and will deal with the matter from that point.
- n) The main school telephone will be manned in the evening following a major incident.
- o) Pupils and staff should be briefed by the Head following a major incident.

(A summary of this is added to the final Residential Trip letters so parents have an outline of the Emergency Plan when their child is on a school trip).

**Scandal.** The action taken would depend on the particular circumstances of the scandal.

**Pandemics.** The school will follow specific advice from local health authorities. In all cases the Head will liaise with the Chair of the Executive Board. This small group would agree on what, if any, information should be passed to staff, pupils and parents.

**Emergencies Occurring Not in School Time.** Once notified of a disaster, the core Emergency Management Team (Head, Executive Board, Deputy Heads) should meet as soon as possible to discuss contingency plans in the light of that particular disaster and plan accordingly. Initial contact and discussions may need to be by telephone.

**Business Continuity.** Business Continuity arrangements are in place in the event of a partial or total loss of site or facilities. These arrangements will be activated in response to an incident causing significant disruption to the School, particularly the delivery of key/critical activities. Examples of circumstances triggering activation of these arrangements to include:

- Loss of key staff or skills e.g. above normal levels of absenteeism due to illness or other scenarios such as severe weather, transport disruption
- Loss of critical systems e.g. ICT failure, power outage.

- Denial of access, or damage to, facilities e.g. loss of a building through fire or flood, an external emergency with the school in the Emergency Service's cordon preventing access, severe weather scenarios or utilities failure
- Loss of a key resource e.g. an external supplier/partner vital to the delivery of a critical school activity such as catering.

## 1. EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT TEAM KEY ACTIONS

The key tasks and actions below are summarised in a flow chart at Annex D.

**Phase 1: Immediate Action** (Actions 1 - 7 should be undertaken straight away. The order in which these actions should be undertaken will be determined by the needs of the situation.)

### **Action 1: ASSESS CONTINUING RISK, ENSURE SAFETY OF ALL CHILDREN AND ADULTS IF REQUIRED CONTACT EMERGENCY SERVICES 'DIAL 999'**

- Deploy first aiders, if necessary.
- Account for all pupils and staff.
- Report anyone missing to the Police or other emergency services.

### **Action 2: OBTAIN INFORMATION ABOUT INCIDENT AND OPEN A LOG**

Collate as much information as possible in the incident sheet and log. Information should include the following:-

- Overview of incident/description.
- When and where incident occurred.
- Names of children and adults involved in the incident including those who witnessed it.
- If the incident is a crime scene consider preserving the scene and identify witnesses and/or potential offenders.
- Nature of any injuries/fatalities sustained. Hospitals where injured have been taken.
- Names of adults with injured children/adults.
- Actions undertaken by emergency services, including arrangements for caring for children/adults who do not require hospital treatment.
- Locations of the uninjured.
- Remaining hazards at the scene.
- Collect relevant pupil/staff lists and contact numbers as appropriate.
- Control the escape of inappropriate/inaccurate information via mobile/public phones from within the group.

Not all this information may be available but this should not delay moving to Action 3 if necessary

### **Action 3: IMPLEMENT THE SCHOOL'S EMERGENCY PLAN**

- Staff with lead responsibilities to be released from all duties.
- Collect copy of the School Emergency Plan and Emergency Pack from Reception.
- Set up operations room for the co-ordination of the incident in the MPS Hall.
- Establish an independent telephone system (use of Trip Mobiles from Reception).

**Action 4: MOBILISE THE SCHOOL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT TEAM**

- Brief the team.
- Set out first meeting.
- Clarify tasks, make plans and confirm roles.
- Set up timetable of meetings to review management of incident.
- Contact the Police.
- Identify how senior staff, including the Head, will be supported.

**Action 6: CONTACT FAMILIES OF PUPILS, ADULTS AND STAFF INVOLVED IN INCIDENT**

- Designate key member(s) of staff to make contacts and liaise with the Police.
- Ensure that persons making contacts are fully briefed with written guidance on the situation.
- If this is a Police-led incident then contact with families' should be agreed by both parties.
- Maintain a record of contacts to avoid confusion and distress through duplication of contacts and to ensure that nobody is missed out.
- Establish and offer useful telephone numbers, either for support or for more information.
- Check that families/parents are not left alone in distress, suggest that they make contact with other relative/neighbours.
- Where appropriate, give advice to parents and families (in line with media advice) on responding to contacts from the media.
- Where appropriate, give information about arrangements for uniting or putting in contact children, adults and staff with their parents/families.
- Where a parent or family cannot be contacted, consider asking the Police to visit the home.

**Action 7: BRIEF STAFF, PUPILS, PARENTS/CARERS AND OTHER MEMBERS OF THE SCHOOL COMMUNITY**

- Hold briefing meetings for all teaching and non-teaching staff, set up a schedule to keep staff informed and updated.
- Issue a prepared statement for all parents – use school website, letter or text whichever seems most appropriate to the situation. This is likely to be placed on the website from an off-site location.
- Inform all pupils in the most appropriate way (the critical incident team can assist you with this).
- Identify pupils, adults and staff who are absent. Make appropriate arrangements for them to be briefed.

**Phase 2: Managed Response****Action 8: PLAN MANAGEMENT OF EMERGENCY**

- The school's Emergency Management Team should liaise with the Police and other agencies as appropriate.
- Review actions so far, clarify tasks, assign roles and make further actions accordingly.
- Ensure that school and other agencies' actions are properly co-ordinated.
- Establish timetable of meetings to review the management of the incident.
- Clarify criteria for withdrawal of outside agencies at appropriate stage.
- Access further advice from the emergency services if required.

**Action 9: SET UP ARRANGEMENTS TO DEAL WITH ENQUIRIES AND MEDIA**

- All media contacts should be directed to or dealt with in line with advice from Head.
- Consider providing those answering the phone with a written statement as to what it is appropriate for them to say.
- Caution staff about not talking to the media.
- Organise additional staff to deal with phone enquiries and people coming to the school as necessary.
- Designate areas for parents, media, others. (This could be off site depending on the nature of the emergency)
- Ensure that the incident log includes a record of all telephone calls made and received and any actions taken.

**Action 10: MAKE ARRANGEMENTS TO SUPPORT CHILDREN AND ADULTS**

- Identify those children, adults and staff who are most likely to be in need of support and arrange for school staff/support agencies to provide support.
- Ensure that pupils, adults, staff and parent/carers are aware of the support arrangements the school is making and how these are accessed. It is good practice to inform and/or seek consent from parents/carers where there may be interaction with an outside agency.
- Consider setting aside and staffing an appropriate area for children who are becoming too distressed to continue with their lessons. Consider setting aside and staffing a further area for people coming into school who are distressed. Consider holding a staff briefing with support agencies to discuss appropriate management strategies for distressed children.
- Plan how to manage distress that may be caused by ongoing police/legal proceedings and media attention.
- Give children permission individually and collectively to discuss what has happened and their reactions. Consider putting on a special class session to give pupils information about the grieving process and to enable them to talk through their experiences.
- Plan appropriate support for staff to enable them to cope with children's questions and discussion.
- Ensure that all staff including those co-ordinating the school's response do not neglect their own need for support. Schedule staff co-ordinating the school's response to be 'off duty'.
- Ensure staff are alert to physical and/or emotional change or any other signals of distress among staff as well as children.

**Action 11: MAKE ARRANGEMENTS FOR PERSONAL EFFECTS, REGISTERS AND AREA OF SCHOOL AFFECTED**

- In discussion with parents/families, and, if necessary the Police, decide what to do with the personal effects of the individuals who have been affected.
- Consider discussing with relevant class members what would be appropriate for work (including work as part of any displays), desks, books, lockers, etc, belonging to individuals who have been affected.
- Make arrangements to adjust class registers, rotas, any other pupil listings accordingly.
- Make appropriate arrangements for the part of a school where the incident occurred.

**Phase 3: Restoration to Normality****Action 12: MAKE ARRANGEMENTS FOR EXPRESSIONS OF SYMPATHY AND/OR ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF WHAT HAS HAPPENED**

- Make arrangements to express support/sympathy to families, children and adults who have been affected.
- Make arrangements to support the plans that the family may have for a memorial.
- Make plans for attendance at funerals. Find out if school representatives are welcome. Ensure that school representatives feel able to cope with these tasks.
- Make arrangements for someone from school to visit those who have been affected.
- Consider sending cards and messages from children and staff to children, adults and staff affected.
- Consider organising a special assembly/service to collectively acknowledge what has happened and how the school is coming to terms with this. Consider involving local religious leaders. Consult with families of individual affected.
- Consider setting up an area in the school where writing, art work or other mementos can be dedicated to individuals affected.

**Action 13: PLAN FOR RETURN TO SCHOOL OF THOSE INVOLVED IN THE INCIDENT**

- Home visit by class/form teacher/member of staff to discuss arrangements for return e.g. visits, part time attendance, etc.
- Planned support for emotional needs e.g. how to cope with the comments and questions of other pupils, permission to remove themselves from lessons to go to an agreed place if they are becoming distressed, etc.
- Support for possible physical needs e.g. mobility difficulties, disfigurements, etc.
- Rota of home visits from school friends.
- Where appropriate, organise work to be sent home prior to return.
- Brief staff and children on how best to support individuals returning to school.
- Arrangements to differentiate work, manage missed course work, special arrangements for exams.
- Adjust working arrangements for staff returning to school.

**Action 14: PLAN MEMORIALS AND COMMEMORATIONS**

- Consider an appropriate memorial, taking into account the wishes of those who were involved or bereaved e.g. special garden, tree, furniture, painting, sculpture, photograph, memorial prize.
- Appeals and donations are a complex area and advice should be sought from the British Red Cross. (via the Emergency Planning Team)
- Discuss how to mark anniversaries. e.g. commemorative service/assembly, concert, display, etc
- Brief staff who subsequently join the school about the incident, also about the long term emotional needs of children and staff affected by it.

**Annex B: INCIDENT FORM**

Name	Date	Time

Initial Incident Details	Date	Time
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*Description: detail nature of incident; names of any pupil(s) involved, including age; names of staff involved; locations involved; contact details at location(s);*

Are there any casualties or fatalities?

Have the Emergency Services been called?

Is the incident currently affecting or likely to affect school activities? Where?

What is the estimated duration of the incident?



What is the actual or threatened risk to staff or pupils?
How were you made aware of the incident?
If you are on a trip – inform point of contact. Continue to follow Actions 1 to 7 and log activity (see below for log)
If you are receiving the information as a member of SLT or as Head, decide on whether to call Emergency and initiate Emergency Management Team action
<b><u>Headmistress or SLT Decision:</u></b> Is it an Emergency? <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Is it a serious incident or disruption arising with little or no warning on a scale beyond the coping capacity of the school operating under normal conditions,</li><li>• Does it require the assistance of the Emergency Services and/or others.</li></ul>
<b><u>Date and Time Declared and Emergency:</u></b>




July 2022

**Review July 2023**