

# BRIZE NORTON PRIMARY SCHOOL

## CRITICAL INCIDENT MANAGEMENT PLAN

### DEFINITION

A critical incident may be defined as:

“An event or events, usually sudden, which involve the experience of significant personal distress to a level which potentially overwhelms normal responses, procedures, and coping strategies and which is likely to have emotional and organisational consequences.”

For example:

- The death of a pupil or a member of staff
- A serious accident involving pupils or other members of the school community
- Violent attacks or intrusions onto the premises
- A disaster in the school or local community

In such circumstances, planned and effective responses and coordination of support personnel are essential to protect the welfare, health and safety of those involved.

### AIMS:

- To prepare governors, staff and pupils for an incidents that may occur
- To ensure that there is a plan that can be implemented swiftly in the case of an emergency
- To be a guide to actions in circumstances that are liable to strain the capacity of those handling the situation to think clearly

### GENERAL PRINCIPLES

#### Before the event:

Promoting resilience and coping strategies

- Positive and supportive relationships within the workplace and between the workplace and the local community.
- Awareness of and sensitivity to the issues raised by disasters, loss, bereavement.

These strategies form part of our school ethos and the curriculum experiences that we plan as part of the PSHCE curriculum.

#### After the event:

Promoting effective responses

- Careful recording of facts and of actions taken as events unfold
- Clear allocation of responsibilities for specific tasks for immediate and short term action
- Collaborative planning for medium and long-term action
- Clear lines of communication
- Positive management of media attention
- Attention to the immediate and longer-term emotional impact of major incidents

### THE INCIDENT MANAGEMENT TEAM

In the event of a serious emergency, the Incident Management Team (hereafter IMT) will take charge of the situation. This will consist of:

Team	Primary Tasks
The Headteacher	Contact and assemble the IMT

	Contact the LA and agree support required Liaise with emergency services and maintain control until they arrive Contact the Chair of Governors Review progress with IMT Keep a log of events Act as coordinator of the plan and will also have overall responsibility for communications with the media.
Senior Teacher (TLR2)	Inform staff Inform pupils as appropriate Receive parents coming into the school Will act as a deputy coordinator of the plan, in the event that the headteacher is not in school
School Secretary	Contact emergency services as directed by the headteacher Answer incoming calls Divert press/media enquiries as directed by the headteacher Ensure lists of staff/pupils/visitors on site is available
Chair of Governing Body	To inform the governing body Support the school in implementing the management plan

The main tasks of the IMT will be:

- Gathering information about the nature and extent of the emergency and establishing who has been informed about it.
- Liaise with Emergency Services where appropriate and maintain control until the ES arrive whereupon the ES will provide the lead control over the situation.
- Recording all information about the emergency.
- Controlling all links with the media.
- Controlling all links with parents.
- Producing a daily briefing (where appropriate) summarising the current situation, support systems available and short and long term plans.
- TO MAINTAIN A NORMAL SCHOOL ROUTINE AS FAR AS POSSIBLE

## COMMUNICATION

Efficient and effective communication systems are central to the effective management of emergencies.

### Rapid Alert Systems

- Emergency fire and evacuation procedures are to be prominently displayed and all staff familiar with them through regular practice.
- The fire alarm signal is to be used to trigger rapid evacuation.
- An agreed signal is to be known by all staff for emergencies where evacuation would be inappropriate or dangerous.

### Quick Access to Information and People

- A list of emergency telephone contact numbers is to be held by the head teacher and other senior staff. It is to be regularly reviewed and updated and a copy inserted in to this emergency plan.
- All staff members are to carry the Brize Norton emergency contact list on all off-site visits and journeys.
- A copy of the ground plan of Brize Norton school is to be inserted to this emergency plan.

- A visitors signing in system is to be used and is to be positioned so that it can be quickly found in times of emergency.
- The telephone tree is to be used to convey important but non confidential messages.

#### Equipment/Technology

- The schools telephone number is to be clearly marked on every handset in the school.
- A mobile phone, is to be carried by a member of staff on all off-site activities.

#### Incident Log Sheet

- The incident log sheet (found in this folder) must be completed as soon as possible after the event.

#### Miscellaneous

- In the event of a crisis it is proposed to utilise the Staffroom which is suitable for 'First Liaison with parents or others, and also as a collecting point. The side entrance gives good access to the room.
- Other rooms could be utilised in addition to the staffroom namely the Secretary's office, the reception classroom and the head teachers office.

### **MAJOR EMERGENCY RECORDS**

In an emergency demands are made on all involved. In order for people to cope effectively all up to date information is easily accessible. The following information is held in the school office is duplicated off site (headteacher) and is taken on any off site activities by the party leader.

- A copy of the Critical Incident Plan procedures
- Names, addresses and phone numbers of emergency contacts of all staff and pupils
- Contact details of emergency responders with authority
- Contact details of contractors used by the school

### **EMERGENCY ACTION PLAN**

#### Urgent Action (at time of incident):

- Should a situation be identified then the headteacher or senior teacher should be informed immediately
- The lead professional should
  - ensure place of safety established if possible
  - rapidly gain information on the situation
  - collate information on staff and children involved
- The Incident Management Team become responsible for coordinating and responding to events. An incident log of actions, with timings needs to be started.
- The responsible person should call the Emergency Services if appropriate and ensure that any immediate Health and Safety action is taken.

#### Immediate Action (within hours of the incident)

- Gather facts; aim to dispel rumour or speculation.
- Establish Incident Management Team.
- Planning meeting: Incident Management Team support personnel (Learning & Culture and other support and enforcement agencies) as soon as possible. Decide priorities for action; establish telephone and communications links and media contact (see media tips); set up incident logs; clarify who is in charge of managing the overall situation; allocate duties for specific tasks (see below).

- Contact families and log contacts made: priority for those staff, volunteers and pupils directly involved. Task continues until all informed. Ensure the person contacting families is well-informed and supported. NB Contact may need to be face-to-face; support or enforcement agencies may need to be present alongside the establishment's representative to meet next of kin. You may need to prepare a brief statement for contacts made by telephone. The Learning & Culture Planning & Development or Emergency Planning Unit can help to arrange a suitable venue or transport.

Short-term action - (same day, if possible) if safe to do so

- As appropriate, arrange for staff directly involved to meet with enforcement agencies (Police, Fire, Health and Safety Executive and or Environmental Health); if possible, have a representative from the establishment's management and relevant Trade Union / Professional Association attending. Consult enforcement agencies about what information may or may not be released to the media, parents, governors etc.
- Call meeting for all staff (include regular volunteers as appropriate). Give facts about the incident; aim to dispel rumour. Give information about support available or planned. Plan with staff how and what they may tell other people and pupils about the incident.
- Arrange for staff and volunteers directly involved to meet with the relevant support agencies (plan psychological support / assess need for counselling).
- Inform pupils not directly involved if possible in small or familiar class groups, with known teacher, helped if necessary by another staff member or support agency if available.
- Enforcement agencies may need to interview pupils directly involved (i.e. witnesses or victims). Ensure pupils are accompanied by a parent, or – with parental consent – by a senior establishment representative known to the pupil.
- Arrange for pupils directly involved to meet with a representative from a support agency with a known member of staff. Enforcement agencies and support agencies may wish to negotiate a joint interview with pupils.
- Review actions taken and forward planning with establishment's management, Learning & Culture and relevant support agencies. Ensure incident logs are being kept by those delegated

Medium and long-term action - (next few days / weeks; and planning for the next few months)

- Consult support agencies to help identify and support vulnerable or high-risk pupils, volunteers and staff (special needs; history of psychiatric / psychological problems; involvement in a similar or equally traumatic incident; lack of social and emotional support).
- Support agencies may offer group or individual work with staff, volunteers and parents.
- Promote and facilitate discussion with pupils in class / tutor groups; establishment staff may wish to seek help for this from support agencies. Plan for preparation and discussion about follow-on events (e.g. funerals; inquests; inquiries; court proceedings etc.).
- Plan a special assembly (within days) or memorial service (weeks to months as appropriate); consult next of kin and liaise with the relevant religious and cultural groups.
- If appropriate, arrange hospital visits, home visits, messages from staff and pupils to those directly affected. Maintain contact with staff, volunteers and pupils directly affected. Maintain contact with staff and pupils not yet able to return; and with next of kin. Plan for return of belongings.
- Decide on attendance at funerals; inquests; inquiries etc. as they are being planned. Consult parents about pupils' attendance; accompany pupils if appropriate. Arrange staff cover or release as appropriate.
- With help from support agencies, organise treatment; rehabilitation and return to establishment for staff, volunteers and pupils directly affected. Modify workload, and curriculum demands if appropriate, as necessary. Prepare peers for significant changes in returning staff, volunteers or pupils. Aim for return to familiar routines as soon as possible.

- Continue monitoring reactions of staff, volunteers and pupils and anticipate possible “trigger” events (e.g. inquests, birthdays). Consult support agencies and parents of pupils to identify possible need for groups or individual treatment / counselling. Arrange appropriate referrals for treatment as necessary.
- Plan for commemoration of victims as appropriate; consult with parents and with religious, cultural or community groups.
- Plan ahead for first anniversary of the incident. Anticipate the possible return of emotional reactions and support staff, volunteers and pupils accordingly; consult and seek help from support agencies if necessary.
- Review and revise the establishment’s Critical Incident Management Plan.

## **GENERAL PROCEDURE FOR A CRITICAL INCIDENT AT SCHOOL**

- Go inside
- All persons stay inside (unless emergency services advise otherwise)
- Close all doors and windows
- Tune in to local radio
- Follow advice received
- Stay calm and reassure others
- Implement critical incident management plan

## **SPECIFIC SITUATIONS INVOLVING STAFF AND PUPILS**

1. What to do if there is an intruder on site?

External to the building:

- Go inside
- All persons told to stay inside (unless police advise staff otherwise)
- Close all windows and lock all doors
- Ring the police on 999 and request urgent assistance
- Follow the advice given

In the building:

- Where possible move people away from danger
- Leave the building, if practical
- Ring police on 999 and request urgent assistance
- Follow advice given

2. What do in an emergency school closure?

The decision to close or partially close a school lies with the Headteacher and, wherever possible, following consultation with the Chair of Governors. The decision should be based on access to essential services (heating, water etc), staffing levels and transport safety. The school follows OCC procedures for school closures.

3. What to do if you see a fire?

- Ring the fire bell to raise the alarm
- Evacuate the building safely
- Call fire and rescue service on 999
- Headcount to check full evacuation
- Follow advice received from the Fire and Rescue Service Officer

4. What happens if an off site incident occurs?

The party leader becomes the emergency manager and should action procedures as detailed in the “Out and About with Oxfordshire” and OCC emergency procedures documents.

5. What if a person is travelling when an incident occurs?
  - Close windows and turn off fans
  - Stay inside the vehicle
  - Tune in to local radio
  - Follow advice/directions to emergency rest centres
  - Phone home base (school) and inform them of your location
  
6. What if an incident happens involving a vehicle used for school trips e.g. mini-bus
  - Ensure the safety and security of all individuals present – all pupils supervised
  - Notify the emergency services of the nature of the incident
  - Do not admit blame or liability for any accident
  - Notify the school/headteacher of the nature of the incident and the names, nature and extent of any casualties

On possession of this information the IMT in school will implement the procedures within this plan.

7. What if an incident happens on site?
  - Go inside
  - All persons stay inside unless emergency services advise otherwise
  - Close all doors and windows
  - Ensure occupants are comfortable
  - Tune into local radio
  - Establish contact with the directorate to agree communication channels with parents/carers/partners etc
  - Follow advise received
  
8. What if the incident concerns the wider area including the school grounds e.g. gas release
  - Go inside
  - All persons stay inside
  - Class all doors, windows and external fans
  - Ring Police on 999 and request urgent assistance
  - Follow advice received
  - If required evacuate the area
  - Collect emergency contact details of parents/careers
  - Where possible secure the building
  - Follow advice for evacuation
  
9. What if there is a terrorism or bomb threat made e.g. bomb
  - Check for suspect package or inform IMT of any threats received
  - Inform police on 999
  - Collect all belongings
  - Open all doors and windows
  - Evacuate the school to designated meeting point (fire bell)
  - Await advice from the emergency services

In all incidents you should:

- Stay calm and reassure others
- Implement critical incident management plan

<b>Radio Stations</b>		
<b>FOX FM</b> VHF/FM 102.6 01865 871009		<b>BBC Radio Oxford</b> VHF/FM 95.2 01865 889099
<b>One of these commercial radio stations pending location</b>		
<b>GWR FM</b> VHF/FM 97.2	<b>2-Ten FM</b> VHF/FM 97 & 102.9	<b>Mix 96 FM</b> VHF/FM 96.2

## **USE OF THE SCHOOL BUILDING IN CIVIL EMERGENCIES**

Occasionally emergencies that require members of the community to leave their homes and be temporarily accommodated in a place of safety e.g. floods and chemical releases. In such instances the school may be required as a rest centre. In these cases:

- The headteacher will inform the Health and Safety Executive of the school closure and plan accordingly.
- The school community will be informed of any school closure following the emergency school closure procedures.
- The IMT would meet and prioritise tasks needing to be carried out by the school during the time of the rest centre.
- Parents/carers would be kept informed of the situation through emails and website updates. Those parents without internet access would be telephoned. A notice board outside the school building would be updated daily.
- Staff would be briefed on the plan to re-establish normality. Additional caretaker hours may be allocated to prepare for reopening the school.

## **MEDIA ADVICE**

The school secretary will divert press/media enquiries as directed by the headteacher. In the event of unwelcome or intrusive media attention following an emergency, the headteacher will contact the County Council's Public Relations or the Directorate's Media Representative for advice or support; and they may act as the media liaison contact.

Any talking to the media will be by the headteacher following OCC media protocol.

### **Responding to calls from the media**

- Make a clear note of the enquiry, the caller's name and organisation, and any deadline they may have. If the caller is from a radio station or TV station, check whether the interview will be recorded live.
- Find out when the item you have helped with is likely to be published/broadcast. If they think you'll be checking there is every incentive for them to be careful with the story.
- Ask for time. Don't feel pressured into saying anything until you have a clear idea of precisely what you wish to say. Reporters will often (and genuinely) plead urgency. You can still demand a few minutes and promise to call back.
- Note down the main points you wish to make before you call back.
- Ring back when you said you would. If not, they'll get a better story from someone else and you will have lost control.
- Never be afraid to say you don't know, or that you cannot disclose the information being asked for (e.g. if it concerns confidential information; or a matter that might be subject to legal proceedings). Far better to say too little than too much.
- Keep calm and keep control. Reporters need your co-operation now and in the future and are unlikely to be hostile.

#### Before an interview

- Check whether the interview is to be recorded or broadcast live.
- Ask whether you are the only person being interviewed, or if it will be a group discussion. If the latter, ask who else will be involved.
- Find out which programme the interview is for.
- Ask what the first question is likely to be.

#### During an interview

- Answer questions clearly and concisely. Stick to the point. Avoid drifting into related, supplementary issues unless asked.
- Do not answer a question if you cannot, or do not wish to; if this is the case, give a reason.
- Avoid technical or bureaucratic language and jargon. It sounds pompous and excludes the listeners.
- Explain briefly and simply. Assume you are talking to an intelligent person, but someone who does not know your subject. That way you should cover the necessary ground economically but without talking down to listeners.
- Have a note of important points/relevant statistic to remind you.
- End your interview in a positive way by outlining either a specific plan to deal with the particular issue under discussion, or a general intention to continue working hard on behalf of the library/school/community/pupils etc.
- At all times, try to sound calm and confident, even if you don't feel it. You are there because you know something, which other people would like to hear about.

#### After the interview

- Do not ask for the interview to be played back unless there is a very good reason.

### **CRITICAL INCIDENT – SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL SUPPORT**

#### How can staff cope; and who can help them?

- Be kind to yourself, and be honest with yourself about your own reactions. If you feel overwhelmed by events, seek support. Do not feel pressured into supporting other people (including pupils) when you feel unable to do so.
- In the event of a major incident affecting the school or its local community, the headteacher would alert the appropriate agencies to co-ordinate social and emotional support for those affected.
- Advice and support would be sought from the County Council's Occupational Health Service who could advise on any appropriate specialist support needed.

#### Who may need help?

- A major traumatic incident creates 'ripples' that may affect a wide range of people: from those directly affected and witnesses, their relations, close friends and colleagues, those involved in managing the incident, to members of the local community (who may offer help, or who may share the same sense of loss or shock).
- Remember that pupils with special needs, people with a history of psychiatric and psychological problems, those already experiencing relationship difficulties, and people who have experienced past traumatic events may be particularly vulnerable.
- Knowledge of the social groupings that are important to staff, volunteers and pupils and knowledge of community networks will be invaluable in both helping to identify potentially vulnerable people and in identifying natural sources of mutual support. Support agencies will find it helpful to draw upon your local knowledge in this way.



What reactions might we notice?

- Individual reactions to bereavement and traumatic loss will vary in intensity, duration and in the ways that feelings are expressed. Generally, though, the normal grieving process has recognisable phases:

**SHOCK:** Disbelief/Numbness/Detachment



**DENIAL:** Expecting return of dead person/Sensing dead person's presence



**AWARENESS:** Pining/Anxiety/Anger/Guilt/Depression/Emptiness



**ACCEPTANCE:** Gradually re-building life and relationships/Moving on in own life

- Often, acceptance begins to develop after the first anniversary, which may trigger a temporary return of some feelings and experiences.
- Loss of concentration is a common feature of trauma or bereavement in both adults and children, and may affect individuals over a period of about two years. We often underestimate the duration of such effects, particularly in children and young people.
- Young children will often express their emotions physically (e.g. become prone to infections, disturbed sleeping or eating patterns), or through their behaviour (e.g. nail-biting, bedwetting, clinging, fear of separation or the dark). They may appear to regress in their development for a period of weeks; and may need to enact the incident through play (sometimes repetitive).
- Talking – or listening to others talk – generally helps; though people will vary in their readiness and willingness to do so. Children and some young people may need help to identify the feelings they are experiencing; and may need reassurance that what they are feeling is “normal in abnormal circumstances”.

Signed:

Headteacher

Chair of Governors

Date:

**CRITICAL INCIDENT MANAGEMENT PLAN – RECORD SHEET**

This plan is reviewed and updated annually by the headteacher, in consultation with staff and governors.

<b>Reviewed (date)</b>	<b>By (name)</b>	<b>Revision made in section(s)</b>
<b>February 2009</b>	<b>M. Smith (headteacher)</b>	<b>Whole document</b>