



# Holly Park School Critical Incident Policy

## **I Definition**

1.1 A critical incident may be defined as any unexpected occurrence which has a major impact upon the school, which is likely to cause serious disruption to the running of the establishment and/or which is likely to result in significant public or media attention.

1.2 The risks for the school are to:

- The pupils and the staff
- The buildings, premises and grounds
- The systems and services without which the school cannot function effectively.

1.3 **Links with the UN Rights of the Child**

### **Article 3**

The best interests of the child must be a top priority in all things that affect children

### **Article 33**

Governments must protect children from the use of illegal drugs.

## **2 List of Possible Incidents that Can Affect the School**

- The death/suicide of a pupil or member of staff
- A serious accident to a pupil/parent or member of staff on the premises or in the immediate vicinity or on a school visit or journey.
- An outbreak of a serious communicable disease e.g. meningitis or E-coli
- Asbestos contamination
- Major fire, flood or explosion
- A bomb threat
- Release of hazardous substances near or on the premises.
- A significant physical threat to pupils or staff by a parent/pupil or member of the public
- Hostage taking or abduction.
- Power failure – e.g. water, electricity
- Extreme weather condition e.g. snow.
- A data Attack

## **3 Major Elements for Dealing with Critical Incidents**

3.1 It is impossible to predict the exact form or effect of an emergency. Therefore we will focus on the following:

- The essential roles that need to be allocated and carried out.

- The procedures that need to be in place
- The relevant information about the school, pupils, staff and school contacts that must be accurate and up to date and
- having a plan that is sufficiently flexible to address a range of 'unusual' events which include the worst case scenario.

3.2 The plan will be kept in key areas with updated copies being able to be downloaded from off site from Google Drive and Governor Hub if necessary.

- Office
- Headteacher's room
- Deputy Head's Office
- Site Manager's Office
- Staffroom

3.3 The critical incident plan includes events such as:

Death of pupil or member of staff  
 Serious accidents or illness  
 Incidents during Educational Visits  
 Assaults on staff by parents or members of the public  
 Bomb Threats  
 Emergency school closure  
 Chemical spill  
 Flooding  
 Fire  
 Gas leak  
 Hostage situation  
 Shooting  
 Threatening person on school grounds  
 Cyber Attack

## **4 Managing information**

4.1 Liaise with the Communication Unit (media) – Barnet Emergency number.

4.2 Staff to record all conversations.

4.3 School Mobile Phone to be used for outgoing calls.

4.4 In the immediate aftermath of an incident or crisis it is possible that the school will be inundated with incoming calls from anxious parents and others – including the media. The Head Teacher should prepare for the eventuality. Staff dealing with these calls should liaise with the Communications Unit and provide an agreed, factual statement along with a reassurance that appropriate actions are being undertaken. Staff should keep a note of all conversations. A separate dedicated line(s) may be needed for outgoing calls – mobile phones are clearly very suitable.

4.5 Where appropriate, the Senior Leadership Team will authorize the use of the school website, or the text messaging service to communicate with parents and/or other stakeholders

## **5 Working with the media**

- School to advise LA Communication Unit and Barnet Press Office.
- Lead staff to refer any issues back to Communication Unit.

- 5.1 In the case of a major incident, The media will become involved very quickly. In many situations where the Emergency Services are involved the Police will take the lead on dealing with The media. Nevertheless reporters may press the school/centre for information, views and comments.
- 5.2 The media will not go away if you totally ignore them. They will be a bigger problem as they will seek out information themselves, distract staff and disrupt the work or the school. Accordingly, you should refer all enquiries to the Communications Unit within the Chief Executive's Office.
- 5.3 The Communications Unit will allocate a named and dedicated press officer to:
- Advise the Incident Manager on news and information management
  - Field and respond to media enquiries
  - Draft press statements and releases
  - Supervise and manage journalists on site where the situation arises.
- 5.4 If the media attempt to seek information from staff and/or parents, contact the Communications Unit at the earliest opportunity for advice and support and the journalist should be politely and firmly referred to the Communications Unit.

## **6 Recovery planning**

- 6.1 Once an immediate crisis has been addressed, the school will need to activate a recovery programme to start the process of returning to some sort of equilibrium as soon as possible. Schools are recommended to set up a recovery team, which will be assisted by the Local Authority and the Council. Depending on the nature of the incident, the LA may take the lead role in this process.
- 6.2 Recovery team to consider following issues
- Ways of communicating to staff, parents and children
  - Formal and informal recognition and rituals
  - Support for staff and pupils, which may include therapeutic help
  - Support for the Incident Managers and the recovery team
  - The curriculum implications – timetabling, staffing etc
  - Buildings issues (perhaps in the case of a major fire)
  - Policies and procedures implications.
- 6.3 Carry out an impact assessment with support of Recovery Team.
- 6.4 Recovery Team draws up recovery programme and carries out necessary risk assessment.

## **7 Roles**

- 7.1 The person responsible for completing and monitoring the Critical Incident Plan is the Headteacher, supported by the Senior Leadership Team, Chair of governors and Site Manager.

7.2 The Plan should be reviewed bi annually by the Headteacher, Senior Leadership Team, Site Manager and governors Finance & premises committee

7.3 The Role of the School is to:

- To contact Education and Skills/Head of School Improvement (for all critical incidents) before communicating the incident to parents, the local community or the press.
- To work with the Local Authority (LA)
- To seek to reduce the risk of incidents escalating or actual situation(s) deteriorating further.
- To maintain a school emergency plan and procedures and, to implement and follow these in the event of an incident.
- To ensure all staff are aware of and follow the school's emergency plan and procedures.
- To contact and liaise with the Emergency Services where required, both during and post incident.
- Where the Emergency Services take over control of any school-based or related incident, the School's Emergency Management Team is to ensure that all school staff and pupils follow the directions of the Emergency Services.
- In the case of smaller incidents, wherever possible the School should try to maintain the normal routine of staff and students not directly involved.
- Bring about a swift return to normality.
- To support staff, pupils, and parents in the aftermath of an accident.

7.4 Incident Managers:

- The Headteacher will take the lead responsibility for managing all aspects at the relevant incident in the event of a crisis.
- Incident managers will consist of Headteacher, Deputy Headteacher, Site Manager, Office Manager, Chair of Governors and (as available) the Senior Leadership Team.
- The Headteacher (Incident Manager) will be the initial or main point of contact with LA during a critical incident.

7.4 The team of managers to deal with a critical incident would be:

- Headteacher
- Deputy Headteacher
- Site Manager
- Office Manager
- Chair of Governors
- SLT
- Learning Mentor
- Pupil Support Officer

**Jobs for the EMT will be:**

- Head / EMT lead (Headteacher)
- Welfare officer lead (Deputy Head)
- Communication officer lead (Office Manager)
- Media (Chair of Governors)
- Facilities officer/Logistics lead (Site Manager)

**Head of EMT**

Overall command of the school EMT

**Welfare**

Responsible for issues relating to the welfare of staff  
And students both their physical and psychological  
Welfare during and post event

**Communications** Responsible for compiling, clearing and delivering information on / communications re: the concerned incident and required actions, etc to pupils, parents and staff. This person should liaise with the Council's Corporate Communications Team to ensure effective media liaison

**Facilities** Responsible for issues relating to school premises and buildings. Responsible for all logistical operations relating to the concerned incident. For example, finding emergency contractors (e.g. plumbers, electricians) or arranging alternative staff/pupil transport.

#### 7.5 The Role of the Local Authority is to:

- Give immediate support, guidance and advice to the Manager.
- Supply relevant technical expertise and advice.
- Manage the press and the media
- Provide information.
- Seek to reduce, through the exercise of its powers and functions, the risk of a major emergency arising.
- Seek to reduce the risk of live incidents escalating / situations deteriorating further.
- Act as point of communication in accessing support services e.g. Barnet press office, health and safety, Educational Welfare Team, HR, legal etc.
- Provide support in the event of a critical incident, for example Psychological support ect.
- Alert schools to a potential or emerging local emergency situation. For example: **flooding following heavy rain / major water leak; pollution and/or transport disruption** resulting from a **chemical spill** or **fuel spill; extreme weather conditions (heavy winds, rain, snowfall,freezing temperatures); major train or road crash; major incident at Heathrow Airport; terrorist bomb threat/incident; etc.**
- Subsequently, support the school to recover after the incident - facilitating a swift return to normality, and providing support and counselling for the victims and their families. This support would be delivered by the educational psychologists in association with social services and other external groups.

#### 7.6 The Role of the Emergency Services is:

- To prevent and minimise loss of life and personal injury.
- Seek to reduce, through the exercise of its powers and functions, the risk of a major emergency arising.
- To seek to reduce the risk of live incidents escalating/situations deteriorating further.
- If contacted and deployed the Emergency Services will first carry out a risk assessment of all reported incidents and/or emerging threats. Depending upon the situation they will either take over control of the management of the situation or provide advice. Where they are advisory it will be the schools responsibility to manage the incident, with support from the LA
- The police will deal with the collection and distribution of casualty information

## 8 Monitoring and Review


- 8.1 It is the responsibility of the Governing Body to monitor the effective implementation of this policy through the School Improvement Plan and to assess its impact. This responsibility has been delegated to the Finance & Premises Committee.
- 8.2 This plan will be monitored on a bi annual basis and necessary amendments will be made.

## Document Control

### Revision History

Version	Revision Date	Revised By	Revision
1.0	Autumn 2013	Simon Reid & Ann Pelham	Updated in light of new Head in post
1.2	September 2014	Govs Premises	Updated
1.3	September 2015	Govs premises	Updated
1.4	August 2016	Ann Pelham	Updated in light of Barnet advice and separated now into policy and plan Plan kept for school use only and details not shared via website etc for confidentiality
1.5	October 2016	Govs premises	Reviewed
1.6	October 2017	Govs premises	Reviewed
1.7	October 2018	Govs premises	Reviewed
1.8	October 2019	Govs premises	Reviewed
1.9	October 2020	Govs premises	Reviewed
2.0	October 2021	F&P Committee	Reviewed
2.1	Spring 2023	F&P Committee	Reviewed
2.2	Spring 2025	F&P Committee	Reviewed

### Signed by

	Name	Signature	Date
Headteacher	Ann Pelham		Spring 2025
Chair of Governors	Clare Hegarty		Spring 2025

### Distribution

Shared with
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff via school server</li> <li>• Parents via Website</li> <li>• Governors via committee meetings</li> </ul>

Date for next review

## CRITICAL INCIDENT FORM

**WHAT WAS THE INCIDENT?**

**LOCATION OF INCIDENT**

**TIME AND DATE OF INCIDENT**

**LIST PEOPLE INVOLVED IN INCIDENT**

**REASONS WHY INCIDENT HAPPENED**

**WERE THE POLICE CALLED      YES/NO**

**INCIDENT NUMBER:**

**ANY RECOMMENDATIONS:**

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**Completed by:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Position:** \_\_\_\_\_

**DATE:** \_\_\_\_\_