

9/1/2022

Hillstone Primary School

Critical Incident Policy 2022





Safeguarding Statement

At Hillstone Primary School we respect and value all children and are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all our pupils so they can learn, in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. We believe every pupil should be able to participate in all school activities in an enjoyable and safe environment and be protected from harm.

This is the responsibility of every adult employed by, or invited to deliver services at Hillstone Primary School. We recognise our responsibility to safeguard all who access school and promote the welfare of all our pupils by protecting them from physical, sexual or emotional abuse, neglect and bullying.

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1. Induction

At Hillstone Primary School we are committed to and strive to achieve best practice in all that we do. We recognise that many crises can be avoided through careful planning and preparation. This Critical Incident Plan is intended to support the school where situations of a catastrophic nature occur. In formulating this plan the school has not tried to anticipate every element that might arise out of specific crisis situations but rather have attempted to generate a range of flexible guidelines that will address a broad spectrum of scenarios.

2. Aims

- Identify potential critical incidents;
- Minimise the impact of critical incidents;
- Highlight potential school actions / reactions to staff;
- Clarify roles and responsibilities within roles;
- Identify support agencies / multi-agency partners.

3. Potential Incidents

Potential crises may include, but are not limited to the following:

- Destruction or vandalism of the whole or significant part of the school;
- Violence or assault on school premises (including grounds);
- A hostage situation or intruders on school premises;
- An abduction of a pupil from school premises or educational visit;
- A pupil missing and not found whilst in the care of the school
- Death or injuries on school journeys;
- An accident involving pupil, staff or visitors to school;
- A serious outbreak of a contagious disease;
- A natural disaster in the community
- Civil disturbance or terrorism

4. General Guidelines

There are emergencies or crises situations that no amounts of pre-planning can anticipate or effectively alleviate. However, there are generic responses expected of staff in all crises situations. Staffs are expected to:

- Avoid panic and maintain order
 - Establish what the situation is (as far as is possible)
 - Seek immediate help;
 - Seek immediate treatment for any injured parties;
 - Report the situation to a person in authority on the scene;
 - Follow all instructions issued by the police and emergency services
 - Follow schools guidance on unsolicited contact with the press; See school's Guidance Unsolicited Press / Media document
- More specific guidance on different scenarios is given in the following sections.

5. Serious Incidents at School

Examples of serious incidents might be fire, death, major accident or suicide. In the event of such an emergency:

- the Head Teacher will be in charge of co-ordinating the response. (Normal chains of responsibility should be followed in the event of the Head Teacher being absent). School's Emergency Evacuation protocol should be implemented if evacuation of the school to alternative premises be required - See Emergency Evacuation Policy
- The Head Teacher is responsible for ensuring the emergency services are notified. This may be delegated to a responsible member of staff;
- Where a serious incident involves casualties, the Head Teacher will appoint members of staff record the names of those injured and the hospital to which they were taken;
- Parents and Guardians will be informed as soon as it is possible.

6. Serious Incident – Educational Visits

General procedures for Educational Visits are stated in school's Educational Visits policy and protocol. This is supported by a range of protocols to support serious incidents. They are:

- Serious Incidents
- Pupil Missing
- Accident

Communications with parents/guardians will be managed by the school. Pupils should generally not be allowed to phone parents/guardians.

7. Threats to School

If information is received that a dangerous or explosive device has been introduced into the school the following procedure will commence:

- If the threat is directly received by the school all details must be recorded by the member of staff receiving the information. This information should be immediately communicated to the Head Teacher;

- The Head Teacher will immediately inform all staff in all areas by raising the fire alarms
- The Head Teacher should contact and be advised by the emergency services;
- The School's Emergency Evacuation and Bomb Alert Protocols should be implemented if advised to evacuate to alternative premises.

8. Intruders in School/Hostage Situation

The school operates controlled access to the premises during core hours, morning and after school activities. All staff, volunteers and students working in school are required to:

- Maintain procedures to assure efficacy of the controlled access system;
- Adhere to and implement school's safeguarding policy, procedures and protocols;
- Adhere to and implement school's Visitor to school policy

All staff should be especially conscious of:

- Any unusual activity;
- Unauthorised visitors (not wearing a visitor sticker/badge);
- Indicators that locked exit doors have been tampered with;
- Unusual, suspicious or out of character behaviour exhibited by individuals in school.

If staff observe any doors not secured or propped open this should be reported to the Head Teacher, Senior Leadership Team or administration office immediately.

Staff should report any out of the ordinary activity to the Head Teacher / Senior Leadership Team and administration office. Caution should be used if approaching or challenging intruders in order to avoid provocation.

Where an unauthorised visitor is considered suspicious and/or aggressive the Head Teacher should contact the Police. (Normal chains of responsibility should be followed in the event that the Head Teacher is absent). They will then decide on the appropriate action with advice of the Police. In certain circumstances staff may be advised to remain in classrooms with pupils. Where evacuation is considered necessary the Head Teacher will implement an evacuation with audible alarm or, where this may provoke an adverse reaction from the intruder/hostage taker, a silent evacuation will be implemented.

9. Serious Outbreak of a Contagious Disease

If a breakout of a contagious disease is known the school will contact Birmingham City Council's Health and Well-being Team to determine if it is communicable in a school setting. The school will follow the advice and direction given.

10. Accidents

Pupils/Staff/visitors involved in an accident – as per normal school procedures

During Educational Visit – as per normal Educational Visit Policy

11. Emergency Evacuation/Closure of the School

In the event that the school must be evacuated, School's Emergency Evacuation Protocol will be implemented.

Staff will escort pupils in an orderly and closely supervised manner to the designated alternative premises.

The Building Site Supervisor, if on site will ensure that access for emergency services is available as required and utilities (gas/water/electricity) are disabled if necessary and safe to do so. If the Site Manager is not on site, they will be summoned immediately. **This is only required in a critical situation and does not apply to normal evacuation.**

Where an incident that requires school closure occurs overnight, the Head Teacher will contact the local radio stations to broadcast notice of the school closure and information of any temporary accommodation if in place. Normal chains of responsibility should be followed in the event the Head Teacher cannot be contacted.

The Head Teacher will arrange for notification of closure and/or temporary accommodation to be displayed at the school premises. Information will Hillstone Primary School also be posted on the school's website and Scholarpak messages will be sent to parents to keep them informed.

12. Communication

If a critical incident occurs the external line in the Head Teacher's office will be designated for the use of making outside calls only. The Head Teacher will inform and liaise with Trustee and School Support and the Chair of Trustees.

The Head Teacher will contact the Local Authority Media Relations Office for assistance in preparing a press statement. Staff and Trustees should avoid any communication with the Press/Media other than the prepared statement.

In line with school's Educational Visit policy and protocols all teachers who are out of school with pupils will have a mobile telephone for the purpose of advising the school of a critical incident.

The Head Teacher or the Chair of Trustees will be designated as press officer. They will be responsible for all communications media. The press officer will agree the timing of the press release and liaise with emergency services to provide a single joint statement if applicable. All press releases will demonstrate to the media that the school is controlling the incident in a caring, competent and responsible manner and seek to set minds at rest countering any rumours.

The administration staff (under the supervision of Business Manager) will manage all telephone / electronic communications received from parents / guardians and other interested parties except the Press/Media. This will leave the Head Teacher / Senior Leadership Team to manage the immediate situation. Details of all incoming calls / calls to parents / guardians will be recorded. A briefing statement will be prepared by the Head

Teacher and given to those staff managing telephone calls. Staff will be directed to relate the statement verbatim. Where appropriate other useful telephone numbers will be given to parents / guardians e.g. hospital, emergency disaster line.

The administration staff will be responsible for managing parents/guardians arriving at school or the temporary emergency premises during a crisis situation. Where appropriate a room will be set aside for parents / guardians to wait during a crisis situation or until they can be reunited with their children. Parents / guardians will be reunited with their children as soon as possible and a record maintained noting which children have been collected.

Press and television crews will not be given access to the school premises unless by express permission of the Head Teacher is given. Where a press briefing is arranged and the use of the school premises is not possible / appropriate, an alternative location will be designated.

All staff will receive a briefing re the incident as soon as is possible to minimise uncertainty and ensure rumours do not circulate.

Pupil will be briefed as the Head Teacher feels is appropriate.

13. Longer Term Action Following a Crisis

- Counselling for staff and pupils should be arranged as soon as possible and offered to parents/guardians if appropriate;
- The relevant support agencies will be contacted by the Head Teacher as deemed appropriate;
- Parents/guardians will be updated on what is happening in school subsequent to an incident

14. Roles and Responsibilities

The following are principles which apply **over the long term**. Roles may be delegated however the responsibility remains with the persons named below. In a specific crisis situation the most senior staff member involved will assume responsibility for managing the situation until the post holder is available. In such a situation they are authorised to exercise professional judgement and act as they see fit in the interests of the pupils, staff and the school, knowing they have the support of the Head Teacher and Trustees.

1. Head Teachers

- Overall responsibility for safeguarding pupils, staff, volunteers, visitors and students on placement;
- Overall responsibility for planning, risk assessment, management crisis, aftermath;
- Ensure staff access training and that the policy, procedures and protocols are embedded in the working practice
- Ensure safe systems are in place
- Ensure practice evacuations are conducted and reviewed

- Overview of communications with outside agencies, parents/guardians and the media.
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2. Deputy Head Teacher

- Assume overall responsibility in the absence of the Head Teacher
- Prime responsibility for ensuring pupils are supported in the aftermath of a disaster;
- Support for staff and parents/guardians

3. Assistant Head Teacher (s)

- In the immediacy of a critical incident situation assume overall responsibility in the absence of the Head Teacher and Deputy Head Teacher
- Assist the Deputy Head Teacher in supporting pupils in the aftermath of a disaster;
- Support staff and parents/guardians

4. Visit Leader (Educational Visits)

- Ensure visits are planned in accordance with the school's policy, procedures and protocols;
- Ensure all risk assessments and documentation, required as part of the school's visit approval application process, is completed prior to commencement of the visit;
- In the immediacy of a critical incident situation occurring offsite during the visit assume overall responsibility and coordinate communication with school / emergency services;
- Implement the appropriate crisis protocol;
- Act as a source of advice/guidance to participating colleagues and volunteers.

5. Business Manager/Office Administrators

- Ensure that data systems are secure;
- Ensure automated backups occur successfully;
- In a crisis, manage telephone / electronic communications to the school;
- Ensure emergency services are contacted in a crisis situation;
- Manage communications in the case of a move to a temporary alternative office off-site

6. Site Manager

- Ensure safety and security of the site
- Ensure emergency services have access
- Disable utilities if appropriate and safe to do so;
- Liaise with contractors and supervise repair works

7. Teachers

- Ensure the safety of pupils;
- Ensure safe practices in accordance with school's policies, procedures and protocols;
- Maintain vigilance;
- Support Colleagues;
- Liaise with parents/guardians when directed.

8. Other School Staff

- Ensure the safety of pupils;
- Ensure safe practices in accordance with school's policies, procedures and protocols;
- Maintain vigilance;
- Support Colleagues;
- Liaise with parents/guardians when directed.

9. Local Authority – LEA Emergency Team

- Provide practical support in the event of a crisis;
- Support in securing alternative provision premises if required;
- Guidance and support with media enquiries

15. Date

All data is held on school's computer system which is backed up daily, Senior Leadership and Management Teams have been actively involved in the development of this plan and have access to copies in the event that the school's computer system cannot be accessed.

16. Press / Media Contact

Please refer and adhere to school's Guidance Unsolicited Press / Media document. Journalists are not allowed onto school premises during the handling / management of a critical incident. All communications with the Press / Media will be authorised by the Head Teacher. (Normal chains of responsibility should be followed in the event the Head Teacher is absence). Where deemed appropriate the Head Teacher will seek assistant from Birmingham City Council. Staff should not communicate with the Press / Media unless authorised to do so. Staff will not permit Press/Media access to pupils in their care.

17. Building Issues

Any serious damage from Vandalism / Fire Damage should implement the school closure procedures

Date reviewed: September 2022
Date of next review: September 2023