

Huntspill Community Federation



MAJOR INCIDENTS & CONTINGENCY PLAN



Lead Person: Derek Nevell
Committee: Welfare
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THIS POLICY IS TO BE USED ALONGSIDE:

- 1. CRITICAL INCIDENTS IN SCHOOLS 2016-2017**
- 2. KEY CONTACTS FOR SCHOOLS AT TIMES OF MAJOR INCIDENT**

On rare occasions a school or CYPD establishment may face a major incident. This might be a critical incident associated with trauma, or a number of incidents requiring urgent action &/or closure. In this situation we would do the following:

- contact the emergency services as required;
- contact CYPD so the appropriate people within the LA are mobilised to help

KEY CONTACT

Assistant Principal Educational Psychologist

A flowchart of the steps we should follow, with relevant telephone numbers, will be kept in the school office so it is accessible in an emergency.

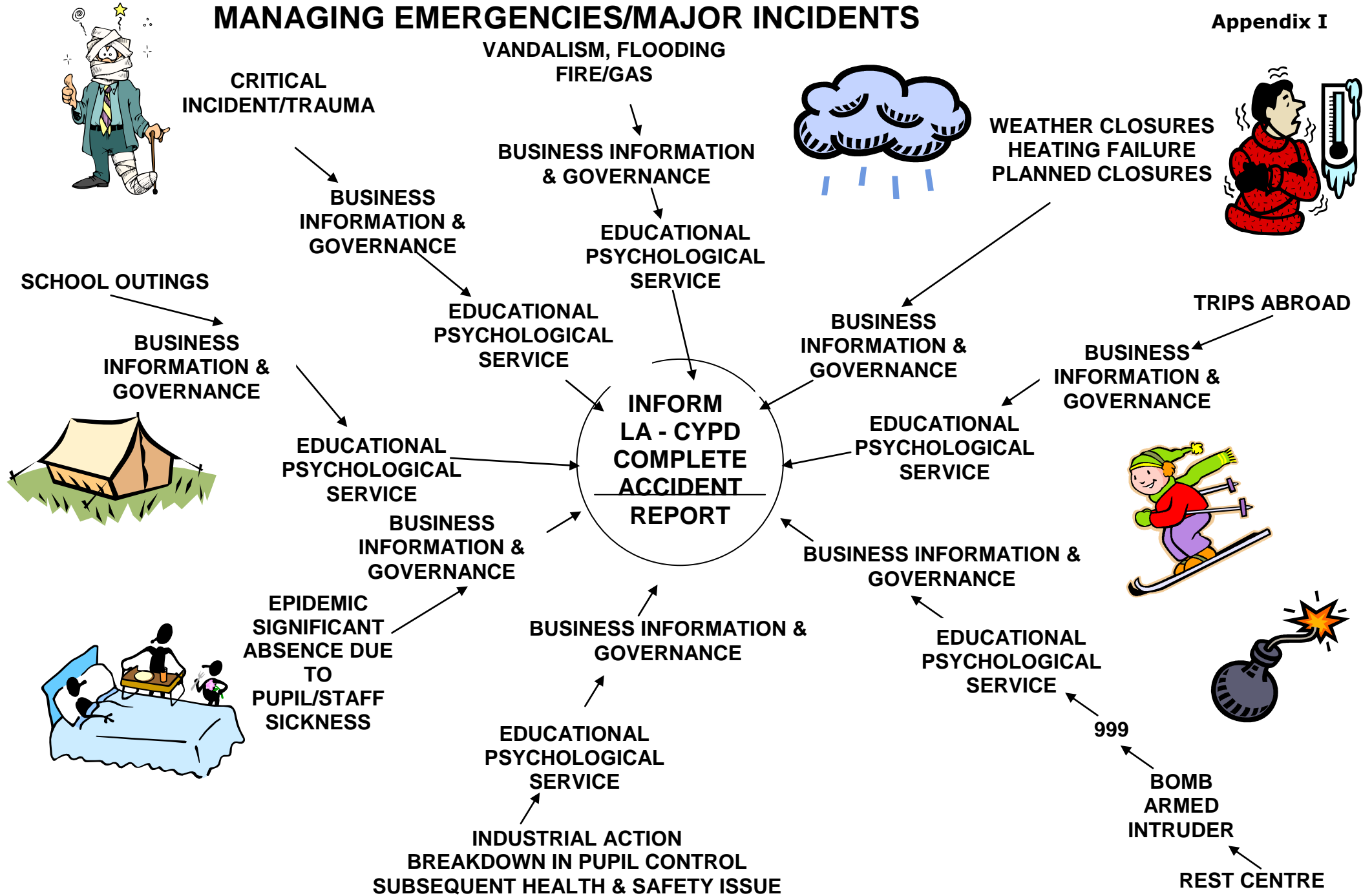
Appendix I Flowchart

The final section is entitled 'Critical Incident Contingency Plan' & includes:

1. What is a critical incident?
2. Act promptly
3. Inform staff
4. Inform governors
5. Inform parents
6. Inform pupils
7. Deal with enquiries
8. Deal with the media

MANAGING EMERGENCIES/MAJOR INCIDENTS

Appendix I



CRITICAL INCIDENT CONTINGENCY PLAN

WHAT IS A CRITICAL INCIDENT?

A **Critical Incident** may be defined as a single incident or sequence of incidents which:

- are sudden and unexpected
- contain real or imagined threats to a person
- overwhelm usual coping mechanisms
- cause severe disruption
- are traumatic to anyone

CRITICAL INCIDENTS AFFECTING SCHOOLS MAY INCLUDE:-

- The death of a pupil(s) or member(s) of staff through sudden accident, murder, terminal illness or suicide.
- A serious accident involving pupils & school personnel on or off school premises.
- A violent attack or violent intrusion onto school premises, eg involving an armed intruder or a bomb alert.
- Fire, flood, building collapse or major vandalism in school.
- A disaster in the community, eg transport accident, terrorism.

The **TRAUMA** caused by critical incidents challenges individuals mentally, physically, emotionally & spiritually.

ACT PROMPTLY

In the event of a Critical Incident the Headteacher will need to act promptly & be responsible for dealing with the following issues:

- Emergency Services - check that these have been contacted as necessary.
- Gathering Information - A vital first task is to obtain accurate information about the incident. Rumours spread quickly & can add to the distress of those involved. Find out:-
 1. What has happened
 2. Where & When
 3. Extent of injuries, numbers & names
 4. Location of injured and uninjured

Accessing Support - The school should contact the Senior Educational Psychologist at the Area Base who will initiate the Critical Incident Response Procedure.

Note: The involvement and expertise of other LA personnel is also available to schools:-
e.g: Communications Team (Press Office) can advise and give practical help to Headteachers on dealing with the media.

INFORM STAFF

- Ensure all staff are informed promptly of the incident - it may be necessary to convene a short staff meeting.
- Establish procedures for keeping staff up to date with incoming information.
- Agree how and when pupils will be informed.
- Be sensitive to the feelings of staff, particularly those who are closest to the pupils & adults involved in the incident & to those who have had recent personal traumas.

INFORM GOVERNORS

- The Chair of Governors or the Vice chair of Governors should be informed as soon as possible after a major incident.

INFORM PARENTS OF CHILDREN DIRECTLY INVOLVED

- Parents of children directly involved should be contacted quickly and with sensitivity.
- The school may need to set a room aside in school for meetings with parents.
- In the event of an incident involving death or serious injury, particularly off site, the police will often make the first contact with families.

- Wherever possible, parents of all other children in the school should be informed that the school has experienced an incident and that their child may be upset.
- Prepare a letter to parents for distribution as soon as possible which gives:
 - brief details of the incident without names
 - an explanation about the involvement of the Educational Psychology Service or other services supporting staff and pupils at the school
 - how parents can get more information

INFORM PUPILS

- Pupils should be told simply & honestly what has happened. This is probably best done in the smallest groups possible - classes or year groups.
- Questions should be answered in a straightforward way, passing on only facts & avoiding speculation.
- Some classes or year groups may be more directly affected by the incident & will benefit from extra consideration, support and sensitive handling of information.
- Siblings & other close relatives of victims should be informed separately &, where possible, in liaison with parents.

DEAL WITH ENQUIRIES

The school may be inundated with telephone calls. People will need to staff the telephone which can be a stressful task.

- The confidential nature of the task should be emphasised to all telephone operators & clear guidance given on what it is appropriate to say.

- An agreed factual statement should be available for the telephone operators, which includes reassurance about the action being taken at the school/incident site.
- Those answering the telephones should keep notes & have them checked against school records so that there is certainty about who has telephoned in & who should still be contacted. This should include media, governors, etc.

DEAL WITH THE MEDIA

- Headteacher or senior teacher to liaise with the media.
- Liaise with LA Communications Team (Press Office) - who will advise on the content & presentation of the statement.
- Prepare a brief written statement which can be read out or handed to reporters. Stick to the facts - do not be tempted into speculative comments.

FURTHER ISSUES TO CONSIDER:

- In the event of a major incident or disaster the emergency services (police, fire, ambulance) will take the Lead role & the Social Care Department have a statutory duty to manage & co-ordinate the situation in line with Somerset County Council's Emergency Planning Procedures.
- Staff & pupils may require further support following a critical incident.