

ST MARY'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

CRITICAL INCIDENT AND EMERGENCY RESPONSE PROCEDURES

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Introduction

A Critical Incident is a significant event in the School which can impact on the physical and well-being of School staff and pupils and may cause physical damage to the School buildings and assets.

A critical incident may arise from any number of circumstances, such as:

- A school building becoming unsafe as a result of a fire or structural damage.
- A school building becoming unsafe as a result of severe weather such as floods, high winds, extreme storms or heavy snow.
- A situation where the safety of a pupil or adult is threatened, or there is a loss of life.

Additionally, a range of circumstances might constitute an emergency, such as adverse weather conditions, which prevent the School from opening.

In some circumstances, LOCKDOWN procedures might need to be enacted very quickly to protect the School and those in it from an identified and urgent risk, such as the following:

- An intruder on the school's site or nearby.
- A local incident, such as a civil disturbance or risk of air pollution.
- A fire adjacent to the School.
- A dangerous dog or another animal which is nearby.
- A firearms or weapons attack.

Lockdown procedures are at Appendix 1.

The aim of these procedures is to:

- Be able to respond rapidly and effectively, using resources efficiently, mitigating the impacts of any type of emergency on the School, pupils and staff.
- Be able to identify key issues and prepare for the unexpected makes it easier to stay calm and confident in an emergency.
- Prevent or minimise the loss of life and injury to pupils and staff.
- Prevent or minimise potential damage to the School's infrastructure.
- Alert relevant parties, for example, emergency services, the council, parents and school governors.
- Have a designated person to take control at the scene until the emergency services arrive.
- Minimise disruption to the normal daily routine of staff and pupils.
- Support staff, pupils and parents in the aftermath of an incident.
- Ensure effective working with the media.

Guidelines for Critical Incidents

In any critical incident situation, the School will refer to the ***Emergency Conditions & Major Incident Guidance for Head teachers 2018/19***. The Local Authority (LA) can provide practical support to headteachers and governing bodies in planning for and managing such incidents. In event of a Critical

Incident, the Wiltshire Council should be contacted on **0300 456 0100**, clearly identifying that you are calling to report a critical incident. Out of office hours your call will be diverted to the emergency duty team which also provides out of hours cover for 'social services' responsibilities.

The School Business Manager is responsible for ensuring that the School holds the latest version of the LA Guidance and that staff are refreshed in procedures annually.

The School will also hold a copy of ***Planning for and Managing Critical Incidents in Schools and other Settings Emergency Information Booklet***, published by the Wiltshire Educational Psychology Service (Jan 2018).

Preparation for a response to critical incident

To maintain an appropriate level of readiness for a critical incident, the School's SLT under the direction of the Headteacher must:

- Ensure contact details of staff, parents and relevant agencies are kept up to date by admin staff.
- School communication systems are working and available.
- All staff and governors have been consulted on and are aware of the procedures in this document.
- This guidance and the LA Guidance publication are readily accessible.

Critical Incident Communications

Response by LA

If a critical incident is reported to the LA ***other than by the School***, the LA will contact:

- Headteacher.
- Chair of Governors.
- School Educational Psychologist.
- CASP (where applicable).
- LA Press Office (day time only 01225 713114).

Informing staff and parents

- Emergency contact details are kept by the School for all parents.
- Admin staff will contact all parents by phone in the case of an emergency.
- In the case of School closure, messages will be relayed on Heart FM and BBC Radio Wiltshire.
- The Headteacher is the main point of contact for corporate communications

Informing pupils

Where circumstances allow, the School will endeavour to:

- Share information with pupils in class groups in a sensitive and non-threatening manner, with Class teachers giving the same message across the School.
- Allow pupils time to ask questions and have opportunities to talk about the event.
- Act sensitively to members of staff that may have experienced trauma or bereavement as a result of the incident.
- Give individual attention to those pupils with specific physical or mental health needs, where a familiar member of staff, such as a TA, may brief them on a one-to-one basis.

Media

- The LA Press Office will take a lead for dealing with media in the event of an incident and will liaise with Education officers to ensure the correct information is passed to the Media.
- Staff must not deal directly with the Media and any requests must be passed to the Press Office. Staff are to be aware that any comments made to the Press could jeopardize any subsequent enquiry following on from the event.

Finance

- The Headteacher and School Finance Officer have access to School funds. They are authorised by the governing body to spend emergency funds where necessary.
- Staff will keep a full log of expenditure and keep receipts if money needs to be reimbursed following on from the incident.

Post Critical Incident Review

Subsequent to a critical incident, the following tasks should be considered under the direction of the Headteacher or designated member of staff:

- Draw up a log of information relating to the incident.
- Debrief individual members of staff as necessary to their role in the incident.
- Arrange a meeting of all staff to brief them on the incident and its outcomes.
- Debrief pupils on events.
- Identify pupils, staff and parents at risk of post-traumatic stress.
- Identify any physical or mental health needs and make referrals as appropriate.
- Initiate a bereavement strategy if necessary, ensuring that pupils and a staff are available of the support available from the School and external agencies.
- Undertake a post incident review with external agencies to identify lessons and implement changes as necessary

Emergency Response Procedures

Adverse Weather

Whenever possible, the School has a duty to remain open during adverse weather conditions. The decision to close the school will always take account of the safety of pupils and staff and will ultimately depend on the ability of individual teaching and support staff to be on site.

It is the responsibility of all staff to inform the Headteacher if they are unable to attend work. It is expected that staff will attend School wherever possible by sharing lifts or using public transport if necessary; however, no one should attempt to go to School if they feel it would threaten their safety to do so.

Before school has opened

The guidelines relating to a decision to open or close the School before the School day has begun are as follows:

- Unless informed directly by a member of staff, it should be assumed that the School will open.
- The decision to close the school will be made by the Headteacher following consultation with the Chair of Governors.

- Once the decision to close the School has been made, the Headteacher will inform all members of staff who have registered a mobile number with them.
- The Headteacher will contact Wiltshire LA and inform local radio stations Heart FM and BBC Radio Wiltshire of the School's closure. Telephone numbers and the Heart password are in Part 1 – Annex of the Emergency Information Booklet.
- A message will be added to the School's website and any social media pages to confirm the closure.
- On each day of closure, as soon as possible, the Headteacher will contact the Chair of Town Heads to inform them of the intention to close the School due to adverse weather. If the Chair of Town Heads is unavailable, the Vice Chair is to be informed.

After school has opened

The guidelines relating to a decision to close the School after the School day has begun and following worsening conditions are as follows:

- The decision to close the School will be made by the Headteacher following consultation with the staff and Chair of Governors. Where possible a decision will be made about subsequent days.
- The Headteacher will contact Wiltshire LA and inform local radio stations Heart FM and BBC Radio Wiltshire of the School's closure. Telephone numbers and the Heart password are in Part 1 – Annex of the Emergency Information Booklet of the School's closure.
- A message will be added to the School's website and social media pages to confirm the closure and the School's answer phone.
- Admin staff will begin to phone parents and inform them of the School's closure. They will also make use of email requesting that parents reply to acknowledge receipt of the message. The School will only release children to parents collecting on behalf of other parents if the parent is known to the School and arrangements are already in place.

Flu Pandemic

Similar arrangements would be employed if the School needs to close in response to a human flu pandemic. In this instance, the School would be informed by the LA of the need to close in order to prevent the infection of vulnerable groups, for example, from child to child. It is expected that in this event staff will still be required to attend School, except where they themselves are ill or caring for infected dependents.

Evacuation of the School in the event of fire

The School has a set procedure for evacuation of the School in the event of fire. Drills are practised regularly, and a record kept by the School Business Manager. In the event of fire, assembly points are:

- Reception and KS1: KS1 playground.
- KS2: KS2 playground.
- Office staff and Nursery: Main carpark.

Major evacuation of the School

- On the order to evacuate the School in the event of a critical incident, the School Business Manager will ensure that the School's emergency packs are made available to the emergency services or other authority that request them. Items contained within the pack are listed in

Appendix 2. One pack will be retained by the School Business Manager in the School Office and a second in the Deputy Headteacher's office.

- All Staff and pupils are to assemble in the field to the rear of the School, ensuring that they are at least 250m from the nearest building. Each Class teacher is responsible for evacuating their own classroom or place of activity by the nearest exit. TAs are to check toilets and cloakroom areas where applicable and close doors and windows where safe to do so.
- In circumstances such as a gas leak, the School population will move to Ivy Lane School. as the evacuation must be to at least 250m away from affected buildings. Ivy Lane has agreed to act as a host venue in the event of a major evacuation (November 2018).
- Children will be walked to the Ivy Lane site in Class groups. Admin staff will take the contact records so that parents can be informed and asked to collect the children at an appropriate time from Ivy Lane. If internet access is available, text messages would initially be sent via the School's texting service.
- Once the affected building is declared safe by the emergency services, children will be walked back to St Mary's School if there is still time left in the school day to resume classes.

Sheltering

If children and staff must shelter in the School, they will be kept safely until the School is advised that they may leave the premises. Children will only be allowed to leave when it is safe to do so, and they can be handed over to a responsible adult.

All efforts will be made to communicate with parents. A message will be put on the answer phone on the main school number.

Incidents that happen to pupils or teachers outside of school hours

All staff have the telephone numbers of the Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher. Depending on the incident, appropriate emergency arrangements will be made using common sense.

If additional support such as advice or counselling is needed, then the most senior member of staff will seek out the relevant information and put a response in place.

Incidents that happen on school trips out of the area

Risk assessments are carried out prior to any visit. Each trip has a named member of staff to lead the visit.

A residential School trip notification form is completed prior to the visit and 24hour emergency telephone numbers are provided.

The trip leaders must have all the appropriate School contact details and the emergency number for the LA.

In the event of an emergency, the most senior person listed on the Residential School Trip Notification form is contacted and they will decide the most appropriate course of action. This may be a coordinated response or a major incident response.

END

LOCKDOWN PROCEDURE

Lockdown is the ability to restrict access quickly, prevent staff and pupils from moving towards danger, or frustrate or delay the identified risk from entering the School. Lockdown procedures will be regularly supported with staff training.

In the event of a potential risk being identified, the Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher will be informed immediately. The Headteacher will decide whether the procedures for lockdown should be initiated.

Where a lockdown is required, office staff will phone external classrooms and inform staff that a lockdown is in place. Members of staff in each room will ensure that external doors are shut.

Office staff will inform the emergency services of the situation. The Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher will set the door entry system to 'force all doors closed' and inform the Local Authority of the situation.

During lockdown all staff must:

- Bring pupils inside.
- Check all pupils are accounted for and alert the Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher if any are missing.
- Communicate via the internal phone system any updates to the situation (where it is safe to do so).
- Lock all external doors and windows.
- Draw blinds, cover internal door windows.
- Staff should endeavour to keep the pupils occupied and calm.
- Once a lockdown is underway, staff must continually risk assess the cause of the lockdown (with support from the emergency services); the movement of pupils should only be undertaken with the approval of the emergency services.
- A lockdown will remain in place until it has been lifted by the Headteacher in conjunction with the emergency services.
- A fire alarm will trump the lockdown, and it will be the cue to evacuate the School

In the event of a firearms or weapon attack staff must also:

- Switch off classroom equipment.
- Switch all mobile phones to 'silent,' so as not to give positions away.
- Refrain from using the internal phones after the initial lockdown command if use of the phone could alert the attacker(s) to the presence of pupils and staff.
- Consider the safest areas for the children to be in.

Parents

- Parents are to be informed that the School has a lockdown procedure to reassure them that the School understands concerns for their children's welfare, and is doing everything possible to ensure their children's safety.
- Parents are told **NOT** to contact the School if they are aware that a lockdown procedure is in place as this can block the school's telephone lines when they are needed to communicate with the outside world.
- Pupils will not be released to parents during a lockdown.

- Parents must wait to be contacted about when it is safe to collect their children and where this will take place; parents will also be made aware of what will happen if the lockdown continues beyond school hours.

Staff

Staff are to be familiar with the School's lockdown procedures. A lockdown drill will **NOT** be practised so as not to frighten or confuse pupils.

Communication

This lockdown procedure is available on the School's website. Lockdown drill information may also be displayed in each classroom alongside the School's fire evacuation procedures.

Support for staff and pupils

In the event of a prolonged or particularly challenging lockdown, emergency services, local authorities and voluntary sector organisations will be asked to work together to coordinate practical and emotional support for those affected by the lockdown events.

END

EMERGENCY PACK – CONTENTS LIST

Contents

- 1 Carry holdall
- 1 x armband - Incident Controller
- 1 x safety helmet
- 2 x large LED torches
- 1 x megaphone with spare batteries
- 2 x Foil first aid blankets
- 5 x high-visibility vests
- 10 x emergency glow stick
- 1 x hazard barrier tape
- 2 x disposable respirator masks
- 1 x clipboard c/w waterproof labels
- 2 x permanent marker pens
- 1 x pair work gloves
- 1 x protective goggles
- 1 x Hand Sanitizer spray
- 1 multi-function hand tool
- 2 x safety whistles
- 1 notebook with pencil
- 1 x large First Aid Kit