



Little Sutton Primary School Critical Incident Plan

INTRODUCTION

In responding to an incident the aim should always be to ensure:

- Minimise risk of harm to students, staff and parents
- rapid and appropriate action is taken;
- accurate information is provided;
- normal school routines are maintained as far as possible, giving continuity to pupils;
- immediate, sensitive and non-intrusive support is offered;
- trust and confidence is maintained in the school.

DEFINITION OF A CRITICAL INCIDENT

An incident becomes a critical incident when it constitutes a serious disruption arising with little or no warning on a scale beyond the coping capacity of the school operating under normal conditions, and requiring the assistance of the Emergency Services and/or Birmingham City Council/LEA and others. A critical incident may also be declared when the response the school makes to an incident will have a significant impact on the trust and confidence of the pupils, parents or community and applies equally to serious, less serious and internal incidents.

Examples of such incidents impacting on schools could include

- death or serious injury as a result of violence, accident, self-harm and/or sudden/traumatic illness;
- major fire;
- building collapse;
- riot and/or civil disorder;
- natural and/or man-made disaster;
- terrorism;
- missing person(s)/abductions.

Internal incidents which have a significant impact on the school.

These incidents might occur:

- on the school site during school hours;
- on school transport;
- whilst the pupils are taking part in activities away from the school site;
- on school premises as part of after school activities;
- within the local community involving pupils from the school.

Using this definition as a basis for decision making, an incident is declared to be a critical incident following consultation between the person(s) managing the incident within the school (normally the head teacher and/or the senior management team) and the senior officer in Birmingham City Council Emergency Team. If there is doubt it is always better to consult and err on the side of caution and declare an incident critical.

GOOD PREVENTATIVE PRACTICE

Curriculum

We will address sensitive issues such as death, bereavement and serious injury as appropriate within the general curriculum. Therefore, pupils will not have to address these issues for the first time following a critical incident. These issues may be covered through studies in R.E., geography, history and PSHE.

Pastoral support

We will develop an atmosphere of support and trust amongst our pupils and parents, and provide opportunities for them to talk and share their feelings.

Behaviour policy

As a positive measure to ensure our pupils' safety, our well-established behaviour policy applies off-site as well as within the school boundaries.

Whilst careful pre-planning and effective risk management will minimise our pupils' exposure to dangerous situations, unforeseen hazards may well occur. In these situations, we will immediately brief children about how to proceed and require their compliance with any rulings we make.

Training

We will, from time to time, brief or train all relevant staff groups on their role in the prevention, management and response to incidents.

Security

We will employ effective security measures to prevent unwelcome visitors entering the school; and out of hours security systems to reduce the potential for damage and vandalism.

Administrative practices

- We will maintain a list of all pupils and staff with next of kin contact details held centrally at the school both on computer and as hard copy. An additional hard copy will be kept at an alternative site, such as a designated member of staff's home. Pupils home details can be accessed via eportal. All teaching staff know how to access eportal. Contacts can also be contacted via Parentmail or Parent Pay.
- We will complete registers promptly at the beginning of each morning and afternoon session. Staff in school at these times will be 'registered'. Names of pupils who are late or leave school early will be recorded, as will staff.
- We will maintain an inventory of equipment held on site in accordance with Birmingham City Council guidelines.
- We will operate a signing in and out procedure for all visitors and volunteers in school.
- We will display details of emergency evacuation procedures in all areas of the school site.

Planning for Trips and Visits

- We will follow DfE and Birmingham City Council guidance when planning and organising school visits (see our separate educational visits policy).
- All supervising adults will carry relevant details of the members of the party or their group; a list of contact numbers including school/LEA emergency contact numbers will be kept by the trip leaders.
- Emergency contact numbers should only be used in event of a genuine emergency e.g. a member or members of the group has suffered a life threatening injury or fatality, is at serious risk or has gone missing for a significant and unacceptable period.
- Visit leaders will familiarise themselves with emergency planning procedures and reporting mechanisms.
- We will hold additional insurance for all school visits, purchased through Schools Advisory Service.

Health and Safety

- All relevant school policies will include reference to health and safety procedures and how these relate to the teaching and organisation of the subject. This is particularly pertinent for physical education, design and technology, and science.
- We will follow statutory guidelines on the testing and maintenance of equipment, fixtures and fittings. All electrical, PE and fire fighting equipment will be inspected and tested annually.
- We will follow regulations for the storage and security of potentially hazardous substances and chemicals.
- We will conduct regular health and safety checks on the buildings and site, with any potential dangers being reported and dealt with.
- All staff will receive a Health & Safety Handbook

DEALING WITH AN INCIDENT

- The emergency services should be contacted. (If appropriate)
 - At this stage, it may be most appropriate to take whatever urgent action is needed to ensure the safety of others including evacuation if necessary, (see Evacuation Procedures) In the event that the school needs to evacuate, the Harvest Fields Centre will be the point to which the staff and children evacuate
 - As soon as possible, the Head Teacher (or next-most senior person) will start to keep a simple log of all events and actions. There is a sample record sheet attached (Incident Log Sheet).
 - The Head Teacher should communicate with the Birmingham City Council emergency services, etc. via the school's fax line or via mobile phone. This will leave the school's main phone line free for incoming calls from parents, etc. (The same procedure should be used for keeping contact with off-site parties if they have been involved in a critical incident.)
 - The Head Teacher (or next-most senior person) will deploy staff as necessary to manage the situation and ensure the safety of all concerned. This may involve the senior management team being relieved of their classroom duties, and their classes being covered by other colleagues.
- Parents will need to be contacted promptly, but the way in which this is done will depend on the nature and scale of the incident. Contact may be made in person or by phone. In very serious circumstances, it may be appropriate for the police to make the initial contact.
- The chair of governors will be informed as quickly as possible.
 - In many cases, the LEA's Schools' Emergency Team will take over much of the management of the incident, leaving the head teacher free to deal with pupils, parents and colleagues.
 - The admin staff will generally answer all calls from anxious parents. They should keep a log of callers and check this against school records to determine who might still need to be contacted.

Before making contact with parents:

- The Head Teacher will confer with those who will be making contact about what to say, possibly rehearsing the message first. We will limit our comments to the known facts, and not speculate on the causes or responsibility for the crisis.
- The admin team or other colleagues will keep a strict log of those parents who have been contacted, noting date and time of call, the number called and the person who was spoken to (or if there was no answer). This list should be cross-referenced with those who have contacted us.

- We will endeavour to delegate these calls to those not actually involved in managing the incident

It may be prudent for the Headteacher or a member of the SLT to directly contact parents dependent on the scale and nature of the incident.

When calling:

- We will check that parents are not left alone in distress, perhaps making suggestions for making contact with relatives or neighbours.
- We will offer any important phone numbers such as hospitals.
- An important task is to protect children, parents and staff from publicity. Press and television will not be given permission to enter the school premises or be given access to staff or children. One of the head teacher's first tasks on hearing of a crisis will be to contact the LEA's support services. All enquiries by the media will be directed to the officer, who will give factual information to the media whilst maintaining the privacy of staff, children and their families. In any event, the only other persons to speak to the media would be the head teacher or chair of governors. There is a high likelihood that the press will attend the school very quickly given the pace at which modern news travels. The school needs to be prepared for this by urging attendance of the LEA support team at the earliest opportunity.
- Pupils should be told simply and without fabrication what has happened, in the smallest group possible – usually within their class. Questions should be answered as straightforwardly as possible. Children and parents should be informed (preferably by letter) by the end of the day if the school has to be closed. As far as possible the school's normal routine should be followed to maintain security and continuity for the children.
- In the event of deaths or serious injuries, the head teacher will maintain close contact with the families involved and make arrangements for the school's representation at funerals, respecting the view, customs and wishes of parents.
- If an incident happens off-site, the head teacher will arrange for all contact with the party to go via the school. Therefore, we will contact parents, the Birmingham City Council et al on behalf of the party leader. It is also highly probable that the best course of action will be for children to be re-united with their families as soon as possible. The head teacher, with advice and help from the police and the LEA, will arrange to bring the children home. In some instances it may be appropriate to arrange for parents to be taken to the children.
- The leader of an off-site party may need to act 'in loco parentis' to authorise emergency medical treatment. However, they may only do this if every reasonable effort has been made to contact the parents.
- The whole school will be affected by a tragedy. The head teacher will arrange debriefing sessions for directly-affected staff, check that procedures are in place for monitoring staff and pupils, and activate strategies for allowing all involved to express their feelings if they wish. In the case of prolonged absences of anyone injured in an incident, the head teacher will ensure that a member of staff makes contact with the child or colleague at home or in hospital, and subsequently make sensitive arrangements for their return to school, and thereafter check that monitoring procedures are in place. Consideration must also be given to arrangements for a special assembly or memorial service. In the longer term, the head teacher may need to introduce strategies to continue to monitor vulnerable pupils and staff, consult and decide on whether, and how, to mark anniversaries, and to ensure that new staff are aware of which pupils/staff were affected and in what way.

Safeguarding

Little Sutton Primary School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the wellbeing of all children and expects its staff and volunteers to do the same.

SUMMARY OF ACTION PLAN

Task & Responsibilities

Immediately

1. Obtain immediate information at the start of the crisis - **HT**
2. Call the emergency services – **HT /Office**
3. Take whatever urgent action is needed to ensure the safety of others. - **HT**

Within an Hour

4. Meet to decide on key actions to be taken.- **SMT/Office Manager**
5. Establish links with the Birmingham City Council and Chair of Governors - **HT**
6. Contact families - **Office**

As soon as Possible/Appropriate

7. Call staff meeting - **HT**
8. Inform children in class – **Class teacher**
9. Arrange de-briefing for children involved - **SMT**
10. Arrange de-briefing for staff involved - **SMT**
11. Identify high risk children and staff - **SMT**

In Following Weeks/Months as Necessary

12. Identify the need for group or individual support. – **HT/SMT**
13. Arrange memorials, etc - **SMT**

Copies of Recording Log Sheets are appended.

Several pages of Information sheets are available as a separate document (Birmingham City Council Emergency Information Sheets)

This policy has been drawn up with acknowledgements to;

Birmingham Learning & Culture
Northampton County Council

Dates & Review

This policy was adopted by the Governing Body of Little Sutton Primary School
May 2019