



Altrincham CE
Aided Primary School

Grow Strong and Bear Fruit



Critical Incident Policy

June 2025

1. Background

This policy aims to address the issue of an event or events – usually sudden – which involve experiencing significant personal distress, to a level which potentially overwhelms normal procedures and which is likely to have organisational consequences.

2. Aims

- To establish planned emergency arrangements and procedures
- To inform staff that planned contingency procedures exist
- To provide reassurance of the practical help that is available from the Board of Governors, Local Authority and other agencies at short notice.

3. Objectives

- To maintain as far as possible, normal educational services
- Contact and advise staff of immediate contingency arrangements
- Contact and reassure parents/carers that the school is fully operational
- Set up temporary accommodation and other resources including telephone/fax/computer systems

This policy applies to all staff, pupils and governors of Altrincham CE Primary School.

This policy will set out the school's approach to handling emergency incidents. All staff are to be aware of the contents and will be able to act appropriately and effectively in the event of an emergency or crisis.

The aim is to prevent loss of life, minimise casualties and reduce the impact of the emergency in terms of personal injury, stress and damage to property.

An Emergency Incident Team will be convened consisting of the following key personnel:

Head Teacher
Chair of Governors
Site Manager
Deputy Head Teacher
School Business Manager

Links to other relevant policies include:

- Accidents and Reporting procedures
- Educational Visits
- Health and Safety
- Safeguarding and Child Protection
- Business Continuity Plan
- Lock Down Policy

4. Scope

- A deliberate act of violence, such as the use of a knife or firearm
- A fire or explosion or fire in nearby premises
- A pupil or member of staff being taken hostage or other terrorist acts including bomb threats
- A lightning strike
- Serious vandalism to the school premises
- Flooding of a significant part or the whole of the school
- Gas leaks

In addition:

- The death of a pupil or member of staff through
- A transport related accident
- A local or national emergency whereby school has to be used as a designated place of refuge
- Civil disturbance and terrorism

5. Activation

Immediately following the incident Trafford's Critical Incident Checklist to be actioned by Head Teacher or in her absence, the Deputy Head Teacher. See Appendix.

School Recovery Team Responsibilities

Area of Responsibility	Action	Person Responsible for Initiating the Action
Press release/Advising the media	Take advice from LA, Diocese and Governors. Statement will be prepared and published through Trafford's press department	Head Teacher Chair of Governors
School Closure	Consider closing school or sealing off an area	Head Teacher
Advising Staff	Consider contacting staff members	Head Teacher
Advising Parents	Contact parents by telephone or by Parent Mail if appropriate	Head Teacher
Advising Governors	Contact Governors	Chair of Governors
Advising Pupils	Assemblies/KS Meetings	Head Teacher/Deputy Head Teacher
Advising Outside Agencies and Authorities	Contact these as appropriate	Head Teacher Deputy Head Teacher
Advising Insurers	Contact Insurance Companies and LA	School Business Manager
Safety of Staff and Pupils	Take a roll call	Head Teacher (staff) Class Teachers (pupils)

Temporary Accommodation	Arrange Accommodation – perhaps local churches/Church buildings	Head Teacher School Business Manager
Temporary Telephones	Mobile availability and direct line to HT/C of G/DHT	Head Teacher School Business Manager
Computer Systems	Re-installment of files etc.	School Business Manager to contact Altrincham Grammar School for Boys
Contact Suppliers	Letters, emails etc.	School Business Manager

6. Emergency Action List

Stage 1 – Initial Actions

- Open and continue to maintain a log of all factual information received, actions taken and the time of events.
- Make every attempt to clarify exactly what has happened.
- Contact LA and Diocese and agree whether the incident requires the involvement of the Local Authority Critical Incident Team.
- If deputising for Head Teacher, try to contact her and inform her of the situation.
- Inform the Chair of Governors about the situation/incident and the level of involvement from the LA (if appropriate). Ensure they are briefed and available for interview by the media if appropriate.
- Delay any media comment until after the LA Press Office Team have been consulted.
- It is especially important that the names of those involved in any incident **are not** released or confirmed before the identities are formally agreed and parents/next of kin are informed.
- Call in designated staff members on the Recovery Team and nominate one as an on-site co-ordinator.

If the incident is during term time

- Unless there is overwhelming pressure, avoid closing school and try to maintain normal routines. If school remains open a number of different facilities may need to be set up/accommodated e.g. a control point, a parents' meeting point, a media briefing point and staff/pupil welfare facilities.

If the incident is outside of term time or school hours

- The Site Manager should arrange for parts of school to be opened as appropriate and be available for requests as and when are needed. Call in school administration support as required.

Stage 2 – Organisation

- Agree appropriate identification of Local Authority Critical Incident Team members, issue badges and on-site facilities.
- Set up arrangements to manage visitors. Record all names.
- Set up arrangements to enable accurate information to be disseminated.
- Ensure sufficient staff are available to answer phone calls. The LA may set up a help-line.
- Staff must maintain a record of all calls received.

- Give staff answering the phone calls a prepared statement and update regularly.
- Make staff aware that some of these calls may be bogus.
- Divert media calls to the LA's Press Officer.
- Try to arrange a separate line for outgoing calls only.
- Arrange for staff to be called in and briefed at an early stage. Update staff regularly.
- Be aware of how colleagues are coping.
- Arrange for pupils to be told in small groups wherever possible.
- Discourage pupils and parents from speaking to the media.
- Arrange for next of kin lists to be available for the Emergency Incident Team if appropriate.

Parents

- If pupils are involved, the contacting of parents will be an important early task. Remember if it is a major incident then parents may already have heard on the media or from other parents. It may be appropriate for parents to come to the school for a briefing, report or further support.
- Maintain regular contact with parents.
- If the incident is away from school, seek police advice on whether parents should travel to the scene or whether children are to be taken home.

Staff

- Remember to have regular comfort/rest breaks and advise others involved to do so.
- Maintain regular contact with staff and make a point of seeing that all staff know each other's names and responsibilities.
- Remain positive and respond quickly to ideas and suggestions.
- Be available to see staff when required.
- Remember some members of staff may be so affected by the incident that they will not be able to support the children.
- Provide professional support for those dealing with the situation.

Stage 3 – Period following the close of the incident

- When appropriate seek advice from the LA Critical Incident Team.
- Contact local clergy and faith leaders regarding special assemblies/funerals/memorials etc.
- Prepare a statement regarding the incident for the Director of Service at the LA.
- Arrange staff contacts with children involved in the incident either at their home or at hospital.
- Arrange a sensitive return to school (possibly phased).

Stage 4 – Longer term issues

- Work with staff to monitor pupils informally.
- Clarify procedures for pupils who need individual further help and support.
- Recognise that some staff may also require individual further help and support.
- Recognise and be prepared to mark anniversaries.
- Remember to make any new staff aware of pupils and families who have been affected and how.
- Remember that legal processes, inquiries and newspaper/media stories may bring back distressing memories and cause temporary upset.

- If the incident lasts for several weeks, then media attention is likely to continue for this time.

Emergency Evacuation

- In the event of a fire, bomb threat etc. Follow the normal fire evacuation procedures and assembly points.

Emergency Internal Incident

If the danger comes from outside:

- Close all doors and windows and remain inside the building
- Go to rooms facing away from the incident
- Eliminate any ignition sources and stop ventilation systems
- Tune into any local radio station and wait for any telephone communication from the Local Authority.

Bomb Threat

The priority contacts in this instance are:

- Police
- Ambulance
- Fire Brigade
- Gas Supply
- Insurers

Action

This may occur in two ways, either by telephone call advising the school of a bomb planted on the site or by location of an unidentified package or letter.

- If a telephone call is received inform the Head Teacher and clear the building immediately. Telephone 999.
- If a suspicious package is identified, then clear the immediate area.
- Avoid the use of two way radios and mobile phones.
- Avoid causing any vibrations.
- Evacuate people at least 100 metres away from the immediate area.
- Do not allow anyone to re-enter the building until authorised to do so by the police.
- It may be necessary to evacuate to an agreed emergency evacuation centre – St George's Church.

Closure of School Due to Snow/Bad Weather

The priority contacts in this case are:

Head Teacher

Parents

Action – if possible

- Inform parents
- Place a message on the school answerphone

- Place a message on the school website and on Twitter
- Display a large notice on the school gates
- Ensure that paths cleared and salted as far as possible

Premises Related Damage

Priority contacts:

- Buildings Officer (Diocese, Cassidy and Ashton)
- Computer Network (through Altrincham Grammar School for Boys)
- Electricity Supply
- Environmental Health
- HSE
- Insurers
- Plumbers
- Electricians
- Fire Brigade
- Gas Supply
- Generators/Plant Hire
- Glaziers
- Temporary accommodation
- Temporary buildings
- Water Authority
- Ambulance
- Police

Action:

All staff to be aware of fire evacuation procedures

During the working day:

- Sound the alarm
- Dial 999
- Follow the evacuation plan
- Close windows and doors
- Turn off computers and appliances if it is safe to do so
- Assemble at the agreed meeting points

Structural Damage

Action:

- Ensure everyone moves to and remains in a safe place in another area of the building or outside, well away from the building, depending on the nature and extent of the damage.
- Contact Head Teacher/Diocese/Cassidy and Ashton
- Do not allow anyone to re-enter the building until surveyors have inspected it.
- Inform Chair of Governors
- Review arrangements to keep the school open.

Gas Leak

Priority Contacts:

- Gas Supplier
- Head Teacher
- Local Authority
- Diocese/ Cassidy and Ashton
- Press Office

Action:

- Advise Site Manager immediately to check and initiate evacuation procedures
- Contact gas supplier emergency telephone number
- Turn off gas supply if a local isolator is fitted. If not the main supply requires isolating
- Open all windows and evacuate the area using the following evacuation procedures

Hazardous Spillages

Action:

- Clear the room and surrounding areas
- Contact the Site Manager and Head Teacher
- Call the Fire Service if necessary
- Remove contaminated clothing (be aware of cross-contamination) and rinse the affected person with plenty of plain water
- If pupils or staff are showing any adverse medical symptoms, then call for medical help.
- Cover any spillage with sand. Close doors and windows in affected area.
- Seek further advice from the Local Authority if required.
- Be aware of COSHH guidelines.

Power Cuts

Priority contacts:

- Electricity Supplier
- Computer Network
- Gas Supplier
- Generators/ Plant Hire

Action

- Advise Site Manager or Head Teacher immediately. Staff to send a message to the office if necessary.
- Electricity supplier to be contacted
- If long term power failure, arrange for alternative accommodation if available
- Advise the school kitchen in order that alternative arrangements for school meals can be arranged.

- Be aware that the telephone system may not be operational. Use mobile phones to contact the Local Authority/ relevant people.
- The Head Teacher will decide if normal lessons can continue without power.

Personnel Related Incidents

Accidents to person(s) loss of key personnel or an activity or trip

Priority contacts:

- Ambulance
- HSE
- Local Authority
- Police
- Insurers

Action

- Establish the nature and extent of the emergency
- Make sure all members of the party are accounted for and all are safe
- If possible – advise other staff of the incident and the actions taken.
- Ensure that an adult accompanies any casualties to hospital.
- Ensure that remaining pupils have adequate supervision and arrange for an early return to school.
- Arrange for one adult to remain on the site of the incident to liaise with the emergency services until the incident is over and all children are accounted for.
- Control access to telephones until a senior member of staff has contacted parents/others who are directly involved.
- Give full details of the incident including:

Nature, date, location and time of incident

Details of injuries

Names and home numbers of the pupils involved

Action taken so far

Telephone numbers for future communication

Assault On Staff

Priority contacts:

- Police
- Ambulance

Action

- Raise the alarm
- If the assault is by a pupil on a staff member then try to isolate the child
- School Office will contact emergency services as required
- All incidents however minor will be logged.

Intruders

Priority contacts:

- Police
- Ambulance
- School Office

Action

- Under no circumstances should force be used to evict intruders.
- All visitors must report to Reception and receive a badge after signing in.
- If a stranger is sighted who is not wearing a badge, then challenge by asking for identification and reason for being on the premises.
- If you do not feel it is appropriate to challenge the person then report the matter to the Head Teacher and/or School Office immediately. If the Head Teacher is not available, contact a member of the Senior Leadership Team.
- If the Site Manager is on duty, they should be asked to check the site and locate the person.
- A decision should then be made as to whether to contact the police.

Medical

Priority contacts:

- Environmental Health/Public Health
- First Aiders
- Emergency Services
- Counselling Services
- Catering Services

Action

Outbreak of food poisoning

- Take appropriate medical attention
- Inform Environmental Health/Public Health Officers of the LA
- Inform parents as appropriate
- Prepare a press statement with the assistance of Trafford Press Office
- Discuss and reassess food hygiene and food sources with the kitchen staff

Outbreak of communicable illness e.g. meningitis

- Take appropriate medical action
- Isolate pupils
- Inform parents as appropriate

- Prepare a press statement with the assistance of Public Health and Trafford Press Office

Death, Serious Injury or Medical Emergency

Action

Never assume someone is deceased until certified by an appropriate professional. Continue to provide appropriate medical support.

- First Aid staff to be called to the location of the incident
- Notify emergency services
- Notify Head Teacher
- Ensure pupils and staff are not exposed to trauma
- Inform family of injured person
- Complete accident report forms
- Notify HSE (RIDDOR)
- Seek advice from LA and LA Press Officer

Missing Pupils

Priority contacts:

- Police
- Parent/Carer

Action

- Report incident to Head Teacher or a member of the Senior Leadership Team
- Inform parent
- Question other pupils to find out the pupil's intentions or remarks
- Contact the police immediately

Abduction

Priority contacts:

- Police
- Parent/Carer
- LA and Diocese
- Press Officer
- Chair of Governors

Action

- Call police immediately
- Ensure the safety of other pupils and staff
- Notify the LA so other schools can be contacted
- Agree a spokesperson to deal with media and police
- Agree a venue away from school for daily meetings to review the events and plan strategy

- Inform Head Teacher and Chair of Governors

School Crisis Kit

The following documentation will be kept to assist with handling a disaster/crisis effectively.

The information will be stored in the school office.

- A list of pupil names, addresses and contact details will be kept up to date by administration staff and data collection sheets will be sent out annually for updating by parents/carers.
- A staff list of names, addresses and emergency contact details will be kept up to date by administration staff and will be updated annually at the beginning of the academic year.
- A list of Local Authority emergency contact details.
- A list of emergency services contact information
- A list of utilities contact information and details of how to cut off supply in emergency.
- Copies of school floor plans
- A set of keys

Appendix 1

ACTIONS FOR EDUCATION ESTABLISHMENTS TRAFFORD

