

CRITICAL INCIDENTS POLICY

This section should be completed following ratification of the Policy.

Audience	Trust Leaders, EVC's, Staff Leading Trips, Office Managers, Site Managers, Trustees
Ratified	June 2022
Other Related Policies	Safeguarding & Child Protection, Health & Safety, Business Continuity Plan, Risk Assessment Template, Trips & Visits
Policy Owner	Executive Team
Review Frequency	Every two years

Ownership

Preston Hedges Trust is responsible for the production and maintenance of this document. It is issued by the Clerk, catherine.gautrey@prestonhedges.org to whom any change requests or queries should be directed.

Preston Hedges Trust has a clear and comprehensive framework of information and support to help our school deal with incidents effectively should a critical incident occur.

This policy has been written by the Executive Team and Trustees of Preston Hedges Trust and is in line with the guidance provided by the DFE and West Northamptonshire County Council

Definition of a Critical Incident

A critical incident can be defined as a serious disruption with little or no warning, which could cause one or more of the following effects:

- Suicide or self harm
- Death of pupil or staff
- Fire (building)
- Flood (inside or out)
- Epidemic in school or community
- Violent incident (pupil or staff)
- Vandalism
- Theft
- Hostage taking
- Missing child (home or school)
- Child abduction
- Transport accident (away from school)
- Death or serious accident away from school on trip
- Disaster in the community
- Civil disturbance or terrorism
- Mental Health related problems
- Sudden loss of staff
- Terrorism
- Excessive temperatures (heat)

On a scale beyond the capacity of the organisation under normal conditions, and requiring assistance from the Emergency Services, Deacon Communications and others.

Aims of the document are to:

- Outline practices and procedures which might be useful in the event of a critical incident.

Effects of Critical Incidents on the School Community

The consequences of any major event upon all those connected with it cannot be precisely defined; however, the support necessary will be needed as quickly as possible.

A number of important factors include:

- The suddenness of the occurrence
- The effect of shock
- The need for rapid support
- The need to communicate with large numbers of people quickly
- The publicity and attention which can follow

Children

Children's reactions will depend partly upon their age and maturity. Potential effects are significant and can include anxiety at the start/end of school when separated from their parents, disturbed sleep, difficulties in concentration, guilt, avoidance of activities that are related to the event and exaggerated responses to certain events.

Staff

Staff have to relate to all pupils, including those not involved in the incident. In addition, they relate to a wider audience of colleagues and parents, as well as their own family and friends. They may have difficulty knowing when to talk about the incident and what to say. If they have been directly involved in the incident, they may experience similar effects to those described for children. Other members of staff need to be aware of these issues, and ensure that appropriate support is available for staff who have been involved in a major incident.

School Community

The consequences of a major incident upon the community can be profound and long lasting. Immediate shock can be anticipated: long-term shock can also occur. Often a school suffers from a temporary disruption to its normal routine, the effects of which can be felt for some time afterwards. Attention should be given to supporting pupils and their families through this period.

Practical Measures for Schools

When an emergency arises those in charge can turn to our guidance that will reduce the possibility of overlooking essential actions but allow flexibility in response to events. This guidance is known as **The Planned School Response**.

Our priority is to:

- Save Lives
- Minimise personal injury
- Safeguard the interests of pupils and staff
- Minimise loss and damage

Issues to Consider When Implementing The Planned School Response

As part of our Planned School Response we have guides for different scenarios to provide support for staff.

- Deacon Communications can assist with liaison with the media.
- The police may be needed to deal with the intrusive behaviour of the media.
- Letters, texts or e-mail to parents should be agreed as these may come to the attention of the media.

Health and Safety Practical Measures taken within School and on School Visits.

- Please refer to the Educational Trips and Visits Policy
- A list of children, together with next of kin contact details, are held centrally at our school both on computer and in readily accessible folders.
- These lists, together with other relevant information, are stored in the cloud and backed up by our IT provider.
- A copy of the Critical Incident Policy is kept in the school Office on the clipboard with Fire Safety register.
- A list of adults and children on a school visit is held in the school office.
- The Principal and CEO will take an encrypted memory stick off site containing emergency contact details, when a trip or event lasts beyond the school day, i.e. a school residential trip.
- Registers are completed promptly at the beginning of the morning and afternoon sessions. Anyone entering the school site is required to sign in and out at the school office using our electronic system.
- Staff leading children on a trip out of school carry contact numbers of two senior members of staff, and a mobile phone.
- Staff leading children on out of school activities where they may be separated from the main group or group leader, carry contact numbers of two senior members of staff and every adult on the trip, and an emergency envelope, which contains emergency contact numbers and a copy of the emergency procedures sheet.
- On any out of school activity staff take with them a pupil register and information regarding children's behaviour and medical needs as appropriate, e.g. Inhalers, Epipen.

It is difficult to put the Planned School Response fully into operation out of school hours so the following arrangements will need to be made.

Plans for Out of School Hours

Dealing with a critical incident out of school hours can produce some issues which are:

- Principals can access a copy of the Critical Incidents Policy at home via Sharepoint within the Policies folder.

- Staff and Trustees may not be aware of the incident, even though details of it are being released by the media. The Principal or Assistant Principals will contact members of staff and the CEO will contact other Trustees after consultation with the Principal or an Assistant Principal.
- There will be the expectation that each school will respond to the incident as soon as it re-opens. Preparations will be made to respond to the incident and to the media and public expectations.
- Advice sources may be more difficult to access at weekends and at holiday times and we would contact Deacon Communications for support.

Planned School Response for a Critical Incident or Trip is overleaf.

Planned School Response for a Critical Incident on a Trip

IMMEDIATE ACTIONS:

- ADMINISTER FIRST AID - where appropriate
- CALL EMERGENCY SERVICES - as appropriate
- ALERT SCHOOL –PRINCIPAL – With initial details
- ACCOUNT FOR ALL PUPILS, STAFF AND VISITORS
- OBTAIN FACTS AND INFORMATION – establish your location and extent of injuries
- TELEPHONE SCHOOL PRINCIPAL – With precise details
- PRINCIPAL – To travel to scene or send other senior member of staff
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AT SCHOOL	AT THE SCENE
• Principal or designated lead at school phones CEO to advise them of the situation • CEO arranges for Company Secretary & Chair of Trust to be briefed • <u>Record events and actions on incident log sheet</u> • Principal or designated lead at school agree how to communicate and inform parents of incident in partnership with CEO. • Principal or designated lead at school gathers leadership team to inform them of incident and prioritise actions at school which will include designating an area for parents who may come on to school site seeking information • If appropriate consult insurers as soon as possible for advice and support • Consult Business Continuity Plan for further emergency guidance. It is in Sharepoint/Policies	• Prioritise first aid • Liaise with emergency services • Ensure all children/staff are as safe and warm as possible • Provide regular updates on the situation for the lead at school • Principal when arriving at scene to support staff present and relay information to school base.

SHORT TERM PLANNING

- **EMERGENCY PLANNING**—operates 24hour contact system: supports school and LA: co-ordinates other agencies needed.
- **PRINCIPAL AND EXECUTIVE TEAM** put together a short term plan in conjunction with Trust Board.
- **LIAISE WITH THE POLICE/DEACON COMMUNICATIONS REGARDING MEDIA STATEMENTS**—decide who is to speak, and beware of rumour. Children should not speak to the media. All media statements to be agreed by CEO and solicitors if appropriate.
- **BRIEF ADMINISTRATION STAFF**—Principal or most Senior Staff member to instruct them on what information can release or advise them to refer calls to the PR officer.
- **BRIEF OTHER STAFF INCLUDING THOSE NOT ON SITE AT PRESENT**
- **UPDATE INFORMATION**—review and re-assess tasks.
- **SEE BUSINESS CONTINUITY PLAN** – for further support

MEDIUM TERM PLANNING

- **APPROPRIATE AGENCIES** —to complete reports resulting in fatalities, major injuries and hospitalisation in accordance with procedures.
- **LIAISE WITH SENIOR EDUCATION OFFICER**—to identify the need for group/individual care.
- **DO NOT DISCUSS LEGAL LIABILITY**

LONG TERM PLANNING

- **REVIEW MEETING** with Principal, CEO and Trustees as deemed appropriate and members of the Leadership Team, Finance and Compliance Committees
- **ACTION PLAN** devised to go forward

CRITICAL INCIDENTS ARRANGEMENTS

Guidance for Third Party After School Activities (e.g. Sports Clubs, Dance Clubs)

- CONFIRM WHICH ADULT IS IN CHARGE AT THE SCENE
- _ENSURE THAT THE EMERGENCY SERVICES ARE CALLED
- OBTAIN THE FACTS AND INFORMATION
- CONTACT, THE SITE MANAGER, WITH:
 - a) brief details of the incident
 - b) names of known participants

Critical Incidents & Emergency Numbers *(SEE School appendix)*

HIRERS SHOULD TELEPHONE THE SITE MANAGER WHO WILL INFORM THE PRINCIPAL or ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL

- IN THE EVENT OF AN EMERGENCY THE HIRERS SHOULD CONTACT THE APPROPRIATE EMERGENCY SERVICES

Support for Schools in Crisis

In Partnership with Deacon Communications decide which of the following actions need to be taken:

- Liaise with the Police and with any other emergency services attending the incident.
- Make arrangements for the following day/s: school closure, partial closure, change of times.
- Arrange provision for additional telephones.
- Arrange additional administrative support for the following days, to help with enquiries etc.
- Contact the Principal Educational Psychologist. – 01604 364770 or MKC 01908 657825
- Contact Education Inclusion & Partnership 0300 126 1000 or MKC 01908657825 (inclusionandinterventionteam@milton-keynes.gov.uk)
- Contact Unions for teachers and support staff

Points to note:

- If an incident occurs at our school then the Principal, or Directors are in charge of the site, but the police would be responsible for the co-ordination of the emergency response. The exception is where there is a fire, and then the Fire and Rescue Service would be responsible for matters relating to the fire.
- Consent of a parent/guardian is required for a pupil to receive counselling or other individual attention from non-school staff.
- Children should not be sent home without the knowledge of their parent/guardian.

Insurance claims:

All insurance claims will be handled by the Finance Director.

- a) Details of personal injury should be entered on the appropriate Accident and Incident forms held in school for pupil, employee or visitors and sent to our insurers.
- b) In the case of damage to buildings and contents:
 - An insurance claim form should be requested from our insurers. This should be completed and returned together with a schedule of all damaged school equipment and property.

Incident Log Sheet

Name: Page

Date	Time	Event	Action	Signed by

