



Business Continuity & Critical Incident Policy

School Values

ENJOYMENT HONESTY CARING RESPECT

EQUALITY

Larkhall Primary Campus (including the Larkhall Centre for Autism) Critical Incident Policy

Introduction

The Larkhall Primary Campus Critical Incident Policy (CIP) has been written for those who will be involved in re-establishing the operational delivery of services following a critical incident.

General Information

Age range of pupils	3-11
Number of pupils	400
Number of staff	80
School number	208/2371
Telephone	020 76223820
Email	admin@larkhall.lambeth.sch.uk
SIMS/FMS backup	Peter Gray
Whole School tracking	Gary Nichol
Inventory	Oscar Norena
Pupil files	Colin Smart
SEN files	Ceinwen Hywel

Definitions

An emergency is any event which causes, or has the potential to cause injury, loss of life, damage to property or significant business disruption. A disaster is the escalation of an emergency to the point where normal conditions are not expected to be recovered for at least 24 hours.

A disaster/critical incident can strike any school. It can arrive in a number of forms, including storm, flood, fire or action by individuals or pressure groups. If the incident is large enough, it will put the school out of action for a short or long period of time. Sometimes a crisis grows quickly from what was at first a manageable event, such as an occurrence of meningitis, into a 'tabloid-headline' situation.

Advance planning will limit the impact of disaster. It is now common practice to prepare a set of emergency procedures from the assessment of risk for dealing with possible disaster scenarios.

Serious storms, floods or water escaping from other sources can also have a major impact, especially if premises are in low-lying land near a river and if important equipment, machinery or computers are sited on the lower floors. All premises and employees are at risk, albeit tiny, from falling aircraft, and chemical or nuclear pollution.

Disaster, however, should not be considered as something that only happens to the building. Death, assault, vandalism, contraction of contagious diseases or viruses and accidents to children and/or staff are areas where planning is also required, particularly in relation to the media.

A Health and Safety Scheme

An up-dated health and safety policy is in place with stringent risk assessments undertaken.

Emergency Contact Information

The school has agreed the contents of a 'grab bag', which would be used in the event of incident. The bag contains:

- A copy of this policy
- Fire Evacuation Plans
- Closure procedure with Lambeth LA
- Details of Text Messaging Service
- Emergency contact details of children and staff

Staff and children's data (those on roll) including home phone numbers are stored on SIMS. This is to be kept up to date at all times.

This will be stored in a secure cupboard in the Head Teacher's office

Strategy

If a disaster is declared by the Larkhall Primary Campus Head Teacher, or an Assistant Head Teacher, this Critical Incident Policy will be activated.

Staff Awareness

All staff are aware that there are arrangements in place for dealing with critical incidents and should know the contact arrangements in case of emergency. All staff who have direct contact with children are aware of the procedures and the part they have to play in the event of a critical incident.

In the prolonged absence of the Head Teacher, the Chair of Governors will, working with an Assistant Head Teacher, inform the Local Authority. An Assistant Head Teacher will be the Acting Head in the absence of the Head Teacher.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Head Teacher is responsible for the implementation and co-ordination of the CIP, including:

- Immediately activating the Critical Incident Management Team
- Formulating a Critical Incident Action Plan
- Co-ordination of status reports/communication for the benefit of all audiences (including staff, children, parents, LA, press)
- Maintaining the CIP in an up-to-date format by delegating responsibility to the School Business Manager for updates.

Creating a Critical Incident Management Team (CIMT)

Lead by the Head Teacher the Incident Management Team includes the mainstream school Assistant Head Teachers, Centre for Autism Assistant Head Teacher, School Business Manager, Premises Officer, Children's Centre Manager and senior Governors. The CIMT is responsible for acting under the direction of the Head Teacher (or an Assistant Head Teacher) to restore normal conditions as soon as possible.

The CIMT will undertake the preparation and planning work, preparing a Critical Incident Action Plan and carrying out the various tasks described in the following paragraphs.

Name	Title	Contact
Gary Nichol	Head Teacher	07712 649821
John Powles	Assistant Head Teacher	07813 545688
Ceinwen Hywel	Assistant Head Teacher	07891 760725
Tom Foster	Assistant Head Teacher	07956 131175
Beccie Powles	Assistant Head Teacher	07793 024266
Sam Witchalls	Assistant Head Teacher	07713 881601
Colin Smart	School Business Manager	020 7622 3820
Oscar Jorena	Premises Officer	07946 413679
Clare Hudson	Children's Centre Manager	07985 433623
Yvonne Steel	Chair of Governors	07943 280285
Mark Peters	Vice-Chair of Governors	07771 647584

Central Liaison Point for all incidents: school office Gaskell Street Entrance

Alternative Liaison point: school office Smedley Street Entrance

If whole building is inaccessible then Allen Edwards Primary School will be used

Prevention of Disruption and Risk Factor

Some incidents causing disruption may be completely avoidable if foresight has been exercised, potential risks identified and evaluated and preventive measures put in place. Purpose is to identify the disruptions that should have a Critical Incident Action Plan (higher Risk rating) and those which do not (lower Risk rating)

Possible Disruption	Impact (A)	Likelihood (B)	Risk Rating (A x B)
Loss of Staff (Industrial Action/Flu Pandemic, etc)	4	5	20
Loss of Premises (Partial or Total)	4	3	12
Loss of Utilities (Power/Water/Sewerage/Gas/Phones)	4	3	12
Loss of ICT (Server Failure/Power/Virus/Cyber Attack)	3	3	9
Local Hazards in area (Railway Line/Industrial Sites)	1	2	2

Impact: How serious the disruption might be as a result of this threat:

1. Insignificant
2. Minor
3. Moderate
4. Major
5. Disaster

Likelihood: The chances of this threat happening:

1. Rare
2. Unlikely
3. Possible

4. Likely
5. Almost Certain

When a Crisis Strikes a Critical Incident Action Plan will be formulated and implemented, following the procedures below.

Immediate Action (within hours)

Obtain and collate accurate information about the incident

Although there is the strong urge to begin alerting people and taking action straight away it is most important to gather information which is accurate, at least in outline, before doing so. Planning how to react, keeping a cool head and working through the policy can be calming, even though circumstances may be very difficult. It will also ensure that untoward consequences of ill-considered or rash reactions are avoided. The process of gathering accurate information will be on-going throughout the incident and keeping a record of this will be important.

Call together the CIMT

The Critical Incident Management Team will now be called together. The membership of this team can be altered at this time, depending on the circumstances. The team members can take on the various tasks allotted to them thus sharing the load and speeding up the process of action.

Retrieve the Critical Incident Policy

Accessing this policy should be an early action. It will contain, among other things, the various contact lists which should save considerable time at this stage. Ensure that the **current** edition is available to several people, so that it is still available even if one or more members of the CIMT are not available at the time of the emergency. At least one paper copy of the policy should be kept off site so it can be accessed even if the buildings are unavailable.

Inform the Local Authority

In most circumstances the local authority should be alerted as quickly as possible. A decision about the involvement of the local authority and the various services that can be called on should be taken at this time. The chair of governors should also be alerted to the situation as soon as possible.

Establish a communications room and dedicated phone

Communication Channels

Name	Contacting
Gary Nichol	SLT, Governors and LA
John Powles	Year 5 & 6 Leaders
Year Groups leaders to contact year group team	
Ceinwen Hywel	Year 3 & 4 Leaders
Year Groups leaders to contact year group team	
Tom Foster	Year N & R Leaders
Year Groups leaders to contact year group team	

Beccie Powles	Year 1 & Year 2 Leaders
Year Groups leaders to contact year group team	
Sam Witchalls	Centre for Autism Team
Colin Smart	Business Team
Clare Hudson	Children's Centre Team
Yvonne Steel	Governing Body
Mark Peters	Governing Body

Social Networking Site

Be aware that information may be made available on social networking sites very early in an emergency situation and this could serve to inform (or possibly misinform) parents and others. The need for prompt action to provide information is therefore vital.

Start the Incident Log and record keeping procedures

An incident log is an important tool in the management of an evolving incident, and will be vital in any subsequent review of how the incident was handled.

This record is vital. Later enquiries or court cases can depend on the accurate recording and availability of information. Immediately, it is essential to have an up to date record of:

- what action has been taken,
- what has been said,
- the people who have been informed,
- which people have attended (as helpers or visitors) etc.

Contact the families of children involved

The decision on who will contact the families of children involved will be taken in the light of the actual circumstances. An accurate log of this will be kept and used so that no family is unintentionally omitted or contacted twice by different people. If need be, advice about how to do this as sensitively as possible can be sought from professional sources, and the local authority may be able to offer assistance.

Arrange to inform other parents

All parents will be concerned and, in some situations, very worried. Arrangements will be made to inform them using brief but accurate information perhaps from a pre-prepared note. More detailed information can be provided to parents at a later date, if appropriate.

Inform teaching and support staff

Like parents, staff will also be concerned to know the situation. Because of their close contact with children it is important to provide full and accurate information and to brief them about what can be appropriately discussed with children. Advice to staff about giving information to the media will also be important. Normally this should be channelled through the person identified to handle media enquiries and information (Assistant Head Teacher). If possible, a staff meeting will be held to ensure that staff feel involved in the procedures. Information about points of contact should be included.

Inform pupils

Arrangements will be made to inform children not directly involved. There may be a need to provide up-dated information as a situation develops.

Contact appropriate support services

The following organisations may need to be advised of the implementation of the Critical Incident Policy as soon as possible:

Immediate Contacts		
Service	Operation	Contact
Police	Emergency	999
Police	All stations across the borough	020 73261212
Ambulance	Emergency	999
NHS Hospital	St Thomas' Hospital	020 71887188
NHS Hospital	Kings College Hospital	020 32999000
Fire Service	Emergency	999
Local Authority	Response Team	020 79263220 020 79261000
Other Contacts		
Service	Operation	Contact
Electricity	British Gas	0845 6000604
Gas	Corona Energy	0800 111999
Telecoms	BT	0800 777666
Water	Thames Water	0845 9200887
Insurance	LA – Zurich Municipal	020 79269846
Banking	Nat West	0845 3016105
Health & Safety Executive	H & S	03000 031647

Respond to / inform media

The press and other media can have a considerable impact on an incident. A good working relationship with the media can be very helpful in providing accurate information to the public. If the incident involves the emergency services note that initial communications may be provided by those services. One of the Assistant Head Teachers is responsible for this area.

Inform associated schools

Other schools and settings could be directly affected by an incident, not least because they may have on their roll siblings of children involved. It is important not to neglect informing other schools in the rush of events following a serious incident.

Short Term (within hours or days)

Hold to normal routine if possible

One of the aspects of a crisis is the anxiety felt by all the people associated with it, including those who have no direct involvement. Normal routine will be kept to as far as possible to ensure some security in the lives of children, in particular, at a time of crisis.

Arrange a debriefing for staff and pupils involved in the incident

A debriefing meeting serves a number of important purposes. For example, it may:

- Clarify what happened
- Allow for a sharing of reactions
- Reassure the participants that such reactions are not abnormal

- Mobilise resources

During a major trauma, people are often numbed. They feel as if things are not really happening to them. For a few days after the event they are often in a state of shock. Thereafter, upset as they may be, it is important that someone helps them to begin to make sense of what actually happened. Debriefing is a way of talking about not only what happened, but of sharing the often frightening emotional reactions to the events.

By holding a debriefing meeting in the school, either by a member of school leadership or by an experienced person from outside, the school is giving the children and staff permission to exchange their reactions and educating them in how best to cope in the period that follows. A separate debriefing meeting may be necessary for staff who are directly affected by the crisis

Develop a support plan for handling feelings and reactions of people

The advice and assistance of specialist staff may be needed to deal with people's reactions to the incident. It is important not to allow an ad hoc approach but to draw up a support plan with the professionals in this area. It may be necessary for the staff of the setting to have a location where they can meet to discuss the school's (or setting's) response to the incident. The school leadership will co-ordinate with the Education Psychology Service to provide counselling for staff/children. A similar service is available through the Health Service for pupils.

Release a more detailed press statement

Having worked with the media initially, it is a helpful process for both school and the media to provide more up to date and detailed information as it emerges. This will be appreciated, will help to keep others informed and possibly reduce the number of enquiries.

Medium Term (within days or weeks)

Continue to provide updates on facts

Depending on the circumstances it may be necessary to continue to provide updates for staff, parents and the media for several days or in some situations even longer.

Monitor the effects on pupils and adults and organise support for those needing it

Having developed a support plan, this will be put into action. If other agencies have taken on the task, it is important to ensure that it is happening.

Prepare for involvement in funerals, memorial services etc

There are many different religious and cultural views about the participation of young people in funeral rites. The school will want to respect these views and customs as well as the wishes of parents and the children themselves. The current consensus among mental health professionals is that most children (and adults) come to terms with their grief more quickly if they say farewell formally. Whenever possible, survivors should be encouraged and enabled to attend the funerals of those who died, and the parents of those who died should be encouraged to allow it.

Prepare strategies for re-entry into school

When attendance at school has been interrupted by a critical incident it is important to prepare for return. This will require briefing for staff and children and possibly a modified timetable.

Longer Term

Continue to be aware of people's state of mind

As things return to normal it is important to continue to be aware of those who are vulnerable and watch out for continuing or emerging symptoms. New staff and staff unfamiliar to vulnerable children will be briefed about the situation.

Special assemblies and memorial services

In addition to funerals that families may choose to be private, the school may wish to mark the event with a special assembly or a memorial service. Discussions will be held with staff, governors, parents, children and the local community on what form this would take and who would be involved. Planning the ceremony often becomes an important therapeutic act in itself. For many who have been affected by a major incident, a memorial service acts as a way of acknowledging that it is now over. Even so, many staff and children may be upset during the service and this will be considered in planning, for example, where it is to be held and if access should be given to the media. Some schools have planted special gardens in memory of children or staff members; others have installed seats in the playground in their memory or have commissioned sculptures or paintings.

Prepare for anniversaries

Anniversaries are likely to be sensitive and difficult times. It is wise to prepare together for these. Marking an anniversary with something positive may be more helpful than allowing it to pass without drawing attention to it. The views of parents of any children who had been involved in the tragedy, or who had lost their lives, will be taken into account.

Be aware of the effects of legal procedures

Enquiries and court cases etc. can be long drawn out affairs, keeping alive the trauma of the event. School will be aware of these proceedings and the possible effects on those involved.

Provide support as the facts progressively emerge and change

Schools should be aware that the understanding of the event can alter as information emerges. Strong feelings of guilt may develop and support may be needed for these people.

Review procedures

In the light of experience school will review procedures and implement any learning from the incident. That information could be shared with the Local Authority as it could contain information that might be useful to other schools/settings.

A copy of this policy is kept in the main school office and on the staffroom notice board.

Lockdown Procedure

It is now possible to envisage circumstances where the school may wish to lock itself in, to secure staff and students from an outside threat. This circumstance is described as a 'lockdown'.

If a lockdown is declared:

- The Head Teacher or an Assistant Head Teacher will advise to implement the lockdown.
- The CIMT will mobilise.
- The school will be advised that it is in 'lockdown' by the CIMT.

- All staff will remain in classrooms and keep children calm and away from windows
- All children in outdoor PE lessons will be advised to return to school.

The lockdown will proceed in the following priority:

- The external gate of the school will be closed.
- All external doors will be locked

Monitoring the Site Entrances:

Once the site is secure, staff should return to the building and monitor entrances discretely from the classroom windows. The doors should only be opened by the Head Teacher or an Assistant Head Teacher when visual confirmation of the presence of the Emergency Services can be confirmed.

Staff

All staff are required to co-operate with the CIMT in support of the CIP.

In the event that staff are sent home, they should remain available during normal working hours to assist with necessary tasks.

Preparations for School Visits

Many traumatic events have arisen directly from school visits. Preparation for a visit is carried out in accordance with the local authority visit guidance, so that accurate information is available promptly to those coping with the incident back at school. A complete and accurate list of children and adults engaged in any activity away from school is always available.

Site Security

A number of serious incidents in schools have been associated with intruders and security arrangements are reviewed regularly as part of planning for critical incidents.

Procedure for Closing the School

Closure in advance of a School day

The school can be closed in advance of a normal school day using the following system:

1. Closure authorised by the Head Teacher or an Assistant Head Teacher and the Chair of Governors.
2. Notification of a school closure using the school website, school Facebook and Twitter accounts (actioned by the Assistant Head Teacher) as well as the Local Authority On-line website (actioned by the School Business Manager).
3. Implementing the school staff snow closure procedure.
4. Sending out text messages to all parents (actioned by the School Business Manager).

Closure during a School Day

It is never a preferred option to close the school during a school day but it can be done using the following procedures:

- Closure authorised by the Head Teacher or an Assistant Head Teacher and the Chair of Governors. Children will continue to be supervised by staff until parents authorise them to leave or they are collected.
- Parental authorisation can be provided by text message or email from a parental phone number.
- Consider use of Places of Safety (as described below).
- Notification to the LA of the school closure using the Local Authority On-line website (actioned by the School Business Manager).
- Recording the closure on the home page of the school website and Facebook and Twitter accounts (actioned by an Assistant Head Teacher).
- Sending out text messages to all parents (actioned by the School Business Manager).

Immediate Places of Safety

In the event of a major incident on site requiring the school to be closed, children will assemble at the primary assembly points (main upper school playground). If these are not useable staff will escort children to the secondary assembly points (main lower school playground)

Off-Site Place of Safety

If it becomes necessary to evacuate the site completely, children will be escorted into Larkhall Park, from where they can be collected or from where they can be released to parents.

Business Recovery in the Event of a Loss of Buildings or Site Space

General

Replacement of the buildings and facilities that have been damaged or made unavailable will be the responsibility of the Local Authority

Insurance

The school is covered under the LA business continuity insurance, this includes the installation of temporary working facilities.

Replacement of On-Site Facilities

The size and scope of facilities required for the school will vary according to circumstance. In the first instance contact should be made with the LA Insurance on 020 79263220.

Dependant on the nature of facilities disrupted, the following actions will be put in place.

Nursery Provision Relocation	
Replacement Facilities	Reception Classes area

Both Nursery & Reception Provision Relocation	
Replacement Facilities	Ground Floor Main Building

Centre for Autism Provision Relocation	
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- If both Nursery, Reception and the Centre for Autism require relocating, then the Nursery and Reception children will relocate to the Ground Floor Main Building and the children in the Centre for Autism will be asked to remain at home until provision can be put in place; this will be decided in consultation with Lambeth SEN.

Portable Classrooms

The location of the temporary accommodation will be determined based on the space required and circumstances at the time. Three possible location that has been identified for consideration should temporary accommodation / buildings need to be sited is:

- Main upper school playground
- Main lower school playground
- School Sports enclosed pitches

Erecting additional buildings on our current school site will always be the preferred solution.

Replacement of Off-Site Facilities (Relocation Agreements)

In the event of a disruption to our critical activities, as detailed above, we will contact the following school to organise alternative provision.

The Head Teacher takes overall responsibility for contacting appropriate locations.

Our 'Buddy' School is: **Allen Edwards Primary School.**

Allen Edwards Primary School

Contact: Mrs Louise Robertson Tel 020 7622 3985

Premises available:

- Main Hall
- Library
- Sharing existing classroom provision
- Selection of classrooms and support rooms
- Playground

Would allow delivery of:

- Continuous education
- Classroom based lessons
- Physical Education
- Examinations
- Lunchtimes

Pandemic Threat / Mass Staff Unavailability

Loss of staff is considered a generic threat to operations. The spread of a virus capable of impacting on operational service delivery is now considered genuine and serious.

In the event of mass staff illness, and after all avenues of supply have been investigated, the CIMT will shut the school to children using the same procedures described above.

Other Threats

The following Other Threats have been considered:

- Phone and ICT Communications Loss
- Finance Process Breakdown – payments to staff & suppliers fail
- Utilities / Energy Supply failure
- Evacuation due to Nearby Incident
- Bad Weather prolonged
- Strikes
- Terrorist Attack or Threat

Welfare Considerations

Our welfare lead in the event of an incident is the Senior Leadership Team (Head Teacher, Assistant Head Teachers and School Business Manager)

In the event of an incident the school is aware that actions to address associated trauma need to be taken immediately.

Over time, further action and support will be needed to reduce longer term effects on the emotional well-being and achievements of both children and staff.

Feeling shocked and numbed or feeling a strong urge to talk are normal reactions of those thrown into a major crisis. The school will try to ensure that adults and children are able to make contact with those we and they trust.

Younger children in particular are best supported by people they know well, namely their families and school staff. Outside agencies can provide support and advice to those directly involved with the children.

The following details short, medium and long-term actions which will be considered by the school in the event of an incident (where appropriate). The school will take decisions with support from welfare experts.

Short-term considerations:

- Organisation of child and parent reunions.
- Consideration of which children need to be briefed, how and by whom.
- Contacting outside support agencies, particularly Educational Psychology and child bereavement service.
- Arrangement a briefing meeting for staff as soon as possible.
- Arrangement of a debrief session for directly affected staff.
- Arrangement of a debriefing session for children, if appropriate.
- Ensuring procedures for monitoring staff and children are in place.
- Activation of strategies for allowing young people to express their feelings about the situation, if they wish.
- Contacting the families of those hurt or bereaved to express sympathy.

Decisions to be made may include:

- Who will give the news and what should be said?
- Whether to provide briefing notes for teachers responsible for informing children, to ensure a consistent message.
- Will counselling be required, and how will this be achieved?

- What information needs to be given to parents so that they are informed of assistance and support available to them and their child?

Medium-term considerations:

- Ensuring a member of staff makes contact with children at home or at hospital.
- Making sensitive arrangements for return to school.
- Arrangement of alternative methods of teaching, if necessary.
- Arrangement of support for affected staff.
- Arrangement of consultation so staff feel more able to support children.
- Clarification of procedures for referring children for individual help.
- Ensuring parents are kept informed.
- Consideration of attendance at funerals, taking the wishes of parents into account.
- Planning memorials and / or special assemblies.
- Ensuring monitoring procedures are in place and being followed.

Long-term considerations

- Introduction of strategies to continue monitoring vulnerable children and staff.
- Consultation and decision making over whether and how to mark anniversaries.
- Ensuring new staff are aware of the children affected and in what way.
- Ensuring new staff know how to obtain further help if necessary.
- Recognising that legal processes, enquiries and news stories may bring back distressing memories and cause temporary upset in the school.
- Consideration given to offering meetings for children and parents seriously affected by the incident. Advice and assistance can be offered through the Educational Psychology services and child bereavement service.

In case of death / bereavement the school will consider:

- Providing something tangible at the school for all: book of condolence, flowers, collection, and display of art work for remembrance.
- Holding a staff meeting with support agencies to discuss appropriate strategies for incident response and those affected.
- Plans to manage distress that may be caused by ongoing police / legal proceedings and media attention.
- Children that may need help in discussing their thoughts and feelings
- Closing for the day to allow people to attend the funeral
- Arranging transport for children to attend the funeral
- Whether children should be encouraged or discouraged from attending the funeral
- Whether there should be a memorial service at the school. If so, when?

In addition to those directly affected or involved in the incident, children and adults who are most likely to suffer distress as a result of the incident include those who:

- Are uninjured, but were at greatest risk.
- Directly witnessed death / injury / violence of the incident.
- Are siblings of those directly involved.
- Those who blame themselves.
- Those who are being blamed by others.
- Are experiencing instability at home.
- Have learning difficulties.
- Have pre-existing behavioural difficulties.
- Have previously suffered bereavement or loss.
- Have witnessed a similar incident or event before.

Debriefing

During and after any incident, it is vital that debriefs are held.

Some incidents will be lengthy, therefore it is appropriate to carry out regular debriefs to discuss the issues over the period.

Debriefing sessions will produce a number of issues requiring action or clarity. These must be acted upon as a priority.

Policy agreed by Governors

Date:

Signed: