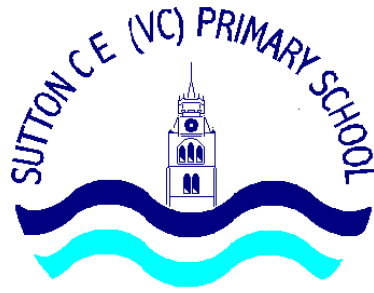


Sutton CE (VC) Primary School



Responding to Critical Incidents

Version 2018v1

Guidance Procedures for Schools

Approved by the Governing Body: 30.1.18

Responding to Critical Incidents

Guidance Procedures for Schools

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1. CRITICAL INCIDENTS DEFINED – The Cambridgeshire Context

What do we mean by a critical incident beyond every day experiences of school life?

- Arson/fire at school
- Pupil suicide or sudden death
- Sudden death of a staff member
- Abduction/disappearance
- Floods
- Unexpected closure

While it is hoped that none of these incidents will occur it is important that schools should be prepared for any eventuality.

Schools will need to consider their response:

- Immediately
- In the medium term
- In the long term

This guidance is designed to support schools in developing a structured and staged approach to critical incidents. It includes a range of contact numbers for the Local Authority, personnel and a range of templates and examples that you may find useful in your planning.

All schools, no matter what their designation, should have a Critical Incident Plan. If you would like any additional support or guidance when preparing your school's plan please contact:

Jo Pallett
Education Adviser
01223 703562
joanna.pallett@cambridgeshire.gov.uk

2. WHAT CAN SCHOOLS DO TO PREPARE FOR THE UNEXPECTED?

- **Identify a Critical Incident Management Team (CIMT)**

This is the group who will lead, in the case of a critical incident. Most schools keep the CIMT to be the Senior Leadership Team (or other management structure) so that there is no sudden different team in charge during an emergency.

Team must include non teaching staff and governors may be included if it is felt appropriate. Teams should also be clear of the structure if a key member e.g. the Headteacher is away.

Schools should ensure that all staff are aware of the CIMT, its members and role.

- **Design a plan to suit your establishment**

- It should be simple and straightforward to operate
- All staff should be familiar with it
- It should list staff mobile telephone numbers
- It should be practised and regularly reviewed
- Information should be updated regularly
- A copy should be taken on school visits
- It should be held in duplicate copy off-site in the event of a fire/flood. More than one member of the CIMT should hold an updated off-site copy
- The plan should identify alternative facilities should the school become untenable for whatever reason. This facility may be a school or a County Council building in the vicinity of the affected school
- This facility should, at the very least, provide an administration base as a bare minimum for the continuance of the daily business. Facilities for teaching may not always be available and assistance would be available from Education Capital.

In producing a plan you should identify the range of crises or incidents that could affect your school. These may include the need to evacuate or contain students and staff at short notice.

- **Establish a mechanism to implement your plans/CIMT and advise all parties**

- Contact lists/cascade systems including school holiday availability rota for CIMT
- Contact/rendezvous points
- Emergency assembly areas
- Include out of hours numbers in your system

A resource kit should be prepared in advance and maintained in a “grab pack” for immediate use, e.g. site plans, contact lists (staff, governors, pupils), include key holders (internal and external), emergency contact card, stationery etc.

Ensure all communication systems and procedures are in place, known to key staff and kept up to date. They should be included in the off-site copy of the emergency plan. Remember, some incidents may run for days so plan for standby and roster arrangements. Carry out a simulation exercise to explore how a critical incident may unravel. Identify as part of the School Development Plan any additional needs for training and revise plan as necessary.

3. HELPFUL CONTACTS

The initial contact should be made to your Education Adviser. The table includes their work and out of hours numbers and other LA staff you may find useful.

NAME	TITLE	TEL: NUMBER
Jo Pallett	Education Adviser – Secondary/Special	01223 703562 07768 099930
Chris Meddle	Education Adviser – Primary, Cambridge City & South Cambs	01223 703564 07798 571179
Diane Stygal	Education Adviser – Primary East Cambs and Fenland	01223 703564
Carol Peel	Governance Adviser	01223 715320
Sarah Priestley	Information Governance Officer	01223 699137
Education Child Protection Service	Helpline	01223 713800
CREDS		01223 703882
	County Attendance Manager	01223 703543
Carol Way	County Inclusion Manager	01223 706342/01480 376199
Sue Eagle	Social & Education Transport Manager	0345 045 5208
John Vark	Transport Delivery Manager	01223 715599
Sam Surtees	Manager Admissions, Transport and Education Welfare Benefits	01223 699200/01223 699662
Annabel Talbot	Bereavement	01480 376256
	Business Support Helpdesk	01223 717333

NAME	TITLE	TEL: NUMBER
Joanna Stanbridge	Education Psychologist	01353 612803
Stuart Wood	Health & Safety	01223 699122
IT Helpline	IT Support	0300 300 0000
Jill Buckinghamshire	Locality Manager	01223 507166 07768 137968
Mike Bannister	Premises Manager	01908 20 8200 07884 442 565
Stephen Brown	School Visits	01480 375133

Where to get advice and support

HELP!
Where to get support and advice

Is it a **CRITICAL INCIDENT**?

Yes

Contact your Education Adviser:

Primary

- **Chris Meddle**
Education Adviser
City and South Cambs
Tel: 01223 703564
Mob: 07798 571179

Diane Stygal
Education Adviser
East Camb
Tel: 01223 703564

Secondary and Special

- **Jo Pallett**
Education Adviser
Tel: 01223 703562
Mob: 07768 099930

No

Is it an **URGENT REQUEST FOR INFORMATION/SUPPORT**?

Allegations against staff
Chris Meddle, Education Adviser, South Cambs and City
Ray Worsley, Education Adviser, East Cambs and Fenland
Jo Pallett, Education Adviser, Secondary and Special

Child Protection Issue
Education Child Protection Advice Helpline 01223 703800

Health and Safety Issue
Stuart Wood 01223 699122

Detailed legal advice
Christopher Jones 01223 699386

Managing difficult situations including complaints
Please contact the Education Helpline who will locate relevant sources of advice Tel: (01223) 706399

Is it a **NON URGENT REQUEST FOR INFORMATION/SUPPORT**?

Review information contained on portal and intranet

Contact the Education Helpline for more information on (01223) 706399

HELP!

Where to get support and advice

Chair of Governors

Where to get advice and support



Is it a **CRITICAL INCIDENT**?

Yes

Contact your Education Adviser:

- **Chris Meddle**
Education Adviser
City and South
Cambs, Primary
Tel: 01223 703564

Diane Stygal
Education Adviser
Tel: 01223 703564

- **Jo Pallett**
Education Adviser
Secondary and
Special
Tel: 01223 703562

No

Is it an **URGENT REQUEST FOR INFORMATION/SUPPORT**?

Allegations Against Staff

Chris Meddle, Education Adviser, South Cambs and City, Primary
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Child Protection Issue

Education Child Protection Advice Helpline
01223 703800

Health and Safety Issue

Stuart Wood 01223 699122

Detailed Legal Advice

Christopher Jones 01223 699386

Governance Advice

Carol Peel 01223 715320

Managing Difficult Situations Including Complaints

Please contact the Education Helpline who will locate relevant sources of advice 01223 706399

Is it a **non urgent** request
For information or
support?

Review information
contained on portal and
intranet

Contact the Education
Helpline for more
information on
01223 706399

Or

Governance Helpline on
01223 715321

4. SUPPORT GUIDANCE MATERIALS
4.1 TEMPLATE FOR RESPONDING TO A CRITICAL INCIDENT
Issues requiring immediate action

Action Point	Guidance Note	CIMT Action	Personnel Involved	Done	Who by	Time	Comment
1. Gather information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What happened/where/when. • How many involved; who are they? • Name and contact numbers of adults at location of incident. • Details and location of injured (severity, name of injured and supervising adult(s) name(s) /contact number). • Details and location of non-injured names, and supervising adult(s) name(s) /contact number. • Has anyone else been informed e.g. Emergency Services, Education Adviser (what were they told?). • Ensure Education Adviser/LA and Chair of Governors are informed. 						
2. Call a meeting of the Critical Incident Management Team (CIMT) for briefing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assign tasks and ensure each individual knows what is expected and logs their action on a central log of events record sheet. • Consider whether you may need to close the school. • Identify a member of CIMT as the person to co-ordinate information. • Consider communication to school staff/pupils/community. 						
3. Establish a base for CIMT (this may be off school site) to operate with dedicated phone use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CIMT to agree a statement for all incoming calls, which can be managed by properly briefed staff or via informative answer phone messages where not all school lines can be operated personally (e.g. after school hours). • CIMT to brief personnel having direct links with public/media (factual brief statements only). (Discourage any speculative discussion; route all press enquiries to County Press Office in the case of a serious incident). • Establish press release in conjunction with the County Council Press Office. • Ensure telephone line(s) or mobile phones for outgoing calls available. • Action the 'telephone cascade' for staff and governors [where appropriate] to keep information flow fast and accurate. 						

Remember in most cases the first point of contact for the school will be the Education Adviser who will act as your key contact with the LA.

COMMUNICATION

<p>➤ Contact families whose relatives (children and adults) are or may be involved</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Should be done quickly and with great sensitivity, preferably by a CIMT member – but remember it is the responsibility of the police to notify next of kin in the event of a death. • Consistency of information is essential, therefore use agreed statement and most up-to-date information from your contact adult on the site. • Try not to leave messages or use extended chains of communication. • Establish a reception base for concerned relatives coming to the school. Think carefully about the siting of this base (access phone/internet etc). • Ensure people who can comfort and inform relatives staff this. Maintain direct contact with this base. 						
<p>➤ Prepare general information for all parents/staff/governors</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If you have concerns about issues of legal liability or the likelihood of police action, any further information should be drafted with the help of the appropriate Education Adviser. S/he can check with relevant agencies before letters are issued to the wider school community. • Information should be simple, factual, express sympathy, concern, and should indicate when further information may be offered. 						
<p>➤ Briefing school staff and governors</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure CIMT have a schedule to brief staff on a regular basis. • Ensure all staff (teaching and non-teaching) and governors are discouraged from speaking to the media. This responsibility should be referred to a named person in the team and/or the County Press Office. 						
<p>➤ Briefing pupils</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Usually best managed in class or tutor groups by adults best known to the pupils. The agreed statement can then be delivered in a way that is age-appropriate to the group. • A large gathering can generate hysteria, which can become a management problem in itself. 						

<p>➤ Briefing the media</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By contacting the County Press Office at the earliest opportunity colleagues can liaise swiftly to direct press interest away from the school and CIMT, who have enough to arrange initially. • The County Press Officer can act as the local agent for media enquiries and can enable you to continue to manage the internal situation. Keep the Press Officer well briefed at all times. • Even if you have good links with local media, it is essential enquiries be directed to the County Press Officer. • If you have training sessions for CIMT on a regular basis, you may wish to invite a member of the County Council Press Office. 						
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4.2 TEMPLATE FOR RESPONDING TO A CRITICAL INCIDENT

Issues to be dealt with as soon as possible

Action Point	Guidance Note	CIMT Action	Personnel Involved	Done	Who by	Time	Comment
1. Ensure continuing support for needs of pupils, staff and relatives of those involved in the incident is planned	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A member of CIMT is identified as having responsibility for ensuring continuing support. • Your Education Adviser may have mobilised help from a variety of agencies able to offer support and counselling to those immediately affected: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Educational psychologists - Experienced counsellors - Social Workers - Child protection staff - Emergency Planning team - Locality teams - Area Directors - Property, Press and PR - Health and Safety • You need to discuss likely continuing needs with relevant professional staff. Local religious communities may be able to contribute or take a lead in providing a longer-term focus for support. • You may want to make a detailed plan of who can offer types of support and for how long this can be continued. 						
2. Provide a focus for expressions of sympathy if appropriate. Refer to Bereavement Guidance in Managing Cambridge Schools (October 2006) for more detailed information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You may wish to place a table in the foyer or a vase of flowers, with a book for tributes/condolences. Sufficient space for items of remembrance may be helpful – the public and the school community may wish to place flowers or other tributes which can block fire exits or emergency service access points if not managed. • It may be more appropriate to negotiate a location away from school, i.e. church or public building. 						
3. Further information Bulletin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In your statements to the press and letters to the wider school community, you should indicate when you expect to be able to give more information. Try to honour this even if the update is very limited. You will create tension or possibly aggravate recipients of your information if your timescales are not adhered to. • Clear your letters and statements with the County Press Officer and Police if necessary. 						

4.3 TEMPLATE FOR RESPONDING TO A CRITICAL INCIDENT

Supporting people involved – action extending over time

Action Point	Guidance Note	CIMT Action	Personnel Involved	Done	Who by	Time	Comment
1. Share information and advice about what has happened (this will apply immediately but will continue)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All staff will need information about what has happened. Staff should be advised about how to talk to and support children. Information should be provided for staff on counselling available to pupils and to themselves. Parents may need information and advice on supporting and getting help for their children. 						
2. Acknowledge the consequences of the event on the school's community, their reactions and feelings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The incident may cause stress throughout the school. Acknowledge openly that the incident may affect people (children and adults) emotionally in different ways and at different times. Recognise that the behaviour, concentration and performance of children and adults may change. Recognise that not all staff will feel able to support others. Be aware of staff who are taking the brunt of supporting others, and ensure that they, too, receive support. 						
3. Provide opportunities for pupils and staff to express personal reactions (immediate and continuing need)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pupils should be encouraged to talk about their feelings in class, smaller groups, or individually, with active listening. Some pupils may show signs of needing support beyond the staff's competence or confidence. Extended counselling should be identified (with parental permission). Staff closely affected by the event should have opportunities for debriefing and counselling if they require it. Staff responsible for managing the critical incident should be offered supervision and relief. Some adults and children may need therapeutic help for an extended period after the event. 						

<p>4. Consider the overall response of the school</p>	<p>The CIMT may need to consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Attendance at a funeral. (It will not normally be appropriate to close the school.) Discuss attendance with the Education Officer. ● Visit(s) of staff/children to hospital. ● Expressions of sympathy to families affected. ● An assembly or service to mark the event. ● A memorial in the school or school grounds. It is advisable to consider this carefully and ensure full consultation with all parties. 						
<p>5. Re-establishing normal routines</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Normal routines should be established as soon as possible as these provide security and stability at a time of stress and/or emotional upheaval. ● Bear in mind the need to create time and space for thinking and grieving about the event. ● Pupils should be encouraged to resume normal attendance. ● Children who cannot attend school due to injury or distress may need other ways of maintaining the contact with the school and school personnel. ● Consider how/when personal effects of deceased pupils should be removed. 						

4.4 CRITICAL INCIDENT PREPARATION CHECKLIST

Coding: **A** - In place
 B - Still needs to be done
 C - Not relevant

Up-to-date information about:	Code
Pupil/staff, Governor, Key Holder emergency contact details.	A
LA emergency contact numbers.	A
Education Transport / Bus / Coach lists.	C
Emergency supply / support list.	A
Information sheet about the school.	A
Up-to-date site plan.	A
Pupil/staff movement data (timetables / registration – who is where and when) (include sickness / day-leave rota + staff list of who is where and when during holidays).	A
People, groups or organisations who visit or use the school and would need to be informed.	A
People and groups used by the school, e.g. suppliers and contractors.	B
Premises and sites plan of the school including critical locations, e.g. chemical storage, key salvage priorities, gas, electric and water mains control positions.	A
School bank details, account number and sort code.	A
Location of keys to classrooms, minibus, school safe etc.	A
Copy of Hazard Register.	A
Server back-up disks for all administration and student records.	A
Educational Visits - details of names, location, significant medical information and contact details relating to all pupils and staff off-site.	when relevant

Evacuation procedures – visible and practised.	A
Telephone lines – private, mobile, emergency access.	A
Small room / quiet area for Police statements, counselling or interviews.	when relevant
Plan for possible off-site location.	B

Management support:

Access to qualified first-aiders.	A
Screening of entrances / exits – siting of school / emergency office?	A
Instant assemblies to release teaching staff.	A
Knowledge of resources available to deal with the aftermath.	A
Familiarisation with 'Managing Bereavement in Cambridgeshire Schools' document.	B

4.5 MANAGING CRITICAL INCIDENTS TIME PLAN

Task	Time Scale
Obtain as much factual information as possible at start of crisis.	Immediate
Alert Headteacher. Headteacher to alert the CIMT, Education Adviser/LA.	Immediate
Convene meeting of the Critical Incident Management Team.	Immediate
Start the incident log.	Immediate
Make arrangements for handling the media in liaison with Education Adviser/Press and PR.	Immediate
Carry out quick appreciation of immediate response required.	Within first hour
Select and set up control arrangements – decide roles and responsibilities of CIMT.	Within first hour
Communicate details of the incident to staff, pupils, governors and parents as appropriate.	Within hours if practicable
Inform pupils in a sensitive way – small groups if appropriate.	Within hours if practicable
Arrange a debriefing meeting for staff involved in incident.	Before leaving school
Arrange a debriefing for pupils involved in the incident.	Before leaving school

Even when the incident has ended, arrangements to return the school to normal could go on for some time.

Facilitate support for high-risk pupils.	Next few days, could go on longer
Funerals, rituals and memorials.	Next few days
Decide/agree a range of response and support measures. These have potential to run for many weeks/months.	As soon as possible
Suggested reading and other resources.	As soon as possible
Review and revise plans in light of experience.	As soon as possible

4.6 SCHOOL CRITICAL INCIDENT LOG (EXAMPLE)

INCIDENT:

Date/ Time	Details of Incident	Action Taken	By Whom

APPENDIX 1

REFERENCES AND SUPPORT AGENCIES

If you have difficulty accessing any of the following reference materials, please contact the Educational Psychology Service who may be able to assist.

- ❑ **DfES Teachernet Emergencies website** (2006).
www.teachernet.gov.uk/emergencies The Teachernet website contains useful pages of advice & guidance for schools on how to cope with emergencies. For example it contains an interactive web tool that school can use to design their own emergency plan.
- ❑ **Loss, bereavement and critical incident resource pack** (2000) The Scottish Educational Psychology Development Programme.
- ❑ **Giving sorrow words**
Managing bereavement in schools a resource manual (1998) S.Killick & S.Lindeman. INSET pack – has an accompanying video.
- ❑ **Safety and disaster management in schools and colleges** (1998) D. Kibble.
- ❑ **Dealing with disaster** (1994) HMSO Publications.
- ❑ **Wise before the Event** (1993) W.Yule & A.Gold. Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation.
- ❑ **Helping children cope with grief** (1998) R. Wells. Sheldon Press.
- ❑ **Death and loss: compassionate approaches in the classroom** (1995) O.Leaman. Cassell: studies in personal and social education.
- ❑ **Helping children to manage loss: positive strategies for renewal and growth** (1998) B. Mallon. Jessica Kingsley Publishers.
- ❑ **Coping with unhappy children** (1993) Ved Varma (Ed). Cassell: studies in personal and social education.
- ❑ **Children and bereavement, death & loss: what can the school do?** (1993) P. Wagner. National Association for Pastoral Care in Education.
- ❑ **Grief in children** (1990) A. Dyregrov. Jessica Kingsley Publishers.
- ❑ **The forgotten mourners** (1995) M.Pennells & M. and S. Smith. Jessica Kingsley Publishers.
- ❑ **Interventions with bereaved children** (1995) M.Pennells & M. and S. Smith (Ed). Jessica Kingsley Publishers.
- ❑ **Coping with disastrous events:** Kent County Council.
- ❑ **Critical incidents, a support framework for schools:** Norfolk Education Dept.

Appendix 2

CHILDREN AND BEREAVEMENT: USEFUL HELPLINES, SUPPORT GROUPS AND AGENCIES

- ❑ **The compassionate friends.** National support group for families who experience bereavement. Will also offer resources 'on loan' to schools.
Helpline: 08451 232304 www.tcf.org.uk
- ❑ **Cruse.** National organisation that supports the bereaved.
Cambridge helpline: 01223 302662. www.crusebereavementcare.org.uk
- ❑ **Centre 33.** Voluntary organisation aimed specifically at 'young adults', defined as those under 26. Can provide information, counselling and support with bereavement & loss. Tel: **01223 316488.**
www.centre33.org.uk
- ❑ **CAMHS.** Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services.
Brookside Clinic, Cambridge **01223 746001.**
Hinchingbrooke Hospital, Huntingdon **01480 415300.**
- ❑ **Childline.** National helpline for children and young people experiencing distress. London office **020 7650 3200.** Emergency Helpline **0800 1111.**
- ❑ **Child death helpline.** Telephone helpline for anyone affected by the death of a child. Tel: **0800 282986.**
- ❑ **AICH.** Advice, Information, Counselling Huntingdonshire. A registered charity, which provides free, independent and confidential counselling to young people (aged 14 – 25) in the Huntingdon area: **01480 435061**
- ❑ **The children's hospice for the eastern region:** Milton, Cambridge
01223 860306.
- ❑ **The Samaritans.** Tel: **01223 364455** www.samaritans.org.uk
- ❑ **Winston's Wish.** Provides support for bereaved children up to 18, plus their parents and carers. Family line: **084 5203 0405**
www.winstonswish.org.uk
- ❑ **National Children's Bureau.** Tel: **020 7843 6000**
- ❑ **The Refugee Council.** Tel: **020 7346 6777**
- ❑ **The child bereavement trust.** Support and counselling for grieving families.
Tel: **01494 446648** www.childbereavement.org.uk
- ❑ **The Childhood Bereavement Network.** 8 Wakeley Street, London, EC1V 7QE
Tel: **020 7843 6309** cbn@ncb.org.uk