



St Nicholas Church of England
Voluntary Aided Primary School
Child Okeford

Friendship · Respect · Curiosity · Community

Exploring possibilities together

With God all things are possible

Matthew 19:26

Critical Incidents and General Emergency Procedures Policy

Policy adopted:	June 2018
Approval Level:	Governing Body
Last Review:	March 2023
Policy review period:	Annually
Next Review:	March 2024

PART ONE: CRITICAL INCIDENTS

1. Aim

The aim of part one of this policy is to lessen the effect of a critical incident on the staff, children and parents at St Nicholas CE VA Primary School. It is anticipated that by adopting the procedures outlined in part one of this policy it will be possible to provide a more secure environment for everyone associated with the school.

2. What is a critical incident?

(1) A critical incident is one which arises suddenly. Critical incidents may occur in school or out of school, but both types will have a major impact on staff and children. An incident might be designated as critical where the result is likely to be serious disruption to the running of the school, or where there is likely to be significant public and/or media attention on the school.

(2) There can, of course, be no rigid formula for responding to incidents, but broadly speaking, it has been assumed that where damage to premises is the focus, Dorset Council will take the leading role in managing the crisis in collaboration with the school and other agencies. Where the crisis is related to people, such as in the event of a death or serious injury, the assumption is that the school is likely to take the lead, with the support of the local authority, as necessary.

(3) Examples of in-school critical incidents:

- (i) a serious accident to a child or adult;
- (ii) the death of a child or member of staff through natural causes, such as an illness;
- (iii) a traffic accident involving a child or staff member;
- (iv) violence or assault within school;
- (v) a school fire or explosion;
- (vi) destruction of part of the school building;
- (vii) abduction of a child;
- (viii) a child or children absconding; or
- (ix) an illness such as meningitis within the school or the local community.

(4) Examples of out-of-school critical incidents:

- (i) an accident of a child or staff while out of school on a visit;
- (ii) death or injuries on a school journey;
- (iii) tragedies involving children from many schools; or (iv) civil disturbances.

3. Support agencies and personnel

A list of significant contacts and telephone numbers is included below at item 9.

4. Practice within school

(1) Individual class teachers have an important role to play in managing critical incidents and may well be the best people to deal with the children in their classes. The main role of specialist agencies is one of support, empowerment and to support children who cannot be helped by the teachers within the school alone. In times of crisis, teachers must react as they feel appropriate and there can be no easy formula for dealing with critical incidents but by ensuring good communication within school a crisis may be managed more effectively.

- (2) By outlining the appropriate actions to be taken in the event of a critical incident, the school aims to reduce the effect.

5. **Critical Incidents Team**

- (1) A central component of part one of this policy is the identification of the composition, roles and responsibilities of the Critical Incidents Team.
- (2) The role of the team is to review and direct the handling of the incident and the response and recovery process in order to:
 - (i) ensure the safety and security of children, staff, other users of the premises and visitors;
 - (ii) minimize the loss to the school in physical, human and financial terms;
 - (iii) manage an incident to minimize disruption to regular operations; and to
 - (iv) liaise with appropriate agencies, including the media.
- (3) The Critical Incidents Team will comprise of the following personnel:
 - (i) Headteacher;
 - (ii) Deputy Headteacher
 - (iii) Chair (or Co-Chair) of Governors;
 - (iv) the school's designated DSL (Headteacher);
 - (v) the school's Fire Marshall; and
 - (vi) the school's Cleaner in Charge.
- (4) The Critical Incidents Team will, dependent upon the nature of the incident itself, be concerned with any of the following issues:
 - (i) adequate assessment of hazards and situations which may require emergency action;
 - (ii) analysis of requirements to address these hazards; establishment of liaison with all relevant emergency services; development of an effective management plan;
 - (iii) dissemination of planned procedures;
 - (iv) organisation of practice drills to test the plan;
 - (v) regular review of this plan;
 - (vi) assisting the Headteacher with all aspects of the implementation of the plan; and
 - (vii) arranging staff development activities, where necessary.

6. **Procedures during an incident**

- (1) The Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher must be informed of any critical incident as soon as possible.
- (2) As soon as an incident is confirmed member of the Critical Incidents Team will meet to decide strategies.
- (3) The rest of the staff will be informed as soon as possible, preferably at a specially convened staff meeting.
- (4) All staff should share the same information.
- (5) Children will be told information simply and sensitively, without fabrication, preferably in class groups.
- (6) The School will try, as far as possible, to keep to the normal routine.

7. Action plan

(1) Major incidents require the following procedures:

- (i) set up a communication network;
- (ii) convene the Critical Incidents Team;
- (iii) inform immediately the Chair of Governors, Director of Children's Services, Emergency Planning Liaison Officer and any other appropriate Officers;
- (iv) collect, record and convey as much accurate information as possible; (v) identify two telephonists to staff:
 - a school phone for incoming calls; and
 - b mobile phone for outgoing information/staff use.
- (vi) set up office area to be used for enquiries;
- (vii) use the up to date list of children's next of kin (record files) and contact parents of affected children;
- (viii) record all actions;
- (ix) Headteacher, alone, to act as 'press officer'; and
- (x) refuse access to press/television on school premises.

(2) Action Plan timing:

Action	Timescale
Obtain factual information at the start	Within hours
Senior staff meeting with support personnel	Within hours
Advise Director of Children's Services	Within hours
Convene the Critical Incidents Team	Within hours
Contact families concerned	Immediately
Call a staff meeting to give information	Same day if possible
Inform children in classes	Same day if possible
Arrange a debriefing meeting for staff involved	Same day if possible
Arrange debriefing for children directly involved	Same day if possible
Identify high risk children and staff	Following day
Promote discussion in classes	Following days and weeks
Identify the need for group or individual treatment	Over days and weeks
Organise counselling	As required
Mark anniversary (discreetly)	Annually

(3) It is expected that Dorset Council will:

- (i) advise County Planning Emergency Unit so that appropriate assistance is made to the school;
- (ii) ensure that the appropriate Officers are advised of the crisis so that the best possible level of support can be made immediately available, as appropriate; and
- (iii) ensure that those agencies or services who are skilled in offering counselling are alerted to the crisis so that support is available as soon as seen to be appropriate.

(4) In determining the timing of the above response by the Local Authority, the Director of Children's Services needs to be guided by the Headteacher, making certain that the support offered is timed to acknowledge the school's own response to the tragedy.

8. **External documentation**

Part one of this policy should be used in conjunction with the Dorset Council Education Service Emergency Plan Issue No. 2 currently displayed in the school office on the noticeboard.

9. **Essential contact list**

Name	Role	Work	Mobile	Home
Jill Watson	Headteacher Designated Safeguarding Lead	01258 860581	07725 811751	
Belinda Bolar	Deputy Headteacher	01258 860581	07917 774995	01929 552949
Belinda Bolar	Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead	01258 860581	07917 774995	01929 552949
Lynne Crighton	Chair of Governors			01258 860650
Jenny Hanson	Fire Marshall	01258 860581	07835 442870	01258 881040
Sharon Lomas	Cleaner in Charge	01258 860581	07982 584741	
Theresa Leavy	Executive Director of People - Children	Theresa.leavy@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk		
Dorset Council	Emergency Planning Service	01305 224659		
Emergency Services		999		

PART TWO: GENERAL EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

10. Fire evacuation

- (1) **IF YOU FIND A FIRE OR ONE IS REPORTED TO YOU:** Staff discovering a fire or other emergency for which the buildings should be evacuated should activate the alarm *using the nearest available break glass call point*. They should then notify *the main office* of the exact location of the incident.
- (2) **ON HEARING THE FIRE ALARM:**
 - (i) All staff, pupils, occupants of building must respond to alarm activations **IMMEDIATELY.**
 - (ii) The fire alarm is a ***continuous ringing bell***.
 - (iii) Mrs Hanson or a member of staff will summon the emergency services (**DIAL 999**) as necessary; or they will be notified by our service monitors – Southern Monitoring.
 - (iv) Staff will supervise/ effect the evacuation of pupils/visitors to the designated assembly point on the playground. **See Appendix for all evacuation points.**
 - (v) Staff not with pupils, visitors and contractors must leave the building by the nearest exit and report directly to our Fire Warden (*Mrs Hanson*) or a senior member of staff at the assembly point. **(See Appendix for Fire Exits and assembly points).**
 - (vi) Pupils should leave in single file when instructed by the teacher in charge of the class. Pupils should then leave by the nearest available escape route. The last person to leave the classroom must close the door. Pupils should walk in silence and remain with their teacher at the assembly point.
- (3) **IF THE ALARM IS RAISED DURING LUNCHTIME:**
 - (i) Pupils should leave the hall through the Fire Exits leading to the playground.
 - (ii) The whistle should be blown to get the children to stop.
 - (iii) If the alarm is raised during WET LUNCHTIMES pupils should leave in single file when instructed by the Lunchtime supervisor in charge of the class. Pupils should then leave by the nearest available escape route. The last person to leave the classroom must close the door. Pupils should walk in silence and remain with the lunchtime staff at the assembly point.
 - (iv) If a pupil is not in a classroom when the alarm sounds, he/she must walk to the assembly point leaving the building by the nearest marked escape route.
- (4) **A calm orderly exit is essential. Walk quickly – DO NOT RUN or stop to collect belongings**
- (5) **AT THE ASSEMBLY POINT:**
 - (i) On arrival at the assembly area pupils must stand in their classes while staff (Teachers/ TAs/ Lunchtime Supervisors) check their registers. Each class should take their manual register identifying children away from school.
 - (ii) The result of this check must be reported to the Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher (Ms Watson / Mrs Bolar) as soon as it is completed.
 - (iii) Fire wardens are responsible for ensuring corridors/buildings are cleared. Fire wardens should ensure that in the event of their absence, another member of staff is available to take over their duties.

Area of School	Fire Warden
KS1 / KS2 Toilets KS2 Toilets Staff Toilets	Ms Jill Watson or Mrs Bolar Mrs Hanson Mrs Hanson
Canteen/ Hall	Ms Jill Watson or Mrs Bolar
Reception Toilets	Reception Staff (Miss Badger or Miss Fryer)
Open playground Gates	Mrs Wellband or Mrs Hughes (whoever is in Acers).
Evacuations during lunchtime	
Area of School	Staff responsibility
Reception/KS1/KS2 Toilets/ Art Room	Ms Jill Watson or Mrs Bolar
Canteen/ Hall	Lunchtime Staff working in the kitchen at the time the alarm is raised.
Open playground Gates	Member of the Lunchtime Team or member of staff occupying class (ACERS)

- (iv) All staff with the above responsibilities should report to the Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher of staff that all corridors, toilets and hall are cleared.
- (v) The Headteacher/Deputy Headteacher of staff will liaise with the Fire Brigade on their arrival.
- (vi) The building must not be re-entered until staff are notified it is safe to do so by the Fire Brigade/ Headteacher/ Deputy Headteacher.
- (vii) If the building cannot be reoccupied following an evacuation, pupils will be evacuated to the community hall and arrangements made to contact parents.

11. General evacuation for people with special needs

(1) Mobility impairment:

- (i) Those people who require only limited assistance should evacuate the building using the nearest exit. If they have to move at a slower pace, they should allow other persons to exit the building before them and then continue their evacuation to a place of safety. A responsible member of staff will be nominated to escort those who need assistance from the building.
- (ii) If staff or pupils with significant mobility impairments access the upper floors then additional measures such as Evac-chair's may need to be provided for the site. (These are specially designed chairs for bringing a person down a stair.)

- (2) Visual disability: People with a visual disability will usually require the assistance of one person, on stairways the helper should descend first with the persons hand on their shoulder, on level surfaces they should take the helpers arm and follow them.
- (3) Hearing disability:
 - (i) People with a hearing disability should be escorted out of the building by staff.
 - (ii) In the event of staff with a hearing impairment joining then they may require additional means of being warned in the event of an alarm e.g. pager that vibrates when alarm is activated, flashing beacon linked to alarm etc.

12. **Bomb threats**

- (1) If a bomb threat is received notify the Headteacher, or in their absence, the Deputy Headteacher.
- (2) Contact the police for advice as to whether the school should be evacuated – this decision is ultimately the responsibility the school.
- (3) The signal for evacuation of the building, should this be necessary, will be **BT**.
- (4) The normal evacuation procedure should be followed. The Evacuation point in the case of a Bomb Threat will be the Community Centre.

13. **Gas leaks**

If you smell gas, or suspect there is a gas escape, you should immediately: (i)

open all doors and windows;

- (ii) notify the Headteacher/ the Deputy Headteacher of the incident;
- (iii) call facilities/ site manager;
- (iv) check that all gas appliances are switched off;
- (v) shut off the gas supply at the meter control valve located at the rear of the Pre School (The Ark);
- (vi) evacuate part or all of the premises as necessary; and
- (vii) if gas continues to escape, telephone National Grid on 0800 111 999.

14. **Chemical spills**

- (1) If it is safe to do so identify the substance spilled and take necessary action to minimise contamination if trained to do so.
- (2) It may be necessary to evacuate the room and ensure windows are opened.
- (3) If spill is severe, evacuate part or all of the building, using fire drill procedures if necessary.
- (4) Move all persons to a safe location and call the emergency services. The Fire & Rescue Service are the lead agency in dealing with chemical/ toxic/ hazardous spillage incidents.
- (5) If severe spill is immediately outside the building:
 - (i) follow procedures to contain all persons within the building;
 - (ii) ensure all doors and windows are locked;
 - (iii) switch off fans or air conditioning;
 - (iv) avoid using electrical equipment in case sparks are produced; and (v) do not smoke.

Appendix

