

Netherleigh and Rossefield School

Major Incident Policy

January 2017

There can be no rigid formula for responding to incidents, but broadly speaking, it has been assumed that where damage to premises is the focus, the proprietors will take the leading role in managing the crisis in collaboration with the Senior Management Team 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 Senior Management Team will take the lead, with the support of any other relevant agencies (as appropriate.)

Handling crises is a normal part of school life. Some incidents however, are of a more critical and overwhelming character in which staff, pupils and parents may experience acute, sometimes prolonged distress. This policy is not intended to be prescriptive or to attempt to cover all possible events. Any viable incident would require a different type or scale of response. However, there is evidence that where a school has anticipated a major critical incident and made plans for managing a response, it is likely to handle the actual event more effectively and confidently.

This policy will aim to identify:

- Who will assume key roles.
- That contact lists are accurate.
- That there is a tested framework for communications.
- That there are some developed skills to draw on.
- That the response to a crisis will be more assured than that based on improvisation.

General planning

The Headmaster (Richard McIntosh) would be the “Incident Manager” unless he is unavailable. If this is the case then it will be the Deputy Head (Judy Brushett), the Proprietor (Mary Midgley), a senior teacher (Richard Maddra) and the Head of Early Years (Lois Partington) in that order.

The Proprietor (Mary Midgley) will also be identified to take a lead responsibility for liaison with the emergency services in the event of a crisis. In the event of an emergency all staff will be notified as soon as is practically possible. The school office will be the central liaison point for all incidents, as this is where the phone line is based.

In the aftermath of an incident there is the possibility of the school phone being inundated with incoming calls. It may therefore be most appropriate to use dedicated mobile phones to separate incoming and outgoing calls.

Those dealing with incoming calls should provide an agreed factual statement along with reassurance of action being taken at the incident site. It is important to avoid speculation or developments unless you are confident that they will be available.

Contacting parents

It may be necessary to invite parents to come to a meeting. It might be necessary to choose a venue away from the public and press.

Possible major incidents

FIRE

If there is a fire during a working day the school fire and evacuation plan details action to be taken. If there is a fire overnight or in school holidays the LEA has a support team that will help. There is some information that is vital to the running of the school which is securely backed up electronically.

This includes:

- Pupil and staff database.
- School financial accounts.
- Anything that is stored on the networked computers which includes most curriculum documents and policies.
- Premises and sites plan of the school including critical locations, copy of asbestos log book.

BOMB ALERT

If there was reason to believe that there might be a bomb in school, the fire evacuation plan would operate.

SEVERE WEATHER

If there is a sudden heavy overnight fall of snow/hurricane etc. The most senior member of staff will contact local radio stations to alert them that the school may open later than usual/close. There is a password for this system which has been agreed between the school and Pulse Radio. The Headmaster and Proprietor will keep a copy of the password off site. The most senior teacher will contact school transport organisers to inform them of the arrangements for that day. Staff emergency contact procedures will be initiated. This system could be used for other major incidents.

ACCIDENT INVOLVING A VEHICLE CARRYING SCHOOL PUPILS/STAFF

The action would depend on the severity of the accident and the distance from school. School should be alerted as soon as possible. (A mobile phone should accompany any out of school activity. The number of that phone should be recorded on the relevant Educational Visit Documentation.) Parents will be informed via school and school will organise transport as appropriate to get parents to the hospital where any pupils may have been taken. Trauma for both parents and pupils can be reduced by bringing them together as soon as possible. The most senior and available teacher will inform Acton Jennings so

that a press release can be agreed and prepared. The Proprietors must be informed as soon as possible as the press may want to get in touch. All other staff not involved in the incident will be briefed with up to date information and reminded not to talk to the media. When the situation is most immediately under control parents, staff and pupils may benefit from counselling, which school can organise.

SCHOOL JOURNEY OUT OF HOURS

The most senior teacher will keep a copy of all pupils and staff and their contact details when pupils are engaged in school activities out of schools hours. If there is an accident the above arrangements will still apply.

PUPIL DIES IN SCHOOL

Following on from current well practised call alarm procedures, the ambulance will be called. Other pupils will be led from the relevant room/area while first aiders try to save the pupil. If they witness death or near death they will need opportunities to talk about their feelings and counselling. Parents will be informed in the most sensitive way possible. A calm member of staff may have to collect parent of the dead/dying child and take them to hospital or wherever is deemed appropriate. Their religious leader may need to be informed if they have one. Be prepared for grief to show in the form of anger. Refer all questions that are difficult to the Headmaster. The Proprietors are to be informed as soon as possible and briefed about speaking to the press. Counselling for all concerned to be brought in to school. Educational psychology and EWO services can provide emergency counselling. All press enquiries are to be routed through the Headmaster and Acton Jennings.

LOCKDOWN PROCEDURE

What is a lockdown?

A lockdown is implemented when there is a serious security risk of the premises due to, for example, near-by chemical spillage, proximity of dangerous dogs, attempted access by unauthorised people intent on causing harm/damage.

Reasons for a lockdown to be initiated:

- An out of control student who is a threat to the safety of our students, staff, or himself/herself;
- Someone who has a gun or weapon;
- An intruder
- Hazardous chemical outside the building;
- A weather related event

How will I know a lockdown is occurring?

You will be notified by the sound of three short bursts of the fire alarm being sounded in the corridor. The alarm is situated near the office and will be activated by a member of staff who works in the office.

STEPS TO TAKE IN THE EVENT OF A LOCKDOWN

1. If you hear the "LOCKDOWN" alarms:

- a) Everyone is to stay where they are.
 - b) Classroom teachers are to:
 - i. Quickly glance outside the room to direct any students or staff members in the hall into your room immediately.
 - ii. Secure all external and internal doors
 - iii. Lower or close any blinds
 - iv. Place students against the wall, so that the intruder cannot see them looking in the door. Look for a possible 'safe corner'
 - v. Turn out the lights and computer monitors
 - vi. Keep students quiet.

Note: All staff members should locate and hold on to their fire register prior to turning out the lights. This will aid in accounting for all students should an evacuation be necessary.
 - c) Physical education classes being held in the hall should move into the nearest available room, secure all doors, and find a safe area.
 - d) If students and teachers are outside the school building, they should stop, drop and remain still.
 - e) If teachers and students are in the toilets, they should move to a cubicle and lock it
 - f) Anyone in the hallway should move to the closest classroom immediately.
 - g) Kitchen staff should stay in the area they are in, secure the doors and turn out the lights.
2. The Headmaster and/or Fire Warden will inform all personnel if the lockdown has been lifted.
3. If an evacuation occurs all persons/classrooms will be directed by a Police Officer or the Headmaster to a suitable safe location. Once evacuated from the building, teachers should take the fire register to account for all students present in class.

ANY OTHER DIFFICULT TO PREDICT OCCURRENCES

At time of a national emergency, such as the issues following on from 11th September, the school will liaise with the police, Bradford Metropolitan District Council and any other relevant agencies. The school will participate in any briefing information/meetings for Heads and key personnel with advice on how to protect schools and pupils, as well as recommended procedures to be followed if an event should occur.

GENERAL ADVICE FOR DEALING WITH THE MEDIA

Today's media operate very quickly. They are likely to contact you before the contingency plan is in place. The following includes some key points: Whatever the incident, and particularly if it involves injury or death on a school trip, the likelihood is that information will be sketchy at best and possibly inaccurate.

- Delaying tactics, e.g. the Headmaster is not available, but will call you back as soon as possible.
- Be clear about which staff/proprietors are designated to talk to the press and who are not.
- Be prepared to accept that a designated person may not be the most appropriate person to handle the situation in some circumstances.

- Do not talk to a journalist by yourself; have a colleague with you to take notes of what is said.
- Do not provide anything other than facts.
- Give a prepared statement rather than an interview.
- Arrange a later time to undertake an interview.
- Be sensitive about personal information.
- Do not apportion blame or admit liability to anyone, even in conversation.
- Establish who you are talking to and their organisation (name of journalist and short notes of what you have said).
- **DO NOT SPEAK OFF THE RECORD**

This policy will be reviewed annually. This will help to ensure that the plan is a working document and kept up to date.