



# Critical Incident Plan

Reference: D02  
Version number: 1.1  
Last updated: November 2022  
Date of next review: November 2023 or if legislation/statutory requirements change

*A happy and high-achieving boarding prep school in the heart of the glorious Cotswolds*

## Summary of changes and reviews

Version	Date	Summary of amendments	By
1.0	23 Nov 21	Complete re-write, based on ISBA template. Version control numbering implemented.	SB
1.1	25 Nov 22	Reviewed, no changes	SB

Version: 1.1  
Dated: November 2022  
Next review: November 2023



## Contents

Introduction.....	5
How to use this Plan .....	5
Context .....	6
Aim.....	6
Objectives.....	6
Priorities .....	6
Incidents covered .....	6
Decision making responsibilities .....	7
Statutory reporting requirements.....	7
Training requirements.....	7
Incident Management Team (IMT) Membership.....	7
Incident Management Team (Working Hours).....	7
Incident Management Team (Out of Hours).....	7
Support staff.....	7
Incident Management Team (IMT) Responsibilities.....	8
Team Leader / Co-ordinator .....	8
Deputy Team Leader .....	8
Spokesperson .....	8
Welfare representative liaison .....	8
Family liaison .....	9
Media liaison .....	9
Estates liaison .....	9
Investigation liaison.....	9
Incident secretary.....	10
Notification of an incident.....	10
Initial alert procedure.....	10
Initial information requirements.....	10
Grading the incident.....	11
Initiation and actions of Incident Management Team .....	11
Appendix 1: Incident Notification Capture Sheet.....	12
Appendix 2: IMT First Meeting Agenda .....	14
Situation .....	14
IMT details.....	14
Liaison requirements.....	14
Pupils, parents and staff.....	14



Media issues .....	14
Other issues .....	15
School communications.....	15
Financial issues .....	15
Insurance issues.....	15
Legal issues .....	15
Medical issues.....	16
Administration.....	16
Recovery .....	16
Appendix 3: IMT management initial actions and check lists .....	17
Preparation.....	17
Equipment, documents and information .....	17
Initial actions .....	18
Next steps.....	19
Actions on subsequent days.....	19
Follow-up actions .....	20
Appendix 4: Log Sheet .....	21
Appendix 5: Question Sheet .....	22
Appendix 6: Contact details.....	23
IMT.....	23
Agencies/individuals who may need to be informed.....	23
School telephone extension list .....	24
Key Wishford contacts list.....	24
Other useful numbers .....	25
Appendix 7: Relative Enquiries Guidelines .....	26
The Aims of the Relatives Response Team.....	26
General Guidelines in Replying to Phone calls .....	26
Do's and Don'ts .....	26
Appendix 8: Actions in the event of an emergency away from school .....	27
Appendix 9: Reputation management .....	28
Factors to be considered .....	28
Adaptable template letter to parents .....	28
Appendix 10: Procedures for assisting mobility impaired individuals during an emergency .....	30
Appendix 11: Post Traumatic Stress in Children (PTSD).....	31
Information for Teachers.....	31
Coming to terms with a loss of a friend .....	32



Do .....	33
Try Not .....	33
Appendix 12: Emergency media response pack.....	34
Getting ready .....	34
Strategy planning considerations .....	34
Initial statement .....	35
Preparing answers to potential questions.....	36
Guidelines for Difficult Questions .....	37
Should we Agree to Interview on TV or Radio?.....	38
Should we give a Press Conference? .....	38
Appendix 13: Sample announcements, press releases and letters to parents .....	39
Announcements .....	39
Press releases .....	39
Prepared statement for media .....	39
Letter to parents.....	40
Appendix 14: Aide memoires for specific incidents .....	41
Flooding .....	41
Fire .....	41
Lightning storm.....	42
Earthquake .....	42
Industrial emergency near school .....	42
Attack on a student or member of staff.....	42
Fights between pupils.....	43
Hostage situation.....	43
Missing child / abduction / runaway .....	44
Attempted Abduction.....	44
Threatening person in a school building .....	44
Threatening person in or close to school grounds .....	44
Marauding Terrorism Firearms Attack (MTFA) .....	45
Bomb Threat .....	45
Unsafe Structures .....	46
Utility Failure .....	46
School Trips/ Offsite Incidents (also see Appendix 8) .....	46
Death or serious injury .....	47

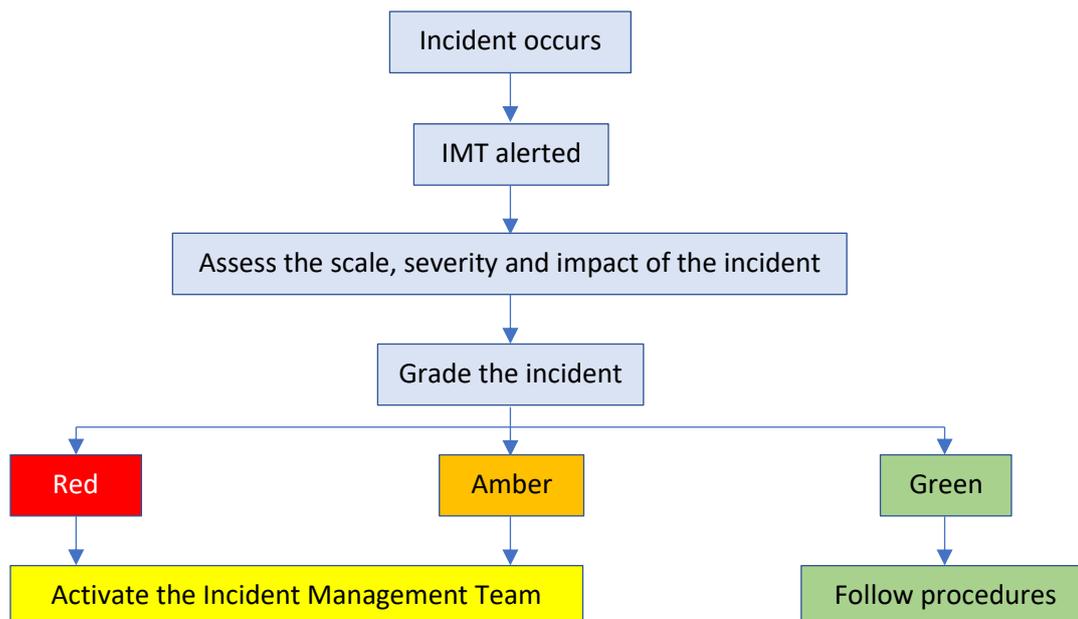


# CRITICAL INCIDENT PLAN

## Introduction

### How to use this Plan

- Follow the Activation Process below
- Grade the incident
- Form the IMT
- Follow the Guidance for Specific Incidents
- Refer to the Annexes as appropriate



**Red**

- Death – pupil, parent, staff
- Kidnapping/abduction, attempted or successful
- Serious assault
- Attempted suicide – pupil, parent, staff
- Serious emergency – fire, bomb, explosion to a school party on an educational visit
- Hostage situation
- Serious outbreak of a contagious disease in school or on educational visit

**Amber**

- Missing pupil
- Non-fatal accident or incident – pupil, parent, staff
- Assault on or by a pupil, parent, staff
- Member of staff arrested – abroad
- Pupil arrested – abroad
- Industrial emergency near school
- Threatening person in the school building or grounds
- Fire

**Green**

- Fights between pupils
- Member of staff arrested – UK
- Pupil arrested – UK
- Gross professional misconduct by a member of staff
- Flooding
- Lightening storm
- Earthquake
- Unsafe structures
- Utility failure



## Context

Hatherop Castle School is a boarding Prep School with approximately 200 children between Reception and Year 8, plus a nursery of approximately 40 children between the ages of 2 and 5. There are approximately 60 members of staff in school during the school day. In the evenings, there are 7 resident staff and up to 44 boarders. The whole school site on a 21-acre site.

## Aim

This plan provides a framework for the reduction of disaster risks affecting Hatherop Castle School and, should an emergency occur, for the rapid safeguarding of our people, property, and the environment in order to secure the recovery of the School's business whilst maintaining our reputation.

## Objectives

The objectives of the policy are to:

- protect and save lives;
- contain the incident;
- work effectively with the emergency services;
- retain business continuity;
- assist in any investigation;
- communicate with parents and key stakeholders;
- restore normality as soon as possible; and
- maintain reputation.

## Priorities

The priorities in any emergency are to:

- minimise or eliminate any danger or risks to individuals;
- ensure that the school acts in a lawful manner;
- facilitate effective recovery; and
- take reasonable steps to minimise any adverse publicity and to ensure all external enquiries are handled consistently by nominated personnel.

## Incidents covered

The type of incidents requiring activation of this plan might include the following:

- site emergencies;
- off-site emergencies;
- off-site hazards;
- death/serious injury of pupils or staff;
- violence to staff or pupils;
- high value kidnap;
- intruder access;
- bomb threat;
- infectious health hazard;
- vandalism / arson;
- adverse media attention;
- safeguarding issues;
- serious SLT misdemeanours; and
- minor on-site utility emergencies.



## Decision making responsibilities

The Head, on advice from the School Business Manager, should activate the plan. If the Head is absent then the responsibility will fall to the Deputy Head Pastoral, Deputy Head Academic and then to the School Business Manager. One of these four senior leaders should be contactable at all times.

The Executive Chairman of Wishford Schools should be informed as soon as possible and may nominate a spokesperson for the Board.

## Statutory reporting requirements

- DfE Guidance March 2014 Health & Safety in Schools.
- ISI Handbook for the Inspection of Schools.
- Boarding Schools National Minimum Standards.
- In line with Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR) and Health & Safety at Work (HSAW).
- Section 39(1)(a) of the Children and Young Persons Act 1933.
- Sexual Offences Amendment Act.

## Training requirements

The plan should be rehearsed once biennially after appropriate training of any new staff that will be involved; a table top discussion will suffice but a 'live' exercise should be planned at least once every five years. Any 'real' incidents in a year will count as a rehearsal.

## Incident Management Team (IMT) Membership

### Incident Management Team (Working Hours)

- Team Leader / Co-ordinator - Headmaster
- Spokesperson - Deputy Head (possibly escalated to the Proprietor)
- Welfare representative - House Mother
- Family liaison - To be nominated (depending on scale of incident)
- Media liaison - Marketing Manager (possibly escalated to Wishford Support Office)
- Estates liaison - Site Manager (assuming he is not involved in emergency response)
- Investigation liaison - School Business Manager
- Incident secretary - Headmaster's PA

### Incident Management Team (Out of Hours)

Depending upon the nature of the emergency, the Headmaster will either call in staff to support or nominate resident staff.

## Support staff

Additional support staff may be nominated, depending upon the scale of the emergency. This could include:

- Relative response team, reporting to the Family Liaison.
- Media response team, reporting to the Media Liaison.
- Liaison/escorts, reporting to the Estates Liaison.



# Incident Management Team (IMT) Responsibilities

## Team Leader / Co-ordinator

Responsible for effective activation and management of the plan:

- preparation:
  - Ensure the plan is up to date;
  - Assure Wishford Schools of compliance;
  - Ensure the IMT is properly trained;
  - Exercise the plan and the IMT;
- nominate IMT;
- identify location for IMT meeting room;
- command and manage the IMT;
- manage priorities and deconflict objectives;
- ensure common understanding of the situation; and
- inform and brief the Wishford Schools Executive Chairman on the incident.

## Deputy Team Leader

Responsible for deputising in the temporary absence of the Team Leader:

- fulfilling the responsibilities of the Team Leader in his absence; and
- if the team leader is focussed on managing the incident, the Deputy Team Leader is likely to be running the school and managing the implementation of actions, particularly with respect to teaching and learning, or other such activities in school.

## Spokesperson

Responsible for being the primary contact with the media and 'external' face of the School:

- prepare initial holding statement and later press releases (in conjunction with emergency services);
- provide primary contact with media; and
- arrange press conferences.

## Welfare representative liaison

Responsible for the welfare of pupils and staff requiring medical attention:

- access to medical records (staff & pupils);
- hospital and ambulance services liaison;
- emergency medical supplies;
- isolation plan;
- allergies, special medical needs;
- brief staff on medical aspects of the incident;
- liaise with school doctor, hospitals, ambulance service etc;
- co-ordinate the provision of welfare assistance in school and to external locations (hospitals etc);
- arrange counselling for staff and students (if required);
- maintain an overview of movements of staff and students away from school for medical reasons;
- liaison with other schools; and
- brief Family Liaison Team & IMT.



## Family liaison

Responsible for communications with families / relatives:

- Routine communication with parents;
- Coordination of visits;
- Meet and greet parents; and
- Liaison with the Media Team.

## Media liaison

Responsible for managing the School's dealings with the media during an emergency in order to maintain Brand Protection and Reputational Enhancement:

- develop the School's media strategy;
- determine authorisation and release procedures;
- develop Q&A;
- develop Social Media strategies;
- monitor local radio broadcasts and press;
- provide advice to staff and students on dealing with the media;
- update the Q&A;
- build social media first statement page;
- proactive engagement with media contacts;
- prepare responses to additional enquiries; and
- monitor and manage social media.

## Estates liaison

Responsible for facilitating all access to the School grounds by external stakeholders in order to ensure prompt and effective response and recovery:

- maintain maps and diagrams of the estates showing key points for water, gas and electricity;
- liaise with emergency services;
- liaise with and join the Local Resilience Forum;
- control access to the site;
- facilitate access for emergency services;
- maintain liaison with police cordon;
- communicate with staff within the estate;
- liaise with assessors, insurance, regulatory bodies;
- assist investigation liaison;
- liaise with contractors;
- ensure that the school buildings and grounds are secure;
- ensure safety of staff and students in school grounds;
- ensure that all visitors to school are met and escorted; and
- liaise with GPs, environmental health on medical issues (such as decontamination of kitchens etc).

## Investigation liaison

Responsible for the coordination and facilitation of post emergency investigation in order to demonstrate the School's duty of care and mitigate liability:

- determine external compliance requirements;
- establish contact with regulatory bodies;



- ensure insurance contact telephone numbers are contained within the plan;
- liaise with school insurers, accountants, bank and solicitors (and request their attendance at IMT, if necessary);
- preserve evidence and prepare for later inquiries (including Log Sheets);
- take legal record of proceedings (interview witnesses, take photographs, written inventory of damage etc);
- facilitate investigations into cause & response;
- lead and/or manage internal investigations;
- organise replacement equipment, and secure storage of salvage;
- account for costs;
- check all press releases, prior to their release;
- liaise with local authorities and relevant regulatory authorities; and
- capture lessons identified.

### Incident secretary

Responsible for maintaining a record of all communications made and decisions and actions taken:

- support the Team Leader;
- assist with information management;
- clarify decisions made and confirm who said what;
- maintain log and question sheets; and
- assist in managing team resilience.

## Notification of an incident

### Initial alert procedure

#### During working hours

Unless the emergency is an obvious physical incident on the site of the school the initial alert may well be in the form of a Press enquiry to the main School number or picked up on social media.

#### Out of working hours

Will usually be by means of a telephone call or email to the Headmaster or Head of Boarding

### Initial information requirements

The following information must be ascertained:

- nature of the incident;
- exact location and time of the incident;
- number of casualties and details of injuries etc;
- names and home numbers of those involved;
- emergency services involved;
- actions taken so far;
- location and telephone number of where the call is being made from;
- any media response; and
- name of person who took the initial call, and time the initial information was received.

A capture sheet for this information is at Appendix 1.



## Grading the incident

Grading of the incident should be done by the individual activating the plan (Head, Deputy Head or School Business Manager).

## Initiation and actions of Incident Management Team

If the incident grading warrants it, the Incident Management Team will be formed. The following Appendices will support IMT when determining courses of action.

1. Incident notification capture sheet.
2. IMT first meeting agenda.
3. IMT management initial actions and check lists
4. Log sheet.
5. Question sheet.
6. Contact details.
7. Relative enquiries guidelines.
8. Actions in the event of an emergency away from school.
9. Reputation management.
10. Procedures for assisting mobility impaired individuals during an emergency.
11. Post-traumatic stress in children (PTSD).
12. Emergency media response pack.
13. Sample announcements, press releases and letters to parents.
14. Aide memoire for specific incidents.



## Appendix 1: Incident Notification Capture Sheet

Nature of the incident
Exact location and time of the incident
Details of casualties, their injuries and their locations
Names and home numbers of those involved
Names and contact numbers of any witnesses
Emergency services involved



Actions taken so far

Location and telephone number of where the call is being made from, and any other staff members who are with individuals

Any media response

Name of person who took the initial call, and time the initial information was received



## Appendix 2: IMT First Meeting Agenda

### Situation

- What happened, when, where, why (if known).
- Details of actions presently being taken, including other parties involved.
- Numbers of, name, injuries, present location of all casualties, and details of those not accounted for.
- Total number of persons involved and total known to be safe and their present location. (Record all names of personnel involved, including witnesses and obtain contact numbers before sending them home).
- Details of any visitors or contractors involved.
- Estimate of immediate effect on the school.
- Estimate of obvious weaknesses in the response.
- Details of additional support immediately required.
- Dedicated numbers for communications including fax, mobiles and e-mails.
- Deployment of additional resources to the scene with communication links.

### IMT details

- Composition of the IMT.
- Location of the IMT.
- Responsibility of recording details of the incident.

### Liaison requirements

- Contact arrangements are required for the following:
- Scene of incident.
- Emergency services.
- Parents.
- Governors.
- Media.
- Regulatory authorities.
- Hospitals.
- Neighbouring premises.
- Suppliers / contractors who also may be affected.
- Associated schools.

### Pupils, parents and staff

- Locate personnel records.
- Flow of approved information to all including relatives.
- Accounting for persons who are missing and injured, requesting police assistance to inform Next of Kin (NOK).
- Informing parents of persons who are safe and collection actions.
- Reception, welfare and rehabilitation requirements.
- Advice regarding enquiries from the media.
- Advice regarding giving evidence.

### Media issues

- Nominate spokesperson.
- What calls go where.



- Media Statements. Decision on the content of an immediate statement for release to public and media.
- Authorisation procedure.
- Activity on social media.
- Prepare Q&A.

### Other issues

- Appoint support staff.
- Formulate statements in co-operation with other parties involved e.g. Emergency services.
- Monitoring of press and media broadcasts.
- Advice to staff, pupils and dependants regarding the handling of media enquiries.
- Hosting and escort arrangements for visiting media.
- Briefing of other sites to whom enquiries may be directed.
- Rehearsal of spokesperson.
- Audio recording of interviews, press conferences etc.

### School communications

- Reception to be briefed on what calls to go where.
- Enquiry lines, parents / relatives, media, others and manning requirements.
- Mobile communications for liaison personnel.
- Email monitoring.

### Financial issues

- Accounting for costs of incident including recovery considerations, nominate an accounting code.
- Funding of victims and their dependants' immediate requirements.
- Sources of additional funds.
- Appeal.

### Insurance issues

- Inform insurers and comply with conditions
- Third party insurers
- Assessor to the scene
- Photographic evidence and written inventory of damage
- Secure storage of salvage / replacement equipment.
- Disposal of waste.

### Legal issues

- Beware admission of liability, allocation of blame.
- Obtain copies of any contracts / trading conditions that may be relevant.
- Inquiry considerations.
- Preservation of evidence.
- Legal record of proceedings.
- Interviewing of witnesses.
- Statutory reporting requirements under HSAW or other regulations.
- Contact third party legal advisers including dependants who may be affected.



## Medical issues

- Independent advice
- Liaison with hospital, GPs, Environmental Health Officers
- Decontamination (kitchens etc).

## Administration

- Security of site, meeting rooms, records, salvage and replacement materials (high vulnerability to theft after replacements are made)
- Emergency power and lighting.
- Making place safe or cordon off unsafe areas.
- Controlled re-occupation.
- Alternative accommodation and facilities.
- Catering
- Transportation
- Overnight manning
- Off-site storage of records and plans

## Recovery

At an early stage appoint a separate team to look at recovery arrangements, which will include many of the items listed above including:

- Clean-up/disposal of waste (consider evidential requirements).
- Inventory damage.
- Prioritise the clean-up/recovery.
- Welfare and counselling arrangements.
- Funding of victims' or dependants' immediate requirements.
- Attendance at funerals, purchase of wreaths.



## Appendix 3: IMT management initial actions and check lists

### Preparation

- The IMT meeting room will be determined by the Team Leader, and will be subject to the seriousness of the incident and physical restrictions (as some areas may be out of unusable due to the nature of the incident). This may require use of an off-site facility, such as a meeting room at Cricklade Manor Prep or making a request to Hatherop Primary School to allow use of their facilities.
- The chosen meeting room should have access to a telephone and a reliable WiFi connection. Should the nature of the incident inhibit this, consideration should be given to relocating off-site.
- The majority of information that is required will be stored on SharePoint.
- Unless it is specified that the action is required, the IMT should make a judgement call as to which activities are required in the circumstances.

Activity	By whom	Completed
Ensure there is no immediate risk to the community		
IMT nominated and briefed		
IMT meeting room established		
Communications confirmed (radios issued/ telephone numbers shared)		
Log and question sheet activated		

### Equipment, documents and information

Activity	Required	By whom	Completed
Site maps			
External contact telephone numbers including service suppliers (in addition to those in Appendix 6)			
Location of utility services cut-off valves and junction boxes			
Hazardous material stores			
Entrances and exits plus parking areas identified			
Location of hydrants & risers			
Fire equipment points			
Fire assembly points plus alternatives			
Underground pipes and drainage			
Telephone DPs			
First aid equipment			
Torches			
Communication equipment (radios, loud hailer, whistle)			
Blankets, gloves, high-visibility jackets			
Registers			
Petty cash			
If external visit, source risk assessment			



## Initial actions

Note that this is collection of considerations, and not a priority list to work through in order.

Activity	Comments	By whom	Completed
Inform Proprietor	Urgent priority		
Inform Safeguarding Support Unit	If serious injury or death of a child while under the school's care		
Inform GCC Schools' Emergency Support Team			
Agree on what information to release and when			
Contact families involved	See aide memoire at Appendix 14 for informing parents of death/serious injury		
Inform staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide staff with factual information about the incident, so that they can feel confident about handling questions from students</li> <li>• Provide a clear management plan about how to react to incident</li> <li>• Tell them when the information will be updated e.g. break-time</li> <li>• Encourage staff to refer to the CIMT when in doubt (using an agreed internal line)</li> <li>• Be aware that staff may also be overwhelmed by information about the event</li> </ul>		
Inform pupils	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Decide whether it is better to talk to the school in class groups, year groups, or individuals</li> <li>• Consider asking members of staff who are well known to the pupils and who feel confident in handling their reactions to do this</li> <li>• Tell pupils what has happened, in an age appropriate manner, and allow them to ask questions</li> <li>• Dispel rumour</li> <li>• Offer support</li> <li>• Use clear language; no euphemisms</li> </ul>		
Start preparing media strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Seek support from Wishford, ISI, IAPS and/or GCC Media Team if required</li> <li>• Proprietor to confirm appropriate spokesman</li> <li>• Control all access points to the school, but designate an area to brief the media that allows you some control of them</li> <li>• Keep the press area separate from the gathering place for pupils/staff</li> <li>• See Appendices 9 and 13</li> </ul>		
Teaching and learning	Consider whether to continue with the normal school day, send children home or plan an alternative activity		



## Next steps

Activity	Comments	By whom	Completed
Prepare information for parents	This could be my email or in the Messenger. In some circumstances it may be appropriate to call a meeting at the school, especially if the incident is one that will generate concern about an aspect of the school's organisation.		
Seek support for handling feelings and reactions	Consider Ed Psych support. Note that Gloucestershire Educational Psychology Service can provide support and they have specialist training in critical incident debriefing		
Inform the wider community	The School may wish to contact neighbouring schools and community groups if there are siblings of children involved in the incident		
Debrief staff at end of day	Could be in person, over Teams or by email. Remember that some of them may also need support		
Business continuity planning	Should areas of the school not be usable, plan for how we will provide teaching and learning in the short and medium term, noting that the immediate response may be to revert to home learning.		

## Actions on subsequent days

Activity	Comments	By whom	Completed
Review situation	Should be done, as a minimum, each day		
Teaching and learning	Consider: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cover requirements</li> <li>• Flexible timetable</li> <li>• Appropriate rooms</li> <li>• Refreshments</li> </ul>		
Updates to staff	Consider: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Practical arrangements</li> <li>• Support for staff</li> <li>• Self-care</li> </ul>		
Updates to pupils	Consider: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Further information (as appropriate)</li> <li>• Showing care and support</li> <li>• Providing comforting routine and predictability</li> <li>• Allowing pupils some involvement/outlet (e.g. cards, drawings, poems, ceremonies)</li> </ul>		
Updates to parents			



## Follow-up actions

Activity	Comments	By whom	Completed
Inform ISI	Within 14 days, if serious injury or death of a child while under the school's care		
Identify contentious curriculum issues	There may be aspects of the curriculum immediately following the incident that could trigger unpleasant reactions. Such sources of reminder could be: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Literature</li> <li>• Items in assemblies</li> <li>• Episodes within the Curriculum</li> <li>• It is important to anticipate these sources and possible reactions</li> </ul>		
Anticipate events/anniversaries	In order that they are not forgotten, provisionally plan future events in the draft calendar		
Post-incident review	Approximately 6 weeks after the event, plan a reflection and review of the incident to identify lessons identified and update this plan		







## Appendix 6: Contact details

### IMT

Appointment	Name	Mobile number	Changes
Team Leader	Nigel Reed	07773 397795	
Deputy Team Leader	James Oakden	07745 136369	
Spokesperson	Sian Dawson	07545 173112	
Welfare representative	Becky Walker	07771 562556	
Family liaison			
Media liaison	Janine White	07480 852739	
Estates liaison	Dave Freebury	07769 515346	
Investigation liaison	Simon Bristow	07801 370493	
Incident secretary	Sam Kinch	07527 401381	

### Agencies/individuals who may need to be informed

Organisation/individual	Telephone number	Notification required	Informed	Initials
Sam Antrobus	07971 259428			
Emergency Services	999			
Gloucestershire Police	01452 726960			
St Nicholas' Church vicar	01285 750332			
GSCP Safeguarding Support Unit	01452 583629 01452 614194 for outside of hours			
GSCP MASH	01452 426565			
GSCP LADO, Nigel Hatten	01452 426994			
GCC Educational Welfare	01452 550505			
GCC Media Team	01452 425226 07747 898064 for out of hours			
GCC Schools' Emergency Support Team	01452 426412 01452 427171 for out of hours			
Thames Water	0845 9200 800			
SSE SWALEC	0800 052 0400			



## School telephone extension list

Location	Internal extension	External direct dial	Remarks
Main Office number	N/A	01285 750206	
Headmaster	223	01285 708560	
Registrar	222	01285 708562	
School Administrator	221	01285 708564	
Marking Manager	241	01285 708567	
Deputy Heads' Office	232	01285 708568	
Business Manager	235	01285 708561	
Finance Officer	234	01285 708563	
Site Manager	247	01285 708570	
Learning Enrichment Department	248	01285 705955	
Boarding Office	225	01285 708573	
Kitchen	243	01285 752027	
Performing Arts' Centre	246	01285 708572	
Art studio	242	01285 708565	
Sports Office	228	01285 708569	
Nursery	244	01285 752029	
Science Lab	303	01285 704303	
RP Classroom	239	01285 708571	
2L Classroom	238	01285 708566	
Head's Flat	245	01285 752025	
Tower Flat	252	01285 702195	
Surgery Flat	253	01285 702196	
Boarding House Boys	250	01285 702193	Internal access only
Boarding House Girls	251	01285 702194	Internal access only

## Key Wishford contacts list

Individual	Internal extension	External direct dial	Mobile/comments
Sam Antrobus	270	01249 479070	07971 259428
Mark Dingle	278	01249 479078	07866 438489
Gary Vaughan	N/A	N/A	07769 449232
Kate Ross	274	01249 479074	07795 633434
Ian Harkess	N/A	N/A	07444 265160
Steven Burns	N/A	N/A	07837 412403
IT Helpdesk	276*	01294 479276*	N/A

\*External number dials all phones in the IT department; internal extension just dials Heidi Tengesdal



## Other useful numbers

<b>Organisation</b>	<b>Telephone number</b>
Fairford Health Centre	01285 712377
Cirencester Hospital	01285 655711
IAPS	01926 887833
ISI	0207 6000 100
Health and Safety Executive Incident Contact	0845 300 9923
Environment Agency	0800 807060
Foreign and Commonwealth Office Consular Assistance	020 7008 1500 (24 hour)
Teacher Support Network	0800 056 2561
Cheltenham General Hospital	0300 422 2222
Gloucestershire Royal Hospital	0300 422 2222
Heart Local Radio	01452 572400
BBC Radio Gloucester	01452 307575
Child Bereavement UK	01494 568900
Gloucestershire Educational Psychology Service	01452 328101



## Appendix 7: Relative Enquiries Guidelines

### The Aims of the Relatives Response Team

- To draw calls away from other locations.
- To give assurance to callers.
- To ensure that external callers are dealt with in a professional and caring manner.
- To control the release of factual and approved information. The school must speak with one voice and be seen to speak with one voice.
- To gather information from relatives.
- To provide welfare assistance if required.

### General Guidelines in Replying to Phone calls

- **Do not offer to call people back. Ask them to ring you in an hour, explain that you are very busy and that there are a number of relatives who will be waiting to call the team. BUT, if you promise to ring back, keep your promise.**
- Be considerate and caring.
- Be calm and controlled.
- Be prepared to listen to concern and do not interrupt.
- Ensure that your tone of voice is comforting not patronising.
- Treat them as individual important people.
- Avoid direct expressions of sympathy.
- Avoid attempts at reassurance (if you don't have confirmed information).
- Be patient and methodical.
- Reassure them that the school and the emergency services are doing all they can to respond to the emergency.
- Keep a record of all calls, and what was said on the calls.
- Ask them to stay on the number that they are on, or suggest that they move to a friend or relatives house for support (if they do, ask them to call in and let you know the new telephone number).

### Do's and Don'ts

#### Do's

- Only give approved confirmed information.
- If in any doubt about any caller or your response, consult the Team Leader.
- Always try to be helpful.
- Be considerate and keep calm.
- Give your name if asked.
- Say that you are an authorised spokesperson if asked.
- Assume everything you say will become public knowledge.
- Defend the School at all times.

- Take a break if you are feeling over-stressed.
- Ensure calls are returned if you have promised to.
- Refer the calls from the media to the Media Team.

#### Do Not

- Do not lose your temper.
- Do not speculate.
- Do not give out unofficial information.
- Do not promise to ring back unless you absolutely have to.
- Do not withhold any publicly available information.



## Appendix 8: Actions in the event of an emergency away from school

A hard copy of the following guidelines must be taken by all party leaders and their deputies.

- Establish nature and extent of the emergency.
- Make sure that all other members of the party are accounted for and safe.
- If there are injuries, establish their extent and administer first aid (if you have been trained or feel capable - but be aware of consequences that might follow were you to give incorrect treatment).
- Establish names of the injured and call relevant emergency services.
- Advise other party staff of the incident and that emergency procedures are in operation.
- A judgement will need to be made, based on the situation and availability of emergency services personnel, whether a lone adult accompanies the casualty/casualties or remains with remainder of the group.
- Ensure that the remainder of the party are adequately supervised throughout and arrange for their early return to base.
- Arrange for one adult to remain at the incident site to liaise with emergency services until the incident is over and all children are accounted for.
- Control access to telephones until contact is made with the Headmaster, Deputy Headmaster or School Business Manager and until they have had time to contact those directly involved. Pass full details of the incident (name, nature, date and time of incident, location of incident, details of injuries, names and telephone numbers of those involved, action taken so far).
- Telephone numbers for future communication (identify alternate telephone numbers in case telephone lines become jammed).
- The school will arrange to contact the parents of those involved. In serious incidents the parents of all pupils, and next of kin for staff, should be informed.
- A designated person should act as the point of contact with the media to whom all involved should direct questions. Under no circumstances should the name of any casualty be divulged to the media.
- The Party Leader should write down as soon as practicable all relevant details. A record should be made of any witnesses. Any associated equipment should be kept in its original condition.
- Legal liability should not be discussed or admitted.
- All accident forms should be completed. (Insurers and HSE or Local Authority inspectors will be contacted by the office).
- Inform parents of any delays that will be necessitated.



## Appendix 9: Reputation management

The greatest risk to the school's reputation is the arrest of a staff member for sexual misconduct, and in particular if it involves a minor.

### Factors to be considered

Should this happen, the following factors should be considered:

- Likelihood of it being in the media or become known to parents; this will determine whether the strategy should be proactive or reactive, and if the former, the urgency of making a statement.
- Subject to the seriousness of the incident, we should consider bringing in a reputation lawyer and professional specialist communication agency to advise on all messaging. (For example, <https://www.onlycrisis.com>).
- In addition to the duty of care to the children, KCSIE also requires the school to provide a duty of care to the staff member in question. This can be very difficult to maintain in the face of a police investigation whose priorities are different; a lawyer will advise but we could find ourselves personally unpopular with the authorities.
- Consider whether it would be prudent for the school to find a decent criminal solicitor for the accused teacher to ensure that the reputation of the school is protected, particularly if we believe their innocence; this will ultimately be a Wishford decision. Brief staff accordingly so that should they find themselves in this unfortunate position they wait for the school solicitor and not take the duty solicitor at the police station.
- Note the need to maintain the anonymity of the staff member.
- You will find the restrictions of the Education Act extremely frustrating.
- Refer to the Media Pack for the preparation of Q&A.
- Make sure your spokespersons are rehearsed (by professionals) in this particular scenario.
- Prepare a series of letters to parents and staff and briefings for the school community.
- Handle media enquiries by email. Ask for all questions to be put into an email then send them to the external team for drafting (communications first then legal). Send the reply under the School's name.

### Adaptable template letter to parents

As you may or may not be aware, the Education Act 2011 includes provisions that cover the present situation. The relevant provisions were introduced to protect teachers in situations where false allegations are made against them. That is not to pass any form of judgment on the present matter, but a reflection of the reasoning behind the section's introduction. Of course, if charges follow then the individual can be identified, which in itself demonstrates the balance that needs to be drawn between the individual teacher's interests and the wider public interest in open justice.

The School, as much as it may want to be able to communicate openly with its community, is bound by the Act. It should also properly follow the spirit as well as the letter of the Act. The relevant sub-section defines "publication" as including "any speech, writing, ... or other communication in whatever form, which is addressed to the public at large or any section of the public ...".

As I am sure you will understand to be plain from this wording, this prevents the school communicating with the parents of pupils as a group, they being a "section of the public". It is the same with regard to pupils and staff. In the present circumstances, these three groups are the most relevant sections of the public. The school necessarily also has to guard against communicating with individual parents in ways in which the scope and purpose of the Act's provisions are capable of being wholly or substantially undermined. You will also appreciate that there is a need for the school to deal with all parents in the same manner and not be selective. These considerations negate against discussing the matter with individual parents.



I further understand that your son/daughter is a potential witness, although I have no knowledge of his possible evidence, nor do I need to know at the present juncture. This is a further reason why the school should be cautious in its communications with you since it cannot allow the perception, never mind the reality, of it being thought to be interfering with or influencing evidence of a potential witness. The mere fact of communication can itself create that risk and all communication does need to be carefully considered. In making those observations, I am not advocating that there be no communication between the School and you, as there are plainly issues that will need to be addressed and managed, but that consideration needs to be given to this factor. Discussing the case generally is almost certainly the wrong side of the line; discussing how best the School addresses your child's needs in light of events is an example of something that is plainly appropriate to be able to discuss, limited only by the extent to which the school can disclose information about the case itself.

Understandably, the school appreciates you may find the situation a frustrating one. I can reassure you that the present matter has created its own frustrations for the school given that the Act does not assist the school in its dealings with pupils, parents and staff.



## Appendix 10: Procedures for assisting mobility impaired individuals during an emergency

Each mobility-impaired individual should have a Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP), which is to be shared with all staff who might teach that individual, including cover teachers. The PEEP is to be followed where possible.

If the situation means that the PEEP cannot be followed, the following actions are to take place:

- Contact the Site Manager by radio; as a Retained Fire Fighter and First Responder, he is best placed to advise. However, note that in a number of emergency situations, he will not be on site as he will be responding to the emergency through the emergency services.
- If he is unable to advise/not present, the emergency services should be contacted. If possible, this should be via the school office, but if that is not possible, any staff member in the vicinity of the mobility-impaired individual should contact them. The dispatcher should be given the following information:
  - type of emergency;
  - location of the individual; and
  - any further information requested by the provider.
- The despatcher will advise that an emergency unit has been despatched and the unit will use special equipment to move the individual up or down the stairs to exit the building.
- Until the responders arrive the initial caller should remain with the mobility impaired individual. If the emergency conditions worsen (e.g. the fire spreads to the floor where the impaired individual is located) two options remain:
  - the impaired individual should be moved to an area protected by a fire door and/or sprinkler until the responder arrives; or if that is not possible
  - if everyone else has vacated the building, bystanders should assist the impaired individual into the stairwell.



## Appendix 11: Post Traumatic Stress in Children (PTSD)

### Information for Teachers

In the aftermath of a disastrous event the natural community support systems may be unavailable as the whole community, family or neighbourhood are disrupted or distressed. If children are involved in the disaster, and survive, whilst family members or close friends such as school friends die, and especially if the child is a witness to the events, reactions to the bereavement will be complicated by the effects of such traumatic experiences.

We all have our own ways of dealing with every day stresses. We talk things through and put our own interpretations onto events which helps us to make sense of our world. When we are confronted by stresses that are sudden, unexpected and catastrophic our usual coping strategies are overwhelmed, leaving us feeling intensely fearful and powerless to act, unable to put things out of our minds. This is called traumatic stress.

Although it has been recognised for some time that adults could be seriously affected by traumatic events, it has only been in the relatively recent past that people have begun to understand the way that traumatic events affect children. Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder in children occurs when children continue to experience distress for over a month after the event.

Traumatic reactions can interfere with and inhibit the normal grieving process. When a child is bereaved they often gain much comfort from dreaming about that person in a calm way, the feeling that they are close in dreams can help to ease the loss. Traumatized children, on the other hand, often experience nightmares in which they relive their frightening experience, or they have intrusive daytime recollections, including flashbacks to the traumatic situation, which interfere with the child's efforts draw on any shared happy experiences which involved the dead person.

Children already feel vulnerable and powerless in the world of adults, and in the event of a disaster involving children, adults often exclude children from much of what is going on in order to protect them. This lack of information about what has happened and what is going to happen to them, can cause further alarm and distress to the children involved.

To grieve satisfactorily for a loved one, it is necessary to remember and recollect again and again. The need to avoid traumatic images interferes with this process, as does the need to protect the feelings of the adults in the child's world who are probably showing signs of distress themselves.

Three aspects of the event will need to be remembered and dealt with. The circumstances of the death, the loss, and the consequent life changes will all need to be dealt with. When working with children who have suffered traumatic bereavement or loss, the first goal is to enable them to anticipate, understand and manage everyday reminders so that the intensity of these reminders and their ability to disrupt daily functioning gradually lessen. Problems arise as even within a small group, such as a family, not all family members will have shared the same experience, and not everyone will be ready to grieve in the same way at the same time. Some children do not experience their grief reaction until years after the event.

### Crisis Intervention

When it is possible to see a child who has suffered a traumatic bereavement within a few days of the trauma, it may be possible to prevent Post Traumatic Stress from developing. Ideally someone who is skilled in interviewing children should see the child, but if this is not possible the interview should not be postponed on this account.

It is important to reassure the child that this is a very unusual event and that the world has not suddenly become a very unsafe place, although it may be disorganised temporarily.



The child needs to 'nail down' their experience, drawing, modelling or having the opportunity to talk it through in detail, as appropriate. Speed is essential, within the first 24-48 hours is best. It is important that children give attention to the minutiae of sensory experience. What did they see, smell, hear, feel, and taste? What did they remember? What did they do? What emotions did they feel?

The child should be helped to understand what they have witnessed, and any consequences of that event. Crisis Intervention is emotional first aid. It will be necessary to reassess the child's needs at regular intervals. It may be necessary to look carefully at where the child will live if parents have been killed, or what further therapeutic support is needed if children continue to be distressed.

All children who witness the death of someone close, or who are caught up in mass disasters are likely to experience traumatic bereavement. All children should receive preventive crisis intervention followed by regular monitoring afterwards, to ensure that they make a healthy recovery from their experience.

### Emotional First Aid

Actions to consider are as follows:

- Children need to know that this is an extremely unusual event.
- You need to explain why you are talking to them, how children normally feel in these situations and what you plan to do.
- Ask each child to relate its own experience starting from before the event, that is from the time when everything was happening normally. Stop children from reporting versions of the event which they have heard from someone else, get them to focus on how the experience touched them. When they first noticed there was a problem, what they noticed, saw, heard, smelt. What happened next etc., until the incident was over.
- Then ask the children to go through the same process, this time explaining their FEELINGS.
- Try some form of relaxation exercise which they can use if they experience any of the symptoms of traumatic stress:
  - Get the children into a comfortable position, say that they may like to close their eyes. Ask them to think of a really happy event. Perhaps opening a present at Christmas/birthday, or a lovely surprise; ask them to focus on that feeling. Feel it all over; enjoy that happy feeling. Then tell them to use that routine before they go to sleep, or at any time during the day that they are troubled by unhappy or frightening memories.
  - Suggest to the children that they might like to be involved in saying goodbye to their friend(s). Some of them will feel guilty that their last words were unkind or cross, or that they did not particularly like the victim(s). They might find it helpful to write goodbye letters, the Form or Forms Involved can then take responsibility for compiling this information, together with some samples of work which can be given to parents; it is often helpful to do this later in a formal way as part of a memorial service, perhaps. The rituals around death are important and help children understand what has happened and they should be encouraged to be involved. Collections supported by children and parents can be used to provide some lasting memorial to dead friends.

### Coming to terms with a loss of a friend

#### Information for Parents and Pupils

This section has been compiled in an attempt to help the children to come to terms with the sudden death of a friend. We hope you will find it useful in the weeks and months that lie ahead. If at any time you feel in need of further help, please contact either the School or any of the organisations listed on the back of the leaflet.



It is important to reassure your child that the death of a young person is a very unusual event.

We all have our own ways of dealing with everyday stresses. We talk things through and put our own interpretations on to events, which helps us to make sense of our world. When we are confronted by stresses that are sudden, unexpected and devastating our usual ways of coping are overwhelmed. We are left with feelings of fear and powerlessness, and we are unable to put things out of our minds.

### Points to bear in mind

- Children tend to express grief in their ways of behaving. They act out their feelings and emotions. We cannot always know what they are thinking or feeling. Take cues from their behaviour.
- All children react differently. Withdrawal, aggressiveness, panic, anxiety, anger, guilt, fear, regression and symptoms of bodily distress are all signs of grief. Try to be patient and understanding.
- When children are grieving they have shortened attention spans and may have trouble concentrating. School-work may be affected.
- A child may attempt to deny feelings of anger, hurt and fear by repressing them. Eventually grief takes over and their feelings leak out. It may be months or even years before a child displays signs of the full impact of the death of a friend or a member of the family.
- Bereaved children will need to re-establish their self-identity. "Who am I?" becomes a major concern. Try to help them in their search.
- Children are best helped if they are not isolated or insulated from the reality of death. It is a part of life. Your support and availability to your child will be an invaluable asset.
- Face your own feelings about death. Be open and honest with your feelings. Share your feelings. It is all right to cry, be sad or angry. It is even all right to smile.

And finally

### Do

- Allow children to express their feelings.
- Encourage them to be patient with themselves and not to expect too much of themselves.
- Allow them to talk about their loss as much and as often as they want to.
- Talk about the special, endearing qualities of the person who has died.
- Reassure them.
- Avoid suggesting that there may be other people who could be substitutes or compensations for the person who has died.
- Start planning for the long term; it may be appropriate to review PSHEE and citizenship programmes. Staff should also be mindful of, and plan for, anniversaries and other special dates.

### Try Not

- To let your own sense of helplessness paralyse you.
- To avoid the subject of death with your child.
- To say 'you ought to be feeling better by now' or anything which implies a judgement about their feelings.
- To tell them what they should feel or do.
- To change the subject when they mention the person who has died.
- To avoid mentioning their loss out of fear of reminding them of their pain.
- To find something falsely positive (e.g. a moral lesson, closer family ties, etc. about the loss).



## Appendix 12: Emergency media response pack

### Getting ready

The following plans will be confirmed by the IMT, and may require approval from Sam Antrobus or Kate Ross.

Media strategy to be authorised by \_\_\_\_\_

Statements to be authorised by \_\_\_\_\_

The spokesperson will be \_\_\_\_\_

The media response team will be located in \_\_\_\_\_

Interviews will be held in \_\_\_\_\_

Press conferences will be held in \_\_\_\_\_

### Strategy planning considerations

- Do the media already know about the incident? Has the school been connected with the incident? Is the school likely to be connected with the incident?
  - If the answer to any of these questions is no, then we may decide to keep quiet about it. If so, we need to prepare a short statement in case we are found out.
  - Centralise all media enquiries and make sure that only one or two people reply to them.
  - Prepare background material to reply to difficult questions and be sure to cover the areas where we may be criticised.
- If the media know about the incident and have connected it with us, are we likely to be shown in a bad light?
  - If the answer is yes, then prepare a short statement and use it to reply to any questions.
  - Centralise all media enquiries and make sure that only one or two people reply to them.
  - Prepare background material to reply to difficult questions and be sure to cover the areas where we may be criticised.
- The media know about the incident and about our involvement. Is the whole school unlikely to be criticised and do we emerge from the incident quite well?
  - If the answer is yes, prepare a short initial statement. It should tactfully and with restraint say what the school has done well (e.g. "The intruder was restrained by the Games Master and police were called").
  - Should this statement be released proactively?
  - Can we still be criticised? (e.g. Why was it only the Games Master that stood between Year 7 and oblivion?).
- Agree three or four positive points.
  - Our good record so far.
  - The care we have taken to try to prevent incidents such as this from occurring.
  - The speed and quality of our response to the incident.
  - The care that we are offering to children and parents (e.g. counselling).
  - Could refer to most recent ISI report.
  - **Brief everyone on the positive points. Make the positive points whenever possible. Speaking to the media is largely a matter of repetition. There is no guarantee that the media will report what we say, so let's make sure we say it often enough.**
- What are we going to do about pupils and parents who may speak to the media?



- We have no right to 'gag' pupils or members of staff; any attempt to do so may be counter-productive. It is better to shelter them from the media attention, at least for the first few hours of the incident when they may be shocked and distressed. The Police and health services may help with this. We can offer to let them stay on at school to keep them away from media intrusion, but we cannot keep them in school nor can we stop them using the 'phones. If the media can't find them then they can't talk to them.
- The media may track down and hound individuals. If so, a dignified appeal to the editors may help. Or we may be able to arrange protection e.g. by asking the Police for help or by sheltering the individuals on the school premises until the media go away. We can only do this if the individual asks us for help otherwise we may look as if we have something to hide. It may be worth persuading people at this stage to make a short statement or in writing through the school.
- Some parents or pupils may be interviewed in a state of shock shortly after the incident has occurred. They may say anything in such a condition. There is little that we can do about this, except possibly imply that "**whilst we fully understand and even to some extent share their sense of anger and grief, they may take a different view when they have heard the full story**"
- Some parents may set out to be critical of us. There is nothing that can be done about this except prepare our answer and take every opportunity to make it, try at all times to be sympathetic and understanding.
- Many people think that they can make a lot of money by selling their story to the newspapers. This has the advantage of taking the other media off our back as they will not want to build interest in a rival's story. However, there are two disadvantages:
  - You do not get paid as much as you might think.
  - The buying newspaper wants value for its cash - i.e. a sensational story - and there is no control over what they print. Often it is not what might have been said to them.
- If parents do sell stories in this way, we should consider taking specialist advice.

There may be a lot of sympathy for the school if the public view is that the incident was not our fault and we can show that we took reasonable steps to prevent it. In some cases, an incident may even be a PR advantage to us, if we can demonstrate that we have taken sensible precautions and reacted quickly. We should take every opportunity in such cases discreetly to point out the advantages of the School. However, the tone we adopt is crucial. We can rapidly lose sympathy by seeming arrogant or uncaring or elitist.

Spokespersons must make sure that what is said is backed up by facts, respects the feelings of others, and does not seem to dismiss the gravity of the situation.)

### Initial statement

- Express regret. ("I regret to confirm that ....")
- Briefly describe the incident ("*two pupils from Hatherop Castle School were killed today in a climbing incident in Dorset.*")  
[Note: do not imply cause or blame. Use neutral words like 'incident' or 'accident' wherever possible.]
- Include whatever good news we can, providing we are certain that it is accurate. (*The remaining 14 pupils in the party are unhurt and are being looked after by school staff*)  
[Again, don't be too specific in an initial statement.]
- Say what the school is doing ("*We are notifying the parents of the children concerned. Two additional members of staff are driving to Dorset to be with the group.*")
- If we haven't done so already, say whether the parents have been notified. At this stage we may wish to appeal to the media, if they have the names, not to publish them until the parents have been



informed. This may work but we have no guarantee that it will. It is best reserved for special cases - e.g. if we can't contact a parent because they are on holiday, but expect to do so within a few hours.

- Say why we can't say anymore at the moment. ("*Until we have more information ourselves I cannot tell you anymore. We are busy here trying to make arrangements for the pupils ....*")
- Tell the media where they can reach us. Give names and telephone numbers.

## Preparing answers to potential questions

These answers cannot be prepared in advance and should be completed on the computer and then issued to the media response team and spokesperson(s):

- What is the school policy on security?
  - What measures do we have in place?
  - Have we taken police / professional advice?
  - When did we last assess our security measures?
  - Have we ever had a security incident before?
  - Are parents aware of our policy and do they agree with it?
- What is the school policy on safety?
  - What measures do we have in place?
  - Have we ever taken professional advice?
  - When did we last assess our safety measures?
  - Have we ever had a safety-related incident before?
  - Are parents aware of our policy and do they agree with it?
- What is the school policy on drugs?
  - What do we do to prevent drug abuse in Box Hill?
  - Have we had any examples of drug abuse (and what did we do about them)?
  - Do we keep in touch with the Police? (How often and at what level?)
  - Are parents aware of our policy and do they agree with it?
- What is the school policy on bullying / violence?
  - What do we do about bullying / violence?
  - Have we had any recent cases? What did we do about them?
  - Do we keep in touch with the Police? (How often and at what level?)
  - Are parents aware of our policy and do they agree with it?
- What is the school policy on adventure training / outdoor activities?
  - How often do we do this sort of activity and where?
  - What national guidelines do we follow?
  - What steps do we take to check out the activity provider?
  - What training do accompanying staff have?
  - Have we ever had problems like this before?
  - Are parents aware of our policy and do they agree with it?
- What is the school policy on overseas travel?
  - Do we do this sort of activity? How often and to where?
  - What national guidelines do we follow?
  - What steps do we take to check out the activity provider?
  - What training do accompanying staff have?
  - What rules do we have (e.g. about the staff / pupil ratio)?
  - Have we ever had problems like this before?
  - Are parents aware of our policy and do they agree with it?
- What is the school policy on using minibuses?
  - Do school staff drive them?



- Do the drivers have any special training?
- If we use outside companies, what steps do we take to vet them?
- Are parents aware of our policy and do they agree with it?
- What are the school's arrangements for contacting parents in an emergency?
  - Do we keep all their names and details centrally?
  - How do we ensure that our records are up to date?
  - How many people are available to ring around parents?
  - Do we have a plan to bring people in out of hours?
  - Are there any special problems (e.g. a large number of parents working overseas?)
- Any other difficult questions?

## Guidelines for Difficult Questions

Where we cannot or have not prepared answers to difficult questions in advance, try to remember the following guidelines:

### Do Not

- Say anything that could be seen as libellous, that seems to imply blame of anyone else, or that might be held to prejudice a trial or inquiry.
- Admit any liability - this may invalidate our insurance.
- Say anything which identifies individuals, at least until their parents or next of kin have been informed; this applies to staff as well as pupils.
- Appear to speak on behalf of other individuals or organisations, unless you have agreed what to say with them first. (*To say that "I'm sure that Mrs Bloggins feels very upset but she understands that ...." or "The Fire Brigade said this couldn't possibly have been an accident..." is simply inviting journalists to play your comments back, and Mrs Bloggins and the Fire Brigade to contradict you).*)
- Answer hypothetical questions.

### Do

- Say that full details are not yet available, so you cannot yet say exactly what happened. (This is usually the case). But give details which you are sure of - e.g. the time you were contacted, the actions the school has taken).
- Monitor the questions you are asked and identify what 'angles' the media are covering (e.g. *who are they criticising/ Us or someone else? What are they criticising us for? Try to prepare answers to these 'angles'.*).
- Avoid controversy, especially anything which may seem to criticise others. (e.g. *if asked when you rang the Fire Brigade, bear in mind that this may be an attempt to criticise the Fire Brigade for slow response. Try to stay out of that sort of media argument: time enough to look at that once the incident is over.*).
- Provide factual details to back up our 'positive points'. (*Rather than simply saying "we have a good safety record" it is much better to say "we haven't had any injuries in school for 10 years"; but be sure you are accurate. Similarly, rather than saying "our staff are experienced at leading this sort of trip" it is better to say "the member of staff in charge speaks fluent German and has led three previous trips to this area in Austria....).*).
- Provide factual details to counter allegations against us. (*"The school had its last fire inspection in .... We were only required to undertake limited work, which we did."*)
- Remember our positive points. Update or improve them as the situation develops.



## Should we Agree to Interview on TV or Radio?

- Depends if we have something we want to say; what is in it for us?
- Who will do the interview? Have they had training? Will they come over well?
- Make sure the interviewee has been properly briefed. Think through the difficult questions in advance that he/she may be asked, and prepare the answers.
- For a TV interview, try to resist having a dramatic background. If the school has just burnt down, the TV crew will want to film the interviewee in front of it. Is this image we want people to remember? (Maybe it is, if it wasn't our fault and we are appealing for help to rebuild it. Maybe it isn't, if we forgot to have the fire extinguishers refilled.)

## Should we give a Press Conference?

- This is not usually necessary unless the story is very big. Then it gives us the opportunity to get our message across to a lot of media at once; but remember to ask ourselves: what's in it for us? Why are we doing this? What message do we want to get over?
- If we give a conference, or take part in one organised by the Police, prepare thoroughly. Anticipate awkward questions and work out the answers.
- If it is our own press conference, field a team of people. One should chair and control it: his job is not to answer questions but to introduce the speakers and give them time to think and some protection. He may also allocate questions amongst our team. Others on the team should be a senior person (Headmaster for Proprietor) and one or two people with special experience of the incident or problems that it raises.
- Only let in genuine media (ask to see their press cards or ID). Pressure groups can hijack the conference and make it a public debate (which TV will love but we won't).
- Agree ground rules with TV cameras beforehand. If we don't want them coming on the platform, make this clear.
- Ensure the room is tidy and clean, and the background is suitable. Think about our overall image. Dress suitably.
- Let the journalists in by one entrance and have another exit for your own team to leave by. The chairperson should be firm and ensure that the team get away as soon as the conference ends. No 'off the record' private words.

**IF THERE IS A TV CAMERA OR MICROPHONE IN THE ROOM ASSUME IT IS ON AT ALL TIMES!**



## Appendix 13: Sample announcements, press releases and letters to parents

### Announcements

#### After a known fatality

We are taking this time to think about....., a Year 6 who died last night in a road traffic accident.....was travelling with her family to ..... We do not know any details about the accident at this time except that the rest of the family is safe and no one is injured seriously.

.....'s funeral is being held at .....on.....A funeral is a special time to remember a person who has died. The school will let your families know about the specific time and address of the funeral in a written note which will be sent home tomorrow.

Let's take a moment of silence to think of....., to remember all the good things about her, and to say goodbye. In our silence we will express our loving thoughts.

#### After a suspected suicide

A tragedy has happened....., a Year 8 pupil, has died suddenly. Details of .....'s premature death will not be released to protect the privacy of family members. You will be given information about funeral arrangements as soon as possible.

This kind of tragic news is hard to accept. You may experience many feelings within the next few days. Everyone deals with loss differently. It is important to respect the way others grieve. Counsellors' are available in .....Feel free to arrange to go and talk to the counsellors'. They want to listen to your feelings and concerns.

### Press releases

#### Death of a pupil

Date

School grieves sudden death of pupil

As reported by the local Police service, a pupil at Hatherop Castle School died tragically on .....The circumstances of .....'s death are not known at this time and an investigation is currently ongoing.

This is a tragic loss to .....'s family and to our school community. To assist in supporting our staff and pupils through this time to grief, additional trained staff have been assigned to the school to provide support. A letter has been sent by the school to parents, informing them of this incident and providing information on the support services available through the school.

A special assembly to remember .....has been arranged for .....

Contact:..... Headmaster.....School at.....

### Prepared statement for media

#### Death of a pupil

We are sorry to learn of the tragic.....of ..... We hope at this time the school would be given the privacy needed to support our pupils at this difficult time, etc

NB: If the Head wishes to comment about the pupil, they may want to gain permission from the family to include his/her achievements, talents, academic success and personal attributes.



## Fire at school

### For Immediate Release

#### Historic school destroyed by fire

Hatherop Castle School was destroyed by fire in the early hours of Saturday morning. Fire and Rescue Service and the local Polices Services, responded to a 999 call reporting the blaze at 3am on Saturday. There were no injuries reported. The cause of the fire is under investigation. Damage is estimated at £.....million.

## Letter to parents

### Death of a staff member

It is with great sadness that I have to tell you of the sudden death of NAME, (a pupil in Year xx/a Year xx Teacher/Learning Support Assistant, etc). The children were told this morning by their class teacher/Headmaster at assembly.

NAME died of (an asthma attack, meningitis etc) and the children have been assured this is something that does not happen very often. Your child may or may not want to talk about it but it is likely that he/she will need extra love and support from you in the days ahead. This does not mean that anything is wrong with him/her. It only means that this traumatic event has been too powerful for him/her to deal with on his/her own. He/she may be feeling anxious. Take time to listen to your child and try to provide a predictable routine for him/her at home. Avoid too many absences to start with.

We have enclosed an information leaflet for you which may be useful at this time.

Trained staff are helping to support us through this difficult time. It is sometimes necessary for a member of the team to speak to a class or individual pupils who may be distressed. He/she will be guided by the Head/class teacher in this. If you do not wish your child to receive such support from the team please contact us immediately.

We are deeply saddened by this great loss but are trying, for the children's sake to keep the school environment as normal as possible. Our thoughts are with NAME's family at this tragic time and the school community sends them sincerest sympathy and support.

NAME's funeral is on DAY/DATE at TIME am/pm at (Name of Church or Crematorium). We are in touch with the family regarding their wishes for the school's representation at the service.



## Appendix 14: Aide memoires for specific incidents

The following information is colour coded and should be linked to the Activation Process Flowchart and is related to ensuring the immediate safety and welfare of staff and pupils.

### Flooding

- 
- Building Related:
  - Switch off stop cock.
  - Call Site Team.
  - Call water supplier if necessary.
  - Monitor the situation.
  - If necessary, evacuate the area.
  - If flood worsens evacuate the whole building.
- Environmental Flooding
  - Assess the situation and keep in touch with the Environmental Agency and Local Authority.
  - Tune in to local radio or [sign up for flood warnings](#).
  - Consider removing equipment, pupils, staff and pets from the area of risk.
  - If safe to do so turn off the gas, electricity and water supplies before flood water enters the premises.
  - Keep dry and out of flood water if possible.
  - Do not evacuate if you are uncertain about the continuing safety of staff and pupils - please note that 80% of flood deaths occur in vehicles.
  - If it is necessary to walk through shallow flood water, take care for hidden holes, obstacles and other hazards.
  - If flooding causes partial loss of power, consider moving communications hub (by moving office telephones) to another part of the school.
  - If flooding causes total loss of power, relocate communications hub to somewhere with mobile phone reception, and consider relocating office staff to somewhere with power. Consider closing school until power returns.

### Fire

This is an overview; full details are in D03 Fire Prevention Policy.

- Activate the fire alarm.
- Do not tackle the fire yourself.
- Call 999 Fire Service.
- Follow fire drill procedures.
- Fire extinguishers are there to enable staff and pupils to exit buildings as safely as possible - do not try to put a major fire out that is the job of the Fire & Rescue Service.
- Ensure everyone is out and clear of the building.
- Report missing persons to the IMT.
- Consider the locations of the Assembly Points in relation to any smoke drift and weather conditions. Pupils may need to be moved to a more suitable area.
- If the fire worsens remove the pupils immediately from the area or site and as far away as logistically safe/practical as possible.



- If the site has been evacuated make sure someone has been nominated by the IMT to meet the Fire & Rescue Service
- Given the 'All Clear' make sure no pupils are missing on re-entering the building

## Lightning storm

- If pupils and staff are outdoors avoid water, hilltops and trees. Stay away from any metal objects and avoid contact with others.
- If you think your pupils are at risk of being struck, inform them to drop to their knees and bend forward. DO NOT LIE FLAT.
- If in a building instruct pupils to move away from windows and do not touch the metal structures, phones or computers.
- If in a building stay inside, encourage visitors to shelter in the school.

## Earthquake

A major earthquake is not likely to happen in the UK but small tremors have occurred so here are some important points to consider:

- If one or two people are in the room the safest place to be is under the door frame.
- With a class of children ask them to take cover under their desks and cover their faces with their arms to protect against falling objects.
- Once the initial shocks have ceased and there is major damage to the building, evacuate. If not, carry out a risk assessment and consider moving out of some of the building.
- Contact a property surveyor for advice if unsure about the structural integrity of the building.

## Industrial emergency near school

- Pupils and staff should remain in the school building and await further instruction from the LA and council emergency teams and/or emergency services.
- This may include closing all doors and windows and covering extractor fans to minimise inhalation of fumes or smoke.
- Schools may wish to consider the best place in the building to shelter depending on the circumstances. For example, sheltering on the leeward side of the building in case of toxic release.
- Stay tuned to local radio - consider switching to a battery-operated radio in the event of loss of power.
- School should remain in shelter mode until the emergency services and/or local authority give the all clear.
- Encourage visitors to shelter in the school building.

## Attack on a student or member of staff

- At the scene students should know to seek assistance from a member of staff.



- If staff witness the assault they should try and distract the assailant without risking themselves: do not engage physical contact, do not further agitate the assailant, maintain eye contact, be courteous and patient, use the word "stop" and the names of the people involved to promote familiarity.
- Staff should disperse spectators and therefore eradicate the risk of further injury.
- Staff should contact emergency services as appropriate.

## Fights between pupils

- In deciding upon what action you take consider the safety of the pupils concerned and the safety of any other pupils.
- Assess seriousness of situation and if necessary tell a reliable pupil to get immediate assistance from another member of staff.
- A teacher should always remain at the scene.
- Take control and give clear and assertive directions to stop.
- Arrange for first aid if appropriate.
- Escort both parties to main office.
- Call the parents and/or police if necessary.

## Hostage situation

- Do not try to intervene or be a hero.
- Co-operate and follow the instructions of the hostage taker.
- Try to remain calm and spread calmness. The children are likely to try and copy your behaviour.
- If in school:
  - Isolate hostage area by evacuating other pupils or through lockdown procedure - see D07 Security (Lockdown) Policy.
  - On arrival of emergency services, provide them with a map of the school.



## Missing child / abduction / runaway

- Report to the Headmaster.
- The timing of when you do each of these steps will depend upon the situation. If there is a possibility the child has been abducted the police should be called immediately.
- Arrange search parties.
- Search the school or area of off-site visit working from last known sighting point.
- Call family and friends to see whether he/she is with them ensure no undue consternation or worry is caused by this call.

## Attempted Abduction

- Ensure that pupils have the 'tools' for dealing with an attempted abduction, and re-enforce this with parents.
- Suggest that parents and child have a code word that only they and their child know for emergency situations when someone else is collecting the child.

## Threatening person in a school building

- Assess threat.
- Call Police.
- Keep classroom/students secure.
- Initiate lockdown procedure if necessary, in line with D05 Security (Lockdown) Policy.
- If no one is in danger observe the intruder until the police arrive.
- If people are threatened, staff should consider attempting to draw the attention of the intruder away from those affected. When appropriate escape to a more secure area.

## Threatening person in or close to school grounds

- Assess threat.
- Call Police
- Ensure all children are moved within the school building, if required.
- Headteacher will carry out lockdown procedures if necessary.
- Remain in classrooms until the all clear has been given or evacuate as a result of instructions from the authorities.



## Marauding Terrorism Firearms Attack (MTFA)

- If shots are heard instruct everyone to take cover if appropriate (i.e. on the floor or under desks).
- Assemble in a secure location or, if more appropriate than moving pupils across site, activate the lockdown procedure in accordance with D07 Security (Lockdown) Procedure.
- Call Police.
- Check for injuries and missing pupils/staff by use of phone calls to rooms in turn (if lockdown in force)

## Bomb Threat

- DO NOT turn anything electrical on or off, except the fire alarm.
- Quickly survey your room for any unusual items or packages. DO NOT TOUCH THESE ITEMS.
- Report anything suspicious or unusual.
- Evacuate using the fire drill procedure. The assembly point should be far away from the school as possible e.g. furthest point on the school fields taking account of the exit route so as not to transit past the indicated hazard area.
- Take register. Report missing students to the Director of Operations.
- The person taking a call issuing a bomb threat should not interrupt the caller except to ask the following questions:
  - When is the bomb going to explode?
  - Where is the bomb?
  - What does it look like?
  - What kind of bomb is it?
  - What will cause it to explode?
  - Why are you doing this?
  - Who are you?
  - Where are you calling from?
  - Are there any further hazards outside?
  - Note the caller's voice and background sounds such as:
    - Male or female?
    - Estimate of age (young, middle age, old)
    - Indication of accent/dialect, ethnicity, level of education
    - Other voice characteristics: stutter, nasal sound.
    - Did the caller seem familiar with the facility?
    - Was there any background noise?
    - Use the log to record all of this information.



## Unsafe Structures

- Evacuate the school or building if necessary, moving out by a safe route identified at the time.
- Move away from the building if very serious.
- Contact Property Surveyor to report concerns.

## Utility Failure

- Teachers should stay in the classroom with the children until further instructions are given.
- Teachers who are not teaching should immediately report to the main office.
- The company of the power source must be telephoned and a time established for resolving the problem.

## School Trips/ Offsite Incidents (also see Appendix 8)

If an emergency occurs on a school visit the group leader should maintain or resume control of the group overall. The factors to consider include:

- Establish the nature and extent of the emergency as quickly as possible.
- Ensure all other group members are safe and looked after.
- Establish the names of any casualties and get immediate medical attention.
- Ensure that a teacher goes with casualties to hospital with any relevant medical information and that the rest of the group is adequately supervised at all times and kept together.
- Notify the police if necessary.
- Ensure that all group members who need to know are aware of the incident.
- Ensure that all group members are following the emergency procedures and roles are allocated as necessary.
- Inform the school contact and provider/tour operator (as appropriate). The school contact name and number should be accessible at all times during the visit.

Details of the incident to pass on to the school should include:

- Nature.
- Date and time of incident.
- Location of incident.
- Names of casualties.
- Details of their injuries.
- Names of others involved so that parents can be reassured.
- Action taken so far.
- Action yet to be taken (and by whom).

The school contact should:

- Notify parents providing a full factual account of the incident as possible.
- Notify insurers especially if medical assistance is required (this may be done by the school contact).



- If the emergency happens abroad notify the British Embassy/Consulate.
- Ascertain phone numbers for future calls; try not to rely only on mobile phones.
- Write down accurately and as soon as possible all relevant facts and witness details and preserve any vital evidence.
- Keep an incident log of all events, times and contacts after the incident
- Complete an accident report form as soon as possible and contact the District Council's Health and Safety Advisor and HSE if appropriate.
- No one in the group should speak to the media. Names of those involved in the incident should not be given to the media as this could cause further distress to their families.
- All media enquires must go through the school Marketing Manager.
- No one in the group should discuss legal liability with other parties; nothing should be signed relating to the accident liability without clear advice from the Head, Chair of Governors or designated deputy.
- Keep receipts for any expenses incurred, as insurers will require these.

## Death or serious injury

The death of someone associated with your school may not be considered to be a Critical Incident, especially if it was expected, but nevertheless can be very upsetting for a large number of people. Therefore, we advise that the Critical Incident guidelines are followed as appropriate.

Once key consideration is the notification process for either informing pupil that their parents' have or informing parents that their children have died or been seriously injured.

### Death of a pupil

Where possible, this should be done by somebody detached from the school, such as the local police. However, a judgement call should be made as to whether they are accompanied by somebody from the school. However, note experience from the military that resentment can sometimes foster against the individual who informed them of the incident; using an outside agency alone therefore displaces that risk away from the school. However, the school should be in touch shortly thereafter to offer support.

### Serious injury of a pupil

Parents would be notified by the school in the event of a serious injury, which should be done so quickly and sensitively.

- Prepare what to say with care. Give the facts and express sympathy and concern. Inform parents of the action being taken and, if possible, indicate when further information will be made available. Do not mention fatalities specifically. Avoid references to blame and liability. Remember the media are likely to elaborate this statement
- It may be appropriate to invite parents into the school in readiness for further information. Some people may need immediate emotional support at this stage.
- Parents will need to know whether to go to the scene of the incident, come into school, or travel to another location.

If parents cannot be reached directly, then leave a brief message asking them to call a particular number, making the message simple. Again, prepare what to say in the event that you have to leave a message.



## Death or serious injury of a parent or close relative of a pupil

Where possible, it should be left to a parent or close relative to inform the pupil. However, this may not be possible, particularly in the case of a boarder. In this case, the wishes of the family should be sought and considered where possible as to who informs this child. The instinct is that the responsibility will fall to the Headmaster if he is available. However, some parents may request a more 'mothering' individual to inform them, such as a House Parent or the House Mother.

## Follow up after serious injury

If injured/unwell person has been admitted to hospital, the Head (or Deputy in his absence) should email the parents or next of kin to enquire how they are and offer to make contact by phone if they would like to speak to someone. Keep email short and concise, offering sympathy and thoughts. Provide a number with which they can make contact if they so wish.

