

# Kenmore Park Infant & Nursery School



## Critical Incident Policy

**Date Reviewed:** September 2017

**Date Ratified:** 11<sup>th</sup> October 2017

# **CRITICAL INCIDENT POLICY**

## **INTRODUCTION**

In responding to an incident the aim should always be to ensure:

- rapid and appropriate action is taken;
- accurate information is provided;
- normal school routines are maintained as far as possible, giving continuity to pupils;
- immediate, sensitive and non-intrusive support is offered.

Examples of such incidents impacting on schools could include

- death or serious injury as a result of violence, accident, self-harm and/or sudden/traumatic illness;
- major fire;
- building collapse;
- riot and/or civil disorder;
- natural and/or man-made disaster;
- terrorism;
- missing person(s)/abductions.

These incidents might occur:

- on the school site during school hours;
- on school transport;
- whilst the pupils are taking part in activities away from the school site;
- on school premises as part of after school activities;
- within the local community involving pupils from the school.

Using this definition as a basis for decision making, an incident is declared to be a critical incident following consultation between the person(s) managing the incident within the school (normally the headteacher and/or the senior management team) and the senior officer in LA based Education Services.

**(Refer to the Business Continuity Plan reviewed annually)**

If there is doubt it is always better to consult and err on the side of caution and declare an incident critical.

## **GOOD PREVENTATIVE PRACTICE**

### **Curriculum**

We will address sensitive issues such as death, bereavement and serious injury as appropriate within the general curriculum. Therefore, pupils will not have to address these issues for the first time following a critical incident. These issues may be covered through studies in R.E., geography, history and PSHCE.

### **Pastoral support**

We will develop an atmosphere of support and trust amongst our pupils and parents, and provide opportunities for them to talk and share their concerns.



## **Behaviour Policy**

As a positive measure to ensure our pupils' safety, our well-established behaviour policy applies off-site as well as within the school boundaries.

Whilst careful pre-planning and effective risk management will minimise our pupils' exposure to dangerous situations, unforeseen hazards may well occur. In these situations, we will immediately brief children about how to proceed and require their compliance with any rulings we make.

## **Training**

We will, from time to time, brief or train all relevant staff groups on their role in the prevention, management and response to incidents. For example, an increasing number of adults have First Aid training.

## **Security**

We will employ effective security measures to prevent unwelcome visitors entering the school; and out of hours security systems to reduce the potential for damage and vandalism.

## **Administrative practices**

- We will maintain a list of all pupils and staff with next of kin contact details held centrally at the school both on computer and as hard copy. At least four members of staff will know how to access these lists.
- We will complete registers promptly at the beginning of each morning and afternoon session. Names of pupils who are late or leave school early will be recorded.
- We will maintain an inventory of equipment held on site in accordance with LA guidelines. The inventory will be regularly updated.
- We will operate a signing in and out procedure for all visitors and volunteers in school.
- We will display details of emergency evacuation procedures in all areas of the school site.

## **Zero Tolerance**

Pupils and staff have a right to work at school without fear of aggressive incidents such as verbal attacks and physical assaults. The school and governing body will take any incident seriously and take whatever action is necessary to protect pupils and staff. Pupils are supported in this through a very strong anti-bullying policy and staff are encouraged to take union advice whenever the need arises. The school will cooperate with union advice about protecting members of staff. The school operates a zero tolerance policy in this matter.

## **Planning for Trips and Visits**

- We will follow DCSF and LA guidance when planning and organizing school visits (see our separate educational visits policy).

## **Health and Safety**

- All relevant school policies will include reference to health and safety procedures and how these relate to the teaching and organisation of the subject. This is particularly pertinent for physical education, design and technology, and science.
- We will follow LA guidelines on the testing and maintenance of equipment, fixtures and fittings. All electrical, PE and fire fighting equipment will be inspected and tested annually.
- We will follow regulations for the storage and security of potentially hazardous substances and chemicals.
- We will conduct regular health and safety checks on the buildings and site, with any potential

dangers being reported and dealt with. This complies with Risk Assessment procedures.

### **DEALING WITH AN INCIDENT**

- The decision to contact parents, emergency services and when this is most appropriate, will be made by the head or other designated staff. For example, it would be prudent for staff to search for a missing child first, before contact is made with parents or emergency services.
- Any member of staff should take the most appropriate action to ensure the safety of others.
- As soon as practicably possible, the headteacher (or next-most senior person) will start to keep a simple log of all events and actions.
- The headteacher should communicate with the LA, emergency services, etc. via the school's fax line or via mobile phone. This will leave the school's main phone line free for incoming calls from parents, etc. (The same procedure should be used for keeping contact with off-site parties if they have been involved in a critical incident.)
- The headteacher (or next-most senior person) will deploy staff as necessary to manage the situation and ensure the safety of all concerned. This may involve the senior management team being relieved of their classroom duties, and their classes being covered by other colleagues.
- The chair of governors will be informed as quickly as possible.
- In many cases, the LA's senior education officer and his/her team will take over much of the management of the incident, leaving the headteacher free to deal with pupils, parents and colleagues.
- The school administrator will generally answer all calls from anxious parents. S/he should keep a log of callers and check this against school records to determine who might still need to be contacted.
- Parents will need to be contacted promptly, but the way in which this is done will depend on the nature and scale of the incident. Contact may be made in person or by phone. In very serious circumstances, it may be appropriate for the police to make the initial contact.

### **Before making contact with parents:**

- The headteacher will confer with those who will be making contact about what to say, possibly rehearsing the message first. We will limit our comments to the known facts, and not speculate on the causes or responsibility for the crisis.
- We will endeavour to delegate these calls to those not actually involved in managing the incident.

### **When calling:**

- We will check that parents are not left alone in distress, perhaps making suggestions for making contact with relatives or neighbours.
- We will offer any important phone numbers such as hospitals.
- An important task is to protect children, parents and staff from publicity. Press and television will not be given permission to enter the school premises or be given access to staff or children. One of the headteacher's first tasks on hearing of a crisis will be to contact the LA's support services. All enquiries by the media will be directed to the press officer, who will give factual information to the media whilst maintaining the privacy of staff, children and their families. In any event, the only other persons to speak to the media would be the headteacher or chair of governors.
- Pupils should be told simply and without fabrication what has happened, in the smallest group possible – usually within their class. Questions should be answered as straightforwardly as possible. Children and parents should be informed (preferably by letter) by the end of the day if the school has to be closed. As far as possible the school's normal routine should be

followed to maintain security and continuity for the children.

- In the event of deaths or serious injuries, the headteacher will maintain close contact with the families involved and make arrangements for the school's representation at funerals, respecting the view, customs and wishes of parents.
- If an incident happens off-site, the headteacher will arrange for all contact with the party to go via the school. Therefore, we will contact parents, the LA et al on behalf of the party leader. It is also highly probable that the best course of action will be for children to be re-united with their families as soon as possible. The headteacher, with advice and help from the police and the LA, will arrange to bring the children home. In some instances, it may be appropriate to arrange for parents to be taken to the children.
- The leader of an off-site party may need to act 'in loco parentis' to authorise emergency medical treatment. However, they may only do this if every reasonable effort has been made to contact the parents.
- The whole school will be affected by a tragedy. The headteacher will arrange de-briefing sessions for directly affected staff, check that procedures are in place for monitoring staff and pupils, and activate strategies for allowing all involved to express their feelings if they wish. In the case of prolonged absences of anyone injured in an incident, the headteacher will ensure that the relevant people are kept informed of progress and subsequently make sensitive arrangements for their return to school, and thereafter check that monitoring procedures are in place. Consideration must also be given to arrangements for a special assembly or memorial service. In the longer term, the headteacher may need to introduce strategies to continue to monitor vulnerable pupils and staff, consult and decide on whether, and how, to mark anniversaries, and to ensure that new staff are aware of which pupils/staff were affected and in what way.

## **SUMMARY OF ACTION PLAN**

### Task

1. Obtain immediate information at the start of the crisis.
2. Call the emergency services, if appropriate.
3. Take whatever urgent action is needed to ensure the safety of others.
4. Senior management team and office staff meet to decide on key actions to be taken.
5. Establish links with the LA and chair of governors.
6. Contact families.
7. Call staff meeting.
8. Inform children in class, where this does not breach confidences.
9. Arrange de-briefing for children involved.
10. Arrange de-briefing for staff involved.



11. Identify high risk children and staff
12. Identify the need for group or individual support.
13. Arrange priorities: what should happen in the first hour, first day, within a week, etc?

### **Contact details for Critical Incidents:**

All staff and pupils are responsible for the safety of themselves and others, the decision to act or not to act must be taken with the view to promote safety and well-being. Collective responsibility lies with individuals below.

**Chair of Governors:** mobile: 07798 845785 (Catherine Kittredge)

**Headteacher:** work: 0208 204 8759 mobile: 07771 948666

**Deputy Head:** work: 0208 204 8759 mobile: 07910 166240

**Vice Chair of Governors:** mobile: 07932 058274 (Nilesh Parekh)

**Site Manager:** work: 0208 204 8759 mobile: 07905473911 (Adrian Bebbington)

**Assistant Site Manager:** work: 0208 204 8759 mobile: 07869 899422 (Saleem Siddique)

### **Local Authority Representatives:**

- See attached lists of emergency LA contacts.

**Child protection Officer:** Head teacher, deputy and Safeguarding Governor.

### **Location of critical items and linked individuals.**

- Gas mains/Electrical Mains: Site Manager, Assistant Site Manager.
- Safe Key (who will know where this item is?): head teacher, Finance officer, deputy.
- Panic Alarm buttons – All staff, office staff
- Assembly point – as indicated in emergency protocol procedures.

It is due for review by annually or when key information changes, whichever is sooner.

**Policy adapted by: Mrs. R. K. Mahil-Pooni.**

**Date:** September 2017

**Approved by the Governing Body:** 11<sup>th</sup> October 2017