



Hartington C of E Primary School

"Caring & sharing as part of God's family"
"Loving our neighbour as we love ourselves" - Luke 10:27

Critical Incident Policy

Linked to Off Site Visits Policy

Signed by:

_____ Headteacher Date: _____

_____ Chair of governors Date: _____

To be reviewed May 2022

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Statement of intent

Hartington C of E Primary School recognises that whilst the safety of pupils, staff members and visitors on the school's premises is paramount, it is sometimes out of the control of the school.

In an emergency, staff members at **Hartington C of E Primary School** will endeavour to take all reasonable actions in order to ensure the safety of its pupils.

The procedures outlined in this policy aim to minimise disruption to the learning environment whilst ensuring the safety of all pupils, staff members and visitors, by responding to critical incidents as quickly and efficiently as possible.

1. Legal framework

1.1. This policy has due regard to legislation and guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992
- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
- Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974
- Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005
- DfE (2015) 'Emergency planning and response'

1.2. This policy will be implemented in conjunction with the following school policies, documents and procedures:

- Health and Safety Policy
- Accident Reporting Procedure Policy
- Invacuation, Lockdown and Evacuation Policy
- Bomb Threat Policy
- Adverse Weather Policy
- Educational Trips and Visits Policy
- Bereavement Policy
- Media Relations Policy
- First Aid Policy
- Complaints Procedure Policy
- Fire Evacuation Plan
- Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan
- Medical Emergency Risk Assessment
- Emergency Procedures Risk Assessment

2. Definition

2.1. For the purpose of this policy, a critical incident is an emergency which affects pupils, staff, visitors or property and requires immediate responsive action which is beyond that reasonably expected from the school's own management team.

2.2. Critical incidents include, but are not limited to, the following:

- The death of a pupil, staff member or governor
- A serious incident involving a pupil or staff member on, or off, the school premises
- A violent intrusion onto the premises, e.g. a bomb alert
- Extensive damage to school property

- A fire, flood or explosion
- The effects of disasters in the wider community
- Incidents whilst on educational visits
- Epidemics
- Exposure to hazardous substances near, or on, the school premises

3. Roles and responsibilities

3.1. The Head Teacher is responsible for:

- Appointing designated staff members to the critical incident management team.
- Working alongside the critical incident management team to ensure that critical incidents are managed effectively.
- Ensuring that an appropriate ratio of first aiders to pupils is sustained at all times.
- Ensuring that a simple and straightforward, but effective, critical incident management plan is in place.
- Ensuring that all staff members are aware of the school's critical incident management plan and the associated procedures.
- Reviewing the critical incident plan at regular intervals, ensuring that it is kept up-to-date with developments at the school, such as changes to evacuation procedures.
- Keeping a duplicate copy of the critical incident management plan off the school premises in case of a fire, flood or explosion.
- Ensuring that vital information is not lost in the event of a fire, flood or explosion, by keeping a copy of up-to-date pupil and personnel records off the school premises.
- Liaising with the press, or appointing a designated member of staff to do so.
- Reviewing allocations of responsibilities in light of staff absence.
- Compiling an emergency contact list and ensuring that all members of staff hold a copy of this.
- Informing parents and the school community about the critical incident.

3.2. All staff members are responsible for:

- Acting in accordance with this policy at all times.
- Effectively implementing the critical incident management plan, when necessary.
- Maintaining up-to-date records of critical incidents at the school.
- Maintaining their own records of events, as well as keeping copies of notes made by other colleagues.
- Ensuring that they effectively understand the school's critical incident management plan.
- Understanding how to effectively carry out the school's emergency evacuation procedures.

- Understanding their role in the execution of the school's emergency plans, including evacuation procedures and the critical incident management plan.
- Ensuring that pupils are aware of the school's emergency evacuation procedures.
- Ensuring that their own contact details are kept up-to-date on school records.
- Reporting and recording minor and critical incidents in line with the school's Accident Reporting Procedure Policy.

4. Critical incident management team

4.1. The **Head Teacher** will appoint **5** members of staff Including the Chair and Vice Chair of Governors to form the school's critical incident management team. This team will be responsible for:

- Ensuring that parents are kept informed about the situation.
- Deciding when and how to re-open the school.
- Providing support for the families of those hurt or bereaved.
- Ensuring the school effectively cooperates and liaises with the relevant bodies during investigations into critical incidents.
- Dealing with continued interest from the media.
- Ensuring the appropriate attendance of school members at funerals.
- Organising memorial services, including the sending of flowers.

4.2. In the event of a critical incident, the critical incident management team will work alongside the **Head Teacher** in order to effectively fulfil their role, as outlined above.

4.3. Where possible, the **Village Hall** will be allocated to the critical incident management team and any necessary equipment and information will be stored here.

4.4. With prior agreement, the **Village Hall** will be used as a reserve off-site location for the critical incident management team when the on-site location is not usable.

4.5. The team will collate and retain any records regarding the planning of, and response to, critical incidents, including written records and any recordings made via CCTV.

4.6. The team will ensure that each member of staff involved in dealing with a critical incident has recorded all decisions that were made, any communication that was received and all tasks that were carried out.

5. Initial action

5.1. Immediate action will be taken in order to safeguard pupils and staff, using the relevant emergency procedure signal to alert staff members.

5.2. The alarm will be raised by the first adult at the scene of the incident.

5.3. Members of the critical incident management team will ascertain the details of the incident.

- 5.4. All initial information regarding the incident will be logged using the [Initial Action Form attached](#).
- 5.5. First aid will be administered by the first trained first aider at the scene of the incident.
- 5.6. All first aid and medical treatment will be administered and recorded in line with the school's **First Aid Policy**.
- 5.7. The emergency services will be contacted and the following information will be given:
- The emergency services required
 - Exact location of incident
 - Number of casualties
 - Number of injuries
 - Location and phone number of where the call is being made from
 - Any hazards which the emergency services may encounter on site
- 5.8. Where possible, the school will remain open and normal routine will be maintained.

6. Emergency procedures

- 6.1. All staff members and pupils are aware of the school's emergency procedures, including those outlined in the school's **Invacuation, Lockdown and Evacuation Policy**.
- 6.2. The school's designated emergency assembly points are clearly indicated and known by all staff members and pupils.
- 6.3. **Hartington C of E Primary School** will carry out a practice drill of the school's evacuation procedure at least once a term, to ensure that pupils and staff members fully understand what is involved in the procedure, and that it is implemented effectively.
- 6.4. In the event of an evacuation, staff members and pupils will be alerted by the continuous sounding of the **fire alarm bell**.
- 6.5. In the event of an external hazard, staff members will be signalled of the need for shelter by the sound of the **hand school bell**, indicating to staff that the school's invacuation procedure should be followed.
- 6.6. In the event of an intruder, staff members will be signalled to commence the lockdown procedure by activating the panic alarm where in the internal alarm will sound as a continuous siren.
- 6.7. All staff members are aware of the evacuation routes and assembly points in the case of a bomb threat, as outlined in the school's **Bomb Threat Policy**.
- 6.8. In the event of severe weather, the procedures outlined in the school's **Adverse Weather Policy** will be followed.

- 6.9. All staff members are aware of the school's designated first aiders and the locations of first aid boxes within the school.
- 6.10. In the event that first aid or medical treatment is necessary, the procedures outlined in the school's **First Aid Policy** will be followed.
- 6.11. Staff members are aware of any **Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans** in place.
- 6.12. All staff members will receive training regarding the school's emergency evacuation procedures, and will be aware of:
- The appropriate route to take.
 - What assembly point to use in the event of different scenarios.
 - Security arrangements that are in place, such as the locking of the school gates.
 - Access arrangements for the emergency services.

7. Emergencies during educational visits

- 7.1. All staff members will act in accordance with the school's **Educational Trips and Visits Policy**, following the outlined procedures in the event of an emergency.
- 7.2. Critical incidents that occur on school trips will be managed in the same way as those that occur on the school premises.
- 7.3. The **visit leader** is responsible for maintaining written records of any critical incidents that occur whilst on a trip, as well as the action which was taken and by whom.
- 7.4. The **visit leader** is responsible for reporting the critical incident to the Head Teacher immediately.
- 7.5. Any critical incident that occurs on a school trip will be communicated to all staff members, ensuring that they are aware of any pupils who may suffer from shock.

8. Internal communications

- 8.1. To aid communication within the school community, the school will collate an emergency contacts information sheet, copies of which will be kept in the school office. This will include the following information:
- Pupils' emergency contact details
 - Staff members' emergency contact details
 - Contact details of members of the governing board
 - Emergency contact details for the Derbyshire County Council
 - Phone numbers for relevant travel companies
 - Phone numbers for regular supply staff
 - Pupil and staff movement data, including class itinerary

- 8.2. The **Head Teacher** is responsible for ensuring that this information is reviewed on a regular basis and is updated to reflect changes in staffing details.
- 8.3. The school's internal communication systems will be used to alert staff members to a critical incident in the first instance, without alarming pupils unnecessarily.
- 8.4. Staff members, pupils and parents will be informed of critical incidents in the most sensitive way possible.
- 8.5. The parents of pupils who are directly involved in the incident will be contacted immediately using the emergency contact details provided to the school.
- 8.6. Pupils will be informed of a critical incident in groups as small as practicable.
- 8.7. Parents of pupils not directly involved in the incident will be contacted quickly and efficiently, via **a phone call or email**, as soon as is reasonably practicable.
- 8.8. Members of the school's governing board + LA will be informed about the critical incident as soon as possible. In unison with each other both parties will be briefed about speaking to the press and a spokesperson identified. A statement for the press will be agreed by both parties.
- 8.9. During an emergency, staff members will use mobile phones to stay in contact with one another and communicate key messages.
- 8.10. Staff briefings will be conducted following the occurrence of a critical incident, in order to further investigate the event and provide staff members with any updates.
- 8.11. Weekly staff meetings will provide an opportunity for staff members to raise any concerns about the school, including those in relation to emergency procedures and critical incidents.

9. After a critical incident

9.1. Following the occurrence of a critical incident, the school's short term aims include the following:

- Contacting those directly involved
- Inform the governing board and the LA
- Appropriately debriefing the school community
- Attempting to maintain normal school routines
- Making appropriate plans for attendance at funerals and memorials
- Monitoring the wellbeing of staff and pupils, particularly those directly involved in the incident
- Expressing sympathy to the families of those involved
- Identifying vulnerable staff and pupils, ensuring they are aware of the support available to them

9.2. In the medium term, the school's aims include the following:

- Making arrangements for pupils involved to return to school
- Arranging alternative teaching, where necessary
- Providing support to staff members and pupils affected
- Arranging consultations with educational psychologists, where necessary
- Clarifying support arrangements and referring pupils for individual help, if appropriate
- Keeping parents updated and informed

9.3. In the longer term, the school's aims include the following:

- Introducing support systems to continuously monitor vulnerable pupils and staff members
- Discussing how to mark anniversaries
- Ensuring all staff members, including new staff, are aware of pupils affected by the incident
- Acting sensitively to pupils' needs
- Ensuring pupils and staff members know how to obtain further help

10. Post-incident support

- 10.1. Staff members will strive to create a welcoming atmosphere in which pupils can openly discuss life events, including when critical incidents occur.
- 10.2. Following a critical incident, staff members will consult with the parents of pupils involved regarding how best to support the pupil, ensuring that their needs are taken into account.
- 10.3. Counselling will be offered to pupils who were involved in, or witnessed, a critical incident.
- 10.4. Topics including bereavement, stress and safety will be covered as part of the curriculum.
- 10.5. Absences must be authorised by the Head Teacher for pupils attending events following the incident, including funerals and counselling sessions.
- 10.6. The critical incident management team will lead debriefing meetings for staff members, pupils and parents, as well as for the wider community where appropriate.
- 10.7. The need for individual or group support will be assessed by class teachers in the period following a critical incident with the Head Teacher.
- 10.8. Where necessary, the school will liaise with parents regarding a phased return to school for pupils involved in a critical incident.
- 10.9. Information regarding the support being accessed by staff members and pupils will be treated as personal data and processed in line with the school's Data Protection Policy, transferring information to external agencies where necessary.

- 10.10. More support following a critical incident can be accessed by contacting Derbyshire Emergency Planning Division.

11. Media relations

- 11.1. All communication between the school and the media will be conducted in accordance with the guidelines set by the LA.
- 11.2. Where possible, press interest will be managed by the LA's press office.
- 11.3. All information given to the media is done so through a single reliable source.
- 11.4. All statements will be agreed by the Head Teacher and critical incident management team before going to the press.
- 11.5. Pupils and staff will not be named during communication with the press.
- 11.6. Personal information regarding staff members, pupils and visitors will be kept confidential and treated in accordance with the **School's Data Protection Policy**.
- 11.7. Details of the critical incident which may be harmful to investigations into the incident or which reveal personal information will be treated as confidential.
- 11.8. Staff members will not talk off the record to the media and will refer all enquiries to the Head Teacher, critical incident management team or designated staff member.
- 11.9. The school will strive to liaise and co-operate with the media by answering any queries, as appropriate.
- 11.10. All statements given to the press will be factual.
- 11.11. The school will aim to reassure the public and demonstrate control of the situation, as well as counter any dangerous rumours or gossip.
- 11.12. Child protection and safeguarding measures will be taken when reporting about pupils.
- 11.13. No press interviews with pupils will be sanctioned by the school.
- 11.14. Times of press releases will be pre-agreed in order to avoid continuous pressure.
- 11.15. Where appropriate, a pre-prepared statement containing basic information about the school and the school's procedures will be used.
- 11.16. The critical incident management team will ensure that any media access to the site, staff and pupils is controlled.

12. Handling complaints

- 12.1. **Hartington C of E Primary School** recognises that the occurrence of a critical incident is a sensitive subject.

12.2. Complaints or concerns regarding the school's critical incident arrangements should be made in accordance with the school's **Complaints Procedure Policy**.

12.3. The school will continuously work to address and resolve concerns, ensuring that critical incidents are dealt with in line with the law, as well as in a sensitive and supportive manner.

13. Monitoring and review

13.1. This policy will be reviewed on an **annual** basis by the **Head Teacher** and **critical incident management team**, with any changes made to the policy being communicated to all teaching staff and the governing board.

Initial Action Form

In the event of a critical incident, this form should be completed by whoever receives the alert in order to gather as much information as possible.

Name of the person informing about the incident:	
Emergency procedure carried out:	
Alert raised by:	
Details of the incident:	
Number of people involved:	
Details of staff members at the scene:	
People who have been informed:	
Exact location of the incident:	
Number of casualties and injuries:	
Details of any casualties and injuries:	
Action taken so far:	
Assistance needed:	
Form completed by:	
Job role:	

Responsibilities/Checklist of Initial Action by Head teacher or Nominee

RESPONSIBILITIES

- take charge of events
- draw up an action plan for the specific incident
- delegate responsibilities and give task sheets to the chosen person
- consult with the Police and the person responsible for liaison with the media about the release of information to students, staff, parents, general enquiries and the media
- establish a crisis team meeting place, close to the incident control point

Action to be taken ✓ when complete	
Ascertain details of incident	
Take immediate action to safeguard pupils and staff where necessary	
Alert relevant emergency services (Police, Fire, Ambulance) via 999 system Be prepared to give the following information: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emergency Service(s) required • Exact location of the incident • Number of casualties • Nature of injuries • Location and telephone number where call is being made from • Hazards which may be encountered by the Emergency Services at the site 	
Log all communications and actions	
Notify: Derbyshire Emergency Planning Division Office hours: [REDACTED] Number held in office Out of office hours: [REDACTED] Number held in Office Ask for the Duty Emergency Planning Officer THESE NUMBERS SHOULD ONLY BE USED IN AN EMERGENCY - DO NOT GIVE THEM TO THE PRESS, PARENTS OR PUBLIC THE EMERGENCY PLANNING DIVISION CAN PROVIDE RESOURCES TO ASSIST DURING EMERGENCIES	
Assemble a critical incident management team from pre-identified staff	
Refer to the list of emergency contact numbers in Appendix 1 for additional support if required	
Where possible, avoid closing the school and try to maintain normal routines	

Critical Incident Management Team (CIMT)

The CIMT will comprise:

- Head teacher
- Second in charge
- Chair of Governors + Vice Chair
- School Business Manager

Base for Critical Incident Management Team

The base for the CIMT will be the School office where it is still possible to use this. The reserve on-site location will be the school hall or class 2. In cases where it is not possible to use the school premises as a base, the CIMT will make use of:

Hartington Village Hall
Hartington
Nr Buxton
Derbyshire

Telephone 01298 687376

Welfare

Action to be taken	✓ when complete
Secure the immediate safety of pupils and staff - this may include evacuation or keeping pupils and staff inside the building (sheltering)	
Establish the location of all pupils, staff, and visitors using timetables, registers and the visitor's book, and make a list of those unaccounted for	
Establish a staff rota and ensure that staff take regular rest periods	
Identify those pupils and/or staff who are badly affected, and who need extra support	
Make arrangements for reuniting pupils with their parents	
Take account of religious and cultural factors, and consider contact with leaders of local faith communities	

IMPLEMENTATION

Head teacher or Nominee

Action to be taken	✓ when complete
Ensure that accurate, factual information is available for those arriving at the scene	
Liaise with the local authority, police, fire and ambulance services, and other agencies who may become involved	
Act as the main contact to co-ordinate the response	
Inform the chair of governors	
Inform all staff, and parents of injured pupils	
Decide how to inform other parents of injured pupils	
Ensure all staff maintain a log of actions and decisions	
Allocate tasks to members of the CIMT as appropriate	
Provide regular briefings for staff	
Continue to liaise with the local authority and the emergency services	
Try to maintain normal routines as far as possible	
Inform staff involved to prepare a written report of their involvement, noting events and times	
Inform the CAYA health and safety officer who will advise on reporting procedures, and inform trade unions if necessary	
In the event of serious injuries or a fatality, the Health and Safety Executive should be informed within 24 hours	
Continue to allocate tasks to members of the CIMT as appropriate	

Communications

Action to be taken	✓ when complete
Consider emergency communications needs	
Dedicate lines for incoming and outgoing calls and arrange extra support for reception. Line to be used for incoming calls only: Line to be used for outgoing calls only:	
Arrange for the staffing of switchboard/telephone	
Inform pupils, in groups as small as practicable, considering the best way to impart tragic news (advice is available from the educational psychology service)	
Inform parents of children not directly involved in the incident, as decided by the head teacher or nominee - use any existing arrangements for contacting parents quickly and efficiently	
Receive visitors to the school, ensuring they sign in and out and are issued with identification badges	
Ensure that staff are fully briefed on facts and are aware of what information can be released	

Media

Action to be taken	✓ when complete
Ensure that any media access to the site, staff and pupils is controlled In a major emergency, the police will deal with the press and prevent access to the school	
Liaise with and co-operate with the media and to answer their queries, as appropriate	
Liaise with the public relations division to prepare a press statement, to be agreed by the head teacher and director of CAYA, and to decide the ongoing strategy for dealing with the press	

Be aware of the potential problems caused by the spread of misinformation through pupil and/or staff use of mobile phones	
Provide basic information about the school (see Appendix 2)	
Be prepared to be interviewed by the press if necessary and agreed	
Liaise between the press and those affected about interviews - seeking permission from parents/guardians of any students involved in interviews. Any students involved in interviews should be supported	

Advice for Official Spokesperson(s)

- ✘ DO NOT speculate - your interpretation or understanding can and probably will be exaggerated or quoted as hard fact
- ✘ DO NOT give any fact unless you are certain it is correct
- ✘ DO NOT say "NO COMMENT" - it can be taken as a negative answer which could be inaccurate and lead to difficulties later
- ✘ DO NOT be afraid to say "I DO NOT KNOW"
- ✓ DO have the confidence in yourself and your command of the situation to take a positive attitude towards the media
- ✓ DO inform the Press Officers of any development which may assist them and of any journalist you suspect of acting inappropriately.
- ✓ If you know that everyone is safe and well, or those parents of injured children have been told - say so as soon as possible - it stops other panicking.

NB: PUPILS SHOULD NOT TALK TO THE MEDIA UNLESS ARRANGED BY STAFF/PARENTS AND THEN ONLY WITH WRITTEN PERMISSION FROM PARENTS/GUARDIANS

Resources

Action to be taken	✓ when complete
Ensure access to site for emergency services	
Open/close parts of school as required, and turn off water, gas and electricity supplies if necessary	
Ensure the security of the school premises	

Establish a safe and secure base for the CIMT	
Check that all available communications and office equipment are working (phones, fax, copiers), in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School Office • CIMT Base • CIMT Alternative Base 	
Arrange a place to receive parents and children involved	
If necessary, evacuate the building in accordance with the School Fire Procedures	
Ensure that parents do not take students away, unless directed to do so	
Consider relocation to other premises	

All other teaching and non-teaching staff

Action to be taken	✓ when complete
Respond to instructions given by members of the Critical Incident Management Team	
Be ready to respond to any potential hazard in and about the site	
Maintain a calm atmosphere	
Do not speak directly to the media but refer all enquiries to the Headteacher or other person designated as being responsible for contact with the media	