

RESPONDING TO CRITICAL INCIDENTS

*Guidance on procedures for schools
and
Template for a Critical Incident
Management Plan*

GUIDANCE ON PROCEDURES FOR SCHOOLS TO PRODUCE A CRITICAL INCIDENT MANAGEMENT PLAN

The following pages give the reasons why a critical incident management plan is required and guidance on best practice when writing a plan.

This guidance is primarily intended for Local Authority (LA) maintained, foundation and voluntary schools. Academies and Multi-Academy Trusts (MATs) will have their own guidance but may still wish to refer to or adapt these procedures.

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INTRODUCTION

The tragedies which occur from time to time in school settings, have underlined for all schools the need to be prepared for an emergency situation.

The following guidance draws on experience of a variety of incidents and includes a template for a School Emergency Plan. Schools will need to adapt this to suit their own particular circumstances. Derbyshire County Council has its own Emergency Plan, which will be activated where necessary and operate alongside that of the school.

In developing their Emergency Plan, schools may also find the following government guidance and resources helpful:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/emergencies-and-severe-weather-schools-and-early-years-settings>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/controlling-access-to-school-premises/controlling-access-to-school-premises>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-and-college-security/school-and-college-security>

<https://www.derbyshire.police.uk/advice/advice-and-information/t/terrorism-in-the-uk/>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-to-educational-settings-about-covid-19>

Should you have any questions relating to critical incident management or with regards to completing a plan then further advice can be sourced by emailing cs.businesscontinuity@derbyshire.gov.uk

WHAT IS A CRITICAL INCIDENT?

A Critical Incident is defined as an emergency affecting pupils, personnel or property, requiring immediate responsive action beyond that which could be reasonably expected from the school's own management team during the day to day running of the school.

It may involve:

- the death of a child, staff member or governor
- a serious accident involving children and/or school personnel on or off the premises
- a violent intrusion onto school premises (eg an armed intruder or a bomb alert)
- extensive damage to school premises
- school fire, flood or explosion
- the effects of disasters in the wider community
- incidents on educational visits
- epidemics
- the release of hazardous substances near or on the school site
- IT Systems being compromised as a result of a cyber-attack or significant information security breach.

Everyone in a local school community is likely to be affected in large or small measure by any one or combination of the above incidents. Thinking through what you might need to do in such circumstances and having helpful information in an accessible place could make all the difference in successfully managing the situation.

Schools may be close to a major chemical or industrial site for which specific arrangements are in place. Such schools are aware of the actions they must take in the event of an incident. General advice in such cases is to keep or take children indoors and to listen to the local radio for police broadcasts on information. The County Council's Emergency Planning Team will contact the school as soon as they are informed by the police of an incident. Schools within the vicinity of such major sites should ensure that their Critical Incident Management Plan covers specific action to be taken in such incidents. The companies themselves will normally provide an action sheet for schools. If you do not have one, contact the firm concerned.

There may also be specific hazards which pose a particular risk to your school, such as proximity to river, or major road. You should make an assessment of any specific risks affecting your school and plan how you would deal with an incident arising from them.

Your plan should cover procedures for an incident occurring in school time and out of school hours, weekends and during school holidays.

PLANNING PROCESS

It is important to involve staff in the planning process, to ensure that they support the plan and are able to implement it in the event of an emergency. Schools should identify staff that are prepared to take on key roles in an emergency and should nominate one member of staff to take responsibility for updating and reviewing the plan once it is in place.

The principles below apply to managing a wide range of incidents:

- design the plan to suit your establishment (particular care should be taken if your establishment has residential accommodation)
- it should be simple and straightforward to implement
- it should be known by all those having identified responsibilities within it
- it should be regularly reviewed and critical information updated
- it should be held in a duplicate copy off-site or otherwise accessible in the event of fire/flood etc

Managing people in the aftermath of a critical incident relies heavily on good information and having thought through the practical consequences of the range of interested parties and how they can be helped.

ROLES OF INDIVIDUALS

It is important that individuals understand their role within the Critical Incident Management Plan. There are a number of specific responsibilities, which need to be identified and assigned to individuals. Individual responsibilities include:

- Person to take charge of the Critical Incident Management Team
- Welfare
- Communications
- Media
- Resources

The attached plan template includes suggested roles and responsibilities. The allocation of these will vary from school to school. In a large secondary school it may be possible for a number of individuals to undertake these roles. Within a small primary school, many of them will fall to the Headteacher. It is important that provisional allocations of responsibilities are made, but these may need to be reviewed in the light of staff absence for a variety of reasons, or according to the timing of the incident.

INFORMATION GATHERING

Up-to-date records on personnel/pupils/students and the premises will be essential in hard copy and electronic form. A second copy of these and the Critical Incident Management Plan should always be kept securely and stored appropriately off the premises by the Headteacher and/or Deputy Headteacher in order that vital information is not lost in the event of fire/flood/explosion. It would be particularly important for this list to be kept off the premises with any other important telephone numbers added in case a critical incident occurs out of school hours.

Record all actions using a standard incident log, since information may be required a long way into the future should there be a legal case to pursue. Maintain your own records of events as well as keeping file copies of other service notes of the progress of action. Immediate witness accounts should be kept securely for police evidence, if required.

BASE FOR CRITICAL INCIDENT MANAGEMENT TEAM

It will be important to identify a base from which the Critical Incident Management Team could operate. Whilst many schools will not have space to dedicate to the establishment of an emergency base, it would be valuable to identify the place in school which would be used for this purpose, if required, and ensure that all key equipment and information sources are there. This may be the Headteacher's office, but it would be helpful to identify, if possible, a second location on site if the first location is not usable for any reason.

Schools should also consider having a reserve off-site location as the base for the Team. This may be a neighbouring school or Local Authority premises or facilities such as the Village Hall, which could be used with prior agreement. Whilst such a location is not essential, it is desirable and may be particularly helpful in the case of a major incident on the school site itself. The County Council's Emergency Planning Team can arrange temporary accommodation, if needed, during an emergency.

COMMUNICATIONS

There is great value in establishing a telephone tree. This is a simple cascade mechanism for getting each person on the staff/governing body to phone an agreed

number of colleagues with the key facts of the situations. These lists need regular review and updating for changed personnel and changed telephone numbers.

As part of the plan, it would be useful to have details of:

- Pupils/staff emergency contacts
- LA emergency contact numbers
- Governors contact details
- Diocesan officer details (if faith school)
- Phone numbers for bus/coach companies
- Emergency supply/support details, eg regular supply teachers, other relief staff, telephone numbers of other local schools
- Pupil/staff movement data, eg timetables, morning/afternoon registration data, etc

Mobile phones can be invaluable in enabling phone lines known to the public to be used for incoming calls, whilst the mobile can be dedicated to outgoing calls. Neighbours to the school may be able to help in offering emergency access to their telephones for outgoing calls.

Internal Communications

It is important to establish mechanisms for informing staff of developments. This could be through morning briefings. It is also important to debrief all staff involved at the end of each working day/shift. Ensure that information is recorded and shared. Particular issues you may wish to consider are:

- How members of staff can be alerted in the first instance without alarming pupils and parents/carers unnecessarily
- ID for Headteacher/Senior Management Team - visitors to site may not be familiar with all senior staff or the layout of the building

MEDIA RELATIONS

A positive relationship will be helpful in the event of bad news since your contacts will then know that you will share information when you have it and be direct in the messages you need to get across.

If you get a phone call from the media, or they arrive at your school, you can seek advice and help from the communications team at County Hall. The team offers help with crisis communications and will support you if media relations help is needed.

If you haven't bought the Council's Crisis Communications support package and are interested in doing so, please contact:

Jennie Hodgkinson, Senior Communications Officer
Tel: 01629 538234
Email: jennie.hodgkinson@derbyshire.gov.uk

EVACUATION AND SHELTER PROCEDURES

This is one of the most important sections of the plan as it outlines the initial actions that should be taken to safeguard pupils and staff, both from internal and external

hazards. All staff must be aware of these procedures, as warning signals may need to be triggered immediately, before advising others of the threat.

Your evacuation plans should include information about what route to take and what assembly point to use in the case of a bomb threat, as these may need to be different from those used for other types of incident (eg fire). If school gates are locked, then unlocking these to allow access by the emergency services should form part of your procedures.

It is equally important to have pre-planned arrangements for signalling the need for sheltering (keeping pupils indoors and close doors and windows) in the event of an external hazard, and signalling lockdown of the school in the event of an intruder.

EMERGENCIES DURING EDUCATIONAL VISITS

Advice for dealing with emergencies on educational visits is available from DfE (Nov 2018) via the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/health-and-safety-on-educational-visits/health-and-safety-on-educational-visits>

The DfE guidance is in conjunction with the national guidance for educational visits by the Outdoor Education Advisor Panel (OEAP):

<https://oeapng.info/>

For subscribing schools to Derbyshire County Council (DCC) School Visit Service (SVS), DCC guidance and visit advisor contact information is on Derbyshire's EVOLVE system:

www.derbyshirevisits.com

The following documentation is required for all visits to be approved by senior leaders. For subscribing schools to SVS this should be completed on EVOLVE On-Line Visit Form for category 2 and 3 visits (final approval by SVS Visit Advisor):

- A visit itinerary/programme
- Appropriate Risk Assessments
- Supervising Adults
- Emergency contact details

On the visit, the visit leader should carry a visit leader emergency action card.

The visit leader should take charge of an incident until relieved by the emergency services or by a senior member of employer/establishment staff. In the event that the visit leader is incapacitated, all members of the visit leadership team should have the competence to take charge and to initiate the establishment emergency plan.

The designated emergency contact should carry an emergency contact action card.

The designated emergency contact (a member of the senior leadership team) should provide an emergency contact for the group (this needs to be available after hours for evening activities and 24 hours for residential visits).

The school contact must have, readily available, written or online accessible details of the visit, including a list of all involved, contact arrangements with the group, and day and night contact details for parents and staff next-of-kin. On residential or after-hours visits, the emergency contact should have access to this information at home.

Make sure that arrangements will work after hours, at weekends and during the school holidays if visits are taking place at these times.

POST INCIDENT CARE AND SUPPORT

Staff

Anxiety and the urgent pressure of events may produce stress amongst staff. The Critical Incident Management Team needs to think about how to support individuals in the aftermath of the events. Derbyshire Educational Psychology Service can provide advice and support to school's senior leadership teams to mitigate the psychological impact of critical incidents on staff (performance and) wellbeing. This can also include supporting the Headteacher to lead the school's recovery.

Students

Those more likely to be affected are those whose lives were most at risk during the incident; those who witnessed tragic or frightening events or their immediate aftermath; and those who have themselves experienced traumatic events in the past or whose support networks are less robust. Children's Services can assist through Derbyshire Educational Psychology Service which provides Critical Incident support. Derbyshire Educational Psychology Service provide advice and support to help staff to promote students' wellbeing as well as guidance about approaches school can take to address the needs of students following a critical incident. This is available by contacting the Educational Psychology Service on 01629 533815.

Parents/Carers and Other Visitors

When parents/carers hear of a problem, they will naturally come to the school for information. You may need to identify a space where parents/carers can be seen in groups or on an individual basis where concerning or tragic news can be shared in a considerate way. A staff member or trusted adult from the school community may need to be on hand to receive visitors and deal sensitively with their enquiries. This can be more difficult in situations where the police limit the information that can be shared; advice can be obtained from the Communications/Press Office and Derbyshire Educational Psychology Service can help devise simple scripts to give information that can be shared. It can be very difficult to contain events which are often shared quickly through social media. It will be important to have a clear communication route to share accurate and appropriate information as advised by other specialist services. It will also be important for all staff to be aware of the need to resist commenting in such forums.

LOG KEEPING

Any emergency affecting a school may afterwards become the subject of a detailed inquiry. It is important that accurate written records are kept, and that no piece of information about either the planning or the response to the incident is lost. Records may also be in the form of a recording made via a CCTV camera, a telephone or on an answer machine. The records should be retained after the incident for future reference.

Each member of staff involved in dealing with the emergency should log decisions made, telephone calls made and received and tasks carried out. In an emergency, things happen very quickly and it is unlikely that you will remember all the people you have spoken to and actions you have taken unless you write everything down.

Appendix 9 outlines what the legal profession considers to be best practice in log keeping - this may be something to aspire to, but at the very least making sure that all information and decisions are recorded in a hardback notebook would be essential in the event of any inquiry relating to the incident.

STAND-DOWN

The Critical Incident Management Team may need to continue to function for some time after the incident in order to consider a number of issues. These may be:

- When and how to re-open the school
- How to deal with continued interest from the media
- The provision of information to parents/carers and the public
- Support for the families of those hurt or bereaved
- Attendance at funerals
- The organisation of memorial services
- Particular thought needs to be given to the sending of cards and flowers
- Investigations are likely to be undertaken by various bodies such as the police and insurance companies

RECOVERY

When the emergency services have left the school, or in the case of an incident on a school trip, when pupils and staff have returned home and media interest has subsided, the school can begin the recovery process.

Headteachers should work with the local authority to develop a recovery plan for the school. A range of support will continue to be available from the local authority including the Education Psychology Service.

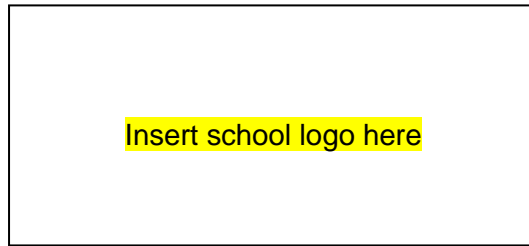
There may be formal inquiries or even police investigations into the incident, which may continue for some time, and require the cooperation and support of school staff, pupils and parents/carers.

Controlled upon completion

TEMPLATE FOR A CRITICAL INCIDENT MANAGEMENT PLAN

The following pages set out the framework of a critical incident management plan. Add information about your school and staff, and adapt it as appropriate to your school and circumstances.

This template is available electronically on SchoolsNet enabling you to use it as the basis for your own plan. Any updates to the plan will be made electronically on SchoolsNet and schools will be notified.



..... SCHOOL CRITICAL INCIDENT MANAGEMENT PLAN

Date of issue		Date of next review	
Person responsible for updating this plan			

Copies of this plan are held by:

NAME	DESIGNATION

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INTRODUCTION

This plan has been prepared and agreed by the staff and Governors of School to assist in dealing with an emergency situation that affects the school community.

This plan relates to an event which may involve:

- the safety of children and/or staff
- the school premises
- a serious accident involving children and/or school personnel on or off the premises
- the death of a child, staff member or governor
- a violent intrusion onto school premises (eg an armed intruder or a bomb alert)
- extensive damage to school premises
- cyber-attack disabling systems or resulting in a significant loss of information.
- the release of hazardous substances near or on the school site
- a crisis which might affect the public reputation of the school

It also considers where the headteacher believes that the school will benefit from receiving additional support or, where the community in which the school is based is affected by an emergency.

The school emergency plan aims to:

- maintain the safety of, and provide support to, all children and staff affected by an incident
- maintain the normal running of any parts of the school not affected
- return the whole school to normal as soon as possible

The plan provides generic guides to actions that should be considered by the headteacher, his/her nominated deputy, and the critical incident management team (CIMT) in case of an emergency in school or the local community, or on an educational visit.

The plan covers procedures for an incident occurring in school time and out of school hours, weekends and during school holidays.

Important Action Points

- Review the plan and its content at least once each year
- Keep the plan up-to-date regarding personnel
- Ensure staff know their roles
- Keep the school's contact list near to the phone in case it becomes necessary to activate the plan

ACTIVATION

Information about an incident may come from a staff member, pupil, parent, the emergency services or the local authority.

Whoever receives the alert should ask for, and record, as much information as possible:

Name of the person informing of the incident	
Details of the incident	
Who else has been informed (eg emergency services etc)	
Exact location of the incident	
Details of any casualties	
Any action taken so far	
Name of contact at the scene	
Number of contact at the scene	
What assistance is needed	

Immediately inform the Headteacher or Deputy/nominee

Responsibilities/Checklist of Initial Action by Headteacher 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/carers, 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 Team Office hours: 01629 538364 Out of office hours: 01629 533085 (ex-dir) Ask for the Duty Emergency Planning Officer THESE NUMBERS SHOULD ONLY BE USED IN AN EMERGENCY - DO NOT GIVE THEM TO THE PRESS, PARENTS/CARERS OR PUBLIC THE EMERGENCY PLANNING TEAM 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:

- Headteacher
- Deputy Headteacher
- Chair of Governors (where contactable/available)
- (Others as determined by school)

Base for Critical Incident Management Team

The base for the CIMT will be the Headteacher's office where it is still possible to use this. The reserve on-site location will be In cases where it is not possible to use the school premises as a base, the CIMT will make use of

NB: (In schools where it is not possible to designate a base for the CIMT, contact should be made with the County Council's Emergency Planning Team who can help to arrange temporary accommodation, where necessary).

IMPLEMENTATION

Headteacher 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/carers of injured pupils	
Decide how to inform other parents/carers 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 LA health and safety consultant 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 by the quickest practicable means in line with the departmental accident reporting guidance.	
Continue to allocate tasks to members of the CIMT as appropriate	

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/carers	
Take account of religious and cultural factors, and consider contact with leaders of local faith communities	

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 worrying or tragic news (advice is available from the educational psychology service)	
Inform parents/carers of children not directly involved in the incident, as decided by the headteacher or nominee - use any existing arrangements for contacting parents/carers 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 LA communications division to prepare a press statement, to be agreed by the headteacher and Executive Director of Children's Services, 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/carers/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/carers 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/CARERS AND THEN ONLY WITH WRITTEN PERMISSION FROM PARENTS/CARERS

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/carers and children involved	
If necessary, evacuate the building in accordance with the School Fire Procedures	
Ensure that parents/carers 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	

EMERGENCIES DURING EDUCATIONAL VISITS

The Emergency Contact (member of senior leadership) should be informed by the visit leader as soon practicably possible

Initial Action by Headteacher or Nominee

- Maintain a written record of your actions using this check list and attached log sheet
- Offer reassurance and support.
- Be aware that all involved in the incident, those at the school and you, may be suffering from shock or may panic.
- Find out what has happened. Obtain as clear a picture as you can - who informed you of the incident? (Usually the group leader)
- Remind the visit leader to follow the checklist or Emergency Action Card for visit leaders on educational visits (see Appendix 7/ or OEAP Emergency Action Card <https://oeapng.info/download/1252/>)
- Remind the visit leader that restricting student phone use may be necessary
- Record the details of the off-site activity/visit during which incident occurred

Location and nature of activity/visit		
Name of person in charge of visit		
Telephone number(s)		
Number of people on the visit	Pupils	
	Teachers	
	Other adults	
Date and time of incident		

Location			
What has happened?			
People affected	Name	Injury	Where they are / will be taken
Emergency Services involved and advice they have given			
Names and locations of hospitals involved			
Arrangements for pupils not directly involved in the incident			
Name of person in charge of your group at the incident			
Telephone Number(s)			

- Depending on the scale of the incident, consider assembling a CIMT to assist with the response

Initial Action List for CIMT

- Inform school staff as appropriate, depending on the time and scale of the incident
- Consider emergency communications needs. Dedicate lines for incoming and outgoing calls and arrange extra support for reception.
- Immediately inform parents/carers of any injured pupils of what has happened and where their son/daughter is, recording what their plans are, eg to travel to their son/daughter, any assistance they need and any means of communications with them (eg mobile phone number).
- In event of a major incident the police may give advice regarding naming badly injured people or fatalities. You may also need to inform next-of-kin of any staff who have been involved.
- Inform parents/carers of any other pupils on the visit but not directly involved in the incident.
- Parents should first hear of the incident from the school (or from the visit leader), not from hearsay or from the media. This may be difficult as students on the visit will have mobile phones and social media access. Information given must be limited until the facts are clear and all involved parents/next of kin are informed.
- Ensure that staff are fully briefed on facts and are aware of what information can be released
- Inform the chair of governors/trustees.
- Contact the local authority: Derbyshire Emergency Planning Team

Office hours: 01629 538364

Out of office hours: 01629 533085 (ex-directory)

Ask for the Duty Emergency Planning Officer

THESE NUMBERS SHOULD ONLY BE USED IN AN EMERGENCY - DO NOT GIVE THEM TO THE PRESS, PARENTS/CARERS OR PUBLIC

Support available from the Emergency Planning Team could include:

- assistance at school or at the site of the incident by local authority officers, and/or others
- communications support, including public telephone helpline where appropriate
- help with arranging travel and transport between the incident, parents/carers and the school help with media management, including press statements and interview briefing
- for an incident occurring in another UK local authority, establishing links with that authority or, for an incident occurring abroad, communication via the Foreign Office, to British Consulate, foreign police, etc

- if necessary, introduce controls on school entrances and telephones
- at least initially, the school is advised to avoid responding to media enquiries and direct these to the public relations division
- liaise with the public relations division as early as possible, and work with them to prepare a press statement
- arrange a quiet space to receive parents/carers of the children involved as they arrive at the school

Medium term actions/considerations

- If the visit is abroad, and the incident results in substantial medical or other expense, the risk management section at County Hall or any other insurers used should be informed as soon as possible
- Inform pupils and staff at school and their parents/carers. Decide what information you should give. Remember that information given must be limited until the facts are clear and all involved parents/carers/next of kin are informed
- In the event of a tragic incident, consider seeking support from the educational psychology service about the best way to inform pupils and to support them afterwards
- Staff and pupils should be told to avoid talking to the media or spreading the story unnecessarily (particularly via use of mobile phones)
- Inform all staff involved to prepare a written report noting events and times. Inform the LA Health and Safety office 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. Staff may wish to submit draft reports to trade union legal officers

POST INCIDENT CARE AND SUPPORT

Post-incident care is aimed at helping individuals to understand their feelings following an emergency and to identify sources of future support. The overall aim of the support is to help people in a way that will reduce the possibility of them developing post-traumatic stress disorder.

It is worth giving some thought to how the topics of loss, bereavement, risks/safety and change are covered in the curriculum. Schools where these topics are discussed openly, and treated as normal life events, are likely to find it easier to cope when a difficult or tragic incident occurs.

Remember to consult with parents/carers following an incident. It is important to communicate with parents/carers of pupils who have been involved, and ensure that their needs and wishes are taken into account.

The Education Psychology Services will provide appropriate care and support to those affected by a major incident in the school community. Dependant on the scale and nature of the incident the Crisis Support Team could be deployed to support the work of the Education Psychology Services.

STAND-DOWN AND RECOVERY

Recovery Plan Checklist

As soon as possible after the emergency:

- Liaise with parents/carers regarding plans for attendance at funerals
- Liaise with parents/carers regarding plans for attendance/representation at memorial services
- Arrange debriefing meetings for staff and pupils
- Arrange debriefing meetings for the headteacher and CIMT
- Identify and support high-risk pupils and staff
- Promote discussion of the emergency in class
- Consider the need for individual or group support
- Help affected pupils and staff to come back into school
- Initiate a review of the school emergency plan, evaluating the school's response and feeding in any lessons learnt

In the longer term:

- Consult and decide on whether and how to mark anniversaries

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- The impact of some incidents can continue for years, so thought may need to be given to ongoing identification and support measures for both pupils and staff who are affected
- Remember that legal processes, enquiries and news stories may bring back distressing memories and cause upset within the school
- Remember to make any new staff aware of which pupils were involved and how they were affected

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1 - CONTACTS

This section should include contact details for all members of staff, so that if an emergency happens out of school hours, all staff can be contacted. During school holidays it may be useful to be aware of when key staff are away, so that it is possible to gain access to the building if required in an emergency. Some general external contacts are included, but you will need to add contacts specific to your school (eg school bus company).

It may also be used to outline the system used by the school for contacting parents/carers.

This section of the plan is likely to need regular update and review, for example at the start of each term.

APPENDIX 2 - COMMUNICATIONS

Communications systems are put under enormous pressure in the immediate aftermath of an emergency, but are vital to ensuring a well-managed response. You should:

- Identify any lines not generally known to the public (kitchen phone, mobile phones).
- Be aware that in a power failure, a powered switchboard system may not work (a telephone plugged into the first phone point coming in from the exchange should provide a useable line). The location of this telephone point should be identified in the emergency plan.
- An early decision should be made about how to inform parents/carers (in the case of a fatal incident, the police will normally inform the parents/carers of the child or children involved)

APPENDIX 3 - BASIC INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

You may find it helpful to prepare some basic information about the school which could be used in the event of a major incident.

APPENDIX 4 - EMERGENCY SCHOOL CLOSURE

The decision to close a school is usually made by the headteacher and governors. Where possible, headteachers and governors are encouraged to seek advice before taking the decision to close a school.

The emergency closure procedure for schools is available on SchoolsNet. You should refer to this procedure when producing your plan.

An agreed method of informing parents/carers and other organisations (eg bus companies) of the closure should be included in your communications section.

APPENDIX 5 - SPECIFIC HAZARDS AFFECTING SCHOOL SITE

If there are specific hazards or risks associated with your school, outline any information and special procedures relating to the risks here. This may include:

- the release of hazardous substances near or on the school site (eg Chemical Site)
- nearby streams or rivers that may flood
- hazards within the school (eg chemical stores)
- difficulties relating to the school itself (eg split-site, communications problems).

APPENDIX 6 - EVACUATION AND SHELTER PLAN

This is one of the most important sections of the plan as it outlines the initial actions that should be taken to safeguard pupils and staff, both from internal and external hazards. All staff must be aware of these procedures, as warning signals may need to be triggered immediately, before advising others of the threat.

Your evacuation plans should include information about what route to take and what assembly point to use in the case of a bomb threat, as these may need to be different from those used for other types of incident (eg fire).

It is equally important to have pre-planned arrangements for signalling the need for sheltering (keeping pupils indoors and close doors and windows) in the event of an external hazard, and signalling lockdown of the school in the event of an intruder.

APPENDIX 7 - CHECKLIST FOR GROUP LEADERS ON EDUCATIONAL VISIT

Checklist to be followed by the group leader if an incident occurs on an educational visit.

APPENDIX 8 - INFLUENZA PANDEMIC PLAN

The Department for Education sector-specific guidance for schools is currently under revision. However general guidance has been prepared by the Cabinet Office and is available here:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/pandemic-flu>

APPENDIX 9 - BOMB THREATS AND SUSPECT PACKAGES

Although bomb threats usually turn out to be hoaxes, they must always be taken seriously. It is important that office staff know what questions to ask if they do take a call from someone claiming to have information about a bomb. The bomb threat prompt card gives questions to ask and immediate actions to take in this situation. Staff should be familiar with this information, and preferably have a copy to hand near the telephone.

Equally important is dealing with suspect packages - in most cases the package turns out to be a hoax or genuine mistake, but it is better to take all appropriate precautions if a suspicious letter or package is received. Any member of staff who may deal with incoming mail in the school should be aware of the guidance.

APPENDIX 10 - OTHER SERVICES USING THE SCHOOL SITE

Use this section to record any separate emergency procedures for other services using the site (eg play schemes, after-school clubs etc) or any additional arrangements relating to extended services at the school.

APPENDIX 11 - LOG KEEPING

Any emergency affecting a school may afterwards become the subject of a detailed inquiry. It is important that accurate written records are kept, and that no piece of information about either the planning or the response to the incident is lost. Records may also be in the form of a recording made via a CCTV camera, a telephone or on an answer machine. The records should be retained after the incident for future reference.

APPENDIX 12 - TRAINING AND EXERCISING

In order to carry out the procedures outlined in your plan, awareness raising and training should be carried out within the school. All staff that has a role in the plan should be aware of the full scope of the plan and their roles and responsibilities. Staff who may not be part of the response to an emergency should still be aware of the content of the plan, particularly the section on evacuation and shelter.

Exercising your plan is equally important, especially emergency procedures such as:

- Fire drill
- Bomb drill (if arrangements differ)
- Shelter drill
- Lockdown drill

APPENDIX 13 - BUSINESS CONTINUITY

Business continuity planning is the process involved in ensuring that a business or organisation can continue with its critical functions after a disaster or emergency. In the case of schools, one of these functions is to continue pupils' education. You therefore need to think about what is required in order to continue this function and what vital records or data you may need to duplicate or back up.

APPENDIX 1 - CONTACTS

This should be updated in response to changes and reviewed annually

School Staff Identified for Incident Response

Name	Status	Home telephone	Mobile phone	Keyholder
	Headteacher			
	Headteacher's nominee			
	Caretaker			

Other School Contacts

Name	Status	Home telephone	Mobile phone	Keyholder

External Contacts

Organisation	Contact No
LA Health and Safety consultant	
Emergency Planning Team	01629 538364 (office hours)
Ask for the Duty Emergency Planning Officer	01629 533085 (ex-dir) (Out of hours)
THESE NUMBERS SHOULD ONLY BE USED IN AN EMERGENCY - DO NOT GIVE THEM TO THE PRESS, PARENTS/CARERS OR PUBLIC	
Educational Psychology Service	
Communications team	
Risk Management section	
off-site insurance emergency number	
The Foreign Office (links with British Consulates etc)	
Local radio	
School bus company	
Diocesan officer	
LA Development team officer	

APPENDIX 2- COMMUNICATIONS

This section should include:

- how members of staff can be alerted in the first instance without alarming pupils unnecessarily
- ID for Headteacher/Senior Management Team - visitors to site may not be familiar with all senior staff or the layout of the building.
- phone numbers and locations of designated phone lines for incoming and outgoing calls
- location of first telephone point from the exchange (in the event of power failure this may provide a useable line when a powered switchboard system may not work)
- how school will communicate with parents/carers when:
 - an emergency happens during the school day
 - an emergency happens before or after the school is open, at weekends or in school holidays

When parents/carers hear of a problem, they will naturally come to the school for information. You may need to identify a space where parents/carers can be seen in groups or on an individual basis where tragic news can be shared in a considerate way. A staff member or trusted adult from the school community may need to be on hand to receive visitors and deal sensitively with their enquiries.

Other methods of informing parents/carers could include:

- Emails or text messaging
- Notices on the school website
- Letters
- Notices on the school gate/fence
- Person at the entrance to the school to explain issues
- Telephone tree where each parent is contacted by telephone (more difficult in larger schools)
- Local radio
- how the school will communicate with companies affected by a school closure or emergency, both during the school day and outside school hours
- numbers of local radio stations and procedure
- what communications procedures are in place between different parts of the school (in a large school or split-site school)
- instructions on how to set the school answer phone to answer only and set a pre-recorded message, both if you are at the school and remotely if the school cannot be accessed

Internal Communications

It is important to establish mechanisms for informing staff of developments. This could be through morning briefings. It is also important to debrief all staff involved at the end of each working day/shift. Ensure that information is recorded and shared.

APPENDIX 3 - BASIC INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Basic information	
Name:	
Address:	
Telephone:	
Age Range:	
Number of pupils:	
Map of surrounding area:	include in file
Photographs:	include in file
Plan of School:	include in file
Details of Senior Staff	
Headteacher:	
Deputy:	
<i>Include other senior staff as necessary</i>	
Details of Governors	
Chair of Governors:	
Vice Chair of Governors:	

APPENDIX 4 - EMERGENCY SCHOOL CLOSURE

Guidance on this subject has been issued by the Children's Services Department and can be found on SchoolsNet.

You should refer to this guidance when completing this section for your school.

Please remember that in any wide area emergency closing a school can have a knock-on effect with other key services as parents/carers would have to take time off to look after their children. Although the health and safety of pupils/students and staff is paramount, headteachers should also take this into account.

APPENDIX 5 - SPECIFIC HAZARDS AFFECTING SCHOOL SITE AND HAZARD ASSESSMENT

This section should include:

- an up-to-date, detailed plan of the school, showing location of cut-off valves and switches for gas, water and electricity, and information on the drainage system
- details of how to reset the fire alarm system
- alternative access points in case of road closure, and emergency access to the school buildings
- school telephone number, fax number, and details of any additional telephone numbers (including mobiles) that could be used
- any specific difficulties and procedures relating to the school site (eg split-site, communications difficulties)
- specific information relating to any hazards on the school site, including:
 - the location of chemical stores and any radioactive materials stored on site
 - details of hazards such as asbestos in the fabric of the buildings, if known
 - the location of oil tanks or other fuel storage arrangements
- specific information and procedures relating to any external hazards that could affect the school, for example:
 - nearby industrial facilities or chemical sites
 - rivers or streams which pose a flooding risk to the school (look at the Environment Agency website for flooding information and guidance on preparing a flood plan for your school)

Appropriate storage/access to all this information needs to be considered so it is accessible to emergency services in the event of a fire.

APPENDIX 6 - EVACUATION AND SHELTER PLAN

This section should include:

- an up-to-date, detailed plan of the school showing evacuation routes and assembly points (this should include at least one alternative in case the emergency affects the main route or assembly point)
- information on any different evacuation routes and assembly points to be used in case of a bomb alert (eg assembly points may need to be further away from the building)
- procedure for sheltering (stay indoors, close doors and windows) if this is advised instead of evacuation
- procedure for lockdown of the school (stay indoors, lock doors, close and cover windows) in case of an intruder
- information on warning signals for fire alarms, bomb alerts, sheltering and lockdown
- any identified 'place of safety' nearby where pupils and staff can be taken if unable to return to the school for some time - this could be a village hall, leisure centre, community centre or similar - and how this building is accessed (eg keyholders)
- information on how staff will ensure that all pupils and people visiting the site are accounted for - procedures for use of registers, visitors books etc
- procedure for sending pupils home if the situation becomes prolonged, taking account of the need to track who has left/been collected

Schools near Chemical or Industrial Sites

This is only relevant to those schools near a major chemical or industrial site.

In the case of an incident at the alarm will be sounded, and the following action taken:

- children inside the school will be kept indoors
- children outside will be brought inside by a member of staff
- children will remain in the classroom in which they were when the alarm was raised, with the teacher who had responsibility for the class at the time.

A copy of the action sheet from company is attached to this plan and the instructions on it should be followed.

[Add further information as specific to each school]

APPENDIX 7 - CHECKLIST FOR GROUP LEADERS ON EDUCATIONAL VISIT

- Ascertain details of incident
- Alert relevant emergency services (Police, Fire, Ambulance, Coastguard) via 999 system
- Call for assistance if available (staff, passers-by)
- Administer first aid where possible
- Account for all members of the party and ensure that all persons uninjured stay together
- Allocate staff member(s) to travel to hospital(s) with casualties
- Ascertain if there are any witnesses
- Allocate staff member(s) to stay at incident site to liaise with the emergency services
- Arrange for all non-casualties to return to base (accompanied by a member of staff) and that all members of the group are informed of the incident as soon as possible
- Inform headteacher/member of senior management team (at school) as soon as possible. Give as much of the following information as possible:
 - date, time, location and nature of incident
 - names of those involved
 - details of any injuries.
 - actions taken.
 - contact point to be used
- Consider requesting additional assistance.
- Keep headteacher/member of senior management team regularly updated.
- Consider whether activity should be abandoned. If so, arrange for non-casualties to return to school. Liaise with headteacher/senior management team over transport arrangements.
- Do not discuss legal liability

APPENDIX 8 - INFLUENZA PANDEMIC PLAN

In the event of the Government advising schools to close, the county council will provide advice and guidance as appropriate at that time.

This section should:

- outline procedures for dealing with a child or member of staff who shows symptoms at school - they should be isolated and sent home as soon as possible
- outline systems to minimise the spread of infection if the school stays open during a pandemic (eg handwashing, disposal of tissues etc)
- consider how lessons can be maintained if some staff become sick
- consider how non-teaching and teaching staff could be used in other areas if your school is advised to close
- if you are advised to close your school, you should attempt to provide some form of education by remote methods

APPENDIX 9 - BOMB THREATS AND SUSPECT PACKAGES

Bomb threat prompt card for reception staff

Action to be taken	✓ when complete
Stay calm	
<p>Make a note of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the code word (if given) • the exact time of the call • the caller's sex and approximate age • any accent the person has, or any distinguishing feature about their voice eg speech impediment, state of drunkenness etc • any distinguishable background noise 	
<p>When they have finished the message, try to ask as many of the following questions as you can, being cautious to avoid provoking the caller:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where is the bomb? • What time is it due to go off? • What kind of bomb is it? • What does it look like? • What will cause it to explode? • Why are you doing this? 	
Dial 1471 - you may get the details of where the phone call was made from, especially in the case of a hoax caller	
Report the call to the police and the headteacher/nominated deputy immediately. In the extremely unlikely event that there was a codeword with the message, and the location of the bomb was given as a location other than the school, follow the same procedure - report the call immediately to the police, and then notify the headteacher	

Guidance on suspect packages

The likelihood of a school receiving a postal bomb or suspected biological/chemical package is very low, however, you should be aware of the immediate steps to be taken if you receive a suspect package or come into contact with a biological or chemical substance.

Postal bombs or biological/chemical packages may display any of the following signs:

- Grease marks or oily stains on the envelope or wrapping
- An unusual odour including but not restricted to almonds, ammonia or marzipan
- Discolouration, crystals on surface or any powder or powder-like residue on the envelope or wrapping (suspect biological/chemical threat)
- Visible wiring or tin foil
- The envelope or package may feel very heavy for its size
- The weight distribution may be uneven
- Delivery by hand from an unknown source or posted from an unusual place
- If a package, it may have excessive wrapping
- There may be poor handwriting, spelling or typing
- It may be wrongly addressed, or come from an unexpected source
- No return address or postmark that does not match return address
- There may be too many stamps for the weight of the package

If you suspect that a letter or a package may contain a bomb:

- Stay calm
- Put the letter or package down gently and walk away from it
- Do not put the letter or package into anything (including water) and do not put anything on top of it
- Ask everyone to leave the area (including classes if necessary)
- Notify the police and the headteacher/nominated deputy immediately
- Do not use mobile phones or sound the alarm using the break glass call points

If you suspect that a letter or a package may contain a biological or chemical threat:

- Stay calm
- Do not touch the package further or move it to another location
- Shut windows and doors in the room and leave the room, but keep yourself separate from others and available for medical examination
- Notify the headteacher/nominated deputy immediately

The headteacher/nominated deputy should then:

- Notify the police immediately on 999
- Ensure that any air conditioning system in the building has been turned off, and that all doors (including internal fire doors) and windows have been closed
- Evacuate the building, keeping people away from the contaminated room as far as possible
- Keep all persons exposed to the material separate from others and available for medical attention

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- If anyone is experiencing symptoms of chemical exposure (eg streaming eyes, coughs and irritated skin) seek medical attention immediately

If anyone believes they have been exposed to biological/chemical material, they should be encouraged to:

- remain calm
- do not touch eyes, nose or any other part of the body
- wash your hands in ordinary soap where facilities are provided

APPENDIX 10 - OTHER SERVICES USING THE SCHOOL SITE

You may need to create additional appendices if there are several other services using the school site (eg play schemes, after-school clubs etc) or any additional arrangements relating to extended services at the school.

Consider whether it is necessary to add extra points to the action checklists in the main body of the plan to ensure that these procedures are integrated into the school's emergency response.

APPENDIX 11 - LOG KEEPING

How to write the log:

- Note all relevant facts in chronological order
- Stick to the FACTS - do not include any assumptions (if you are noting down assumptions to show your reasoning for making a decision, make this clear)
- If you make a mistake, cross it out with a single line | so that what is underneath is still visible, and initial it
- Do not leave blank spaces - or if you do, rule them out with a line
- Do not overwrite – if you make a mistake, cross it out, initial it and start again
- Do not leave large blank spaces between words or between entries
- Do not use correction fluid
- Unused space after the end of a series of entries should be ruled through, then signed in full, dated and timed
- Avoid approximations and abbreviations

APPENDIX 12 - TRAINING AND EXERCISING

Training record:

Date	Training	Areas covered	Attendees

Exercise record:

Date	Brief details of exercise	Actions identified	Outcome of actions	Aspects of plan tested

APPENDIX 13 - BUSINESS CONTINUITY

Business continuity planning is the process involved in ensuring that a business or organisation can continue with its critical functions after a disaster or emergency. In the case of schools, one of these functions is to continue pupils' education. You therefore need to think about what is required in order to continue this function and what vital records or data you may need to duplicate or back up.

Statistically the emergency most likely to be experienced by a school is one that affects the school building, such as a fire or flood. Having an inventory of the contents of the school is invaluable in calculating losses for insurance claims. This section is split into three tables which should be completed for the school.

Equipment - this doesn't need to include every single item in the school, as numbers of desks and chairs are easy to calculate, but IT, electrical equipment and any other specialist, large, one-off or expensive items.

IT data and systems - all important data stored on school computers should be backed up in accordance with your IT Disaster Recovery Plan. (Refer to your IT services supplier for further information). The table allows the recording of essential data sets and IT systems and where they are backed up.

Paper based records - schools will have at least some essential paper-based records, which could be easily damaged or destroyed in a fire or flood. These should be listed in the table along with the locations of back-up copies which should be stored off site - this should include your emergency plan.

It is also worth encouraging staff to think about where they keep lesson plans and pupils' coursework, as loss of these could have a large psychological impact on staff and pupils.

Equipment Inventory

Description	Make	Model Number	Serial number	Purchase Price	Purchase Date	Location (room)

