



Lenham Primary School

Take Pride; Be Proud

Ham Lane
Lenham
Kent
ME17 2LL


Phone: 01622 858260

www.lenham.kent.sch.uk

Headteacher: Mrs Andrea McCluskey

Critical Incidents Policy

March 2019

Document history: Written by Reviewed by Andrea McCluskey	
Agreed by the governing body on:	March 2019
Review date:	March 2020
Signed:  Chair of Governors	

Critical Incident Policy

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1. Introduction

Critical Incidents may take innumerable forms. This policy does not attempt to provide detailed solutions to all potential incidents but to provide a general framework, which may be adapted and used in any such unforeseeable incident.

The purpose of this document is to:

- Outline routines and procedures to reduce the danger inherent in certain situations
- Assist staff in coping with disasters if and when tragic incidents occur.

2. Preventative and precautionary measures

Whilst no amount of planning can totally prevent accidents and problems occurring, it is hoped that some can be prevented and the effects of others minimised by taking sensible precautionary measures.

It is expected that

- All staff and pupils should be familiar with the school's routines for fire and the evacuation of the school building on hearing the fire alarm- fire safety is also covered in our Health and Safety policy.
- All staff should be familiar with the routines and procedures for dealing with emergencies (as detailed in this Policy).
- All staff and pupils should be familiar with the school's security procedures, in particular that all visitors not wearing a visitor's badge should be **challenged** and escorted to reception.
- All staff organising school trips and visits follow the guidelines and checklists
- All staff should sign in and out of the premises
- All staff are aware of pupils with health problems
- All staff are aware of school policy in dealing with violence at work.
- Through our 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 feelings;
- Careful planning and effective risk management will minimise our pupils' exposure to dangerous situations. When unforeseen hazards occur, we will immediately brief children about how to proceed and require their compliance with any rulings we make
- From time to time we will brief and/or train all relevant staff groups on their role in the prevention, management and responses to incidents
- We 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

3. Definition of a critical incident

- An accident leading to a fatality;
- Severe injury or severe stress;
- Circumstances in which a person or persons might be at serious risk of illness;

- Circumstances in which any part, or whole of the school is unable to function as normal due to external influences and
- Any situation in which the national press or media might be involved

An incident becomes critical when it constitutes a serious disruption arising with little or no warning on a scale beyond the coping capacity of the school operating under normal circumstances; and requiring the assistance of emergency services and / or the council.

An incident is declared to be critical following consultation between the person managing the incident within the school (normally the Headteacher) and senior officers within the Local authority.

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

As such, critical incidents include:

- Death of a pupil or member of staff;
- Death or serious injury on a school trip;
- Epidemic in school or community;
- Violent incident in school;
- A pupil missing from home;
- Destruction or major vandalism in school;
- A hostage taking;
- A transport accident involving school members;
- A disaster in the community;
- A civil disturbance or terrorism.

In the event of such an incident the priorities of those adults in charge of the school or trip at the time must be able to:

- Save life
- Minimise personal injury
- Safeguard the interests of pupils and staff
- Minimise loss and to return to normal working quickly

4. The Critical Management Team

This will comprise of the following staff:-

Andrea McCluskey, Headteacher
 Louise Culver, Deputy Headteacher
 Ceri Norey, Chair of Governors
 Emma Pike, School Business Leader
 Michelle Grieve, SENCo

The school's reaction to a critical incident can be divided into the following categories:

- Immediate action
- Short term action
- Medium term action
- Longer-term action

In the event of an incident being declared critical, the critical Incident/ fire box can be found in the school office

5. Immediate Action

I.e. within the first hour of the incident occurring, the “golden” hour

- Obtain and collate information relating to the incident – uncertainty breeds rumour and accurate information is essential;
- Gather and brief the CIMT (Critical Incident Management Team) – brief the team, allocate roles and responsibilities;
- Trigger support from the LEA and other contacts on emergency list – establish clearly who is going to contact whom;
- Set up an incident management room and dedicated phone line – to deal with calls from anxious parents etc. CIMT should agree a factual statement and avoid speculation; a clear log must be completed
- Contact families affected – must be done quickly and with sensitivity. Consistency of information is vital. It may be appropriate for families to come to school and immediate emotional support could be a possibility; a record of contact must be completed
- Make arrangements to inform other parents – may need to take advice from LEA, especially if there is the possibility of legal liability. CIMT may wish to send a letter to parents, or prepare a leaflet.
- Inform teaching and other school staff – staff need to be cautioned about talking to the media or responding to questions from reporters. It is vital that all staff in contact with pupils are kept well informed and feel secure in handling comments or questions from pupils.
- Inform pupils – can be done in small or large groups depending on which is most appropriate. Care needs to be exercised to protect both children and adults closely involved in the incident. It is important that children receive a consistent account of the incident allowing for differences in their ability to understand.
- Encourage people involved to talk – the incident may need to be discussed before children go home for the day, for both pupils and adults.
- Deal with the media – most important to seek advice from County Office before agreeing to speak to or be interviewed by the media. If this is not an option then an agreed text for release should be prepared by the CIMT and a designated spokesperson briefed and prepared to respond on the school’s behalf. Under no circumstances will they be permitted on the school premises
- Devise a plan for handling the reactions and feelings of people affected – the most common reactions will include denial, distress, guilt, anger and helplessness. CIMT need to consider outside professionals to support and debrief staff and pupils affected by the incident. Those providing support also

need support. At this point the CIMT will need to plan their short term reaction to the incident.

6. Short Term Action – the next stage

- Reunion of children with their families – especially where the incident occurs outside the school. Mostly children will need to be brought home, but sometimes parents and families need to visit the scene of the incident to understand how they deal with repercussions in terms of children's fears etc.
- Managing staff – support needs organising for all staff, preferably from within the school, but using outside agencies if appropriate. Staff monitoring should be a priority, even members of the CIMT. If a crisis persists over many hours staff become tired, weary and upset and this affects their powers to make sensible decisions.
- Encourage pupils to talk – activate strategies for enabling young people to talk about the incident, and their feelings, using outside agencies if appropriate. Staff will need briefing about ways to help the children affected by the incident, and how to identify patterns of behaviour etc. This may have implications for the wider curriculum i.e. training in bereavement counselling for staff, provision of a range of books, PSHE discussions etc...
- Debriefing meeting – it may be appropriate to hold a debriefing meeting for staff, children and parents to:
 - Clarify what has happened
 - Allow for sharing reactions
 - Reassure people that reactions are normal
 - Mobilise resources e.g. parental support groups

An experienced person, possibly someone from outside the school community, should lead this meeting.

- Formal and informal recognition of rituals – it is important to remember to express sympathy to families of the hurt or bereaved. Visits to children/staff in hospital. Pupils may wish to send cards and letters. The school may also need to consider attendance at funerals, and/or the desirability of holding special assemblies or memorial services. Anniversaries are also key times when support and sensitivity are required.
- Re-establishing routines – every attempt should be made to provide continuity for the children. The return to school of staff or pupils directly affected by the crisis will need to be managed carefully and with sensitivity but the re-establishment of routine is an important stage in emotional recovery.

7. Medium Term Action

- Return to school for staff or pupils after long absence – reintegration will need to be planned carefully, and may involve home visits prior to return, part time attendance initially, reducing workloads, putting in place mentoring process etc.

- Consulting professionals – consideration should be given to consulting the Educational Psychology Service for support and guidance, especially to help those showing unusual or prolonged reaction to the incident.
- Keeping parents informed – it may be appropriate to produce a leaflet for parents giving guidance on the possible delayed reactions of pupils to an incident and making suggestions to help them deal with these.
- Support for staff – ongoing monitoring and support for staff is a major consideration. CIMT especially will not be immune to reaction from their ordeal.

8. Long Term Action

- Monitoring the vulnerable – the effects of a crisis can reverberate for years, and it is especially important that new staff and pupils are briefed in the school's history to help them understand and deal with potential repercussions especially at anniversary times.
- Marking anniversaries – these difficult times need to be treated with sensitivity. Some suggestions for schools to mark anniversaries are by annual concerts, memorial services, memorial prize giving ceremonies, memorial gardens etc ...
- Legal processes – the length of time taken over some legal processes can prolong the recovery process following a critical incident. CIMT may need to plan for this especially where staff may be involved attending legal processes, and facing extended emotional trauma.
- Curriculum implications – it may be appropriate to schedule INSET training for staff in loss counselling, bereavement etc.

9. Roles and Responsibilities – The School Action Plan

The Action Plan gives responsibilities for specified staff in the event of a critical incident

- (a) In the school environs
- (b) Away from the school

These should be used in the event of a major incident and can be found in the office. Staff responsible for pupils on a planned trip away from the school should carry this with them. The risk assessment must include details of the Group Leader and the nominated staff that will perform these roles should an incident occur

Lenham Primary School Action Plan for a critical incident on school premise can be found at Appendix 1. The Critical Action plan for such an incident away from the school on a planned event can be found at Appendix 2. Lenham Primary School has a specific action plan to deal with Intruders and Fire. These can be found at Appendix 3 and 4.

Following a major critical incident there will be a need to restore the school and all staff and pupils to normal working.

The school will use the guidance set out in "Managing Critical Incidents in School" and in "Crisis Support for Schools – Role of Educational Psychologists involved in crisis intervention." (Copies held by Headteacher.)

There may be a need to use the agreed procedures in the school's Bereavement Policy.

10. Liaising With Parents

Once children are removed to a safe place it may be advisable to arrange for parents to collect them. However this is a difficult situation as there may be panic amongst parents and concern if not all children have been removed to the safe place.

This action should only commence once the Headteacher or a senior member of staff or a senior member of the emergency team directs.

Procedure for Telephoning Parents

This should be done by class, with a member of staff with day-to-day knowledge of pupils directing.

It is important to be aware of following:

- Siblings in school or nursery.
- Children absent on day.

Staff ringing parents should aim to maintain calm and keep information to an agreed minimum, e.g. speaking only of an 'emergency situation'.

Where there is more than one child attending the school the teachers/staff will need to liaise before telephoning.

It may be necessary to arrange a separate room for parents to be reunited with their children.

One or two members of staff to centrally record children as they leave either in registers or alternative set of class lists. (Highlighters useful for this).

No child to be allowed to leave without being recorded as above.

11. Media

It is possible that the press may hear of the incident and arrive or telephone requesting information. All such calls should be directed to the Headteacher. He/she will not give out any information without speaking first to the Education Emergency Action team and a representative of the Police. Under no circumstances will any press be allowed on the school premises

12. Conclusion

The prime objective, shared between the school and LEA, is to serve the best interests of pupils and staff in coping with an incident, collectively and individually. School's that have made contingency plans for responding to a critical incident are likely to cope better and recover more fully.

This policy has been compiled to provide guidance, in the hope that it will never be necessary to refer to it in the context in which it has been written. It is impossible to plan for every eventuality and by their nature; critical incidents will disorientate and overwhelm those involved. A format for a whole school response to such an incident will provide focus for those with whom the responsibility will rest.

As a matter of urgency there will be a need for emergency telephone lines. Contact the Emergency Planning Officer for Kent who is able to make these arrangements with British Telecom.

13. Emergency Contacts – to be completed and maintained by office

CONTACT	NAME
Chair of Governing Body	Ceri Norey
Police	999/111
Fire Brigade	999
School Nurse	0300 123 4496
Education Psychology Service Central Office	0300 123 4496
Emergency Department at the Local Hospital	01622 729000
Press and Media contacts	KM 0800 0855810
Safeguarding	0300412284
Health and Safety	Amey 01622624003

Appendix 1 - Action Plan - A Critical Incident has occurred in the school.

- This folder contains a list of requirements and expectations.
- The Headteacher will act as coordinator and decision maker.
- The Critical Management Team will delegate responsibilities, as appropriate.
- All staff must be aware of what may be required of them should a critical incident occur.
- The first hour is critical – “ the golden hour”
- Clear communication is vital
- Record all actions taken and decisions made.

The Critical Management Team is:

Andrea McCluskey
Louise Culver
Ceri Norey
Emma Pike
Michelle Grieve

The First Aiders are all staff excluding: Andrea McCluskey, Louise Culver, Toni Davison, Emma Pike and Joy Humberson.

A Critical incident may be defined as:

- An accident leading to a fatality;
- Severe injury or severe stress;
- Circumstances in which a person or persons might be at serious risk of illness;
- Circumstances in which any part, or whole of the school is unable to function as normal due to external influences and
- Any situation in which the national press or media might be involved

Headteacher- Roles and Responsibilities in a critical incident

Where possible utilise and involve the Critical incident Management team. Your role is to oversee and instruct.

- Obtain Facts – consider recording in writing
- Call emergency services
- Retain any relevant equipment or evidence
- Keep a log of events/decisions
- Inform staff and pupils as appropriate
- Arrange evacuation for non casualties or consider relocation
- Identify high risk children and staff
- Identify support required
- Prepare and deal with the media

Deputy Head – Roles and Responsibilities in a critical incident.

Your role is to assist the Head in her core duties should an incident occur

- Be directed by the Head
- Keep others informed
- Assist in location to other premises
- Establish an Incident Room

First Aiders - Roles and Responsibilities in a critical incident

- Administer first aid that may be required
- Establish a contact point with the Emergency services
- Where possible travel with casualty to hospital.

Administration Manager- Roles and Responsibilities in a critical incident

Your role is to support the Headteacher in administrative functions.

- Keep a log of events
- Keep a record of Witnesses
- Care for relatives arriving at school
- Contact the director of Education
- Contact chair of Governors
- Contact Health and safety Reps

Staff - Roles and Responsibilities in a critical incident

Your role in a critical incident is to maintain normality and be the point of contact for your class.

- Record actions in writing ASAP
- Maintain in contact with Deputy Head
- Do not allow children to talk to the media

Appendix 2 - A Critical Incident has occurred whilst on a planned trip away from the school.

- This folder contains a list of requirements and expectations.
- The Designated Group Leader will act as coordinator and decision maker.
- The Designated Group Leader will delegate responsibilities, as appropriate.
- All staff must be aware of what may be required of them should a critical incident occur.
- The first hour is critical – “ the golden hour”
- Clear communication amongst the group and with the school is vital.
- Record all actions taken and decisions made.

The Critical Management Team at the school is:

Andrea McCluskey
Louise Culver
Ceri Norey
Emma Pike
Michelle Grieve

The Nominated Adults are completed on every trip risk assessment form.

A Critical incident may be defined as:

- An accident leading to a fatality;
- Severe injury or severe stress;
- Circumstances in which a person or persons might be at serious risk of illness;
- Circumstances in which any part, or whole of the school is unable to function as normal due to external influences and
- Any situation in which the national press or media might be involved

Group Leader - Roles and Responsibilities in a critical incident

Your role is to oversee and instruct.

- Obtain Facts and information – consider recording in writing
- Call emergency services
- Retain any relevant equipment or evidence
- Request assistance on site as necessary
- Inform the Headteacher
- Keep a log of events/decisions
- Inform staff and pupils as appropriate
- Identify high risk children and staff
- Identify support required
- Prepare and deal with the media

Nominated Adult (1) – First Aid Trained if possible- Roles and Responsibilities in a critical incident

- Administer first aid that may be required
- Establish a contact point with the Emergency services
- Where possible travel with casualty to hospital.
- Complete Accident Forms

Nominated adult (2) –Administration- Roles and Responsibilities in a critical incident

Your role is to support the Group Leader in administrative functions.

- Keep a log of events
- Keep a record of Witnesses
- Remain available for the Emergency services

Headteachers role when a critical incident that occurs away from the school.

Your role in a critical incident is to coordinate events and assist the group leader.

- Obtain facts and information
- Ensure Emergency Services have been called
- Confirm who is the Group Leader and the Nominated roles
- Contact the Education Office, requesting emergency support
- Prepare to deal with the Media
 - No Entry to the premises
 - Prepare a statement
- Decide who will communicate with the families
- Decide how to relay information to parents
- Allow parents to attend the school
- Establish an Incident room and allocate a person to manage
 - NO Parents will be allowed to enter this room
- Establish a room for relatives and allocate a person to manage
 - Request voluntary organisations
- Remain available

Appendix 3 – Action Plan in respect of INTRUDERS on school premises

In the case of an intruder in school the Headteacher or secretary will immediately ring the emergency services, informing them that an intruder is on the premises at Lenham primary school Me172QC/ ME172LL, giving as much information as possible including the believed location of the intruder and any description you may have. The secretary will also contact the Local Education Office. The Headteacher will ascertain the location of the intruder and, if possible whether or not the intruder is armed. He/she will decide whether or not it is advisable to evacuate groups/classes/wings/ kitchen/nursery of the school; decide on a safe route to do so; decide on a 'safe place' to which staff may be directed.

The Lenham School is the location for safety in an emergency. The Headteacher will direct a member of staff to contact The Lenham School by phone to warn of the situation.

The Headteacher will inform all staff including kitchen and nursery staff of the situation, maintaining calm at all times.

Teachers may be directed to:

- Clear their room (if the intruder is in it and it is deemed safe to do so) to another within the building (Appendix 4)
- Secure their room – Invacuation (Appendix 5)
- Undertake directed evacuation (Appendix 6)

Appendix 4 - Clear Room

(For use by the class teacher **where the emergency occurs**)

The Hall area is the designated safe area, unless the class teacher decides otherwise on the grounds of a safe route.

The teacher to:

1. Tell pupils to go directly, in a calm orderly fashion to the agreed designated area. Ensure that pupils understand they must go directly to the designated area when a Room Clear is issued.
2. Notify the Headteacher/office immediately, possibly using support staff or other adult or mobile phone for this. Consider response to situation as appropriate.
3. Remain with the problem situation, working to defuse the crisis by remaining calm. Reassure everyone involved that everything possible is being done to return the situation to normal.

Appendix 5 – Invacuation (Secure room)

Invacuation Policy and Procedures apply when students and staff need to be locked within buildings for their own safety. This will occur if there is an emergency situation including a hostile intruder, terrorist attack, criminal activity, chemical spill or extreme weather event. All people on site must adhere to the Policy and Procedures for safety.

Children will have it explained that we have an evacuation when the threat is inside, however when we get high winds and the threat is trees coming in through the windows we have an Invacuation. During this all children go under the table and sit in silence. In Rainbow class the children will huddle together on the carpet and have a story read to them.

There will be at least one practice Invacuation drill per year. Ideally 2 per year.

In the event of an emergency, the Headteacher will make the decision, in consultation with police when deemed necessary, with regard to whether the school needs to be invacuated.

Children will not be released to parents during Invacuation. Parents are not to call the school as this may tie up emergency lines that must remain open. The invacuation situation requires silence in order not to alert an intruder to the presence of children and staff in classrooms.

School Office responsibilities (when possible)

1. Immediately activate Invacuation procedures by ringing a bell in the two corridors.
2. Telephone the Nursery and advise Invacuation has been activated
3. Contact Police and advise them that lockdown (it is fine to call it this with the police) has been activated and the reason on the premises at Lenham primary school ME17 2LC/ ME17 2LL.
4. Toilets and corridor to be checked by SLT.
5. Assigned personnel to wait outside main entrance to direct emergency services.
6. Contact classrooms by staff mobiles for list of names to match against names of students and visitors/volunteers.
7. Liaise with KCC/ School Improvement Advisor.
8. The Headteacher or deputy in her absence are the only staff authorised to give the 'all clear signal' when the emergency has passed through ringing the bell again in the corridors.
9. Arrange for parents to be informed.

School and staff procedures

Children will have it explained that we have an evacuation when the threat is inside, however when we get high winds and the threat is trees coming in through the windows we have an Invacuation. During this all children go under the table and sit in silence. In Rainbow class the children will huddle together on the carpet and have a story read to them.

1. In the event of an Invacuation, it is mandatory that all children and staff remain in the classroom. Children and staff who are in the hallway or in the playground are to move into the closest classroom.
2. Staff should check hallways for children and direct them to the nearest classroom and visitors not matching the intruder description.
3. Close windows and blinds in the classroom and lock the door, if possible.
4. Turn off the lights, fans and electrical devices.
5. Position children under tables and away from doors. In Rainbow class the children will huddle together on the carpet and have a story read to them.
6. Do not allow anyone to use mobile phones if there is one available.
7. Staff may only use mobile phone to give police further information about the emergency.
8. Take a complete roll of everyone in the room.
9. The office will ring the class phone or staff mobiles for this list.
10. Do not ring the office during the Invacuation.
11. Remind everyone to remain quiet.
12. No one is to leave the room during the Invacuation.
13. Remain in this position until the "All clear" is announced through ringing the bell again.

*If a member of staff is in a room which is not to the normal classroom they **remain** in that room. If a member of staff is in a corridor they go into the nearest classroom with **all** the children they are working with.

Appendix 6 - Directed Evacuation

The Headteacher is responsible for

Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher will assume role of Fire Controller and 4 members of staff will be Fire Wardens.

- In the event that a member of staff with a specific role in an evacuation is absent the Headteacher shall nominate and induct a suitable replacement.
- In the event of evacuation the Headteacher or Deputy Head will take responsibility for ensuring where practically possible the safe evacuation of all children, staff and visitors by delegating duties to specific staff i.e. Checking toilet areas etc.
- When the alarm is sounded the wardens and controller will meet at the Fire Panel. Cards will be given out establishing everyone's role. 2 members will go to where the fire panel is saying a fire is present and check. The 2 remaining members will help staff who have exited to the car park side get to the assembly point. If any staff are not present, cards will be allocated to those there.
- Leave the building by the nearest exit and co-ordinate the evacuation from the assembly point.
- Establish from staff members the evacuation status including ensuring that the emergency services have been summoned.
- If the emergency services have not been contacted use a mobile telephone, do not re-enter the building.
- You will be notified by teacher's of anyone that is missing people: pupils, staff and visitors.
- Report the evacuation status to the emergency services on their arrival.
- In the event of a person or persons being reported as being still in the building alert the emergency services as soon as possible.
- **YOU MUST NOT RE-ENTER THE BUILDING** to search for any missing people but they should be reported to the attending emergency services.

The Office is responsible for:

- Phoning the emergency services
- Taking out the Emergency Box.
- Taking the signing in books: staff, visitors, all register and late arrivals
- Bringing out school keys

- Visitors must evacuate to the assembly point and report to the Fire Controller. The Office Staff will sign them in. They must not leave the site until instructed to do so by the Headteacher failure to do this could result in them being reported missing and endanger emergency services lives
- On arrival to the assembly point to distribute the registers advising all teachers to inform the Marshall of status
- Sign in all visitors and teachers

Teachers / Student Teachers / Teaching Assistants responsibility is to:

- On hearing the alarms or directed to evacuate collect the register if in the classroom.
- Close doors and windows if time permits
- Ensure everyone remains together and leaves in a quiet orderly fashion evacuated by the safest and quickest route using the nearest exits to the assembly point on the playground.
- Toilets and corridor to be checked by Class R TA in the infant wing
- Toilets and corridor to be checked by Class 3 and 4 TA in Junior wing
- If however this area is unsafe, evacuate to a different area by direction of the Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher
- Once at the assembly point conduct a roll call and report status to the Controller.
- Headteacher will be informed immediately of any child unaccounted for.

In all emergencies it is vital that office staff take out the following:

- Dinner registers (as backup if class registers not available).
- Visitors' register.
- Pupils signed in/out register.
- Staff signing in/out list (from staff room).
- List of pupils' addresses and telephone numbers (as many as possible).
- Mobile phones if available.
- The Headteacher will identify which pupils, staff, volunteers and visitors were in school at the time of evacuation and whether all have been evacuated.

The Headteacher will be able to liaise with the Local Education Officer, Police and other emergency services, giving as detailed information as possible regarding the nature of the emergency, location, persons involved etc.