

Critical Incident Policy

Queen's College, Taunton

Queen's College, Taunton

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1 Introduction

- 1.1 This is the Critical Incident Policy for Queen's College, Taunton and is addressed to all members of staff and volunteers to respond to all critical incidents
- 1.2 It applies to all School activities both on the School site and any School-arranged off-site activities such as educational visits, residential trips and expeditions.
- 1.3 Nothing in this policy should affect the ability of any person to contact the emergency services in the event of an emergency requiring immediate assistance. If you are in any doubt you should dial 999 before contacting the Critical Incident Manager (**CIM**) or another appropriate member of the Critical Incident Management Team (**CIMT**).

2 Aims and objectives

- 2.1 The aim of this policy is to provide a framework to manage and recover from any crisis affecting the School and to minimise the risks to the health, safety and welfare of those affected and the damage to property or reputation by identifying:
 - 2.1.1 those who may be affected by such an incident;
 - 2.1.2 the types of incident and the threat that they may present to the School;
 - 2.1.3 key activities and assets that may be threatened by such an incident;
 - 2.1.4 measures and procedures to manage, investigate (where appropriate) and recover from such an incident and its aftermath.

3 Critical Incident

- 3.1 A Critical Incident, is a sudden or unexpected incident, crisis or a sequence of incidents or events which cause, or are likely to result in all or any of the following:
 - 3.1.1 injury, harm or illness to pupils, staff, or anyone else affected by the School's activities;
 - 3.1.2 damage to school property or reputation;
 - 3.1.3 serious disruption to the running of the School or School's activities;
 - 3.1.4 intervention by the police or regulatory authorities;
 - 3.1.5 adverse media attention.
- 3.2 Examples of Critical Incidents may include, but are not restricted to the following:
 - 3.2.1 an accident, injury, illness or death of a pupil, staff member or anyone else affected by the School's activities;
 - 3.2.2 media attention and / or regulatory intervention following the investigation or arrest of school personnel or former staff arising from allegations of abuse;
 - 3.2.3 an outbreak of illness or contagious disease on the School premises or affecting pupils or staff;
 - 3.2.4 missing or abducted pupil(s) and hostage situations;

- 3.2.5 security breaches, intruder access or vandalism;
- 3.2.6 criminal or terrorist acts;
- 3.2.7 assaults on or acts of violence towards pupils or staff members or anyone else affected by the School's activities;
- 3.2.8 a fire, arson attack, explosion, bomb scare, chemical leak, the discovery of hazardous substances on the School site;
- 3.2.9 natural disasters e.g. flooding or storm damage;
- 3.2.10 an unplanned evacuation of the School's premises;
- 3.2.11 damage to School property or infrastructure including failure of services (gas, electricity, water etc) or computer systems;
- 3.2.12 loss of key personnel or strike action.

3.3 **Child protection incidents**

- 3.3.1 For the avoidance of doubt every complaint of, or suspicion of abuse (whether by an adult or another pupil) will be taken seriously and will be dealt with under the terms of the School's safeguarding procedures before implementing the terms of this policy.

4 **Responsibilities**

- 4.1 The CIMT consists of senior members of the School's management team and may include those listed below:
 - 4.1.1 The Critical Incident Manager (Deputy Head) is responsible for the overall command and management of the incident and the CIMT.
 - 4.1.2 The Communications Officer (Director of Marketing, Admissions & Development) is responsible for liaising with and briefing key personnel, the media and monitoring media response.
 - 4.1.3 The Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads are responsible for providing support, assistance and information to pupils and staff or anyone else affected by the Critical Incident and will liaise with medical staff, hospitals etc. where appropriate.
 - 4.1.4 The DDSLs are responsible for matters relating to child protection and safeguarding and welfare (where necessary).
 - 4.1.5 The DDSLs are responsible for providing support, assistance and information to parents, relatives and anyone else affected by the Critical Incident.
 - 4.1.6 The Operations Director and Site Manager are responsible for managing issues relating to the School site, premises and property and liaising with regulatory bodies such as the Health and Safety Executive (**HSE**), the local authority and the Environment Agency.
 - 4.1.7 The Bursar is responsible for liaising with solicitors, insurers, brokers, loss adjusters and for all financial matters arising out of the Critical Incident.

4.1.8 The Incident Secretary is responsible for assisting the CIM in their roles and taking minutes at meetings and keeping records (where required).

4.1.9 Other senior members of staff (as required).

5 CIMT emergency contact list

Contact	Name	Telephone
Emergency Services	Police	999
	Fire and Rescue	
	Ambulance	
Police (non urgent enquiries)		101
Critical Incident Manager / Deputy Head	Mr Andrew Free (DSL)	Ext 213 - 01823 340803
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads	Dr Lorraine Earps	Ext 210 / 01823 272559 07541 385322
	Mrs Tracey Khodabandehloo	Ext 220 / 01823 340852 07766 168625
	Mrs Teri Underwood	Ext 282 / 01823 272990
	Miss Elizabeth Hayes	Ext 314 / 01823 340887
	Mrs Donna Kershaw	Ext 353 / 01823 340892
	Miss Sam Horner	Ext 313 / 01823 340886
	Mr Jon Shepherd	Ext 276 / 01823 340853
	Mrs Amanda Free	Ext 229 / 01823 340825
	Miss Natalie (Tilly) Fowler	Ext 353 / 01823 340892
Operations Director	Mr Peter Evans	Ext 203 / 01823 340823 / 07766 256369
Site Manger	Miss Deborah Cossey	Ext 219 / 01823 340875 07967 351276
School Nurse	Mrs Sue Parratt & Rachael Wilson	Ext 250 / 216 / 01823 340819
Bursar	Mr Andrew Stevenson	Ext 201, 01823 275715 / 07388 949273

HR Manager	Mrs Emily Turner	Ext 255 / 01823 340904
Director of Marketing, Admissions and Development	Mrs Kathryn Howard	Ext 297 / 01823 340805 07414 687825
The Incident Secretary	Mrs Sally Murray	Ext 269 / 01823 340846
Chair of the Governors	Mr Mark Edwards	01823 340885
Solicitors	Farrer & Co 66 Lincoln's Inn Fields London WC2A 3LH	020 3375 7000
Insurers	QBE Insurance (Europe) Limited & AXA Insurance UK plc C/O Hettle Andrews & Associates Ltd Eleven Brindley Place Birmingham B1 2LP	Office: 0121 423 6200/6213

6 Preparation for a critical incident

- 6.1 In accordance with School practice, an up-to-date list of contact telephone numbers and addresses should be held centrally and securely on the School's computer system and in a readily accessible format.
- 6.2 The Head Teacher will retain an up to date copy of the list of contacts and this policy at home in a secure format such that these may be obtained in the event of an incident outside of School hours.

7 Emergency procedure in the event of a Critical Incident

- 7.1 In the event of a Critical Incident staff should:
- 7.1.1 assess the nature and extent of the Critical Incident;
 - 7.1.2 take immediate action to safeguard yourself and anyone else affected;
 - 7.1.3 remain calm;
 - 7.1.4 summon emergency assistance and / or medical assistance (if required); and
 - 7.1.5 contact the CIM or another member of the CIMT as soon as possible.

8 Managing the incident

8.1 The CIMT will determine whether the Critical Incident requires a meeting of the full CIMT, and if not will call upon key members of the CIMT, as required.

8.2 Once established, the CIMT will take charge of the Critical Incident.

8.3 The CIMT will be assembled as soon as reasonably practicable in the Critical Incident Operations Room as follows:

On-site operations room	Pastoral Office 01823 340846
Off-site operations room	Channon House 01823 284234

8.4 The CIMT will obtain accurate information about the Critical Incident as soon as possible and will seek to establish:

8.4.1 the nature of the incident;

8.4.2 when, where and how the incident occurred;

8.4.3 who has been affected and who might be affected;

8.4.4 the extent of casualties or damage caused; and

8.4.5 the involvement of third parties including emergency services, regulators etc.

8.5 The CIMT will:

8.5.1 assess ongoing risks and take immediate steps to safeguard the health, safety and welfare of pupils, staff or anyone else affected by the Critical Incident;

8.5.2 make adequate arrangements to liaise with the emergency services, regulators, investigators and outside agencies, as required;

8.5.3 ensure that proper consideration is given to the disclosure of School documents to external sources and, if so authorised, ensure that copies of the latest versions of any such documents are provided and that separate copies of any disclosed documents are retained;

8.5.4 ensure that the emergency services are provided with up to date information including site plans, asbestos registers, chemical storage areas etc;

8.5.5 take immediate steps to minimise disruption, in so far as is possible, to the School, pupils, staff members, parents or anyone else affected by the Critical Incident;

8.5.6 brief the Governing Body and keep them informed of progress;

8.5.7 provide information to and arrange support for and welfare assistance to pupils, staff, or anyone affected by the Critical Incident, to include follow up support as appropriate;

8.5.8 make adequate arrangements to liaise with parents, relatives or anyone else affected by the Critical Incident;

- 8.5.9 ensure that the School acts in a lawful manner and take steps to protect and preserve its legal position and where necessary seek legal advice from the School's solicitors;
- 8.5.10 contact the School's insurers where necessary, obtain confirmation of cover and obtain their approval / agreement to proposed actions;
- 8.5.11 ensure that adverse publicity is minimised and that all external enquiries are handled by the Communications Officer or other nominated personnel;
- 8.5.12 make adequate arrangements to communicate with and where necessary provide a controlled response to the press and media;
- 8.5.13 ensure that all site-evacuation and health and safety procedures have been followed, if appropriate;
- 8.5.14 ensure that the School premises and property are secure following the Critical Incident; and
- 8.5.15 activate contingency plans and / or interim measures in order to safeguard continuity of educational provision, where possible.

9 Communicating with the media

- 9.1 Under no circumstances should staff (other than the Communications Officer or other nominated personnel) make any comment to the media. For more information regarding handling the media see Appendix 1.
- 9.2 All requests for information from the media should be referred to the Communications Officer or other nominated personnel immediately.
- 9.3 The Communications Officer will seek advice from the School's solicitors and / or insurers and / or media / PR advisors in order to determine an appropriate strategy for dealing with the media, which may including preparing a suitable press statements, if so advised.
- 9.4 Depending on the nature of an incident, the School may have to seek the approval and / or agreement of the police or other statutory agencies before releasing statements in which case the Communications Officer or other nominated personnel will liaise with the police and / or other agencies before doing so.
- 9.5 The School will also seek advice regarding the form and content of communications with parents, pupils, staff and others.
- 9.6 The School will set up appropriate media alerts and monitoring.

10 Reporting and record keeping

- 10.1 The CIMT will be responsible for ensuring that the School complies with its reporting and record keeping obligations in relation to the Critical Incident.
- 10.2 **Statutory reporting obligations:**

10.2.1 Health and Safety Executive (HSE)

- (a) The School is legally required under the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013 (SI 2013/1471) (**RIDDOR**) to report the following to the HSE:
- (i) **Accidents involving staff**
 - (A) work related accidents resulting in death or 'specified' injury (including as a result of physical violence) must be reported immediately (major injury examples: any loss of consciousness caused by head injury or asphyxia; amputation); or
 - (B) work related accidents which prevent the injured person from continuing with his / her normal work for more than seven days; or
 - (C) cases of work related diseases that a doctor notifies the School of (for example: certain poisonings; lung diseases; infections such as tuberculosis or hepatitis; occupational cancer); or
 - (D) certain dangerous occurrences or near misses - reportable examples: bursting of closed pipes; electrical short circuit causing fire; accidental release of any substance that may cause injury to health).
 - (ii) **Accidents involving pupils or visitors**
 - (A) accidents where the person is killed or is taken from the site of the accident to hospital and where the accident arises out of or in connection with:
 - (1) any school activity (on or off the premises);
 - (2) the way a school activity has been organised or managed (e.g. the supervision of a field trip);
 - (3) equipment, machinery or substances; or
 - (4) the design or condition of the premises.
 - (iii) More information on how and what to report to the HSE, can be found in *Incident reporting in schools (accidents, diseases and dangerous occurrences): guidance for employers* (EDIS1 (revision 3)) and at <http://www.hse.gov.uk/riddor/resources.htm>.
 - (iv) It is also possible to report online via the following link: <http://www.hse.gov.uk/riddor/index.htm>.

10.2.2 Notifiable Diseases

If anyone at the School is known or suspected to be suffering from disease which is classified as a notifiable disease, and / or in the opinion of a registered medical practitioner has an infection and / or is contaminated in a

manner which could present significant harm to human health (as set out in the Health Protection (Notification) Regulations 2010 (SI 2010/659)), the CIMT should ensure that a report is made by the proper officer at the relevant local authority. More information can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/public-health-england>.

10.2.3 Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)

- (a) The School will notify local child protection agencies of any serious accident or injury to, or the death of, any child while in their care and must act on any advice from those agencies.
- (b) Registered Providers only must notify Ofsted of any serious accident or injury to, or the death of, any child whilst in their care and of the action taken. Notification must be made as soon as is reasonably practicable, but in any event within 14 days of the incident occurring.
- (c) Registered providers must notify Ofsted of any food poisoning affecting two or more children cared for on the premises. Notification must be made as soon as is reasonably practicable, but in any event within 14 days of the incident.
- (d) The CIMT will also consider whether the School is required to report the Critical Incident to any other regulatory body or organisation, such as the Charity Commission.
- (e) If the CIMT has any doubt about when or how to report a Critical Incident, or whether or not it should be reported, the School's solicitors should be contacted for further advice.

10.3 Record keeping

10.3.1 Following a Critical Incident, the School will take all reasonable steps to collect and preserve relevant evidence and documentation.

10.3.2 The School will not keep evidence and documentation containing personal information, which has been collated as a result of a Critical Incident for any longer than is reasonably necessary in compliance with the School's Data Protection Act 1998 obligations.

10.3.3 Where there is a risk of litigation, enforcement action or other proceedings, against or on behalf of the School, documents (which include electronic documents) will be retained for at least six years unless:

- (a) the Critical Incident involved a pupil or anyone else who was under the age of 18 at the time of the incident, in which case documentation will be retained at least until that person's 24th birthday; or
- (b) the Critical Incident may have resulted in exposure to a substance which may be hazardous to health, such as asbestos, and / or there is a risk that any person may develop an occupational disease or illness or work-related medical condition, in which case records should be retained for a minimum of 40 years.

11 Internal investigations

- 11.1 An appropriate member of the CIMT will be nominated to investigate the Critical Incident if the CIMT consider that an investigation is necessary.
- 11.2 Such investigations may be required in order to discover the immediate and / or root causes of a Critical Incident to prevent a recurrence, to discipline employees or pupils or to brief lawyers for the purpose of obtaining legal advice or to aid litigation.
- 11.3 Where appropriate, the CIMT will seek legal advice from the School's solicitors before commencing an internal investigation.
- 11.4 The scope of an internal investigation may be restricted to fact-finding and may not make any finding of fault or allocation of blame.
- 11.5 The CIMT will not sanction any internal investigation which may prejudice the investigations of outside agencies.
- 11.6 No admission of liability on the School's behalf should be made without legal advice and / or prior agreement from the School's insurers.

12 Follow-up and review and monitoring

- 12.1 Where possible, the School will make all necessary arrangements to ensure the continuing provision of education for pupils.
- 12.2 The School will also consider arrangements for support and follow-up for staff and pupils who have been affected by Critical Incident(s), such as counselling.
- 12.3 Following a Critical Incident, this policy, and other triggered policies and procedures and / or relevant risk assessments will be reviewed.
- 12.4 In any event, this policy will be regularly reviewed and records of relevant risk assessments and accidents will be regularly monitored by the Head or another senior member of the management team, and updated as necessary.

13 Linked policies

- 13.1 The School has policies covering a range of foreseeable major incidents or crises which should be read in conjunction with this policy including policies covering:
- risk assessment
 - safeguarding / child protection
 - complaints
 - educational visits
 - fire policy and procedures
 - health and safety.
 - lockdown procedure

Effective date of the policy	31st August 2017
CLG Responsible Member	Andrew Free, Deputy Head

Authorised by	Board of Governors
Signed	Mark Edwards, Chair of Governors
Date	31st August 2017

Appendix 1 Dealing with media incidents

As set out in this policy only authorised staff should be in contact with or make comments to the media.

If you receive a request for comment from the media in any format, this should be referred immediately to the Director of Marketing, Admission and Development, who will then liaise with the CIMT / Senior Management Team and / or Governors and the School's solicitors / PR / media consultants and insurers.

Staff should simply acknowledge the query / request and advise that it will be passed to the appropriate person who will endeavour to respond in due course.

Staff should be aware that the media often impose short deadlines to respond so they should ensure that this information is passed to the appropriate person as a matter of urgency.

Under no circumstances should staff:

- feel pressurised or drawn into making comments or statements to the press
- make any apology, admission of liability or facts or any offers on behalf of themselves or the School.

It will be for the CIMT / Senior Management Team and / or Governors to determine the School's strategy to deal with the incident and the School's response will vary depending on the nature of the incident.

Usually the School will prepare a short statement, but only after having taken advice and / or obtained prior agreement from the School's insurers.

Staff should be aware that any breach of this policy could result in the School taking disciplinary action against them.