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#### Critical Incident Policy

#### February 2023

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**Introduction:**

A critical incident is a sudden, unexpected, and tragic event that causes significant and serious personal distress and disruption to children and staff. It may involve an individual or a group, but it potentially overwhelms normal responses and procedures. It will almost certainly impact upon the emotions and the school community.

* It happens fast.
* It happens ‘out of the blue’.
* It may involve large numbers of school members directly or indirectly.
* It is outside our usual experience.
* National disasters, especially those involving children, are often engraved on people’s memories for life.

In our school this could be:

* The death of a pupil or member of staff.
* A traffic accident involving a pupil or member of staff.
* A deliberate act of extreme violence.
* A fire.
* An explosion.

Out of school:

* Deaths or injuries on school journeys.
* Tragedies involving children from many schools.
* Civil disturbances e.g., bombings.
* Significant events within families involved in the school.
* Minimising Risk.

We act to minimise risk within our school setting and out of school through rigorous standards and expectations regarding:

* Health.
* Safety.
* Security.
* Pupil conduct.
* Staff conduct.
* Parent/carer conduct.

Please refer to the following policies:

* Health and Safety
* Behaviour
* Educational Visits
* Travel Plan
* Emergency Policy
* Fire Safety Policy

#### Communications:

In a critical incident situation, Life Skills Manor will work in partnership and cooperate with any external agencies deemed necessary. Our headteacher will act as spokesperson and all staff and governors are aware of this.

Communication with parents/carers will depend upon the nature of the incident.

#### Plan of Actions:

In a critical incident situation at school the following procedures are followed:

*Fire, explosion, gas leak, violence on the premises etc*

* Assess the situation.
* Building evacuated if necessary.
* Emergency services alerted.
* Communicate with LA.
* Inform Chair of Governors
* Inform parents/carers.
* Deal with the media when needed.
* Staff offer support to children.
* Contact made with relevant support services.

All through the incident it is important that staff act and remain calm and offer support to children, colleagues, and parents/carers.

In a critical incident situation outside of school the following procedures are followed:

* Situation assessed.
* Headteacher and senior staff to decide upon how the information/situation is to be managed/communicated.
* Staff offer immediate support to children.
* Communicate with LA.
* Inform Chair of Governors.
* Deal with the media when needed.
* Inform parents/carers.
* Contact made with relevant support services.

In a critical incident situation outside of school involving children from this school the following procedures are followed:

* Trip Leader assesses the situation.
* Trip leader manages the situation and communicates with the school.
* Headteacher and senior staff to decide upon how the information/situation is to be managed/communicated.
* Communicate with LA.
* Inform Chair of Governors.
* Deal with the media when needed.
* Inform parents/carers.
* Staff offer immediate support to children.
* Contact made with relevant support services.

#### Dealing with enquiries:

If school communications are unaffected by the situation:

* The headteacher deals with enquiries.
* Full notes as the incident progresses.
* Accurate school lists of phone numbers and next of kin are available.
* Accurate school lists of children off the school premises (sick, on school trips) are available.

#### Ensuring the safe return of children to their parents/carers.

It is very important that children are reunited with their parents/carers as soon as possible after a critical incident in which they have been involved. Registers are checked to assess numbers and to highlight any children who may be missing. Staff record the name of any child who is taken by a parent/carer. It is important that the situation is managed as calmly and professionally as possible to reassure children and families.

#### Aftermath

It is important that the physical, mental, and emotional well-being of all children and staff is paramount in the aftermath of a critical incident. Internal structures and outside support agencies are brought into operation to ensure that everyone within Life Skills Manor community feels supported through the fall out of a traumatic situation.

# LOCKDOWN

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Signals** | |
| Signal for lockdown |  |
| Signal for all-clear |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Lockdown** | |
| Rooms most suitable for lockdown | Classrooms. |
| Entrance points (e.g. doors, windows) which should be secured | Gate at entrance of school (car park), Baypoint Social Club Entrance (main car park), rear exit/entrance to the back of the social club. |
| Communication arrangements | * Two-way radios * Classroom telephones * Mobile phones * Instant messaging / email * Other |
| Notes |  |

Upon hearing the lockdown signal, take the action below. If someone is taken hostage on the premises, the school should seek to evacuate the rest of the site.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Initial response - lockdown** | **Tick / sign / time** |
|  | Ensure all pupils are inside the school building. Alternatively, ask pupils to hide or disperse if this will improve their safety. |  |
|  | Lock / secure entrance points (e.g. doors, windows) to prevent the intruder entering the building. |  |
|  | Dial 999. Dial once for each emergency service that you require. |  |
|  | Ensure people take action to increase protection from attack:   * Block access points (e.g. move furniture to obstruct doorways) * Sit on the floor, under tables or against a wall * Keep out of sight * Draw curtains / blinds * Turn off lights * Stay away from windows and doors |  |
|  | Ensure that pupils, staff and visitors are aware of an exit point in case the intruder does manage to gain access. |  |
|  | If possible, check for missing / injured pupils, staff and visitors. |  |
|  | Remain inside until an all-clear has been given, or unless told to evacuate by the emergency services. |  |

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| **Document Title:** | Critical Incident Policy |
| **Version:** | 1 |
| **Prepared by:** | Craig Kelly |
| **Governing Body Acceptance Date:** |  |
| **Date for Next Review:** |  |
| **Link on School Website** | https://www.lifeskillsmanor.co.uk/policies |