



Normanhurst School

Crisis Management Policy

In the event of an emergency the Crisis Management Team will assume control. Members of the team are as follows:-

Managing Principal	Mr Matthew Hagger
Headmistress	Mrs Jacqueline Job
Head of Seniors	Mr Patrick Clair
Head of Juniors	Miss Victoria Stone
Assistant Head	Mr Sedo Masters
Group Bursar	Mrs Sharon Hewitt
Assistant Head/H&S Co-Ordinator	Mrs Julie Saint
Group Operations Manager	Mr Mike Isbell
Main Caretaker	Mr Michael Whyte

THE EMERGENCY PLAN

The Emergency Plan attempts to set out the action to be taken during the first 24 hours following an emergency, i.e. fire, flood, bomb threat, terrorist explosion, structural failure of a building, serious injury to staff or pupils. The timing of an incident will have a major impact on how it is handled.

Incident during normal school hours (8.00am – 5.30pm)

Our existing procedures for handling evacuation in the event of fire clearly define the arrangements for contacting the emergency services, evacuating the premises, accounting for staff and pupils and liaising with the emergency services. (See Fire Drill and Emergency Evacuation Policies). Should an actual incident occur during the school day it will be necessary, once all pupils and staff are accounted for, to do something with them once the immediate area surrounding the incident has been made safe. The location into which to move pupils will depend on the building/buildings affected by the incident. If possible, the School Hall is to be used with the area to the front of the School as second choice. A whole school evacuation should be to the car park on Chingford Plain. The Crisis Management Team will then make a decision regarding action for the remainder of the school day.

Bomb Threat

It is not possible to write a procedure to cover every eventuality, however, having a basic 'Bomb Drill' in place will help to make decisions if and when the situation presents itself. **On no account should the fire alarm be used for a bomb scare/threat as procedures may differ and vibrations/noise from the alarm(s) could trigger the device.** It is imperative that everyone remains calm.

1. Bomb/Suspect Package

- If any staff member finds a suspicious package, the Principal and Headmistress should be informed immediately
- Do not move the package
- The Headmistress should direct a member of the Office Staff to call the police immediately and inform them we have discovered a suspicious package
- The Headmistress and SLT will advise all other staff of the situation and ask them to take the pupils initially to the front lawn or another designated place depending on the location of the suspicious package
- The Health and Safety Coordinator and Caretaker should notify the kitchen staff to turn off the gas ovens before evacuating

- The registers will be taken to the designated place by a member of the office staff. All teachers must confirm to the Health and Safety officer, or the Headmistress in his absence, that all pupils are present, and then await further instructions from senior staff or the police.

2. Bomb Threat Via the Telephone

- Should a telephone message/call be received that a bomb is in the school building or grounds, it is important that the person taking the call obtains as much information as possible. It is also helpful to:
 - Give a co-worker a signal to listen in
 - Ask the caller to repeat statements

Above all try to **KEEP CALM**. Do not get excited or excite others.

Questions to be asked include:

- What time is the bomb set to explode?
- Where is the bomb located? Get as many specific details as possible.
- What kind of bomb is it?
- What does the bomb look like? Write down a description.
- Why does the caller want to injure and kill innocent people?

The person receiving the call should try to be aware of:

- Any background noises/sound they can hear.
- The mood of the caller, if possible (angry, erratic in speech, drunk/sober).
- Sex, age, accent of the caller.
- Any indication that the caller knows someone at the school – pupil/staff/owners.
- The Police should then be called and told all the above information.
- The Principal and Headmistress should be informed and then the SLT.
- The Headmistress and SLT will discreetly advise all other staff of the situation and ask them to take the pupils to the school's Fire Assembly Point or other designated place depending on the information provided on the phone.
- The H&S Officer and Caretaker should ensure that nobody re-enters the building.

Additional Notes

- In the event of a bomb threat, staff should be advised, via H&S training sessions, that windows and doors should be opened to release the pressure of the blast
- If possible, people should assemble at least 500 metres away from the building (the car park on Chingford Plain is preferable)
- If anyone discovers a suspect package, it should not be touched. The Bomb Drill procedure should be initiated and the Police contacted immediately
- If there is anything written on the package for the Police, try to remember it and write it down asap
- The H&S Officer must ensure that any evacuation routes which take pupils/staff past the object are blocked off. If this is not possible, staff should be briefed to help ensure pupils stay well away from the item, and walk sensibly, as any small movement could activate the device
- Should an incident occur where it is inappropriate to evacuate the premises (a hostage situation, dangerous animal in the grounds, violent member of the public etc) the person discovering the incident should immediately notify the School Office. The School Office will contact a senior member of staff and office staff will go round to each room to say that there will be a lock in and give details as advised by a senior member of staff. Staff should then ensure that pupils remain in the room with them. A member of staff will visit each location to pass on necessary information and advise when it is safe to return to normal operation.

Having assessed the situation the emergency services will be called as necessary by the Crisis Management Team.

In case of fire/bomb threat/explosion/gas leak or any other type of emergency, pupils and staff should be prepared to evacuate the School without panic and in the least possible time. Drills should be planned to train everyone in the procedures to be followed in particular types of emergency.

The Principal should consider the safety of the pupils in the School, getting them home if possible, and protecting them and the School's staff in an emergency, as one of his most serious responsibilities.

The School may be closed if an actual or potential hazard threatens the safety and well-being of pupils and employees. The decision to close the School shall be made by the Headmistress or her designee upon consultation with the Principal (Mr Matthew Hagger) and, if necessary, professional staff and/or other community agencies responsible for the safety and well-being of the community.

If the decision to close the School is made during the school day when pupils and staff are present on the premises:-

- a) The School Office and tutors should telephone each family to arrange early collection of pupils. Senior pupils may use their mobile telephones.
- b) The Headmistress should ensure that arrangements are made to supervise any pupils who have to wait for later collection, in such safe and secure manner and location as is practicable
- c) A written note should be sent home with each child outlining the reason for closure, the proposed date/time of re-opening the school (if known), or the procedure by which parents will be informed of the reopening
- d) A message should be recorded onto the school answerphone giving information and instructions as appropriate
- e) A written Notice should be displayed on the school entrance gate
- f) A message should appear on the school website.

Teaching days lost due to emergency closing, if of a significant number, may be rescheduled by extending the school year by order of the Principal.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES:

In the event of an emergency:-

GO TO THE OFFICE TELEPHONE AND DIAL 9 to get an outside line, then 999.

When the call is answered:

Give:

- your name
- the **nature** of the emergency
- exactly **where** the emergency is
- whether there are any **casualties**

Wait:

- for the message to be repeated

Arrange:

- for someone to guide the service(s) called when they arrive on the premises

Incident Outside Normal School Hours (5.30pm – 8.00am)

The Principal and Headmistress will follow the procedure for identifying the source of the emergency and contact the emergency services as appropriate.

The Principal and Headmistress will ensure that any clubs/hirers on site account for all their members/attendees. People running Clubs should sign in on the list in the office to indicate they are present in School. They must always have their club register with them.

An assessment of the situation will be made and if necessary, the Crisis Management Team will be contacted and arrangements will be put in hand for contacting the staff and parents concerning the next school day.

Casualties

We have many appropriately trained first aid staff on site, (see list in School Office) and first aid boxes are located throughout the buildings. Should it prove necessary to set up a temporary location for dealing with casualties the first choice would be the School Hall. The second choice would be the front garden.

- The names of those injured and details of the hospital to which they are transferred will be recorded by a member of the office staff to ensure parents can be advised
- A member of staff will, if possible, accompany casualties
- The senior member of staff will first be issued with the school mobile phone together with a contact number in order that they may liaise directly with the School Office who will inform the Principal and Headmistress
- Where any injuries occur a School Accident Report form must be completed. A RIDDOR form should be completed for a hospital casualty and sent to the H&S Executive.

Where deaths have occurred, parents should be advised in person according to the following procedure:

- 1) The Crisis Management Team should prepare a statement for the press/parents
- 2) The Principal and Headmistress should travel to the parents' home or work to inform them about the nature of the incident. Where possible they should travel by taxi and be accompanied by a member of the police.
- 3) If the parents are already on site, the Principal and Headmistress should see them in a suitably private office. Where possible they should be accompanied by a member of the police.
- 4) The Community School's Police Officer may be asked to recommend a suitable counselling service to help pupils/staff.

Communication

It is essential that staff, pupils and parents are kept advised of the situation, bearing in mind we may not have immediate access to computer records or an operable telephone system. Immediate liaison will be as follows:

Staff and Pupils:	Headmistress and SLT
Emergency Services:	Headmistress and School Office
Visitors/Parents:	School Office
Press:	Headmistress

A copy of pupils' communication addresses and SOS contacts, together with a full list of staff names and addresses should be held by members of the Crisis Management Team.

PUPILS AND STAFF MUST NOT TO TALK TO THE MEDIA.

Subsequent briefings may be undertaken on a regular basis with staff being told what (if anything) is to be communicated to pupils. Should it prove necessary details of available help, e.g. counselling will be provided. Details of arrangements for the next School day will be drafted and communicated to parents. If necessary, written communications updating parents of the situation will be despatched.

If someone unknown telephones the School asking for information, the number should be taken and the call returned to establish who they are and from where they are ringing.

Telephone Arrangements

If the telephone system is working arrangements will be made to man the telephones to deal with any enquiries. If necessary all parents will be telephoned and given information regarding the next day's timetable (a script will be prepared). Office staff/members of the Crisis Management team will make the telephone calls.

If the telephone system is not operating BT will be requested to transfer all calls to The Oak Tree Group Headquarters in Loughton. The Principal will advise the Office Staff about the situation and what to say to parents/the press.

Mobile phones should be used (the school has a mobile phone and if necessary individuals will be asked to make their phones available and will be reimbursed for any calls). Office staff will be responsible for ensuring that the School mobile phone is always charged.

In order to spread the load and ensure that the message is passed effectively, classes will be allocated to office/support staff. If personal mobiles are used, the cost of the calls will be reimbursed by the School.

Security of the Site

Once the emergency services have left the site it will be necessary to make the site secure, the service suppliers for gas, electricity and water may need to be contacted (The necessary information is held by the Principal's Office) if the supplies need be re-connected. The Structural Engineer and the Local Authority may need to be contacted to confirm that the building is salvageable, that it can be occupied and whether structural repairs are needed. Security fencing or boarding may be required. There may be items to be salvaged and skips may be required. This will be overseen by the Principal.

Insurance Company

The Insurance Company should be contacted and given the appropriate details in order that they may contact a loss adjuster to arrange an early visit. This will be overseen by the Group Bursar.

Procedure for Snow/Storm/Act of God

Occurring during the school day:

- The School will normally remain open unless there are severely extreme circumstances
- Although it is anticipated that some staff/pupils may not be able to travel to School, others will be able to and a 'reduced service' will be in operation
- The School Office should be manned by any staff from the earliest opportunity in the morning to answer the telephones (which will ring frequently)
- A message should be recorded onto the school answerphone to confirm that the School will be open for those able to travel
- The Text Messaging Service should also be used to notify parents
- Staff should notify parents who telephone or accompany children that the School will remain open where possible, but that they should monitor the website and/or wait to receive further information later in the day
- Notices will be placed on the front pages of the website to keep parents informed
- The Deputy Head should deal with cover for staff who are absent or need to leave early
- Some staff/pupils with difficult journeys may be allowed to leave early if appropriate
- There may be no After-School Club, depending on staff
- If parents are late picking up pupils due to extreme weather / traffic, the pupils should be looked after by staff who live within walking distance of the school until they arrive
- The Principal and Headmistress will decide whether the School should open the following day.
- If it is decided to close the school, the office staff and SLT should telephone Junior parents to ask them to collect their child/ren
- The office staff should use the school phone system (with four telephone lines including the kitchen) and the SLT should use their own mobile phones and will later be reimbursed by the School
- Senior School form tutors should be given a message to relay to their tutees before allowing them to use their own mobile 'phones to ring home
- Parents should be told to check the website for further information regarding the following day and that a message will be left on the school answerphone.

In all circumstances, the safety of staff and pupils will be put first, while endeavouring to minimise disruption to the pupils' education.

Occurring outside the school day:

- If it is decided that the school will be open for those who wish to come, a message will be left on the school answerphone before 7.30am by Matthew Hagger and a message will be put on the website by Lesley Elder or the Principal. Notices will be posted on the school gates and, if possible, a member of staff will be on duty at each gate.
- In extreme cases the Principal and Headmistress may decide to close the School. In this case the Groupcall Text Messaging Service will be used to notify parents.

A message will be left on the answerphone and website and notices will be posted on the school gates at the front and back.

Dealing with a disaster on a trip/excursion

(including swimming and trips out of School for School teams)

What follows is given in the way of guidance that will need to be adapted to suit the situation. This written guidance **MUST** be held by each adult member of the party:

1. Establish the nature and extent of the emergency
2. Make sure all other members of the party are accounted for and are safe
3. If there are injuries, establish their extent and administer appropriate first aid **ONLY** if you have been trained and feel capable. **Be aware of consequences that might follow were you to give incorrect treatment**
4. Contact the senior member of staff on call. (Usually the Headmistress).
Control access to telephones until the senior member of staff at school has contacted the parents/others directly involved. Give full details of the incident including:
 - nature, date, location and time of the incident
 - details of injuries, etc
 - names and home telephone numbers of those involved
 - action taken so far
 - telephone numbers for future communication
5. Advise other party staff of the incident and of actions taken. The Group Leader, who is in charge, will decide responsibilities to be undertaken by each adult member of the group
6. Ensure that an adult accompanies any casualties to hospital. If only one adult is available in the circumstances a decision will have to be reached as to the best course of action
7. Ensure that the remaining pupils are supervised adequately and arrange for an early return to base
8. **If possible, arrange for one adult to remain at the site of the incident to liaise with the emergency services until the incident is over and all pupils are accounted for**
9. **Before contacting parents, the Headmistress may convene the SLT and Principal to establish who will take charge of the situation and what immediate action will be taken.**
10. DO NOT DISCUSS THE INCIDENT WITH THE MEDIA
11. The Group Leader should, at the first opportunity, make notes of the incident, as must other people involved. A record must be kept of the names and addresses of any witnesses or people involved.
12. DO NOT DISCUSS LEGAL LIABILITY
13. Ensure accident forms are completed as soon as possible
14. Inform parents of any delays that will be necessitated

The venue may be needed to provide the School with an accident report and may need to send a RIDDOR report off (if a hospital is required). The Group Leader should also complete a School RIDDOR form.

Crisis and the Media

No hard and fast rules will cover every crisis. But this checklist should help avoid the compounding of disaster by ill-informed reporting or the inflation of a minor incident into a serious embarrassment for the school.

KNOW ALL THE FACTS: The last thing you want is to be told things you didn't know by a reporter.

TAKE CHARGE and clear lines of communication. Only the Headmistress or the Principal should speak to reporters. Have a clear and efficient system for filtering calls. Let staff know what is happening and advise them not to speak to reporters. If appropriate, give pupils similar instructions.

PREPARE A STATEMENT: It should be (a) brief, (b) factual, (c) correct. Include positive information which is relevant to the incident (precautions, rules, sanctions, etc). Don't sound complacent; emphasise any appropriate action being taken. Be prepared to change the statement if circumstances change. Be clear about the limits of any additional information which might be given.

CONTACT OUT OF THE BLUE: Find out how much the reporter knows, what response is wanted and when the deadline is. If necessary, play for time. Promise to ring back and use the time to prepare your response. Always ring back when you say you will, preferably within the hour.

STICK TO THE STATEMENT: Correct any facts which are wrong but otherwise make it clear that the statement contains all you want to say. Don't get trapped into conversations over which you have no control.

NEVER 'NO COMMENT': Reporters will assume, rightly or wrongly, that you have something to hide.

JOURNALISTS ON SITE: Treat them with courtesy but don't let them wander round unsupervised. You have little control over journalists outside the school gates (but newspapers do have a code of practice for the treatment of pupils).

LAW-BREAKING: If illegal activity has taken place, the police should be informed. If criminal charges have been laid or are imminent, the press is limited in what it can report before the case comes to trial. Keep in contact with police and other agencies over what they say to the press.

PARENTS: Let them know by letter what has happened, if possible before damaging publicity has appeared. If supportive responses are required afterwards, parents' letters and reactions are much more effective than ones from the School.

AFTER THE EVENT: Don't try to correct every minor inaccuracy. Least said, soonest mended, is often a good rule. If there has been a serious misrepresentation, seek an apology or correction.

Advice and help is always available from the ISC PRESS OFFICE, tel. 020 7798 1530.