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Thongsley Fields Primary & Nursery School

Critical Incident Policy

Safeguarding

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Thongsley Fields Primary & Nursery School
Critical Incident Policy

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Appendix A. Critical Incident Emergency Plan (PRIVATELY HELD IN SCHOOL)

- (including contact details and emergency procedures)

Appendix B. [Detailed procedures for evacuation](#)

Appendix C. [Detailed procedures for lockdown](#)

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1. Aim

The aim of this policy is to lessen the effect of a critical incident on the staff, pupils, parents and wider community of Thongsley Fields Primary & Nursery School. This Policy follows the Cambridgeshire County Council Responding to Critical Incidents Guidance Procedures for School.

It is anticipated that by adopting the procedures outlined in this policy it will be possible to provide a more secure environment for everyone associated with the school.

2. Definition of incidents

A school may experience a range of incidents that have to be managed.

Incident: a situation that can be dealt with by the staff team. This may involve some communication with the school's Leadership Team and/or to parents but individual staff members remain in control and are able to cope.

Emergency: an incident which overwhelms the coping mechanisms of the staff team and which requires the school's Emergency Plan to be initiated. This may involve some communication with and possible support from outside agencies but the school takes control of the situation and is able to cope.

Critical Incident: an incident which overwhelms the coping mechanisms of both the staff team and the wider school systems and procedures and which requires the school's Critical Incident Plan to be initiated.

Major Incident: an incident which (if in the UK) is declared as a major incident by the Police, who will take control, and where the relevant Local Authority's Major Incident Plan is initiated, or where (if outside the UK) the relevant authorities take control. **The school's Critical Incident Plan will be required to co-ordinate with the police or other authorities.**

3. Critical Incidents

A critical incident is usually one which arises suddenly or escalates rapidly. Critical incidents may occur in school or out of school, but both will have a major impact on staff and pupils. An incident may be designated as critical where the result is likely to include serious disruption to the normal running of the school, or where there is likely to be significant public and/or media attention on the school. The normal coping mechanisms of the staff team and school's operating procedures are likely to be overwhelmed and require the school's Critical Incident Plan to be initiated.

Such incidents will usually require the assistance of the relevant emergency services and/or Cambridgeshire County Council and others.

The incident or event may be unanticipated, imminent or in progress. It may occur on school property, in the local community or out of school. Examples include:

- A major incident on the school site
- Gas leak
- Arson/fire or laboratory or gas explosion
- Public health threats (E.g. Pandemic Influenza)

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- Pupil sudden death or suicide
- Sudden death of a staff member
- Abduction/disappearance
- Floods from a major water leak, excessive surface run off, or a nearby river or watercourse flooding
- An external security risk or incident requiring the lockdown of the school premises
- Terrorism or a bomb threat or explosion
- An incident which affects access to the school
- An incident off site whilst members of the school community are on a school visit
- A coach crash on a school visit returning to school, no pupils injured
- A terrorism event in London, with a school group on their way into London for a school visit
- A ferry strike in France, 24 hours before a visiting group are due to return home
- An environmental incident such as the release of hazardous substances or severe weather
- A deliberate act of violence, such as the use of a knife or firearm on or close to the site
- Civil disturbances
- A transport related incident near to the school

4. Other incidents and emergencies

Some incidents are unlikely to be deemed as critical with the school able to cope, with the advice and sometimes support of the LA, Trust and outside agencies. Examples might include:

- Death of a person associated with the school
- Expected death of a pupil or member of staff
- Lower scale health issues
- External incident requiring enhanced awareness
- Short term loss of staff or infrastructure

In the event of being notified of an unexpected death the school will notify the relevant LA and Trust officers as soon as possible, in order to initiate the Local Authority 'Child Death Protocol' and alert relevant colleagues.

5. Normal Practise

Individual class teachers have an important role to play in managing critical incidents and may well be the best people to deal with the pupils in their classes. The main role of specialist agencies is one of support, empowerment and to support pupils who cannot be helped by the teachers and support staff within the school alone.

In times of crises, teachers must react as they feel is appropriate (under the direction of the Headteacher) and there can be no easy formula for dealing with critical incidents. However, by ensuring good communication within school, a crisis may be managed more effectively. By outlining the appropriate actions to be taken in the event of a critical incident the school aims to reduce this effect.

6. Critical Incidents Response Team

A central component of this policy is the identification of the composition, roles and responsibilities of the Critical Incidents Response Team. The role of the team is to review and direct the handling of the incident and the response and recovery processes in order to:

- ensure the safety and security of pupils, staff, volunteers and visitors
- minimise the loss to the school in physical, human and financial terms
- manage an incident to minimise disruption to regular operations
- liaise with appropriate agencies, including the Media.

The Critical Incidents Response Team, usually led by the school's Headteacher, will comprise the following personnel:

- Headteacher
- Deputy Headteacher
- Chair or Vice Chair of Governors
- Primary Executive Lead for the Trust
- other member(s) of the school's Leadership Team
- Business/Office Manager
- Designated Safeguarding Lead
- Caretaker

Critical incidents usually develop quickly and action should not be delayed if all team members are yet to be on site.

The Critical Incidents Team will, dependent upon the nature of the incident itself, be concerned with any of the following issues:

- adequate assessment of hazards and situations which may require emergency action
- analysis of requirements to address these hazards
- establishment of liaison with all relevant emergency services
- development of an effective management plan
- dissemination of planned procedures
- organisation of practice drills to test the plan
- regular review of this plan
- assisting the Headteacher with all aspects of the implementation of the plan
- arranging staff development activities, where necessary.

7. Procedures during an incident

The Headteacher or, in their absence, the most senior member of the Leadership Team, must be informed of any critical incident as soon as possible – **see Appendix 1 for emergency invacuation or evacuation procedures to be adhered to immediately**

- As soon as an incident is confirmed, the Critical Incidents Response Team will be convened to agree actions
- the rest of the staff will be informed as soon as possible, preferably at a specially convened staff meeting
- all staff should be provided with and share the same information

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- pupils will be told selective age and stage appropriate information simply and sensitively, without fabrication, preferably in smaller group situations
- the school will try, as far as possible, to keep to a normal routine.

8. Critical Incident Action Plan

Critical incidents require the following initial procedures:

- convene the Critical Incidents Response Team (CIRT)
- establish who is in charge
- establish clear roles and responsibilities within the CIRT
- set up a communication network with clear channels
- identify and inform key First Aid personnel as appropriate (all staff are trained in Emergency First Aid)
- inform the Chair of Governors, LA and Trust officers
- collect, record and convey as much accurate information as possible
- brief office staff regarding management of
 - incoming enquires (telephone calls, email and social media)
 - outgoing information (telephone, email, website and social media channels)

All outgoing communication and information sharing must be approved by the Headteacher (in liaison with the appropriate LA & Trust officers).

- access to MIS data for pupil and staff contact details
- establish incident recording logs for all actions
- lockdown of school premises to all visitors without prior approval of the Headteacher.

It is expected that the Local Authority and/or the Cam Academy Trust will:

- advise Public Relations team so that appropriate and timely assistance is provided to the school
- ensure that the appropriate LA and Trust officers, including Health and Safety, are advised of the incident so that the best possible level of support can be made immediately available, as appropriate
- ensure that appropriate outside agencies e.g. counselling services, are alerted to the incident so that support is available as soon as seen to be appropriate

The Headteacher will liaise with LA/Trust officers and PR services to ensure that the timing of information sharing is coordinated appropriately.

9. Local Partnerships

As part of our joint planning for managing Critical Incidents, the school has established local partnerships in order to ensure the safe evacuation of pupils, staff, volunteers and visitors when necessary.

- In the event of an incident that requires the complete evacuation of the school site, the Headteacher (or nominated member of staff e.g. Business/Office Manager) will contact Hartford Junior School to inform them of the incident and imminent evacuation of up to 350 pupils, staff and visitors.

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- The Headteacher (or nominated member of staff e.g. Business/Office Manager) will also contact relevant LA and Trust officers and Chair of Governors to inform them of the evacuation to the Hartford Schools.
- The Headteacher (or nominated member of staff e.g. Business/Office Manager) will ensure that relevant communication channels (e.g. phone system, website and social media) are updated accordingly.
- Phase Leaders will organise evacuation of pupils, staff and visitors in year group teams with class teachers responsible for individual classes – particular attention will be focused on ensuring vulnerable pupils are safe.
- Evacuation will usually occur via the footpath along the back of Thongsley and The Whaddons towards Mayfield Road and Mayfield Crescent via the underpass below Butts Grove Way.
- The Headteachers of TF, HIS and HJS will liaise to ensure that all pupils, staff and visitors arrive safely, are accounted for and distributed safely.
- All staff are required to carry their own mobile phone where possible with members of the Leadership Team also able to communicate via two-way radios during travel to HIS and HJS.
- The Caretaker will ensure that appropriate signage is placed at the pedestrian and vehicular access gates and entry is restricted to essential personnel and emergency services only.

Suitable signage might include:

All pupils, staff and visitors have been safely evacuated to the Hartford Schools' site.
All children are safe. For more information, please see www.thongsleyfields.org

Appendix A: See Critical Incident Emergency Plan

SECTION 1 - CONTACT DETAILS

- 1.1 School information
- 1.2 Contact details - school staff and governors
- 1.3 Contact details - extended services
- 1.4 Contact details - local authority
- 1.5 Contact details - The Cam Academy Trust
- 1.6 Contact details - local radio stations
- 1.7 Contact details - other organisations
- 1.8 Contact details - for completion during an emergency

SECTION 2 - ACTIVATION

- 2.1 Notification of incident
- 2.2 Initial action

SECTION 3 - ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- 3.1 Roles and responsibilities - co-ordination
- 3.2 Roles and responsibilities - business continuity
- 3.3 Roles and responsibilities - communications
- 3.4 Roles and responsibilities - log-keeping
- 3.5 Roles and responsibilities - media management
- 3.6 Roles and responsibilities - resources
- 3.7 Roles and responsibilities - welfare
- 3.8 Roles and responsibilities - educational visit leader

APPENDIX 1 - POST INCIDENT SUPPORT

APPENDIX 2 - BUSINESS CONTINUITY

APPENDIX 3 - SITE INFORMATION

APPENDIX 4 - EVACUATION

APPENDIX 5 - SHELTER

APPENDIX 6 - LOCKDOWN

APPENDIX 7 - SCHOOL CLOSURE

APPENDIX 8 - COMMUNICATIONS

APPENDIX 9 - BOMB THREATS

APPENDIX 10 - SUSPICIOUS PACKAGES

APPENDIX 11 - LOG-KEEPING GUIDELINES