



CRITICAL INCIDENT PLAN

AUTHOR: Donal Grant-Stevenson

Date of publication: May 2021

Date of next review: September 2022

CRITICAL INCIDENT PLAN FOR THE HALL SCHOOL

1. Introduction.

- a. **Objectives.** The purpose of the plan is to prepare Governors, academic and administrative staff to deal with situations that may turn into a major incident for the School.
- b. **Priorities.** The plan has been put together to provide a framework for Governors, academic and administrative staff to respond effectively in order to achieve the following priorities:
- To minimise or eliminate any danger or risks to individuals.
 - To ensure that the School acts in a lawful manner.
 - To facilitate effective recovery including keeping parents informed.
 - To take reasonable steps to minimise any adverse publicity and to ensure all external enquiries are handled appropriately and confidently by nominated personnel.
- c. **Incidents Covered.** The School is fortunate in that it is not sited close to any obvious sites that require bespoke procedures. The list below of potential hazards may seem alarming but the most obvious for the School probably are traffic accidents either in a bus or on foot crossing busy roads. The management of the incident is more difficult if the incident is remote and information is haphazard and confused. Consequently, all staff should have an understanding of the potential risks and the responsibilities of the leadership team trying to manage the emergency. An essential element of understanding is practise and the procedures should rehearsed regularly.
- Site hazards including infectious disease.
 - Off-site hazards.
 - Hostage taking.
 - Intruder access.
 - Strike action.
 - Bomb threat.
 - Vandalism / arson.
 - Adverse media attention.
- d. **Decision Making Responsibilities.**
- The Headmaster, on advice from the SLT, should activate the Plan. If the Headmaster is absent then the responsibility will fall to the Head of the Junior School and the Assistant Head (School Management) and then to the Director of Operations. **One of these senior managers should be contactable at all times.**
 - The chairman of the Board of Governors should be informed as soon as possible and should nominate a spokesperson for the Board.

e. Statutory Reporting Requirements.

In line with Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR) and Health & Safety at Work (HSAW).

f. Training Requirements.

The Plan should be rehearsed once per Academic Year after appropriate training of any new staff that will be involved; a table top discussion will suffice but a 'live' exercise should be planned at least once every five years.

g. Location of the Incident Management Team (IMT) Room.

i. On-site. The HM office. See Annex A for the layout and organisation of the cell.

ii. Off-site. One of the other school sites will be used if one site is unavailable.

iii. Distribution of the Plan. Copies of the Plan are kept by each member of the SLT and other members of the IMT at school and at home. Copies are also kept in each admin office in each of the three sites.

2. Incident Management Team (IMT) Membership.

a. Incident Management Team (Working Hours).

Team Leader / Co-ordinator	-	HM
Spokesperson	-	HM / Head of the Junior School / Head of External Relations
Welfare Representative	-	Assistant Head School Management
Media Liaison	-	Head of External Relations
Relative liaison	-	Head of HR
Works, Security, Safety Rep	-	Director of Operations
Legal, Insurance, Finance Rep	-	Director of Finance
Incident Secretary	-	HM PA
Collator	-	Deputy Head Learning and Teaching

b. Incident Management Team (Out of Hours).

Team Leader / Co-ordinator	-	HM / Head of Junior School / DoO
Spokesperson	-	HM / Head of Junior School / Head of External Relations
Welfare Representative	-	Assistant Head School Management
Parent Liaison	-	Head of the Junior School/Head of HR
Media Liaison	-	Head of External Relations
Works, Security, Safety Rep	-	Director of Operations

[Type here]

Legal, Insurance, Finance Rep	-	Director of Finance
Incident Secretary	-	HM PA
Collator	-	Deputy Head Learning and Teaching

c. Support Staff

Medical Rep	-	Matrons (during working hours)
Liaison / Escorts	-	As available but at least 4
Media Response Team x 2	-	Head of External Relations / Admissions Secretary
Relatives Enquiry Team x 2	-	Junior School Secretary and Head of HR

3. Incident Management Team (IMT) Responsibilities

a. IMT Members

- i. **Team Leader / Co-ordinator.**
 - Command and manage the IMT.
 - Brief IMT on a regular basis.
 - Inform and brief the Chairman of Governors on the incident.
- ii. **Spokesperson.**
 - Prepare initial holding statement and later press releases (in conjunction with emergency services).
 - Provide primary contact with media.
 - Arrange press conferences.
- iii. **Welfare Representative.**
 - Maintain an overview of movements of staff and students away from school.
 - Co-ordinate the provision of welfare assistance in school and to external locations (hospitals etc).
 - Liaise with school doctor, hospitals, ambulance service etc.
 - Arrange counselling for staff and students (if required).
- iv. **Relative Liaison.**
 - Liaise with and brief the school Relatives Enquiry Team.
 - Provide liaison between the IMT, staff and parents.
 - Locate personnel records of affected pupils.
 - Brief staff on the incident.
- v. **Media Liaison.**
 - Control Media Response Team.
 - Provide basic facts on school.
 - Monitor local radio broadcasts and press.
 - Provide advice to staff and students on dealing with the media.
- vi. **Works, Security, Safety Representative.**
 - Liaise with contractors.
 - Ensure that the school buildings and grounds are secure.

- Ensure safety of staff and students in school grounds.
- Liaise with GPs, environmental health on medical issues (such as decontamination of kitchens etc).
- Ensure that all visitors to school are met and escorted.

vii. **Legal, Insurance, Finance Representative.**

- Liaise with school insurers, accountants, bank and solicitors (and request their attendance at IMT, if necessary).
- Preserve evidence and prepare for later inquiries.
- Take legal record of proceedings (interview witnesses, take photographs, written inventory of damage etc).
- Organise replacement equipment, and secure storage of salvage.
- Account for costs.
- Check all press releases, prior to their release.
- Liaise with local authorities and relevant regulatory authorities

viii. **Incident Secretary.**

Maintain a record of communications made and actions and decisions taken by the IMT.

b. Support Staff. Additional staff will be required to assist the representatives of the IMT.

- Medical Representatives.
- Liaison / Escorts.
- Media Response Team.
- Relatives Enquiry Team.

4. Initial Actions in the Event of an Incident – The Golden Hour

a. Initial Alert Procedure.

During Working Hours. Unless the emergency is an obvious physical incident on the site of the school the initial alert may well be in the form of a Press enquiry to the main School number.

Out of Working Hours. Will usually be by means of a telephone call to any school number.

b. Initial Information Requirements. The person receiving the enquiry about, or being informed of an emergency, should try to extract the following key information:

- Nature of the incident.
- Exact location and time of the incident.
- Number of casualties and details of injuries etc.
- Names and home numbers of those involved.
- Emergency services involved.
- Actions taken so far.
- Location and telephone number of where the call is being made from.
- Any media response.
- Name of person who took the initial call, and time the initial information was received.

5. Incident Management Team (IMT) Meeting Agenda.

The Incident Management Team should meet as soon as practical to review the situation. The list below is not prescriptive and only the relevant topics need to be addressed. Particular emphasis should be placed on getting the facts right and communicating accurately and in a timely manner with parents, media and agencies. Someone should record the decisions taken in the incident log.

a. Situation.

- What happened, when, where, why (if known).
- Details of actions presently being taken, including other parties involved.
- Numbers of, name, injuries, present location of all casualties, and details of those not accounted for.
- Total number of persons involved and total known to be safe and their present location. (Record all names of personnel involved, including witnesses and obtain contact numbers before sending them home.)
- Details of any visitors or contractors involved.
- Estimate of immediate effect on the school.
- Estimate of obvious weaknesses in the response.
- Details of additional support immediately required.
- Dedicated numbers for communications including fax, mobiles and e-mails.
- Deployment of additional resources to the scene with communication links.

b. **IMT Details.** The initial meeting of the IMT is the ideal opportunity to confirm who is responsible for what and who is responsible for recording all details of the incident response.

c. **Liaison Requirements.** Contact arrangements may be required for the following and liaison personnel should be identified at the initial meeting:

- Scene of incident.
- Emergency services.
- Parents.
- Governors.
- Media.
- Regulatory authorities.
- Hospitals.
- Neighbouring premises.
- Suppliers / contractors who also may be affected.
- Associated schools.

d. **Pupils, Parents and Staff.** This item addresses the sensitive issue of gathering the relevant information to ensure that pupils, parents and staff are treated sensitively and kept informed. Experience has shown that the following topics deserve consideration.

- Locating personnel records to confirm contact details.
- Flow of approved information to all including relatives.
- Accounting for persons who are missing and injured, requesting police assistance to inform Next of Kin (NOK).
- Informing parents of persons who are safe and collection actions.
- Reception, welfare and rehabilitation requirements.
- Advice regarding enquiries from the media.
- Advice regarding giving evidence.

[Type here]

e. **Media Issues.** The media will be persistent if the situation warrants publicity. The principle must be to provide accurate and timely information. Better to admit that you do not know rather than speculate. Equally all releases should be approved by the Media Liaison Team. The IMT should consider the following matters:

i. **Media Statements.** Guidance on the content of an immediate statement for release to public and media should be agreed.

ii. **Other Issues.**

- Appoint spokesperson and support staff.
- Formulate statements in co-operation with other parties involved e.g. Emergency services.
- Monitoring of press and media broadcasts.
- Advice to staff, pupils and dependants regarding the handling of media enquiries.
- Hosting and escort arrangements for visiting media.
- Briefing of other sites to whom enquiries may be directed.
- Rehearsal of spokesperson.
- Audio recording of interviews, press conferences etc.

iii. **School Communications.** Careful thought needs to be given to the management of communications. In particular:

- School Secretary to be briefed on what calls to go where.
- Enquiry lines, parents / relatives, media, others and manning requirements.
- Operational lines with no public access.
- Fax machine with telephone attached to be available.
- Mobile communications for liaison personnel.
- The possible use of tape recordings for due process.
- Redirection of mail, if required.

iv. **Financial Issues.** The Director of Finance would normally lead on this item and insurance and legal issues.

- Accounting for costs of incident including recovery considerations, nominate an accounting code.
- Funding of victims and their dependants' immediate requirements.
- Sources of additional funds.
- Appeal.

v. **Insurance Issues.**

- Inform insurers and comply with conditions.
- Third party insurers.
- Assessor to the scene.
- Photographic evidence and written inventory of damage.
- Secure storage of salvage / replacement equipment.
- Disposal of waste.

vi. **Legal issues.**

- Beware admission of liability, allocation of blame.
- Obtain copies of any contracts / trading conditions that may be relevant.
- Inquiry considerations.

- Preservation of evidence.
- Legal record of proceedings.
- Interviewing of witnesses.
- Statutory reporting requirements under HSAW or other regulations.
- Contact third party legal advisers including dependants who may be affected.

vii. Medical Issues. The Medical Liaison Team should liaise closely with the School doctor and possible issues include:

- Seeking independent advice.
- Liaison with hospital, GPs, Environmental Health Officers.
- Decontamination (kitchens etc).

viii. Administration. The Directors of Operations and Finance would normally be responsible for Administration and Recovery requirements.

- Security of site, meeting rooms, records, salvage and replacement materials (high vulnerability to theft after replacements are made)
- Emergency power and lighting.
- Making place safe or cordon off unsafe areas.
- Controlled re-occupation.
- Alternative accommodation and facilities.
- Catering
- Transportation
- Overnight manning
- Off-site storage of records and plans

ix. Recovery. At an early stage they will appoint a separate team to look at recovery arrangements, which will include many of the items listed above including:

- Clean-up / disposal of waste (consider evidential requirements).
- Inventory damage.
- Prioritise the clean up / recovery.
- Welfare and counselling arrangements.
- Funding of victims' or dependants' immediate requirements.
- Attendance at funerals, purchase of wreaths.

- 6. Equipment and Records.** Facilities required at the IMT meeting room and alternate location, including databases, alternate communications, local and site maps with key locations and telephone numbers are kept outside the Director of Operations office.
- 7. Relative Response Guidelines.** Guidelines on the handling of calls from parents, relatives and friends of pupils at the school are at Annex D.
- 8. Specific Incident Checklists.** See separate Enclosures.
- 9. Key Contact Telephone Numbers.** See Annex B.
- 10. Communications.** There are 3 essential lines of communication and one capability which should be installed if possible to improve the ability to keep people informed in school:
 - **Telephone.** Individual calls can be made using the telephone and the School Offices should maintain a hard copy of all parents contact telephone numbers just in case the School's management system cannot be accessed.

[Type here]

- **Text.** The School's management system iSAMS is to be used to send appropriate information to parents
- **E-mails.** iSAMS is to be used for e-mail correspondence with parents.

Annexes:

- A. Layout and Organisation of the IMT.
- B. Contact Details.
- C. Relative Enquiries Guidelines.
- D. Guidelines in the Event of an Emergency on a School Trip.

LAYOUT AND ORGANISATION OF IMT

CHECK LISTS – Main Event

- | | |
|------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| • IMT | HM's Office |
| • Media Response | School Office (2 phones) |
| • Parent Response | Assistant Head School Management |
| • Press Briefing | Old Library/Pit Area |
| • Authorities / Emergency Services | Library |
| • Telephone Answering | School Office |
| • TV | Pit Area |
| • Map board and relevant maps | Director of Operations |
| • Clocks in all rooms | Maintenance Supervisor |
| • Computer & photocopier | School Secretaries |
| • Mobile Phones and chargers | Three with Director of Operations |
| • Video camera, camera & films | IT Manager |
| • Transport | Director of Operations |
| • Telephone Recorder/note taker | Headmaster/Head JS PAs |

CHECK LISTS – Telephone Numbers

- Parents' telephone numbers – maintained by HM PA
- External contact telephone numbers incl service suppliers – maintained by Director of Operations

CHECK LISTS – Map Board

- Ordnance Survey Map and Aerial photograph showing the following - maintained by Director of Operations
 - Location of utility services cut-off valves and junction boxes.
 - Hazardous material stores.
 - Entrances and exits plus parking areas.
 - Location of hydrants & risers.
 - Fire equipment points.
 - Fire assembly points plus alternatives.
 - Underground pipes and drainage.
 - External telephone points and call boxes.

Appendices:

1. Log Sheet.
2. Question Sheet.

[Type here]

EMERGENCY PLAN – LOG SHEET

Your Name: _____ Date: _____ Sheet Number: _____

Serial	Time	Event	Action Taken	Initial

[Type here]

EMERGENCY PLAN QUESTION SHEET

FROM: _____

DATE: _____

TIME _____

QUESTION

ANSWER

NAME _____

TIME _____

ANNEX C

RELATIVE ENQUIRIES GUIDELINES

The Aims of the Relatives Enquiry Team

- **To control the release of factual and approved information. The school must speak with one voice and be seen to speak with one voice.** The challenge is deciding what information should be communicated to which parents? A balanced approach may be to inform all parents generally with more relevant issue being passed only to the parents of boys involved in the emergency. The information released must be approved by the SMT and not contradict any media statements.
- To give assurance to callers.
- To ensure that external callers are dealt with in a professional and caring manner.
- To gather information from relatives.
- To provide welfare assistance if required.
- To draw calls away from other locations.

General Guidelines in Replying to Phone calls

Be considerate and caring:

- Be calm and controlled.
- Be prepared to listen to concern and do not interrupt.
- Ensure that your tone of voice is comforting not patronising.
- Treat them as individual important people.

Do not offer to call people back. Ask them to ring you in an hour, explain that you are very busy and that there are a number of relatives who will be waiting to call the team. **BUT, if you promise to ring back, keep your promise.**

- Avoid direct expressions of sympathy.
- Avoid attempts at reassurance (if you don't have confirmed information).
- Be patient and methodical.
- Reassure them that the school and the emergency services are doing all they can to respond to the emergency.
- Keep a record of all calls, and what was said on the calls.
- Ask them to stay on the number that they are on, or suggest that they move to a friend or relatives house for support (if they do, ask them to call in and let you know the new telephone number).

DO'S AND DON'TS

DO'S

- Only give approved confirmed information.
- If in any doubt about any caller or your response, consult the Team Leader.
- Always try to be helpful.
- Be considerate.
- Keep calm.
- Give your name if asked.
- Say that you are an authorised spokesperson if asked.
- Assume everything you say will become public knowledge.
- Defend the School at all times.
- Ensure calls are returned if you have promised to.
- Take a break if you are feeling over-stressed.
- Refer the calls from the media to the Media Team.

DO NOT

- Do not lose your temper.
- Do not speculate.
- Do not give out unofficial information.
- Do not promise to ring back unless you absolutely have to.
- Do not withhold any publicly available information.

ACTIONS BY STAFF AT THE SITE OF AN EMERGENCY ON A SCHOOL TRIP INCLUDING MINI-BUSES, MANDATORY TRIPS AND OVERSEAS TRIPS

Guidance on Emergency Procedures.

It is difficult to be prescriptive for all possible events which might necessitate the Emergency Plan being implemented. The following list is designed to provide a checklist for the people on the site of the emergency. It is recommended that all staff carry a copy of the guidelines on a school trip.

- Establish nature and extent of the emergency
- Make sure that all other members of the party are accounted for and safe.
- If there are injuries, establish their extent and administer first aid (if you have been trained or feel capable - but be aware of consequences that might follow were you to give incorrect treatment).
- Establish names of the injured and call relevant emergency services
- Advise other party staff of the incident and that emergency procedures are in operation.
- Ensure that an adult from the party accompanies casualties to hospital or if on your own you go with the injured pupil(s); the Emergency Services will look after the rest of the party until another member of staff arrives.
- Ensure that the remainder of the party are adequately supervised throughout and arrange for their early return to base.
- Arrange for one adult to remain at the incident site to liaise with emergency services until the incident is over and all children are accounted for.
- Control access to telephones until contact is made with the Headmaster, Deputy Head or Director of Operations and until they have had time to contact those directly involved. Pass full details of the incident (name, nature, date and time of incident, location of incident, details of injuries, names and telephone numbers of those involved, action taken so far).
- Telephone numbers for future communication; identify alternate telephone numbers in case telephone lines become jammed).
- The school will arrange to contact the parents of those involved. In serious incidents the parents of all party members should be informed.
- Media:
 - A designated person should act as the point of contact with the media to whom all involved should direct questions.
 - Under no circumstances should the name of any casualty be divulged to the media.
- The Party Leader should write down as soon as practicable all relevant details. A record should be made of any witnesses. Any associated equipment should be kept in its original condition.
- Inform the British Embassy or High Commission if overseas.
- Legal liability should not be discussed or admitted.
- All accident forms should be completed and insurers and HSE or Local Authority inspectors should be contacted.
- Inform parents of any delays that will be necessitated.

Lock Down Procedures

1. **Aim**

To maintain the staff and students in a safe environment in the event of a direct threat of violence against the School.

2. **General**

Threats of violence could come from many sources the most likely would be:

- A disaffected pupil past or present
- A disappointed and unsuccessful applicant to become a pupil
- Terrorist looking for a 'soft' target or against a specific 'high profile' pupil
- Direct criminal activity

Threats could be pre-warned (if we're lucky) but most likely it would be a surprise 'attack'. It is prudent, therefore, to plan for all eventualities and contingencies have been drawn up for the following scenarios:

- Normal daytime working week
- Weekend during the day and after School
- At night

3. **Daytime Alert**

Any alarm received during the day will result in a two-phase reaction:

Phase I - remain in current location:

- Classrooms in use will draw blinds, lock the door and wait for further contact;
- PE / external classes should move to the Wathen Hall (SS), Basement 2 Buckland (JS), Pavilion (WS);
- Maintenance, Grounds, and domestic staff should move to the area as above;
- Support staff and anyone in offices should remain where they are and lock all external doors.
- Students and staff in Houses remain where they are.

Phase II - move to Wathen Hall under police escort

- The Police will arrange escorts to Wathen Hall
- Everyone to remain in Phase I locations until contacted
- Note Communications in the following paragraph

Alarm & Communications:

An audible alarm (siren) would alert any intruder and may extend the chaos and will therefore not be considered.

[Any alert will be passed via PCs on the Academic Network and text via iSAMS (or equivalent), which should cover all staff both academic and support.]

[Teachers in classrooms will receive an email alert on their PC as well as an iSAMS (or equivalent) text on their mobile (if you have one)]; they should take the following action:

- Keep calm!
- Lower blinds and lock the door
- Collect all mobile 'phones to restrict communications
- Email hm@hallschool.co.uk with the following details:
 - i. Your name and number of pupils
 - ii. The class you are teaching
 - iii. Location

- iv. A mobile 'phone number if you have one
- v. Any other appropriate information
- Wait for an acknowledgement

It is essential that two-way communications is established at this stage in order to facilitate Phase II.

4. Actions On

Event	Action
Receiving a threatening 'phone call to the School or any individual in it	
Observing any violent threat to an individual's safety (shots fired)	
Receiving an alert via the PC or mobile 'phone	
Being in the same building where shots are fired	
Being in the same room where shots are fired or violent threat of action by a third party	
Being in open ground and you hear shots fired in a building	
Being in open ground when shots are fired near you	
As a member of the SLT	
As a Teacher	
As a member of the Support Staff	

5. **Command & Control**

Ideally the IMT should form as soon as possible but this may not always be possible or safe to do so.

During the working day

The Incident Management Team (IMT) should be formed as soon as possible and only using staff available.

After school or at weekends

The duty member of SLT should be informed as soon as possible; that person should form the IMT with as many available staff but only if safe to do so.

At night

The duty member of the SLT to coordinate from their current location until the Police arrive

Locating staff and students

A Central Register will be compiled

[Type here]

IT

- IT Staff should secure the IT area in the Senior School.
- Network control
- External communications
- Passwords

6. **Refuge Area**

[You should work out here how you are going to manage the emergency from your Refuge Area. Think through the following:

- Location of IMT, Relatives Response, Media Response
- Police liaison
- Feeding
- Lavatories
- Medical Support

7. **Parents**

Think how you would communicate with very worried parents. Consider the effect of social media and students' mobile 'phones] Make use of iSAMS

8. **Media Relations**

Prepare initial holding statements.

[Type here]

THE HALL SCHOOL
EMERGENCY MEDIA RESPONSE PACK

Principal Media Contact:

.....

Tel (Work):

Tel (Home):

Mobile:

Alternative Media Contact:

(Name)

(Appointment)

Tel (Work):

Tel (Home):

**The Hall School
Main Building
23 Crossfield Road
London
NW3 4NU**

**The Hall School
Middle School Building
54 Eton Avenue
London
NW3 3HN**

**The Hall School
Junior School
69 Belsize Park
NW3 4EH**

**The Hall School
Reception Department
2 Buckland Crescent
NW3 5DX**

Day Prep school for boys from 4 to 13 years of age

Headmaster: **Chris Godwin**

Head of Junior School/Reception: **Kevin Dobson**

Chairman of Governors: **Anthony Fobel**

[Type here]

MEDIA PLANNING

- | | |
|--|---------------------------|
| 1. The media strategy will be set by: | IMT. |
| 2. Statements will be authorised by: | Headmaster |
| 3. The spokesperson will be; School: | Headmaster |
| 4. The Deputy Spokesperson will be: | Head of the Junior School |
| 5. The Media Response Team (MRT) will be in: | Senior School office. |
| 6. Interviews will be held in: | Music Room 1. |
| 7. Press Conferences will be held in: | Cooper Hall. |

WHEN THE INCIDENT HAPPENS - STRATEGY

1. The principle should be that the media will find out about an incident particularly if injuries or damage to property are sustained. The general advice to the IMT must be:
 - *Prepare a short statement and use it to reply to any questions.*
 - *Centralise all media enquiries and make sure that only one or two people reply to them.*
 - *Prepare background material to reply to difficult questions and be sure to cover the areas where we may be criticised. It may be helpful to balance shortcomings with a brief statement of what the School has done well. Suitable material may include:*
 - *Our good record so far.*
 - *The care we have taken to try to prevent incidents such as this from occurring.*
 - *The speed and quality of our response to the incident.*
 - *The care that we are offering to children and parents (e.g. counselling).*
2. Consideration should be given also to whether a statement be released proactively?

BRIEF EVERYONE ON THE POSITIVE POINTS. MAKE THE POSITIVE POINTS WHENEVER POSSIBLE. SPEAKING TO THE MEDIA IS LARGELY A MATTER OF REPETITION. THERE IS NO GUARANTEE THAT THE MEDIA WILL REPORT WHAT WE SAY: SO LET'S MAKE SURE WE SAY IT OFTEN ENOUGH.

3. What are we going to do about pupils and parents who may speak to the media?
 - *We have no right to 'gag' pupils or members of staff; any attempt to do so may be counter-productive. it is better to shelter them from the media attention, at least for the first few hours of the incident when they may be shocked and distressed. The Police and health services may help with this. We can offer to let them stay on at school to keep them away from media intrusion, but we cannot keep them in school nor can we stop them using the 'phones. If the media can't find them then they can't talk to them.*
 - *The media may track down and hound individuals. If so, a dignified appeal to the editors may help. Or we may be able to arrange protection e.g. by asking the Police for help or by sheltering the individuals on the school premises until the media go away. We can only do this if the individual asks us for help otherwise we may look as if we have something to hide. It may be worth persuading people at this stage to make a short statement or in writing through the school.*
 - *Some parents or pupils may be interviewed in a state of shock shortly after the incident has occurred. They may say anything in such a condition. There is little that we can do about this, except possibly imply that **"whilst we fully understand and even to some extent share their sense of anger and grief, they may take a different view when they have heard the full story"***
 - *Some parents may set out to be critical of us. There is nothing that can be done about this except prepare our answer and take every opportunity to make it whilst at all times trying to be sympathetic and understanding.*

(NB. A few people think that they can make a lot of money by selling their story to the newspapers. If parents do sell stories in this way, we should take specialist advice.)

[Type here]

4. There may be a lot of sympathy for the School if the public view is that the incident was not our fault and we can show that we took reasonable steps to prevent it. In some cases an incident may even be a PR advantage to us, if we can demonstrate that we have taken sensible precautions and reacted quickly. We should take every opportunity in such cases discreetly to point out the advantages of the School. However, the tone we adopt is crucial. We can rapidly lose sympathy by seeming arrogant or uncaring or elitist.
5. Spokespersons must make sure that what is said is backed up by facts, respects the feelings of others, and does not seem to dismiss the gravity of the situation.)

WHEN THE INCIDENT HAPPENS - INITIAL STATEMENT

1. Express regret. (*"I regret to confirm that"*)
2. **Briefly** describe the incident (*"two pupils from No Name School were killed today in a climbing incident in Austria."*) [Note: do not imply cause or blame. use neutral words like 'incident' or 'accident' wherever possible.]
3. Include whatever good news we can, providing we are certain that it is accurate. (*The remaining 14 pupils in the party are unhurt and are being looked after by school staff in Austria"*) [Again, don't be too specific in an initial statement.]
4. Say what the school is doing (*"We are notifying the parents of the children concerned. Two additional members of staff are flying to Austria to be with the group."*)
5. If we haven't done so already, say whether the parents have been notified. At this stage we may wish to appeal to the media, if they have the names, not to publish them until the parents have been informed. This may work but we have no guarantee that it will. It is best reserved for special cases - e.g. if we can't contact a parent because they are on holiday, but expect to do so within a few hours.
6. Say why we can't say anymore at the moment. (*"Until we have more information ourselves I cannot tell you any more. We are busy here trying to make arrangements for the pupils"*)
7. Tell the media where they can reach us. Give names and telephone numbers.

WHEN THE INCIDENT HAPPENS - ANSWERS TO DIFFICULT QUESTIONS

These answers cannot be prepared in advance and should be completed on the computer and then issued to the MRT and spokespersons:

1. What is the school policy on security?

- What measures do we have in place?
- Have we taken police / professional advice?
- When did we last assess our security measures?
- Have we ever had a security incident before?
- Are parents aware of our policy and do they agree with it?

2. What is the school policy on safety?

- What measures do we have in place?
- Have we ever taken professional advice?
- When did we last assess our safety measures?
- Have we ever had a safety-related incident before?
- Are parents aware of our policy and do they agree with it?

3. What is the school policy on bullying / violence?

- What do we do about bullying / violence?
- Have we had any recent cases? What did we do about them?
- Do we keep in touch with the Police? (How often and at what level?)
- Are parents aware of our policy and do they agree with it?

4. What is the school policy on adventure training / outdoor activities?

- How often do we do this sort of activity and where?
- What national guidelines do we follow?
- What steps do we take to check out the activity provider?
- What training do accompanying staff have?
- Have we ever had problems like this before?
- Are parents aware of our policy and do they agree with it?

5. What is the school policy on overseas travel?

- Do we do this sort of activity? How often and to where?
- What national guidelines do we follow?
- What steps do we take to check out the activity provider?
- What training do accompanying staff have?
- What rules do we have (e.g. about the staff / pupil ratio)
- Have we ever had problems like this before?
- Are parents aware of our policy and do they agree with it?

6. What is the school policy on using minibuses?

- Do school staff drive them?
- Do the drivers have any special training?
- If we use outside companies, what steps do we take to vet them?

[Type here]

- Are parents aware of our policy and do they agree with it?

7. What are the school's arrangements for contacting parents in an emergency?

- Do we keep all their names and details centrally?
- How do we ensure that our records are up to date?
- How many people are available to ring around parents?
- Do we have a plan to bring people in out of hours?
- Are there any special problems (e.g. language?)

Any other difficult questions?

WHEN THE INCIDENT HAPPENS - ANSWERS TO DIFFICULT QUESTIONS

We cannot prepare these in advance. Remember these as guidelines:

DO NOT

- Say anything that could be seen as libellous, that seems to imply blame of anyone else, or that might be held to prejudice a trial or inquiry.
- Admit any liability - this may invalidate our insurance.
- Say anything which identifies individuals, at least until their parents or next of kin have been informed; this applies to staff as well as pupils.
- Appear to speak on behalf of other individuals or organisations, unless you have agreed what to say with them first. (*To say that "I'm sure that Mrs Bloggins feels very upset but she understands that" or "The Fire Brigade said this couldn't possibly have been an accident..." is simply inviting journalists to play your comments back, and Mrs Bloggins and the Fire Brigade to contradict you.*)
- Answer hypothetical questions

DO

- Say that full details are not yet available, so you cannot yet say exactly what happened. (*This is usually the case.*) But give details which you are sure of - e.g. the time you were contacted, the actions the school has taken.)
- Monitor the questions you are asked and identify what 'angles' the media are covering (*e.g. who are they criticising/ Us or someone else? What are they criticising us for? Try to prepare answers to these 'angles'.*)
- Avoid controversy, especially anything which may seem to criticise others. (*e.g. if asked when you rang the Fire Brigade, bear in mind that this may be an attempt to criticise the Fire Brigade for slow response. Try to stay out of that sort of media argument: time enough to look at that once the incident is over.*)
- Provide factual details to back up our 'positive points'. (*Rather than simply saying "we have a good safety record" it is much better to say "we haven't had any injuries in school for 10 years"; but be sure you are accurate. Similarly, rather than saying "our staff are experienced at leading this sort of trip" it is better to say "the member of staff in charge speaks fluent German and has led three previous trips to this area in Austria....).*)
- Provide factual details to counter allegations against us. (*"The school had its last fire inspection in We were only required to undertake limited work, which we did."*)
- Remember our positive points. Update or improve them as the situation develops.

[Type here]

SHOULD WE AGREE TO AN INTERVIEW ON TV OR RADIO?

- Depends if we have something we want to say; what is in it for us?
- Who will do the interview? Have they had training? Will they come over well?
- Make sure the interviewee has been properly briefed. Think through the difficult questions in advance that he/she may be asked, and prepare the answers.
- For a TV interview, try to resist having a dramatic background. If the school has just burnt down, the TV crew will want to film the interviewee in front of it. Is this image we want people to remember? (Maybe it is, if it wasn't our fault and we are appealing for help to rebuild it. Maybe it isn't, if we forgot to have the fire extinguishers refilled.)

SHOULD WE GIVE A PRESS CONFERENCE?

- This is not usually necessary unless the story is very big. Then it gives us the opportunity to get our message across to a lot of media at once; but remember to ask ourselves: what's in it for us? Why are we doing this? What message do we want to get over?
- If we give a conference, or take part in one organised by the Police, prepare thoroughly. Anticipate awkward questions and work out the answers.
- If it is our own press conference, field a team of people. One should chair and control it: his job is not to answer questions but to introduce the speakers and give them time to think and some protection. He may also allocate questions amongst our team. Others on the team should be a senior person (HM) and one or two people with special experience of the incident or problems that it raises.
- Only let in genuine media (ask to see their press cards or ID). Pressure groups can hijack the conference and make it a public debate (which TV will love but we won't).
- Agree ground rules with TV cameras before hand. If we don't want them coming on the platform, make this clear.
- Ensure the room is tidy and clean, and the background is suitable. Think about our overall image. Dress suitably.
- Let the journalists in by one entrance and have another exit for your own team to leave by. The chairperson should be firm and ensure that the team get away as soon as the conference ends. No 'off the record' private words.

IF THERE IS A TV CAMERA OR MICROPHONE IN THE ROOM ASSUME IT IS ON AT ALL TIMES!

ANNEX N

Aide Memoire for Specific Incidents[\[6\]](#)

The following information is colour coded and should be linked to the Activation Process Flowchart and is related to ensuring the immediate safety and welfare of staff and pupils. Some of these events may appear extreme and unlikely to occur or affect the school. However, many such incidents have occurred at home and abroad in recent years.

FLOODING

- *Building Related*
 - Switch off stop cock
 - Call Maintenance Team

[Type here]

- Call water supplier if necessary (see Stakeholders List Annex M)
- Monitor the situation
- If necessary, evacuate the area
- If flood worsens evacuate the whole building
- *Environmental Flooding*
 - Assess the situation and keep in touch with the Environmental Agency and Local Authority
 - Tune in to local radio or use the Flood Line [insert here] for updates
 - Consider removing equipment, pupils, staff and pets from the area of risk
 - If safe to do so turn off the gas, electricity and water supplies before flood water enters the premises
 - Keep dry and out of flood water if possible
 - If whole school is at risk, evacuate if that is the safest option [add further details here specific to your school]
 - Do not evacuate if you are uncertain about the continuing safety of staff and pupils - please note that 80% of flood deaths occur in vehicles
 - If it is necessary to walk through shallow flood water, take care for hidden holes, obstacles and other hazards
 - Have communication plan in case of loss of power

FIRE

- Activate the fire alarm
- Do not tackle the fire yourself
- Call 999 Fire Service
- Follow Fire Drill Procedures as normal
- Fire extinguishers are there to enable staff and pupils to exit buildings as safely as possible - do not try to put a major fire out that is the job of the Fire & Rescue Service
- Ensure everyone is out and clear of the building
- Report missing persons to the IMT
- See Annex O for detailed Fire Procedures
- Consider the locations of the Assembly Points in relation to any smoke drift and weather conditions. Pupils may need to be moved to a more suitable area
- If the fire worsens remove the pupils immediately from the area or site and as far away as logistically safe/practical as possible
- If the site has been evacuated make sure someone has been nominated by the IMT to meet the Fire & Rescue Service
- Given the 'All Clear' make sure no pupils are missing on re-entering the building
- [add school specific issues here]

LIGHTENING STORM

- If pupils and staff are outdoors avoid water, hilltops and trees. Stay away from any metal objects and avoid contact with others
- If you think your pupils are at risk of being struck, inform them to drop to their knees and bend forward. DO NOT LIE FLAT
- If in a building instruct pupils to move away from windows and do not touch the metal structures, 'phones or computers
- If in a building stay inside, encourage visitors to shelter in the school

[Type here]

EARTHQUAKE

A major earthquake is not likely to happen in the UK but small tremors have occurred so here are some important points to consider:

- If one or two people are in the room the safest place to be is under the door frame
- With a class of children ask them to take cover under their desks and cover their faces with their arms to protect against falling objects
- Once the initial shocks have ceased and there is major damage to the building, evacuate. If not, carry out a risk assessment and consider moving out of some of the building
- Contact a property surveyor for advice if unsure about the structural integrity of the building

INDUSTRIAL EMERGENCY NEAR SCHOOL

- [Check the Community Risk Register to see if this is likely]
- Pupils and staff should remain in the school building and await further instruction from the LA and council emergency teams and/or emergency services
- This may include closing all doors and windows and covering extractor fans to minimise inhalation of fumes or smoke
- Schools may wish to consider the best place in the building to shelter depending on the circumstances. For example, sheltering on the leeward side of the building in case of toxic release
- Stay tuned to local radio - consider switching to a battery operated radio in the event of loss of power
- School should remain in shelter mode until the emergency services and/or local authority give the all clear
- Encourage visitors to shelter in the school building

ATTACK ON A STUDENT OR MEMBER OF STAFF

- At the scene students should know to seek assistance from a member of staff
- If staff witness the assault they should try and distract the assailant without risking themselves: do not engage physical contact, do not further agitate the assailant, maintain eye contact, be courteous and patient, use the word "stop" and the names of the people involved to promote familiarity
- Staff should disperse spectators and therefore eradicate the risk of further injury
- Staff should contact emergency services as appropriate

FIGHTS BETWEEN PUPILS

- In deciding upon what action you take consider the safety of the pupils concerned and the safety of any other pupils.
- Assess seriousness of situation and if necessary tell a reliable pupil to get immediate assistance from another member of staff.
- A teacher should always remain at the scene.
- Take control and give clear and assertive directions to stop.

[Type here]

- Arrange for first aid if appropriate.
- Escort both parties to main office.
- Call the parents and/or police if necessary.

HOSTAGE SITUATION IN SCHOOL

- Do not try to intervene or be a hero.
- Co-operate and follow the instructions of the hostage taker.
- Try to remain calm and spread calmness. The children are likely to try and copy your behaviour.
- Isolate hostage area by evacuating other pupils or through lockdown procedure
- On arrival of emergency services, provide them with a map of the school.

MISSING CHILD / ABDUCTION / RUNAWAY

- Report to the Headmaster.
- The timing of when you do each of these steps will depend upon the situation. If there is a possibility the child has been abducted the police should be called immediately.
- Establish the CAT and arrange search parties.
- Search the school or area of off-site visit working from last known sighting point.
- Call family and friends to see whether he/she is with them ensure no undue consternation or worry is caused by this call.

ATTEMPTED ABDUCTION

- Ensure that pupils have the 'tools' for dealing with an attempted abduction, and re-enforce this with parents:
- Suggest that parents and child have a code word that only they and their child know for emergency situations when someone else is collecting the child.
- Consider, particularly for primary age children, insisting on having a named 'pick-up' person who ideally is known by the school.

THREATENING PERSON IN A SCHOOL BUILDING

- Assess threat.
- Call Police.
- Keep classroom/students secure.
- Initiate lockdown* procedure if necessary. (* lockdown - secure facilities to prevent access/egress for safety of occupants)
- If no one is in danger observe the intruder until the police arrive.
- If people are threatened, staff should consider attempting to draw the attention of the intruder away from those affected. When appropriate escape to a more secure area.

THREATENING PERSON OUTSIDE SCHOOL GROUNDS

- Assess threat.
- Call Police
- Ensure all children are moved within the school building, if required.

[Type here]

- Headteacher will carry out lockdown procedures if necessary.
- Remain in classrooms until the all clear has been given or evacuate as a result of instructions from the authorities.

MARAUDING TERRORISM FIREARMS ATTACK (MTFA)

- If shots are heard instruct everyone to take cover if appropriate (i.e. on the floor or under desks).
- Assemble in a secure location or activate the lockdown procedure if more appropriate than moving pupils across site.
- Call Police.
- Check for injuries and missing pupils/staff by use of phone calls to rooms in turn (if lockdown in force)

BOMB THREAT

- DO NOT turn anything electrical on or off, except the fire alarm.
- Quickly survey your room for any unusual items or packages. DO NOT TOUCH THESE ITEMS.
- Report anything suspicious or unusual.
- Evacuate using the fire drill procedure. The assembly point should be far away from the school as possible e.g. furthest point on the school fields taking account of the exit route so as not to transit past the indicated hazard area.
- Take register. Report missing students to the Director of Operations.
- The person taking a call issuing a bomb threat should not interrupt the caller except to ask the following questions:
 - When is the bomb going to explode?
 - Where is the bomb?
 - What does it look like?
 - What kind of bomb is it?
 - What will cause it to explode?
 - Why are you doing this?
 - Who are you?
 - Where are you calling from?
 - Are there any further hazards outside?
 - Note the caller's voice and background sounds such as:
 - Male or female?
 - Estimate of age (young, middle age, old)
 - Indication of accent/dialect, ethnicity, level of education
 - Other voice characteristics: stutter, nasal sound.
 - Did the caller seem familiar with the facility?
 - Was there any background noise?
 - Use the log to record all of this information.

UNSAFE STRUCTURES

- Evacuate the school or building if necessary, moving out by a safe route identified at the time.
- Move away from the building if very serious.

- Contact Property Surveyor to report concerns.

UTILITY FAILURE

- Teachers should stay in the classroom with the children until further instructions are given.
- Teachers who are not teaching should immediately report to the main office.
- The company of the power source must be telephoned and a time established for resolving the problem.
- If school is to be closed, please refer to closure policy guidelines

SCHOOL TRIPS/ OFFSITE INCIDENTS (See Annex E)

If an emergency occurs on a school visit the group leader should maintain or resume control of the group overall. The factors to consider include:

- Establish the nature and extent of the emergency as quickly as possible.
- Ensure all other group members are safe and looked after.
- Establish the names of any casualties and get immediate medical attention.
- Ensure that a teacher goes with casualties to hospital with any relevant medical information and that the rest of the group is adequately supervised at all times and kept together.
- Notify the police if necessary.
- Ensure that all group members who need to know are aware of the incident.
- Ensure that all group members are following the emergency procedures and roles are allocated as necessary.
- Inform the school contact and provider/tour operator (as appropriate). The school contact name and number should be accessible at all times during the visit.

Details of the incident to pass on to the school should include:

- Nature.
- Date and time of incident.
- Location of incident.
- Names of casualties.
- Details of their injuries.
- Names of others involved so that parents can be reassured.
- Action taken so far.
- Action yet to be taken (and by whom).

The school contact should:

- Notify parents providing a full factual account of the incident as possible.
- Notify insurers especially if medical assistance is required (this may be done by the school contact).
- If the emergency happens abroad notify the British Embassy/Consulate.
- Ascertain phone numbers for future calls; try not to rely only on mobile phones.
- Write down accurately and as soon as possible all relevant facts and witness details and preserve any vital evidence.
- Keep an incident log of all events, times and contacts after the incident
- Complete an accident report form as soon as possible and contact the District Council's Health and Safety Advisor and HSE if appropriate.
- No one in the group should speak to the media. Names of those involved in the incident should not be given to the media as this could cause further distress to their families.

[Type here]

- All media enquires must go through the school Marketing Manager.
- No one in the group should discuss legal liability with other parties; nothing should be signed relating to the accident liability without clear advice from the Head, Chair of Governors or designated deputy.
- Keep receipts for any expenses incurred, as insurers will require these.

DEATH:

The death of someone associated with your school may not be considered to be a Critical Incident, especially if it was expected, but nevertheless can be very upsetting for a large number of people. Therefore we advise that the Critical Incident guidelines are followed as appropriate.

HEAT WAVE:

Floods and snow grab the headlines in terms of emergency planning. Yet statistically more lives have been claimed by heat than by all other extreme weather events combined.

Heat waves are a natural, technological, and social hazard which makes preparation for, and response to these climate events, complex. Usually it is after multiple days of oppressive heat that populations are affected. Particularly at risk are the very young and very old, and people with chronic diseases.

Schools are advised to consider their local arrangements and planning for this in the first half of the summer term.

Planning for a heatwave

Guidance about what schools can do to plan for, and respond to, heatwave conditions can be found at:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/429627/Heatwave-Advice_for_Health_Professionals.pdf

Heatwave Watch

The Met Office Heat-Health Watch system operates from 1 June to 15 September in association with the Department of Health. Details are available at

<https://www.metoffice.gov.uk/public/weather/heat-health/?tab=heatHealth&season=normal>

Sun protection

National guidance for schools on sun protection, which is particularly important for young children, is now located on the Cancer Research website:

[Sun safety | Cancer Research UK](#)

If you wish to view the Department of Health's full Heatwave Plan this can be found at -

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/888668/Heatwave_plan_for_England_2020.pdf