



Southfields Primary School

Critical Incidents Policy

Date agreed: November 2022

Review Date: November 2024

This policy, having been presented to, and agreed upon by the whole staff and Governors, will be distributed to:

- All teaching staff
- School governors

A copy of the policy will also be available in:

- The Staffroom
- The Head's office
- School web site

This will ensure that the policy is readily available to visiting teachers, support staff and parents.

Southfields Primary is totally committed to social justice and improving life chances for potentially vulnerable children. It is dedicated to sharing its work and findings beyond the school to improve outcomes for as many children as it can reach and has a particular specialism in Speech and Language development.

1. Aim

The aim of this policy is to lessen the effect of a critical incident on the staff, pupils and parents at Southfields Primary 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. The aim of the Critical Incident Plan (CIP) is that in the event of a crisis the staff has already been trained to deal with such a situation. The school's activities and scope have been risk assessed beforehand to identify potential crises and to impose controls. If the school is shut off from access, back up documents exist so that the school as a body can continue to function in some form. Pupil/ staff details and emergency contact details will be available. Members of staff are aware of their responsibilities during and after an emergency. Staff have been made aware as part of their Safeguarding guidance not to speak to the press or make reference to any incidents on social media.

2. What is a critical accident?

A critical incident can be defined as an incident, which overwhelms or overcomes the coping strategies and strengths of those involved. (Gibson 1999).

A critical accident is one that arises suddenly. Critical incidents may occur in school or out of school, but both types will have a major impact on staff and pupils. An incident might be designated as critical where the result is likely to be serious disruption to the running of the school, or where there is likely to be significant public and/or media attention on the school.

There can, of course, be no rigid formula for responding to incidents, but broadly speaking, it has been assumed that where damage to premises is the focus, Peterborough LA will take the leading role in managing the crisis in collaboration with the school and other agencies. Where a crisis is related to people, such as in the event of a death or serious injury, the assumption is that the school is likely to take the lead, with the support of the LA, as necessary.

Examples of in-school critical incidents:

- A serious accident to a child or adult
- The death of a pupil or member of staff through natural causes, such as an illness
- Suicide
- A traffic accident involving a pupil or staff member
- Violence or assault within school
- Arson attack on school
- A school fire or explosion
- Destruction of part of the school building
- Abduction of a pupil
- A pupil or pupils absconding
- An illness such as meningitis within the school or local community – this now includes Coronavirus (updated February 2020)

- A road traffic accident involving fatalities within the school community

Examples of out-of-school critical incidents:

- An accident to a pupil or staff member while out on a school visit or swimming etc.
- Death or injuries on a school journey
- Tragedies involving children from many schools, e.g. the tragedy at Hillsborough Football Ground
- Civil disturbances

It is important to have a structured and staged approach in response. This is a key factor in successfully supporting those involved in school readiness and emergency planning. (Yule and Gold, 1993).

3. Potential Critical Incidents

There are two types of school critical incidents that may affect Southfields Primary School:

3.1 In school/ on site crises

These would include death through accident or illness, fire, flood or violence.

3.1.1 Accidents occurring in the playground. The hazards are injury through collision with structure or other pupils, structure failure, inappropriate use of play equipment. The controls in place include the use of playground supervisors who collate information on incidents and act as a deterrent, the safety checks of the play equipment, which are recorded. Children are encouraged to reflect on safe play and to report to the office any circumstances that may cause risk.

3.1.2 Illness such as Meningitis. Guidelines are given in the Health and Safety Management in Schools how to deal with such a crisis. The guidance includes guidelines on how to tell the children and contains proforma. This now includes Coronavirus (updated February 2020)

3.1.3 Violence. The hazards are injury/ death to a pupil or member of staff/ public from a violent act by either a pupil, or an outsider to the school who is there either by invitation or an intruder. Playground supervisors or staff are always present when the children are outside. Procedures are followed for visitors There is also the hazard of violence from staff or authorised helpers. The control in this case would be the use of staff/ helpers etc. who have been DBS checked so that people with previous relevant convictions will not be used.

3.1.4 Fire. The hazards are injury/ death to pupil(s) or member(s) of staff/ public. The controls in place to ensure that the risk remains low are: a comprehensive fire risk assessment; ongoing staff inspection; termly health

and safety inspections, annual inspection of firefighting equipment; weekly inspection/ test of the school's fire alarm system which is logged; emergency lighting systems tested half yearly by the school and annually by a maintenance engineer and recorded. Fire drills are carried out at termly intervals. All actions relating to fire safety are listed in the fire logbook, appended to the Fire and Risk Manual. In case of a major fire where the site has to be evacuated, procedures are in place to hold the registration after evacuation and then to escort the children to the emergency off site building should it be required. Permission has been given to use the Stanground Community Centre, which is manned during school hours and has phone facilities (see separate Evacuation Policy)

3.1.5 Bomb Scare/ Threat of Terrorism. This can be considered unlikely however procedures are in place for evacuation of the building to an offsite building (see separate Evacuation Policy and Lockdown Procedure)

3.1.6 Road Traffic Accidents. The hazard relates to both cars on the road outside which becomes very congested and also from unauthorised use of the school car park. Parents are advised periodically by use of the school newsletter not to drive into the school car park with reminders about safe driving practices being sent to parents. Parents are encouraged to report any incidents involving careless driving to the community police via 101. Where there are vehicle movements and pedestrians, particularly young children, there is always a high risk of injury. Parents are encouraged to use the marked walkways in the carpark when accessing the main office.

3.2 Out of school/ off site crises

These would include death/ serious injury on a school trip or tragedies involving several schools such as the Hillsborough football disaster.

The school undertakes several off site activities during the course of the school year. These include both day and residential trips.

All activities undergo a risk assessment and full details of pupils and staff on the trip, including relevant medical details, are retained at the school for the duration of the visit.

The risk assessment should cover in detail all aspects of the trip from the pick up at the start of the trip to the point when the pupils are delivered back to their parents. It should include such matters as:

3.2.1 The coach company should be assessed by looking at the road worthiness of the vehicle; safety features such as seat belts; suitability of the drivers i.e. how long will the journey take, will more than one driver be necessary to prevent fatigue? Has the driver had sufficient rest period prior to taking the children? Reputable coach companies will not mind answering such questions.

3.2.2 Are any stops necessary on the journey? Toilet breaks etc. What are the facilities like in terms of health and safety?

3.2.3 Accommodation. Is it secure? What arrangements are in place to ensure that no one can break into the premises? Is accommodation staff on the premises at all times? Have these been DBS checked if necessary?

3.2.4 Activities. These are risk assessed prior to the trip. All possible hazards on the trip must be assessed including travel to and from the main activity. For example, if children are going on a hike, will they come into conflict with road users or is the route all off road? If it is off road, is the route sufficiently marked or do the adults need to read maps and compasses? What if the weather turns inclement? What if a pupil becomes ill? Etc.

4. Practice within School

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 within the school alone. In times of crisis, teachers must react as they feel appropriate and there can be no easy formula for dealing with critical incidents but 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 the effect.

4.1 Critical Incident Management Team

See Critical Incident Management Plan attached (App 3)

4.2 Critical Incident Room

In the event of a critical incident off site or where the school buildings are usable, the critical incident room has been identified as in Stanground Community Centre. This room has telephone facilities.

4.3 Visitors during a Critical Incident

In general, visitors should be discouraged from entering the school grounds during a critical incident situation. This is particularly obvious if there is a risk to life such as fire, etc. It is also prudent if there has been other incidents due, for example, to violence in one part of the school or indeed if the incident happened outside the school. This is to prevent further strain on resources and

to ensure that the visitors do not come into danger or pose a hazard by their presence.

In the event of an emergency either off site or on however, it must be considered that worried parents may turn up at the school requesting news. These should be seen briefly by the relevant Phase Leader and, if appropriate, be requested to leave with the promise that regular bulletins will be issued by the press officer. The lack of available space for them to wait and the fact that their presence will tie up a member of staff should be stressed. If it is not appropriate for the parent to leave or if the parent refuses then, if possible, either a classroom, which has been vacated due to the teacher being in the CIMT, or possibly the staff room, could be used as a waiting room. If possible the press officer may be able to update these parents regularly but in any case they will need supervision and be told that any unaccompanied walking around the school will result in removal from the premises.

The Council press officer should brief members of the press. If the press officer is not yet on the scene, depending on circumstances, it may be prudent to advise that the school is dealing with an incident however all details are not clear and further information will be provided in due course.

4.4 Evacuation Procedures

Evacuation routes from each area are via the closest outside door Signs throughout school show the way to exit from corridors. If there is no alternative evacuation route due to, say fire, then all classrooms have access to the outside via windows.

Please see separate Evacuation Policy for more details.

All visitors to the school have to sign in on our electronic system on entry to the building. The member of staff who they have come to see should escort them to the assembly point. The school secretary is also responsible for bringing out the visitor register so that all persons can be accounted for.

Evacuation signs, stating that the school has been closed and where to collect the children, have been prepared and are kept in the school office. These will be removed by the office staff on evacuation and, if safe to do so, will be placed on the Front and Back main gates.

Following registration, the children will be escorted to the Stanground Community Centre, if necessary.

The class teacher will be responsible for the briefing of the children and their continued support.

Regular briefings will be undertaken in order that all members are up to date.

Office staff will contact parents via Parent Pay with a request to collect their children. They should be seen at the porch and the relevant children collected calmly by staff. The space will be tight and the sight of the parents may cause emotional outbursts and possible unrest.

5. Post-Disaster Management – Recovery

The Headteacher is identified as having responsibility for ensuring continued support.

Likely continuing needs should be discussed with relevant professional staff.

6. The Role of Support Services:

6.1 The Education Officer

The relevant Education Officer will in most instances be the first point of contact for the school. These numbers are confidential and should be used only in an emergency.

The Education Officer, in conjunction with the school, will determine whether an incident is critical. The Education Officer for the school will act as a key contact between the school and internal and external support agencies, mobilising and co-ordinating resources as required. Specific support services involved may include:

- Educational Psychology Service
- Education Welfare Service
- PSHE Service
- Primary/Secondary Support Service
- Press and Public Relations
- Social Services
- Civil Protection Unit

The Education Officer provides a key-supporting role to a school dealing with a critical incident.

6.2 The Education Psychology Service

Schools facing a critical incident will invariably find themselves inundated by external agencies offering support and advice in the immediate aftermath of an incident. The school community, e.g. teachers, governors, parents and children will, on some occasions, quite naturally request that they be allowed to mobilise and organise their own support networks.

However, there are also some circumstances where schools will require extra support in dealing with a critical incident. The Educational Psychology Service (EPS) can provide specific information, moral support, advice and a trusted sounding board at this most difficult of times. For example:

- They can provide specialist support to assist staff and children through the planned response to a critical incident.
- Psychologists could work with staff groups to plan responses with affected groups of children.
- Information and resources could be provided about possible reactions to traumatic events.
- Referrals for specialist counselling services could be provided.
- Critical incident stress debriefing techniques could be explored with staff and children.

All types of support are initially negotiated between staff and the educational psychologist concerned. In some cases, this will be the school educational psychologist, in other instances other educational psychologists may offer support with specialist interests in this type of supportive work.

6.3 Education Welfare Service

Following a critical incident some children may be apprehensive or reluctant about attending school. School staff will obviously be sensitive to this and will endeavour to reassure and support children. It may, however, be necessary in some instances to involve the Education Welfare Service. Each school has an allocated Education Welfare Officer who will be able to offer help and advice. Individual cases may be referred to the Education Welfare Officer who will be able to undertake home visits and to involve other services or agencies as necessary.

6.4 Personal, Social and Health Education Service

The Personal, Social and Health Education Service provides the framework for a number of key initiatives and services relating to the personal development of young people in school, community and youth service settings.

This includes support for schools in delivering the PSHE and Citizenship curriculum in primary, special and secondary schools, leadership in drug education and important partnership projects, including the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Health Promoting Schools Initiative.

An important component of their work is helping schools prepare for when critical incidents may arise. This can happen, for example, through advising on appropriate policies, working within the curriculum, and involving parents, carers and the community. This work includes guidance on managing drug-related incidents and important areas such as addressing issues of loss and bereavement with children of different ages. Many schools, as part of the development work towards becoming a Health Promoting School, choose to address these issues.

They also stand ready to advise and support schools in the context of an incident, particularly in terms of appropriate responses with the whole school

community – for example, how staff may choose to talk to and with children after the death of a pupil or adult. They can also advise on or confirm appropriate steps to be taken in the event of incidents such as pupils being found in possession or under the influence of illegal drugs. This would include outlining the options for schools and also directing them towards other specialist sources of advice and support.

The Personal, Social and Health Education Service has produced bereavement guidance (Managing Bereavement in Cambridgeshire Schools) a copy of which can be found in all schools.

6.5 Access and Inclusion Service

The Primary Support Service would work in close liaison with other services involved, in particular the Educational Psychology Service and Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) in order to negotiate a level of support with which the schools would feel both comfortable and appropriate.

A significant number of the Specialist Social Emotional Behaviour Support teachers within the Service are fully trained counsellors and so they can provide counselling at an individual pupil/student level or in small groups. It is always necessary to obtain parent/carer permission before counselling commences but counsellors are always willing to help schools approach this topic with parents and carers. The duration of the counselling period will be determined on the basis of individual needs.

Counsellors are also able to work with adults.

7. Press and Public Relations

7.1 Briefing the media

Hopefully you will have already been working effectively with your local paper and possibly local radio to publicise *good news* events. A positive relationship will be helpful in the event of bad news since your contacts will know that you will share information when you have it and be direct in the messages you need to get across. Your immediate call to your Education Officer at the outset of the critical incident will enable the LA to mobilise the Press Office on your behalf. Your Education Officer may be able to handle much of the press interest to leave you free to manage the situation; however, there may be occasions where a radio or TV interview may be required.

7.1.1 Key Points:

- Agree all press statements with the Council Press Office.
- Ensure that all information to the media comes through a single reliable source, keeping the Press Office briefed at all times.

- Demonstrate control and reassure in a factual way that everything is being done to control the situation and minimise its consequences.
- Set minds at rest where possible and counter dangerous rumours. In an interview, present as caring, responsible and competent.
- Provide as much information as reasonable; better the truth is published than rumour/gossip from a third party, but always stick to providing confirmed facts rather than offering observations and opinions.

Agree timing of press releases to avoid continuous pressure. In certain situations, it may be helpful to set up a dedicated media response room.

7.2 Press Releases/Studio/TV Interviews

7.2.1 Key points in writing news release for newspapers

- Keep it simple and with a clear message
- Follow a sequence which addresses
 - What?
 - Where?
 - Who?
 - When?
 - How?
 - Why?
- Write in short clear sentences and keep it active (not passive). For example, The School had a glowing report for English and Maths from School Inspectors, rather than A glowing report for numeracy and literacy skills was given by OFSTED to The School.
- Try to include some direct quotations from people involved (short and informative).
- Don't worry unduly about headlines; the sub-editors will do that for you (they have space problems to resolve as well as eye-catching phrases).
- Ensure that relevant ages of children are given rather than school year groupings that will mean little to the public at large.
- Try to restrict your item to one side of A4, or maximum two, with line spacing at 1.5 or double. Produce it on headed paper and check it for spelling and grammar! Get someone else to read through it to ensure it projects clearly the message you want. Make sure an appropriate person approves it before release.

7.2.2 Key points in managing direct approaches from journalists on the telephone

- Ensure that all staff know who is the media contact in the school – Laura Martin – and request that all contact be made through that person.

- Never say “no comment”; listen to what is required, say you’ll check some details and give a time when you will get back to the journalist. Find out if they have a deadline. Prepare material with a facts/figures slant, based on accessible evidence. Always give some response, even if it’s bland
- Do get back and don’t delay too long. If you exceed the deadline, the story may be printed without any of your input, giving an unfortunate slant and maybe creating further problems to unpick later. For example, it may be reported that you were “unavailable for comment” or “refused to comment” giving a bad impression.
- Make a note of what is asked and what you say.
- Don’t answer “yes” or “no” to a long question which may then be interpreted in an unhelpful way; clarify the issue and reply with a short statement giving your message.
- If you need to put a time-scale on the interview, do so politely.
- If you cannot answer a question it may be helpful to sidestep it politely; say something like “I cannot comment further as I have not discussed this with my colleagues”. Then offer a point you can make with confidence.
- If you need help contact the Council Press Office, in any event keep them informed with updates. If you are aware of a problem before it becomes difficult inform the Press Office, who can manage more easily if they are fully briefed beforehand.

7.2.3 Studio or TV interviews

If you are invited to a local TV or Radio Station to do an interview, it is helpful to find out something about the kind of programme it is so that you can match the approach you will take and the messages you have to the likely audience. Key points to consider are:

- Is there anyone better able to manage the interview – depending on the context? You may wish to discuss this with your Education Officer and Chair of Governors.
- Who will interview you? Are they likely to be sympathetic or aggressive towards you?
- How long will you have to speak? Will there be anyone else being interviewed – could it be adversarial?
- Will it be live or edited later? If it is edited, you should not hesitate to ask for parts of the interview to be re-run if you are unhappy with the responses or any incorrect impressions you may have given.
- Decide on your key points (few in number) in advance and write them down (bullet points).
- Try to memorise, or have easily to hand, key facts, figures and names.
- Get to the station early to give yourself time to acclimatise.
- Keep a clear head; wear comfortable appropriate clothes (you won’t need any additional distractions!)

- Confirm the length of your slot.
- In the interview, speak clearly (if you need water nearby, ask for it when you arrive); don't get rushed, and try not to get flustered – give yourself space to think.
- Be firm, polite and courteous.
- Try to use images that may be familiar to people to bring alive what you have to say.
- Try to offer positive statements at the beginning and end of the interview
- If you feel questioning is unreasonable you may say so, but explain why and put in a positive statement to reinforce your point(s).
- Keep a clear, calm focus for the interview (presenter for TV and microphone – usually opposite the presenter - for radio).
- Advice on handling the media is drawn from their own experience and the document published by the Association of Metropolitan Authorities, Schools, Crises and the Media [ISBN 185677 159 8]

8. The Civil Protection Unit

In serious emergencies, especially those relating to extreme weather or serious accidents/incidents, the Civil Protection Unit is able to mobilise a range of resources both from within the County Council and from other organisations. The Unit works closely with the emergency services, district councils, the voluntary sector, Military and Health.

The Unit has access to a communication Centre / Incident Control Room with a range of useful databases and facilities.

Where an incident requires the public to be evacuated from an area the Unit may well request the use of school premises to provide a Rest Centre. Separate advice is available on the use of schools as rest centres.

9. Social Services

Children's Social Services are able to support families in crisis by working in partnership with parents and liaising with other involved and relevant services. An important component of social work is a holistic approach that considers the needs of a child and his/her family within the community. Social workers aim to involve young people and children fully in decisions that affect them. Social workers have particular experience in managing risk and responding to crisis. Children's Social Services are delivered through local area teams and schools are encouraged to develop good links with their area team in the normal course of events.

Appendix 1

Major Incident Occurring on an Out of School Activity

Guidance Action Sheet for Group Leaders

Please view in line with Evolve Emergency Procedures and our School Procedures

A log of decisions made and actions taken should be kept

In the event of a major incident occurring on an out of school activity the actions below should be considered and implemented as appropriate.

1. Ascertain details of incident.
2. Alert relevant emergency services (Police, Fire, Ambulance, Coastguard) via 999 system.
3. Call for assistance if available (staff, passers-by).
4. Administer first aid where possible.
5. Account for all members of the party and ensure that all persons uninjured stay together.
6. Allocate staff member(s) to stay at incident site to liaise with the emergency services.
7. Ascertain if there are any witnesses.
8. Allocate staff member(s) to stay at incident site to liaise with the emergency services.
9. Arrange for all non-casualties to return to base (accompanied by a member of staff) and that all members of the group are informed of the incident as soon as possible.
10. Inform Headteacher/member of the senior management team (at school) as soon as possible. Give as much of the following information as possible:
 - Date, time, location and nature of incident
 - Names of those involved
 - Details of any injuries
 - Actions taken

- Contact point to be used
11. Consider requesting additional assistance. Keep Headteacher/member of senior management team regularly updated.
 12. Consider whether activity should be abandoned. If so, arrange for non-casualties to return to school. Liaise with Headteacher/senior management team over transport arrangements.
 13. Do not discuss legal liability.
 14. Prepare to deal with the media – this should be done in consultation with the Police (see memoire attached)

Appendix 2

Major Incident Occurring on an Out of School Activity

Guidance Sheet for Headteacher/Member of Senior Management Team

Please view in line with Evolve Emergency Procedures and our School Procedures

A log of decisions made and actions taken should be kept

In the event of a major incident occurring on an out of school activity the actions below should be considered and implemented as appropriate.

1. Ascertain the following:
 - Date, time, location and nature of incident
 - Names of those involved
 - Actions taken
 - Who is in charge at the scene
 - If additional assistance is needed at the site
2. Inform:
 - School Support Contact Officer
 - Other staff – if out of school hours, ensure that the caretaker/premises officer is included in list of staff to be contacted.
 - Chair of Governors and arrange for other governors to be informed.
3. Inform Chief Emergency Planning Officer who can arrange other support as appropriate:
 - Transport (under mutual aid arrangements with other counties/districts).
 - Insurers
 - Religious support
 - Translators
 - Social services support

- Public relations support
 - Premises
4. Initiate Critical Incident Management Plan.
 5. Ensure that staff are fully briefed on facts and are aware of what information can be released.
 6. Arrange for parents of uninjured to come to the school to meet the children on their return.
 7. Arrange for parents/relatives of injured to be informed – this to be done in conjunction with the Police.
 8. Notify HSE and Education Department and Safety Officer if incident involves a reportable accident or specified dangerous occurrence. Complete accident forms as necessary.
 9. Prepare to deal with the media – this should be done in consultation with the Police and Council's Public Relations Officer.

Appendix 3

Managing Critical Incidents Time Plan

Task	Time Scale
Obtain as much factual information as possible at start of crisis.	Immediate
Alert Headteacher – Headteacher to alert LA	Immediate
Activate the Critical Incident Management Team.	Immediate
Start the incident log.	Immediate
Make arrangements for handling the media.	Immediate
Carry out quick appreciation of immediate response required.	Within first hour
Select and set up control arrangements.	Within first hour
Call a staff meeting to give information.	Within hours if practicable
Inform pupils in a sensitive way – small groups if appropriate.	Within hours if practicable
Arrange a debriefing meeting for staff involved in incident.	Before leaving school
Arrange a debriefing for pupils involved in the incident.	Before leaving school

Even when the incident has ended, arrangements to return the school to normal could go on for some time.

Facilitate support for high-risk pupils	Next few days, could go on longer
Funerals, rituals and memorials.	Next few days
Decide/agree a range of response and support measures. These have potential to run for many weeks/months.	As soon as possible
Suggested reading and other resources.	As soon as possible
Review and revise plans in light of experience.	As soon as possible

Critical Incident Checklist

The following checklist may assist you in preparing for a critical incident.

Suggested coding: A - In place
 B - Still needs to be done
 C - Not relevant

Up to Date Information about:	Code
Pupil/staff, Governor, Key Holder emergency contact details	A
LA emergency contact numbers	A
Bus/coach lists	A
Emergency supply/support list	A
Information sheet about the school providing basic details	A
Up-to-date site plan	A
Pupil/staff movement data (timetables/registration – who is where and when) (include sickness/day-leave rota + staff list of who is where and when during holidays)	A
People, groups or organisations that visit or use the school and would need to be informed.	A
People and groups used by the school, e.g. suppliers and contractors.	A
Students: reports, exam records, schemes of work, policies etc.	A
Premises and sites plan of the school including critical locations, e.g. chemical storage, key salvage priorities, gas, electric and water mains control positions.	A
School bank details, account number and sort code.	A
Location of keys to minibus, school safe etc.	A
Copy of Asbestos log.	A
Back-up disks for all accounts.	A
Details of names, location, significant medical information and contact details relating to all pupils and staff off-site on educational visits at any time.	A (Grab pack)

A plan for communication	Code
Evacuation procedures – visible and practised	A
Telephone lines – private, mobile, emergency access	A
Small room/quiet area for Police statements, counselling or interviews	Heads Office
Alternative location	Stanground Community Centre

Management Support:	Code
Access to qualified first-aiders	A
Screening of entrances/exits – siting of school/ emergency office	A
Closure of blinds/curtains on the ground floor to protect from media interest	B
Instant assemblies to release teaching staff	A
Knowledge of resources available to deal with the aftermath	A
Familiarisation with 'Managing Bereavement'	A

Appendix 5

Sample letter for amendment in the light of local circumstances

Dear Parents/Carers,

You may have heard/or

It is with sadness and regret that I have to inform you(Known facts of the incident)

As a school community, we are all deeply affected by this tragedy/

I am sure that you will wish to join me and my staff in offering our condolences and sympathy to those affected/to (Refer to individuals/families affected only where it is appropriate to release this information)

I have now spoken to all pupils and staff in school about what has happened and you will need to be aware of the following arrangements that we have now made:

Details about

School closure

Changes to timings of school day

Transport

Lunch time arrangements

Changes to staffing

Arrangements for specific classes/year groups

Counselling

(If appropriate, advice about media contacts)

I think it is very important that we all take the time to talk with and reassure children about what has happened. This is likely to be a very difficult time for us as a school community and we will all need to support each other.

We appreciate the expressions of concern we have received: however, it would be helpful if parents did not telephone in to the school during this time so we can keep phones and staff free to manage the situation.

Yours sincerely

Appendix 6

References and Support Agencies

If you have difficulty accessing any of the following reference materials, please contact the Educational Psychology Service who may be able to assist.

- ❑ **School-based responses to critical incidents: forewarned is forearmed** (1997) Education, Libraries and Information. Flintshire County Council.
- ❑ **Loss, bereavement and critical incident resource pack** (2000) The Scottish Educational Psychology Development Programme.
- ❑ **Giving sorrow words: managing bereavement in schools a resource manual** (1998) S.Killick & S.Lindeman. INSET pack – has an accompanying video.
- ❑ **Safety and disaster management in schools and colleges** (1998) D. Kibble
- ❑ **Dealing with disaster** (1994) HMSO Publications.
- ❑ **Wise before the Event** (1993) W.Yule & A.Gold. Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation.
- ❑ **Helping children cope with grief** (1998) R. Wells. Sheldon Press.
- ❑ **Death and loss: compassionate approaches in the classroom** (1995) O.Leaman. Cassell: studies in personal and social education.
- ❑ **Helping children to manage loss: positive strategies for renewal and growth** (1998) B. Mallon. Jessica Kingsley Publishers.
- ❑ **Coping with unhappy children** (1993). Ved Varma (Ed). Cassell: studies in personal and social education.
- ❑ **Children and bereavement, death & loss: what can the school do?** (1993) P. Wagner. National Association for Pastoral Care in Education.
- ❑ **Grief in children** (1990) A. Dyregrov. Jessica Kingsley Publishers.
- ❑ **The forgotten mourners** (1995) M.Pennells & M. and S. Smith. Jessica Kingsley Publishers.
- ❑ **Interventions with bereaved children** (1995) M.Pennells & M. and S. Smith (Ed). Jessica Kingsley Publishers.
- ❑ **Coping with disastrous events**: Kent County Council.
- ❑ **Critical incidents, a support framework for schools**. Norfolk Education Dept.

Children and bereavement: useful help-lines, support groups and agencies.

- ❑ **The compassionate friends.** National support group for families who experience bereavement. Will also offer resources 'on loan' to schools. **Helpline 0117 953 9639**
www.tcf.org.uk
- ❑ **Cruse.** National organisation that supports the bereaved.
www.crusebereavementcare.org.uk
- ❑ **CAMHS.** Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services. Hinchingsbrooke Hospital, Huntingdon **01480 415300.**
- ❑ **Childline.** National helpline for children and young people experiencing distress. London office **020 7650 3200.** Emergency Helpline **0800 1111.**
- ❑ **Child death helpline.** Telephone helpline for anyone affected by the death of a child.
0800 282986.
- ❑ **The Samaritans.** www.samaritans.org.uk
- ❑ **Winston's Wish.** Provides support for bereaved children up to 18, plus their parents and carers. Family line **0845 2030405.** www.winstonswish.org.uk. 9.00a.m .- 5.00p.m, Monday – Friday.
- ❑ **National Children's Bureau. 020 7843 6000**
- ❑ **The Childhood Bereavement Network, 8 Wakley Street, London, EC1V 7QE**
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