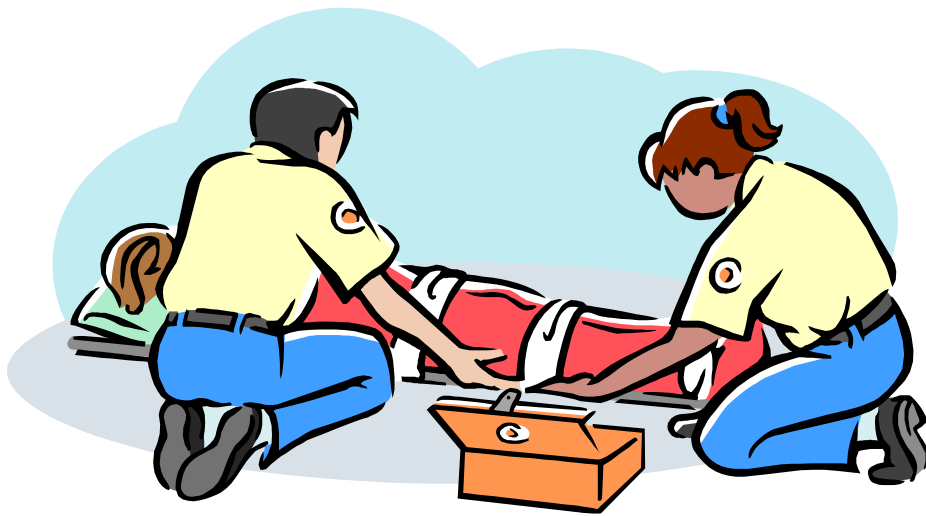


Thomas Willingale School and Nursery



Critical Incident Policy (Emergency Planning and Response)

Review: Spring 2026

Next Spring 2027

Thomas Willingale School

CRITICAL INCIDENT POLICY

This policy has been drawn from the Essex County Council guidance document 'Emergency Planning and Response'.

Definition: critical incidents

An incident becomes a **critical incident** when it constitutes a serious disruption arising with little or no warning on a scale **beyond** the coping capacity of the school operating under normal conditions, and requiring the assistance of the Emergency Services and/or Essex County Council and/or District Councils and/or other agencies.

Examples of critical incidents impacting on schools include:

- death or serious injury as a result of violence, accident, self-harm and/or sudden or traumatic illness;
- child protection incident (individual or collective abuse)
- events which result in higher than normal absences (e.g. infectious diseases such as influenza or meningitis)
- major fire;
- building collapse;
- riot and/or civil disorder;
- natural disaster such as flooding;
- terrorism;
- missing person(s)/abductions;
- intense media interest arising from incidents such as those listed above.

Such incidents can occur, for example:

- on the school site during school hours;
- on school transport;
- whilst the pupils are taking part in activities away from the school site;
- on school premises as part of after-school activities;
- within the local community involving pupils from the school.
- Within the vicinity of the school

The key role of the School Incident Management Plan

On many occasions, incidents that involve bereavement, loss and/or trauma, or property damage can be effectively managed by a school through the implementation of a well-constructed **incident management plan**. This may involve the school accessing County Council or other outside services as required.

Preventative and precautionary measures

Whilst no amount of planning can totally prevent accidents and problems occurring, it is hoped that some can be prevented and the effects of others minimised by taking sensible precautionary measures. It is expected that:

- All staff and pupils should be familiar with the school's routines for fire and the evacuation of the school building on hearing the fire alarm.
- All staff should be familiar with the routines and procedures for dealing with emergencies (as detailed in this policy).
- All staff and pupils should be familiar with the school's security procedures, in particular that all visitors not wearing a visitor's badge should be questioned and escorted to the appropriate office.
- All staff organising school trips and visits follow the guidelines and write a risk assessment to be signed off by the Educational Visits Co-ordinator (the Deputy Headteacher).
- All staff should sign in and out of the premises.
- All staff are aware of pupils with medical needs or health problems.
- All staff are aware of school policy in dealing with violence at work.
- All staff are aware that they should assess associated risks to pupils before carrying out a curriculum or other activity.
- All staff are aware that they are responsible for assessing risks to themselves before undertaking an activity.

A major incident may be defined as:

- An accident leading to a serious injury or fatality;
- Severe injury or severe stress;
- Circumstances in which a person or persons might be at serious risk of illness;
- Circumstances in which any part, or whole of the school is unable to function as normal due to external influences and
- Any situation in which the national press or media might be involved.

As such, major incidents include:

- Death of a pupil or member of staff;
- Death or serious injury on a school trip;
- Epidemic in school or community;
- Violent incident in school;
- A pupil missing from home;
- Destruction or major vandalism in school;
- A hostage taking;
- A transport accident involving school members;
- A disaster in the community;
- A civil disturbance or terrorism
- Arson attacks on schools
- Major fires at a school
- Significant vandalism
- Pupil suicides and sudden deaths
- Violent attacks on pupils and staff members
- The sudden death, in tragic circumstances of members of staff
- Incident involving an intruder, believed to be armed, on school premises
- Road traffic accidents, involving fatalities within a school community
- Abductions / disappearances
- Allegations or actual incidents of abuse against pupils by staff and by staff against pupils
- Incidents involving the murder of schoolchildren that attracted the attention of national and international media over prolonged periods
- Floods
- School used in an emergency.

In the event of such an incident the priorities of those adults in charge of the school or trip at the time must be able to:

- Save life
- Minimise personal injury
- Safeguard the interests of pupils and staff
- Minimise loss and to return to normal working quickly.

This must be time framed:

- Immediately
- In the medium term
- In the longer term.

The Critical Incident Management Team (CIMT) will comprise the following:

Headteacher
Deputy Headteacher
Inclusion Manager
Phase Leaders
Chair of Governors

Action

These are the typical tasks and actions that a school may need to undertake to manage an incident. The school's plan should make it clear **who** will undertake each task (and, in their absence, who would **cover** for them) for a **range of possible scenarios** (such as during out of school hours, on/off site, part of/outside of school organised activities).

Person(s) with **lead responsibilities** within the plan should have **24-hour numbers** by which they can be contacted. These persons should then have 24-hour contact numbers for **all other individuals** named within the plan. The plan should contain **all the other appropriate contact numbers** that may be required. It may also be appropriate to include an up-to-date **plan of the school site**.

It can be helpful to recognise that an incident typically consists of three phases – immediate actions, managed response and return to normality.

3.1 Phase 1 – Immediate actions

Actions 1 – 7 should be undertaken straight away; however the order in which these actions should be undertaken will be determined by the needs of the situation.

Action 1

Ensure the safety of all children and adults - assess continuing risk;

- Contact emergency services as appropriate.
- Enter in incident log all contacts made, actions taken and times.

Recording what has happened in a log of events with times and details of actions taken will be important for any subsequent inquiry which could range from an internal school/ECC inquiry to a formal inquiry with legal implications such as a Coroner's inquiry or an insurance claim.

Those involved may be required to give a statement to Police and/or attend court as a witness. The original contemporaneous record of events and actions is crucial in these circumstances.

- If off site, establish arrangements for reuniting children, adults and staff with their families.
- Determine that adults and staff involved in the incident are safe to drive or take public transport or whether they need collecting or transportation.

Action 2

Implement the School's Incident Management Plan

- Person(s) with lead responsibility to be released from all duties.
- Collect school's incident management plan and contact numbers.
- Open a log of events, actions and times.
- Establish an independent telephone line (for example: a mobile or borrowing a phone line in a nearby building).

- Inform associated schools that could be directly affected by an incident.

Action 3

Obtain information about the incident

- Obtain information about the exact nature of the incident, for example:
 - When and where incident occurred.
 - Names of children and adults involved in the incident including those who witnessed it.
 - Nature of any injuries/fatalities sustained.
 - Hospitals where injured have been taken.
 - Names of adults with injured children/adults.
 - Actions undertaken by emergency services, including arrangements for caring for children/adults who do not require hospital treatment.
 - Locations of the uninjured.
 - Remaining hazards at the scene.
- Collect relevant pupil/staff lists and contact numbers as appropriate.
- If telephone contact, note relevant number(s).
- Control the escape of inappropriate or inaccurate information via mobile or public phones from within the group.

Action 4

Contact key people

- Contact the SCF Communications Team at ECC and agree whether the Schools, Children & Families Service needs to initiate critical incident support and/or other actions as appropriate. The SCF Communications Team will then co-ordinate the other ECC support services as described below:
- Where notification of a critical incident is received from a school, the SCF Communications Team will establish what form of support is required immediately and what might be required in the near future (for example, the death of a pupil with a terminal illness might be imminent and the LA given advance notice that counselling support might be requested within the next few days).

This might typically involve any one, or a combination, of the following:

- the SCF Trauma Support team (counselling service for anyone within the school community);
- the ECC Media Team;
- on-site support from (for example):
 - a SCF senior officer;
 - an Emergency Planning officer;
 - a Health & Safety officer.

- Any ECC personnel visiting the site will agree with the Headteacher and/or the Chair of Governors or their representatives the duration and nature of the support required and this will be logged with the SCF Communications Team. The team will keep in touch with the school during, and immediately after, the incident, as appropriate, calling upon different forms of LA support on behalf of the school as the situation develops.
- The SCF Communications Team will follow up all such incidents to ensure that the support offered was appropriate to the school's needs

Out-of-hours incidents

- Alert the Children's Social Care Emergency Duty Service for both serious situations affecting vulnerable children and adults and for other major incidents affecting the school, who will alert the appropriate contacts within the Directorate and elsewhere.

Action 5

Mobilise the school's incident management team

- Brief the school's Incident Management Team.
- Clarify tasks, make plans and assign roles.
- Set up timetable of meetings to review management of incident. A senior officer from the LA may be present – see Action 4.

Action 6

Contact families of pupils, adults and staff involved in the incident

- Designate key member(s) of staff to make contacts.
- Ensure that persons making contacts are fully briefed. (It may well be appropriate to rehearse and/or have written guidance as to what is to be said).
- Use the record of contacts to avoid confusion and distress through duplication of contacts and to ensure that no one is missed out.
- Establish and offer useful telephone numbers, either for support or for more information, such as emergency disaster number or hospital.
- Check that families/parents are not left alone in distress; suggest that they make contact with other relative/neighbours.
- Where appropriate, share the contact number of other families involved in incident where they have given permission for this.
- Where appropriate, give advice to parents and families (in line with the County Council's media advice) on responding to contacts from the media.
- Where appropriate, give information about arrangements for uniting or putting in contact children, adults and staff with their parents/families.

- Where a parent or family cannot be contacted, consider asking the Police or another professional to visit the home.

Guidance should be taken from the Police if the incident involves injury or death or if the incident is very serious but the full facts are not yet known.

It may be necessary, particularly in a small school, to enlist the help of the ECC Human Resources (Schools) team, governors, local religious/community leaders, GPs, police and so on, if there are a large number of parents to be contacted and supported. Some families/parents may need to be brought to school to receive information about what has happened.

Action 7

Brief staff, governors, pupils, parents, religious leaders and other members of the school community

- Contact and brief chair of governors; request that he/she inform all other governors.
- Hold briefing meetings for all teaching and non-teaching staff; consider setting up a schedule to keep staff informed and updated (such as break times, beginning/end of day)
- Issue a prepared statement for all parents.

If a press statement is required, take advice from the County Council's Media Team. A prepared statement should give the known facts of the situation, initial actions that the school is taking and appropriate expressions of sympathy and concern.

- Inform all pupils in the most appropriate way.

Ensure that staff tasked with telling children are able to undertake this task. Make special arrangements to protect and support staff, adults and children who were close in any way to those affected.

- Identify pupils, adults and staff who are absent. Make appropriate arrangements for them to be briefed.

3.2 Phase 2 – Managed response

Action 8

Plan management of the incident (with identified ECC staff and other agencies as appropriate)

- Meet with the senior ECC officer(s), the school's Incident Management Team and other professionals as mobilised by the Schools, Children & Families critical incident arrangements and/or County Emergency Plan.
- Review plans, clarify tasks, assign roles and make further plans accordingly.
- Ensure that school and other agencies' actions are properly co-ordinated.

- Establish timetable of meetings to review the management of the incident.
- Clarify criteria for withdrawal of outside agencies at appropriate stage.
- Access further advice from the Emergency Services if required.

Action 9

Set up arrangements to deal with enquiries

- At the earliest opportunity, and certainly before speaking to any representative of the media, contact the County Council's Media Team.
- Ensure that all media contacts are either directed to, or are dealt with in line with advice from, the County Council's Media Team.

Names of those involved in the incident should not be released or confirmed to the media or other callers until the statutory authorities (such as the police) have confirmed the identity and the parents and families have been informed and have given permission.

- Consider providing those answering the phone with a written statement as to what it is appropriate for them to say (see notes on Action 7)
- Caution staff about talking to the media.
- Organise additional staff to deal with phone enquiries and people coming to the school as necessary.
- Designate separate areas for parents, media, staff and agencies managing the incident and others; avoid too many people in any one space.
- Ensure that an entry is made in the incident log of all important contacts.

Action 10

Make arrangements to support children and adults

- Identify those children, adults and staff who are most likely to be in need of support.
- Arrange for school staff/support agencies, including the LA's Trauma Support Team (part of SENCAN) to provide support. It is good practice to inform and/or seek consent from parents/carers where their child is to be involved with an outside agency.
- Ensure that pupils, adults, staff and parent/carers are aware of the support arrangements that school is making and how these are accessed.
- Consider setting aside and staffing an appropriate area for children who are becoming too distressed to continue with their lessons.
- Consider setting aside and staffing a further area for people coming into school who are distressed.

- In addition to the individuals directly affected, children and adults who are most likely to suffer distress as a consequence of an incident are those who:
 - are uninjured, but were at greatest risk;
 - directly witnessed death/injury/violence as part of the incident;
 - are siblings;
 - have any possible perceived culpability for what has happened however indirect or incorrect; (for example, those who may blame themselves and/or those who may be blamed by others)
 - are experiencing instability at home;
 - have learning difficulties;
 - have pre-existing emotional and behavioural/mental health difficulties;
 - are vulnerable due to cultural and/or language difficulties; or
 - have previously suffered bereavement or loss.
- Maintain normal school routines wherever possible.

If the school has to close, ensure all staff and parents are briefed on the arrangements for the collection of children. Supervise children being collected and make arrangements for those who are not able to be collected. Ensure that staff and parents are clear as to the arrangements for re-opening the school.

- Consider holding staff meeting with support agencies to discuss appropriate management strategies for distressed children.
- Plan how to manage distress that may be caused by ongoing police/legal proceedings and media attention.
- Give children permission individually and collectively to discuss what has happened and their reactions.

Deal sensitively with open expressions of distress. Allow children to discuss what has happened in lessons where they clearly wish to do this. Do not discourage them from talking.

- Consider putting on a special class session to give pupils information about the grieving process and to enable them to talk through their experiences.
- Plan appropriate support for staff to enable them to cope with children's questions and discussion.
- Ensure that all staff including those co-ordinating the school's response do not neglect their own need for support.
- Schedule staff co-ordinating the school's response to be 'off duty'.
- Ensure staff are alert to physical and/or emotional change or any other signals of distress among staff as well as children.

- Refer staff, adults and, with parental consent, children to outside agencies for support.

Action 11

Make arrangements for personal effects, registers and area(s) of the school affected

- In discussion with parents/families, decide on what to do with the personal effects of the individuals who are critically ill or have died.
- Consider discussing with relevant class members what would be appropriate for work (including work as part of any displays), such as desks, books, or lockers belonging to individuals who have died or are critically ill.
- Make arrangements to adjust class registers, rotas and any other pupil listings accordingly.
- Make appropriate arrangements for the part of a school where the incident occurred.

3.3 Phase 3 – Return to normality

Action 12

Make arrangements for expressions of sympathy and/or acknowledgement of what has happened

- Make arrangements to express support/sympathy to families, children and adults who have been hurt or bereaved.
- Make arrangements to support the plans that the family may have for a memorial.
- Make plans for attendance at funerals. Find out if school representatives are welcome. Ensure that school representatives feel able to cope with these tasks.
- Make arrangements for someone from school to visit the injured in hospital or the bereaved at home.
- Consider sending cards and messages from children and staff to children, adults and staff affected.
- Consider organising a special assembly/service to acknowledge collectively what has happened and how the school is coming to terms with this. Consider involving local religious leaders. Consult with families of individual affected.
- Consider setting up an area in the school where writing, art work or other mementos can be dedicated to individuals affected.

Action 13

Plan for the return to school of those involved in the incident

- Home visit by an appropriate member of staff to discuss arrangements for return (such as visits or part-time attendance).*
- Planned support for emotional needs (such as how to cope with the comments and questions of other pupils or permission to remove themselves from lessons to go to an agreed place if they are becoming distressed).
- Support for possible physical needs (such as mobility difficulties, or disfigurements).
- Rota of home visits from school friends.
- Where appropriate, organise work to be sent home prior to return.
- Brief staff and children on how best to support individuals returning to school.
- Arrangements to differentiate work, for example: manage missed coursework; special arrangements for exams; also, adjust workloads for members of staff returning to school.

Action 14

Plan memorials and commemorations

- Consider an appropriate memorial, taking into account the wishes of those who were involved or bereaved (such as a special garden; tree; furniture; painting; sculpture; photograph; memorial prize).
- Appeals and donations are a complex area and advice should be sought from the British Red Cross.
- Discuss how to mark anniversaries, for example: commemorative service/assembly; concert; display.

Involvement in funerals and special services

Attendance at funerals

There are many different religious and cultural views about the participation of young people in funeral rites. The school will want to respect these views and customs as well as the wishes of parents and the children themselves. The current consensus among mental health professionals is that most children (and adults) come to terms with their grief more quickly if they say farewell formally. Whenever possible, survivors should be encouraged and enabled to attend the funerals of those who died, and the parents of those who died should be encouraged to allow it.

Special assemblies and memorial services

In addition to funerals that families may choose to be private, schools may wish to mark the event with a special assembly or a memorial service. Discussions could be held with staff, governors, parents, pupils and the local community on what form this

* For reasons of safety and support it is recommended that staff making home visits do so in pairs

should take and who should be involved. Planning the ceremony often becomes an important therapeutic act in itself. For many who have been affected by a major incident, a memorial service acts as a way of acknowledging that it is now over. Even so, many staff and pupils may be upset during the service and this needs to be considered in planning, for example, where it is to be held and if access should be given to the media. Some schools have planted special gardens in memory of pupils or staff members, others have installed seats in the playground in their memory or have commissioned sculptures or paintings.

Extract from "Wise Before the Event" - William Yule and Anne Gold, Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, London 1993, page 45

Initial Actions: Day 1

Action	Information, Notes & By Whom
<p><u>Gather and record accurate information</u></p> <p>What has happened? Who was involved? When did it happen? How did it happen?</p>	<p>It is important to establish the facts otherwise rumours may take over and add to the distress of those involved. Specific details should include the names of everyone involved including any children/staff from other schools/settings.</p> <p>By member of SLT</p>
<p>Contact the affected family</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Find out their wishes • Establish clear line of communication • Plan further contact. 	<p>Contact should be made with family or families within the school community who are directly affected by the incident within 24 hours if possible. The nature of the contact should be guided by the wishes of the family although it may involve a home visit by staff representatives to extend sympathy. In some cases it may involve planning for return to school of bereaved children.</p> <p>By Member of SLT</p>
<p>Assess the situation and provide immediate <u>emergency response</u></p>	<p>When an incident takes place on or beside school premises an emergency response may involve: ensuring immediate safety of all students and adults; contacting emergency services; administering first aid.</p>

	By First aider or member of staff
Notify the Local Authority of Critical Incident via Schools Communication Team (01245 434745)	<p>By calling this number the Schools Communication Team will run through for you the various Local Authority services that may be of use to you including the Critical Incident Team via the Educational Psychology Service.</p> <p>By Member of SLT</p>
<p>Ensure a dedicated <u>emergency telephone line</u> is operational</p> <p>.....07737385063..... ...(number)</p>	<p>During major incidents phone lines may become jammed. Agree on which phone line is to be kept open for outgoing and incoming emergency calls. Swap mobile phone numbers with key agencies.</p>
Contact school governors and outside agencies	<p>An Emergency Contact List should be collated in advance and kept in an accessible location.</p> <p>By Admin team</p>
Alert the Media team	<p>Support can be given by the press office on the preparation of an official statement. Individuals should be strongly discouraged from talking to the media as partial information, speculation and personal opinion can cause significant distress to families, especially when inaccurately reported; this is also true of information posted on social networking sites.</p> <p>By Member of SLT</p>
<p>Convene a meeting to brief the Critical Incident Management Team to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brief the team • Make specific plans 	<p>Depending on the incident it may be advisable to meet the evening before or early in the morning to ensure a plan is in place for the school day. At this meeting determine what information is to be shared beyond the group and with whom (in sensitive cases this may involve liaison with the family).</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delegate roles and responsibilities 	<p>By Member of SLT</p>
<p>Establish procedure for informing/ briefing staff to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inform about the incident • Discuss plans for the day • Discuss how to support students (and each other) 	<p>It is important that staff receive accurate facts and are kept updated. This may require two separate groups to allow supervision of students. The meeting would normally be led by the head teacher or senior member of staff. It may be helpful / appropriate for an EP, a member of the clergy or a police officer to have some input to this meeting. Staff should be given advice and share ideas on how best to support students during this time</p> <p>By SLT</p>
<p>Establish procedure for informing students</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In groups • In a familiar environment • From people they know and trust 	<p>Whole school announcements should be avoided. Students should be informed in class or tutor groups by people they know and trust. Outside professionals can provide advice and support to staff where needed. Students who are likely to be particularly affected (e.g. close friends of a deceased pupil) should be told separately first.</p> <p>By SLT</p>
<p>Compile a list of vulnerable students and adults</p>	<p>Vulnerable individuals (students and staff) need to be identified and monitored. Additional support may be put in place either from adults or peers. Staff can be reminded that their colleagues may need some additional support such as a phone call later that evening</p> <p>By SLT and FSC</p>
<p>Plan adjustments to the day and in school support including</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • whole school activities • class/tutor group activities • quiet room with support 	<p>General principles include keeping routines as normal as possible; adapting the tasks to reduce stress and providing opportunities to express feelings in a safe, supportive environment.</p> <p>Where potential impact is considered severe and affects large numbers of</p>

	<p>students in class support sessions may be appropriate. An EP may support this by offering advice or by co-facilitating the session.</p> <p>By SLT</p>
<p>Establish a procedure for informing parents / carers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By letter • In a meeting 	<p>Depending on the nature and timing of events parents may already be aware of the incident. An appropriate letter should be compiled to be sent home with pupils. It may be appropriate to involve outside agencies, such as the police, clergy or EPs. EPs can assist with the drafting of communication to parents or refer to examples for ideas of how to structure the information. Have your own school draft letter that can be adapted and personalised if required.</p> <p>By SLT and Admin team</p>
<p>Arrange for staff to meet at the end of the day to debrief and plan for following day</p>	<p>Although already an emotionally exhausting day it is important for staff to meet for a short session at the end. This gives an opportunity for an update on any developments (including any specific concerns that have arisen), allows planning for next day and provides an opportunity to talk things through with others, offering emotional support, after a difficult day.</p> <p>By SLT</p>

Further Actions: Day 2 onwards

Action	By Whom Information & Notes
Convene a meeting of Critical Incident Management Team to	<p>Sometimes the first day appears quite calm as people may be in shock. Day 2 can present more issues as events begin to sink in so it is</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • consider any new developments • actions and events to date • plan for the day • identify tasks/ assign roles 	<p>important to meet each day until the school returns to normal functioning.</p> <p>By SLT</p>
<p>Convene a meeting for staff to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • update staff on any new developments inform staff of plans for day • give staff an opportunity to ask questions / raise concerns 	<p>In major critical incidents staff should be brought together at the start of the following day. As well as practical purposes this gives emotional support in difficult circumstances and allows a reminder that both staff and students may need some nurturing and time to talk. Plans should be made for subsequent meetings as required.</p> <p>By SLT</p>
<p>Continue to monitor and provide additional support to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • vulnerable individuals previously identified • other students (or staff) causing concern 	<p>Following a Critical Incident a level of shock, anxiety and distress is normal, especially amongst those closest to the incident. Most people will have returned to normal functioning within six weeks. Further support may be required for individuals continuing to show significant signs of distress many weeks beyond this.</p> <p>By SLT</p>
<p>Liaise with affected family including</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • visits by staff or pupils to injured or bereaved • family's wishes and plans regarding funeral arrangements • return to school of bereaved 	<p>Contacts/visits should be planned/ made to anyone injured, either at home or in hospital, with cards and get well messages from staff and students. There may be possessions to be returned to the family and timing of this should be considered.</p>
<p>Begin to plan school response to memorial to include</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the wishes of the family • active involvement of the peers and friends of the deceased 	<p>A lasting memorial and/or a ceremony give an important message about the value of the deceased; offers comfort to friends and family and may provide a sense of closure.</p>

	By SLT
Make a note in the school calendar of important dates <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • anniversary of incident • birthday of deceased • inquests or court cases • events where the deceased would have a part 	<p>The anniversary of a Critical Incident can trigger emotional responses and the school may wish, in consultation with the family, to acknowledge and commemorate the date.</p> <p>By SLT</p>
Review Critical Incident response and amend plan	<p>Once the school has returned to normal functioning it is important to reflect on the response to the incident including what went well and what lessons can be learned. This can be used to evaluate and amend the Critical Incident Management Plan.</p> <p>By Staff and SLT</p>

Lockdown Procedures

Although it is important to be prepared and have Lockdown procedures in place, it is vital that the children's welfare is considered throughout. The procedure needs to consider which members of staff need to be informed, depending on the type of occurrence to ensure that key staff are informed without unnecessarily alarming students or other staff.

Alarming/concerning students when unnecessary may cause them to become scared and develop a fear of going to school.

Communication is a key aspect in these situations so make sure that all emergency numbers are close to hand (preferably inputted into mobile phones already). Note that any mobile phones containing staff personal contact details should be password protected to protect data in accordance with the Data Protection Act.

The Reception team will probably be the first to hear about an emergency and pupils may be sharing on social media before management know, which may raise other concerns.

Areas to think about:

- Bomb threats
- Search planning
- Evacuation/invacuation planning
- Guidance for firearms and weapon attacks
- Staff awareness and security culture
- Preparedness
- Physical security
- Mail handling
- Hostage situations

ALWAYS:

- Reassure staff, students and parents
- Review and implement proportionate protect and prepare security planning

Partial Lockdown – *this is a precautionary measure but puts the school in a state of readiness (whilst retaining a degree of normality), should the situation escalate.*

May be as a result of:

- A reported incident / civil disturbance in the local community with the potential to pose a risk to staff and pupils in the school.
- A threat received by the school, ECC, media etc.
- A warning being received regarding the risk of air pollution
 - o In the event of air pollution, air vents should be closed (where possible) as an additional precaution. Emergency Services will advise as to the best course of action in respect of the prevailing threat.

Immediate Action:

- Contact the Emergency Services if necessary
- All outside activity to cease immediately, pupils and staff return to building.
 - o Method of communication needs to be arranged so staff members can be alerted during break times.
- All staff and pupils to remain in the building with external doors and windows locked.
- Depending on circumstances, free movement within the building may be permitted

Once all staff and pupils are safely inside, senior staff will conduct an ongoing and dynamic risk assessment based on advice from the Emergency Services, which should then be communicated to staff and pupils.

Full Lockdown – *this signifies an immediate threat to the school and may be an escalation of a partial lockdown.*

Immediate action:

- Contact the Emergency Services if necessary
- All pupils return to base (classroom, tutor room or other agreed location, e.g. sports/assembly/dining hall)
- External doors are locked, classroom doors locked (where a member of staff with a key is present), windows locked, blinds/curtains drawn, pupils sit quietly out of sight (e.g. under desk or around a corner) somewhere not visible to external people.
- Register taken – the office will contact each class in turn for an attendance report.

Staff and pupils remain in lock down until it has been lifted by a senior member of staff/emergency services. At any point during the lockdown, the fire alarm may sound which is a cue to evacuate the building - although staff should be mindful that the fire alarm may have been activated by the intruder. Perhaps consider the use of hand bells in smaller schools.

During lockdown, staff will keep agreed lines of communication open but not make unnecessary calls to the central office as this could delay more important communications.

Bomb Threat – *upon receiving a message that a bomb has been planted in school.*

Immediate Action:

- Ask questions such as: where the bomb is located, when the bomb will go off, what materials are in the bomb, who is calling, why the caller is doing this
- Listen closely to caller's voice and speech patterns and to noises in the background
- Notify the Headteacher/most senior member of staff
- Headteacher/most senior member of staff orders evacuation of all persons inside the building(s)
- Headteacher/most senior member of staff notifies police (call 999)

Evacuation Procedures:

- Headteacher/most senior member of staff warns students and staff (do not mention "Bomb Threat". Use standard fire drill procedures:
 - o Students and staff must be evacuated to a safe distance outside of school building(s)

- Teachers take register after being evacuated
- No one may re-enter the building(s) until the entire building(s) is declared safe by fire or police service
- Headteacher/most senior member of staff notifies students and staff of termination of emergency.

Where examinations are taking place (advice from [JCQ – Joint Council for Qualifications](#)):

- Immediate Action:
 - Evacuate the examination room in line with the instructions given by the appropriate authority
 - Make sure that the candidates are supervised as closely as possible while they are out of the examination room to make sure there is no discussion about the examination
 - Make a note of the time of the interruption and how long it lasted
 - Make a full report of the incident and of the action taken, and send to the relevant awarding body

It is recommended that schools check on the relevant awarding board websites for any further/updated recommendations. For schools undertaking SATs they should check the Test Administrator’s Guide for any further recommendations.

Further Information

Further information is available from [Gov.uk](#) and includes the [Stay Safe Film – ‘Run, Hide, Tell’](#) and [Emergency Planning and Response](#).

Appendix 1

Emergency Contacts at Essex County Council

SCF Communications Team

03330139880(Office hours 9am-5pm) 07894963922
(Out of hours/weekends)

Press office

03330132800

07717 867525

Children's Social Care Emergency Duty Service

- for serious situations affecting vulnerable children and adults outside of normal office hours.

Office
ce

0345
6037
627

- for major incidents affecting the school that take place outside of normal office hours

Other Useful Numbers and links

[https://schools.essex.gov.uk/admin/Critical Incidents/Pages/Critical%20Incidents%20and%20School%20Closures.aspx](https://schools.essex.gov.uk/admin/Critical%20Incidents/Pages/Critical%20Incidents%20and%20School%20Closures.aspx)

Appendix 2

References (websites)

The following list includes the full website addresses (URLs) that sit behind hyperlinks in this document: Space is left for you to add any additional sites of which you may be aware.

Essex Schools Infolink (home page)	http://esi.essexcc.gov.uk
Essex educational visits guidance	https://educationalvisits.essexcc.gov.uk/default.asp
Teachernet (home page, then search for educational visits guidance)	www.teachernet.gov.uk
Essex County Council (home page)	www.essex.gov.uk
Essex pandemic 'flu guidance	http://esi.essexcc.gov.uk/vip8/si/esi/content/binaries/documents/Advice_and_Guidance/PandemicfluGuidance_Aug06.doc
Bereavement advice and support	http://www.dh.gov.uk/dr_consum_dh/groups/dh_digital_assets/@dh/@en/documents/digitalasset/dh_092247.p df

Appendix 3

Flood planning

There are some very simple steps that can be taken to develop self preparedness for your location.

Step 1: Find out if your location is at risk of flooding by checking on the Environment Agency website, www.environment-agency.gov.uk, and enter the postcode for your location.

If you are at risk of flooding:

Step 2: You should register for free on the Environment Agency's Floodline Warning Direct by calling 0845 988 1188.

Step 3: Understand what the flood warning codes are and what the implications are for your location.

Flood Watch: Flooding of low lying land and road is expected.

Be aware. Be prepared. Watch out!

Flood Warning: Flooding of homes and business is expected. Act now!

Severe Flood Warning: Severe Flooding is expected. There is extreme danger to life and property. Act now!

All Clear: No further is expected. Water levels will start to go down.

Step 4: Check with your District Council, Borough Council or Unitary Authority to find out what their "Sandbag Policy" is, as this varies between local authorities.

Step 5: Investigate purchase of flood mitigation equipment. This is not just a case of buying sandbags. There are many different types of flood protection products available. However it is not one size fits all and a serious degree of investigation is required to ensure you purchase the most appropriate product for your location and type of flood risk. For example if you are at risk of flooding from sea water, some of the polymer filled bags do not inflate in salty water. A good source of information is an independent organisation, The National Flood Forum, who produce "The Blue Pages", a directory of flood product suppliers. www.floodforum.org.uk and follow the links to Blue Pages.

Step 6: Check your insurance, and confirm what you are actually covered for.

Step 7: Make a list of important telephone numbers. You may well already have such a document to cover other emergency such as evacuation due to fire.

- Step 8:** Know where and how to turn off your utilities, electricity, gas and water supplies.
- Step 9:** Store valuable, sentimental or important documents and objects out of the reach of flood water.
- Step 10:** Consider vehicles you may have parked, whether those of staff, visitors or business vehicles and where they could be re-located to in the event of a flood.
- Step 11:** Prepare an emergency kit suitable to your location. Ensure it contains 1st aid kit, torch, battery, rubber gloves, buckets, whistle other appropriate items for the purposes of your location.
- Step 12:** Follow advice given by Local Authority and / or Emergency Services.
- Step 13:** Monitor information being given via the media, local television and local radio. This will be the main way information will be passed out to the community.
- Step 14:** Monitor local weather forecasts to develop understanding of how intense periods of rainfall, or extreme tides may affect your location.
- Step 15:** Ensure there is sufficient drainage from hard standing areas. To help protect buildings during short intense periods of rainfall.
- Step 16:** Don't forget to consider the school pets. Move outdoor pets, such as rabbits and guinea pigs, indoors to a garage or shed. Keep all domestic pets indoors and upstairs, if necessary. Plan to take these animals away from the school during the flooding event. For further advice of animal welfare during flooding visit www.rspca.org.uk

During a Flood

Flood can kill! Stay in a safe place.

Avoid contact with flood water, it will be contaminated.

Don't walk on sea defences, river banks or cross river bridges, they may collapse.

Don't walk, swim or drive through floodwater. There may be hazards such as missing manhole covers or underwater obstructions. Flowing, ankle deep water is enough to knock a person off their feet.

Only use 999 if you believe there is risk to life.

Do not try to return to your location unless you have been told it is safe to do so.

After a Flood

Call your insurance company

Contact your utility suppliers to arrange re-connections.

Investigate alternative accommodation if your location is un-useable.

Keep a record of flood damaged property.

Don't eat fruit or veg that may have been growing in the school veggie patch, (if you have one).

Open doors and windows to help ventilate your building/s.

Don't attempt to start repairs until the flood is over.

Monitor the weather forecasts.

If you are not at risk of flooding.....

Check to see if your location will be come isolated on high ground.

Check to ensure your access and egress routes will remain clear and not become flooded.

Some thoughts and ideas.....

During the next Fire Drill, consider how this would work if you have just received a flood warning and advice to evacuate your location?

1. Who do you need to contact?
2. Where would the students go?
3. How do you contact the parents? Telephone lines may be down.
4. How do you continue the education of those students affected? The flooding event may be quite protracted, with a long recovery phase.
5. What if this occurred during the exam season?

Many of these points are probably already covered under your Fire Plan or similar document. However, it's a good idea to apply these considerations to a flooding scenario.

For more information on how to prepare for and respond to flooding events visit the Environment Agency website www.environment-agency.gov.uk

Appendix 4

Pandemic 'flu planning

The latest guidance on national and local arrangements for managing an outbreak of pandemic 'flu may be found on the [Essex Schools Infolink](http://esi.essexcc.gov.uk) (<http://esi.essexcc.gov.uk>).

The location from the home page is **Advice & Guidance / 'F' / 'Flu (pandemic)'** but the above link will take you straight to it.

Incident Log at TWS we use My concern Software

Incident:	
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Location of Incident:	
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Maintain a log below of your actions taken as the incident progresses.

Date	Time	Event / Action Taken	Reason(s)
Please attach any emails sent and received			

Date: