



# ST. CATHERINE'S COLLEGE

A CHURCH OF ENGLAND ACADEMY

# Crisis Management Plan

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





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## Quick Reference Crisis Management Flow Chart

<b>Incident Reported</b> 
Establish the facts Inform Headteacher / Deputy / Senior Staff Notify/request Emergency Services if appropriate

<b>Immediate Action</b> 	<b>Short Term Action</b> (first 24 hours ) 	<b>Next Few Days and Beyond</b> 
Ensure safety of all personnel	Set up the Emergency Incident Suite	Make any necessary recovery arrangements: repairs, replacements etc
Verify the facts	Use Fax line or mobiles for outgoing calls	Continue regular updates for staff, students, governors, parents
Convene the Crisis Management Team and allocate tasks – see App L	Use radios for internal communication	Start putting together a full report of the incident and actions by the setting
<b>Start an Incident Log</b>	Contact specialist contractors if required	
Notify CSD. (See App B for Tel Number) Ask for help if needed (including Educational Psychologists)	Check psychological support is sufficient	
Contact other staff and governors for support as required, particularly if out of hours	Crisis Management Team meets at regular intervals	Make plans to mark the event: special assembly, memorial, plaque, etc
Make arrangements to close/open the setting or cancel activities	Issue regular updates for staff, children, young people, governors, parents via: staff meetings assemblies letters home web-site / social media ESCC website	Evaluate the Crisis Management Plan and amend as necessary
Provide recorded message on answerphone for parents, etc	Start planning the return to normality	Formally thank those involved in supporting the Crisis

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## 1. Introduction

1.1 As an essential part of their duty of care, managers of children's services and settings are responsible for preparing crisis plans to deal with crises/emergencies and the business continuity of the setting. It is self-evident that where a setting has anticipated a major emergency, and made plans for managing a response, it is likely to handle the actual event more effectively and confidently. To this end, where the managers of a setting know:

- who will assume key roles
- that checklists and procedures are in place
- that contact lists are accurate
- that there is a tested framework for communications
- that the appropriate training has been undertaken

the response to a crisis will be more assured than that based on improvisation.

1.2 Handling crises is a normal part of life in Children's settings. Some emergencies, however, are more critical than others and tend to disorientate and overwhelm those involved, exposing staff, children, young people and parents to periods of prolonged stress. Each crisis/emergency is unique in its range and complexity, and there is no rigid formula for managing the consequences but, by its very nature, the journey through this sort of event is always going to be difficult. Planning ahead, therefore, is a necessary precaution, and will greatly reduce the pressure on those managing the incident.

1.3 Section 5 of the Model Health and Safety Policy, which can be found on czone, advocates the setting up of a Crisis Management Team and states;

*“A crisis management team has been set up to assist in the reduction of major hazards and risks and to action a recovery plan in the event of a serious accident”.*

*The Crisis Management Team should consist of:*

Headteacher  
Deputy Headteachers  
Director of Safeguarding  
Business Manager  
Chair of Governors  
Plus any other staff or governors deemed appropriate

## Function of the Crisis Management Team:

- to act as the decision-making authority for the management of an incident.
- to develop the procedures and practices to be used for handling emergency situations and communicating these to all those involved or affected.
- to establish and maintain a crisis management suite which will have the necessary equipment available for rapid activation during an emergency. The equipment includes communications equipment, emergency plans and procedures, a log to record all actions taken during the crisis, necessary office equipment/supplies and appropriate maps and building plans.
- to test the Crisis Management Plan on a regular basis to ensure that it is suitable and sufficient and amend it as necessary.

1.4 The constitution of the Crisis Management Team shown in paragraph 1.3 is the suggested minimum and larger settings should consider adding to this list. Consideration should also be given to nominating reserve team members in case of absences or protracted incidents.

## 2. Aim

2.1 This plan template has been prepared to encourage and support pre-planning, and is designed to help settings develop their own emergency plans to respond to incidents involving their particular setting.

2.2 The guidance is not exhaustive or rigid in its format. It is there to assist in the production of a robust emergency response plan and can therefore, be modified or adapted in any way required to suit the needs of individual setting, and the ethos of their management.

## 3. Objective

3.1 This plan aims to provide a basis for managing all levels of an emergency. A major emergency will however, require the introduction of all the measures recommended in order to provide a satisfactory response.

3.2 For the purposes of this document, a major emergency during an **off-site** activity is defined as:

***“When a member of an East Sussex County Council Children’s Services setting or affiliated group, in the course of officially recognised activities, has suffered serious injury or fatality or is missing from an off-site activity”.***

## 4. Other Types of Incident

4.1 Some other types of incident that can result in a crisis are set out below:

- Explosion, fire or chemical hazard
- Building damage or destruction
- Loss of access to premises
- Intruder on premises/Hostage taking/Abduction
- Terrorist incident
- Serious health hazards or infectious outbreak
- Environmental disaster, severe flood, high winds, snow
- Vandalism
- Utilities failure (gas, electricity, water, telephones, computer links) or loss of fuel supplies

4.2 Specific advice on some of these incidents is available on the teacherNet website or can be obtained from the ESCC Emergency Planning Team.

4.3 Guidance on off-site activities is available on czone or from the Children's Services Outdoor Education Adviser.

## 5. Business Continuity Management

5.1 A business continuity incident is one which interferes with the ability of an organisation to deliver its goods or services.

5.2 Most of the incidents mentioned in section 4 above could produce devastating effects in terms of the:

- Loss of students course work
- Loss of teaching material
- Loss of computer files/records/data
- Psychological impact on students and staff
- Disruption caused by transfer to temporary accommodation
- Loss of community facilities and income

5.3 A checklist is provided at **Appendix K** which is intended to assist settings with the production of a simple business continuity plan. Consultation with representative bodies is advisable during the production of such a plan.

## 6. Alerting the Crisis Management Team

6.1 The Crisis Management Team (CMT) will be alerted, according to the type of incident, whether it is on or off-site and whether it is in or out of normal working hours.

6.2 If the emergency occurs **during normal working hours**, the Manager of the setting, or in his/her absence, one of the senior members of staff, will alert the CMT. (**See Appendix A for contact details**).

6.3 If the incident is **off-site, or out of normal working hours** and depending on the information received, it will be the duty of the manager of the setting or base contact to initiate the Team call-out. (**See Appendix C for contact flow chart**).

## 7. Support Provided by ESCC Children's Services Department

7.1 Support from the Children's Services Department will be provided in the event of a major emergency, but it can also be requested for the co-ordination of, and recovery from, other emergencies.

7.2 The emergency contact numbers for ESCC Children's Services are shown in **Appendix B**.

7.3 As a result of the call, all ESCC services will be notified, as necessary. In particular, the following will be activated, as appropriate:

- (a) The **CSD Resilience Management Team**: formed to assess the emergency and provide strategic support as required.
- (b) Through the County Support Group appropriate groups/people will be informed to provide additional support where necessary:
  - **Establishment Support Team**: To provide support to the setting involved and normally comprising a Children's Services officer (Team Leader), an Educational Psychologist, an administration assistant and other staff as required.
  - **Off-site Response Team**: To provide support at the "incident locality" at an off-site emergency, whether in the UK or abroad. The team will consist of appropriately experienced officers at county level, together with staff from the setting in crisis, when appropriate.
  - **Educational Psychologists**: Will also provide support in respect of critical incident stress debriefing if required.
  - **County Communications Manager**: Will be alerted to provide support in dealing with the press and media issues that will arise. A member of the County Communications Unit will attend the setting in crisis.



- **County Insurance and Risk Management:** The County Insurance and Risk Management team will be notified of the emergency as soon as possible and, if appropriate, will send a representative to provide support and guidance to the setting in crisis.
- **A Capital Strategy Officer:** Where damage to building(s) has occurred, an officer from the Capital Strategy Team will provide support and advice on structural issues, refurbishment and/or temporary accommodation, etc.
- **For Church Schools: The Schools Diocesan Officer:** Where damage to building(s) has occurred, will provide support and liaise with the County Council as appropriate.

## 8. Emergency Incident Suite

8.1 In the event of an emergency, it is essential that adequate provision be made for the CMT to manage it. In this respect, an Emergency Incident Suite will need to be set up within the setting.

8.2. The procedures detailed below assume that the structure of the building has not been affected. In circumstances other than this, the procedures can be used as an aide memoire for staff to consider the issues that need to be addressed at whatever location has been designated for the Emergency Incident Suite.

### 8.2.1 Security of the site

During any emergency, the media may try to gain access to the site and it is, therefore, desirable that the perimeter of the site is secure. The Police may assist in this respect and should be asked to attend at the earliest opportunity. The media may try to interview or obtain comments from parents or others arriving at the setting. Therefore, it may be necessary to have an official at or near to the gates to monitor the situation.

### 8.2.2 Security of the building

Security of the building is essential. Therefore all exterior doors must be secure. All ingress and egress should be restricted to the main entrance (bearing in mind that emergency exits must remain available for use). If it is felt necessary to use one of the other doors as an additional exit, then it should be attended by a responsible member of staff at all times. A reception and security check should also be set up to record people entering and leaving the building.

### 8.2.3 Communications

Effective communications are essential to bring the emergency to a successful conclusion. Fixed landline communications provide the best solution but other means, such as mobile phones, radios and Internet communications, should also be considered. If necessary, BT may be able to provide additional lines at short notice.

If the Emergency Incident Suite is set up outside the setting, it will be necessary to pass all available telephone numbers to all parties concerned, including the number parents should use.

It is recommended that an answer phone giving up-to-date information is fitted to the setting's main telephone line and that the existing fax line is used for outgoing calls dealing with the emergency response. A separate number should be given to essential callers, such as the offsite team, County Council contacts etc. who would then have a better chance of contacting the setting.

If mobile communications are used, it should be remembered that they are not secure so they should not be used for transmitting sensitive information.

It is essential that all incoming messages are logged, (**See Appendix J**) and that any decisions/actions are recorded. (**See Appendix I**). Such records would be required for any subsequent debrief or inquiry.

#### 8.2.4 Incident Log

It is essential to ensure that all teams and settings maintain full written records of the passage of information, events, decisions, related expenditure, etc, as they occur, which should be consolidated and retained once the incident has been concluded.

Such records may be required at any subsequent debrief or official inquiry and can be used to defend the reputation of an individual or organisation. The legal view at some past enquiries has been "if it wasn't written down, it didn't happen".

**Appendix I** is provided to assist with the recording of:

- all relevant decisions taken, by whom and a brief reason
- all relevant actions taken

A record of all relevant expenditure can either be recorded on the incident log, or recorded separately and a copy attached to the incident log at a later date.

**Appendix J** is provided for the recording of incoming messages and subsequent actions.

#### 8.2.5 Layout and Aide Memoire

To prevent any delay in setting up the Incident Suite, a diagram depicting its layout should be included in the Crisis Management Plan. A check list of issues to be considered when establishing the Incident Suite is set out at **Appendix G**.

#### 8.2.6 Welfare

As the Emergency Incident Suite will be staffed continuously for the short term and it is likely that there will be parents on site for a considerable time, suitable welfare arrangements should be made at an early stage.

Once the initial setting up of the suite has been completed, a rota system should be introduced to ensure that all helpers receive adequate time off and rest. It may be helpful to keep a record of who has worked in the Suite, when and for how long (**See Appendix H**).

## 9. Parents/Guardians Visiting the Premises

### 9.1 Parents/Guardians Information Centre

Where an emergency has affected a local community, parents/guardians and relatives will want to visit the setting and gain comfort from being there and being together. An area must be set aside to accommodate this; the **Main Hall** may be adequate for this purpose. The advantage of using a hall is that it can normally accommodate a large number of people, and makes updating those present an easier task. (**Note:** *The Main Hall is only a recommendation; another area may be designated if required.*)

### 9.2 Individual Counselling

Consideration must be given to those requiring individual counselling, and a suitable room(s) should be identified for this purpose.

## 10. Dealing with the Media

10.1 It will be impossible to keep the media out completely and an initial press briefing should be given as soon as possible (**See Appendix F**).

10.2 Past experience has shown that if regular briefings are provided the media are more likely to comply with any privacy requests. In this respect a room, ideally outside of the main building, and as far away from the friend's and relative's area as possible, should be set aside as a press briefing room, where an agreed spokesperson can meet them at agreed times to give press statements. The County Communications Manager will provide assistance to the managers of the setting and this should be requested as soon as possible. If the press briefing room is in the same part of the setting, security measures should be taken to ensure that the privacy of the family and friends area is maintained. Any room used for press briefings should be cleared of all items relating to children, young people or staff, which the press could use in their reporting.

## 11. Bereavement Policy Guidelines

11.1 When developing a Crisis Management Plan staff should also consider provision of bereavement support for children, young people and staff. These guidelines are designed to help settings draw up a policy to help respond to a death in their community. Within the plan should be details of how they will respond to each of four main deaths that can affect their community. These are:

- 1 Death of a child or young person
- 2 Death of a parent, carer or sibling of a child or young person
- 3 Death of a teacher or other member of staff

#### 4 A tragedy affecting a section of their community

11.2 How a setting might deal with the expected death (eg following a long term illness) of a member of its community could also be included within the policy.

11.3 Children, young people and families expect settings to provide a safe and predictable environment; however, they may also be places where children and young people find it difficult to manage their thoughts and emotions. It is important that staff endeavour to foster an environment that is compassionate, yet disciplined, whilst at the same time being sensitive to the children's and young people's needs.

11.4 When writing a bereavement policy, consideration should be given to the following points:

1. Social, cultural and religious issues.
2. Identifying key members of staff:
  - who will be responsible for giving information to staff, children and young people
  - who on the staff team will take on the role of supporting children and young people
3. Communication and information sharing with families is vital. Before disseminating any information, make sure that all facts have been verified. Always be honest with children and young people and give them the facts.
4. Children and young people will need to be given time to grieve. Be aware of, and be prepared for, obvious upset and other emotional responses. Identify a quiet place for a bereaved child or young person to go when they feel that they cannot cope with the demands of the learning environment.
5. It is good practice to develop and maintain a resource bank of materials that can be used by staff, children and young people and these resources should be available for children and young people to use or borrow as appropriate.
6. Bereavement issues should be addressed through the PSHE curriculum during the course of primary and secondary education whenever appropriate. Many aspects of this work are already incorporated into the SEAL (Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning) materials.
7. Consider training events for staff to attend:
  - a have an awareness of training needs
  - b access training available through central services
  - c provide a rolling programme of training within the establishment
8. How the setting will communicate with, and manage, the media in certain difficult and potentially emotive situations.

9. Make contact with appropriate external agencies, eg the Educational Psychology Service, which can offer support and guidance when dealing with bereavement.

The above does not provide an exhaustive list; it is important for settings to consider their own needs. St Catherine's College does not currently have a bereavement policy, but manages bereavements sensitively as individual situations with the support (where required) of our Chaplain, Counsellor and Deputy Heads of Year.

11.5 Settings need to be aware of the needs of all members of their community and to foster a caring attitude, as well as considering the emotional well-being of all of those involved in a bereavement. It is important, therefore, to ensure that there are debriefing opportunities for key staff who may be involved in supporting traumatised children and young people.

## 12. Recovery Period

12.1 The recovery process must be considered by the Crisis Management Team immediately after the initial stages of the incident and, in the case of damage to buildings, a decision as to whether it is safe to remain, or necessary to relocate, will need to be made.

12.2. **Appendices D and E** detail the actions for consideration focussed on property for the first 24 hours, and from 24 hours to 2 weeks, respectively.

12.3 Other aspects of recovery that will need to be considered immediately after the initial stages of the incident concern the handling of the feelings and reactions of staff, children, young people, parents and helpers. Advice should be sought from the Educational Psychologists and/or the After-Care Co-ordinator within the Adult Social Care Department.

**Appendices removed as they contain Confidential information**













