



Critical Incident & Business Continuity Policy

Approved via GovernorHub

Approved date	January 2025
Review date	September 2026

Critical Incident Policy

The Members of the Critical Incident Team must:

- Keep your copy of the Critical Incident Management Plan at home
- Be aware of the roles of each part of the plan to enable the school to react swiftly and accordingly.
- Have contact telephone numbers for each other for 24 hour contact.
- In the event of a school trip/visit, have access to a list of names and contact numbers for staff and pupils.
- Property related incidents will also include the school's property manager (add name and telephone number).
- This policy should be kept securely as it contains confidential data. If you are no longer a member of staff please dispose of securely (i.e. shred).

A copy of this plan will also be kept on site in the School Office

Aims

In responding to an incident the aim should always be to ensure:

- Rapid and appropriate action is taken
- Accurate information is provided;
- Normal school routines are maintained as far as possible, giving continuity to pupils;
- Immediate, sensitive and non-intrusive support is offered

In a critical incident, people are often left with sudden shock or panic. It is therefore important that there is a policy in place which gives clear guidelines to the user. The guidelines should be fairly easy to understand and indicate the course of events required to bring stability to the school.

Legislation and Guidance

The Department for Education provides guidance on what to do in the event of a critical incident. The guidance says that the plan should be generic enough to cover "a range of potential incidents that could occur", including:

- Serious injury to a pupil or member of staff (such as a transport accident)
- Significant damage to school property (for example from fire)
- Criminal activity (such as a bomb threat)
- Severe weather (such as flooding)
- Public health incidents (such as a flu pandemic)
- The effects of a disaster in the local community
- A child missing from the premises (lost or absconding)

This plan has been adopted using model templates from Peterborough City Council and Cambridgeshire County Council and adapted to suit any specific needs of Soke Education Trust and its associated schools.

Definition

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. They can be seen as situations that are beyond the everyday experiences of school life, and could be markedly distressing to a significant number of adults and/or children.

Examples of such incidents impacting on schools could include:

- 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 / disappearance
- Allegations or actual incidents of abuse against pupils by staff and staff against pupils
- Incidents involving the murder of school children that attracted the attention of national and international media over prolonged periods
- Floods
- School used in an emergency
- Disruption to water supply
- Adverse weather

These incidents might occur:

- 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 prior to the school day

Using this definition as a basis for decision making, an incident is declared to be a critical incident following consultation between the Critical Incident Management Team (see following section) and the senior officer in Education Services Partnership and Planning. If there is doubt it is always better to consult and err on the side of caution and declare an incident critical.

Critical Incident Management Team (CIMT)

The following people are identified as members of the CIMT and will take a lead in an emergency:

- CEO
- Director of Education
- COFO
- Headteacher

- Deputy Headteacher
- Assistant Headteacher
- Operations Manager
- School Business Administrators
- School Site Officer
- Any member of staff living nearby may be called
- Chair of Board/Chair of LGC

School Building and Emergency Evacuation Alternative

In an emergency where alternative accommodation is required for pupils until parents are able to collect them the following sites will be used

Werrington Primary School
Amberley Slope
Werrington

Preventative Practice

Risk Assessments

Risk assessments are the essential tool for all staff and enable us to be sure that activities, journeys and the environment are safe.

Risk assessment forms must be filled in by teachers when they take pupils off-site, as a group or individually. Unless a change has occurred, a risk assessment for a regular recurring school visit eg to the Sea Life Centre at Hunstanton, can be reviewed, dated and signed rather than repeated each time.

No child should be taken by car unless two adults are present and staff must hold business cover on their personal insurance for such trips as the school's insurance only covers emergency journeys.

Risk assessment forms are copied for the Headteacher and filed.

Curriculum

We address sensitive issues such as death, bereavement and serious injury as appropriate within the general curriculum. Therefore, pupils will not have to address these issues for the first time following a critical incident. These issues are covered through studies in R.E., PSHCE and assemblies

Pastoral support

We have developed an atmosphere of support and trust amongst our pupils and parents, and provide opportunities for them to talk and share their feelings. In the event of a critical incident we would provide mentoring and counselling for pupils and parents through trained personnel within the school.

Behaviour policy

As a positive measure to ensure our pupils' safety, our well-established behaviour policy applies off-site as well as within the school boundaries. See Behaviour Policy.

Whilst careful pre-planning and effective risk management minimises our pupils' exposure to dangerous situations, unforeseen hazards may occur. In these situations a dynamic risk assessment will be made and we will immediately brief children about how to proceed and require their compliance with any rulings we make.

Training

On a termly basis we brief or train all relevant staff groups on their role in the prevention, management and response to incidents.

Security

Our schools provide a secure site. We employ effective security measures to prevent unwelcome visitors entering the school; and out of hours security systems to reduce the potential for damage and vandalism. All visitors to the school must sign in and are provided with a sticker to identify them as a visitor. Children in school have been trained not to approach anyone unknown who does not wear a badge and not to open exterior doors but to inform a member of staff immediately.

Administrative practices

- We carefully maintain a list of all pupils and staff with next of kin contact details are held on cloud-based systems by the school. All members of the Leadership Team and administrative staff will know how to access these lists.
- Registers are completed promptly at the beginning of each morning and afternoon session. Names of pupils who are late or leave school early are recorded by the school using Inventry
- We operate a signing in and out procedure for all visitors and volunteers in school and check these registers in the event of an incident.
- Details of emergency evacuation and invacuation procedures are displayed in all areas of the school site (see Fire Evacuation Plan).

Planning for Educational Visits

We follow Local Authority, DfES and Outdoor Education Advisors Panel (OEAP) National Guidance when planning and organising school visits (see separate educational visits policy).

All supervising adults carry details of the members of the party and a list of contact numbers (including the other adults' mobile phones and school/LA emergency contact numbers).

We hold insurance for all school visits, through a Risk Assurance Policy purchased via the Education Skills & Funding Agency (EFSA).

Health and Safety

All relevant school policies will include reference to health and safety procedures and how these relate to the teaching and organisation of the subject. This is particularly pertinent for physical education, design and technology, and science.

We follow NICC guidelines on the testing and maintenance of equipment, fixtures and fittings. All electrical, PE and fire-fighting equipment are inspected and tested annually.

We follow regulations for the storage and security of potentially hazardous substances and chemicals. We conduct regular health and safety checks on the buildings and site, with any potential dangers being reported and dealt with. Risk assessments are carried out and action required is carried out using a system of prioritisation. (See Health and Safety Policy)

We appoint a responsible person to provide advice and audit.

First Aid

We ensure an appropriate ratio of staff are trained in emergency and paediatric first aid. (See First Aid policy)

Dealing with an Incident

The emergency services should be contacted immediately if it is deemed necessary. At this stage, it may be most appropriate to take whatever urgent action is needed to ensure the safety of others (evacuation, Invacuation or lockdown etc – see Fire Safety and Evacuation Policy and/or Invacuation Policy). As soon as possible, the Headteacher (or next-most senior person) will start to keep a simple log of all events and actions (See appendix 3). The Headteacher will communicate with the CEO and emergency services, etc. via telephone, via mobile phone or e-mail. This will leave the school’s main phone line free for incoming calls from parents, etc. (The same procedure should be used for keeping contact with off-site parties if they have been involved in a critical incident.) A nominated person will contact the Local Authority and or Ofsted.

In the event of a critical incident there should be a structured and staged approach where response to the incident will	
be considered:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Immediately • In the medium term • In the longer term

The following procedures will take place in responding to a critical incident:

Issues requiring immediate action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gather information. • Call a meeting of CIMT for briefing. • Establish a base for CIMT to operate with dedicated phone use, preferably a mobile so that school incoming lines stay free. • Contact families whose relatives are or may be involved. • Prepare general information for all parents, staff, Trustees. • Brief school staff, pupils and Trustees. • Brief the media.
Issues to be dealt with as soon as possible	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure continuing support for needs of pupils, staff and relatives of those involved in the incident is planned. • Provide a focus for expressions of sympathy if appropriate. • Provide further information bulletin. • contact the LA schoolclosures@peterborough.gov.uk

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Contact the DfE simran.panesar@education.gov
Action extending over time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Continue to share information and advice about what has happened. ● Acknowledge the consequences of the event on the school's community, their reactions and feelings. ● Provide opportunities for pupils and staff to express personal reactions. ● Consider overall response of the school. ● Re-establish normal routines.

See Appendix 4a, b and c for checklists for responding to critical incidents using the staged response. Further information and key questions related to the procedures listed above are provided in the checklists.

Contact with Staff, Parents and Pupils

It is important to have a staff cascade telephone list to enable staff to be informed of a critical incident if this occurs out of school hours. Please see Appendix 5.

Parents will be contacted promptly, but the way in which this is done will depend on the nature and scale of the incident. Contact may be made in person or by telephone or Dojo. In very serious circumstances, it may be appropriate for the police to make the initial contact.

Before making contact with parents

- The Headteacher will confer with those who will be making contact about what to say, possibly rehearsing the message first. We will limit our comments to the known facts, and not speculate on the causes or responsibility for the crisis
- The senior administrator or other colleagues will keep a strict log of those parents who have been contacted, noting date and time of call, the number called and the person who was spoken to (or if there was no answer). This list should be cross-referenced with those who have contacted us
- We will ascertain if there are any colleagues who might offer help with transport to the school if required
- We will endeavour to delegate these calls to those not actually involved in managing the incident.
- When calling, we will check that parents are not left alone in distress, perhaps making suggestions for making contact with relatives or neighbours.
- We will offer any important phone numbers such as hospitals.

Pupils will be told simply and without fabrication what has happened, in the smallest group possible – usually within their class. Questions will be answered as straightforwardly as possible. Children and parents should be informed (preferably by letter) by the end of the day if the school has to be closed. As far as possible the school's normal routine will be followed to maintain security and continuity for the children.

In the event of deaths CEO and Nick Beech (P'boro LA) to be informed of a child death or serious injuries, the Headteacher will maintain close contact with the families involved and make arrangements for the school's representation at funerals, respecting the view, customs and wishes of parents.

Protection from Publicity

An important task is to protect children, parents and staff from publicity. Press and television will not be given permission to enter the school premises or be given access to staff or children. One of the Headteacher's first tasks on hearing of a crisis will be to contact Ryan Hyman at Athene Communications 07939650144. In any event, the only other persons to speak to the media would be the Headteacher, CEO or Chair of Trustees.

Dealing with an Off-Site Incident

If an incident happens off-site, the Headteacher will arrange for all contact with the party to go via the school. Therefore, we will contact parents, the LA et al on behalf of the party leader. It is also highly probable that the best course of action will be for children to be re-united with their families as soon as possible. The Headteacher, with advice and help from the police and the LA, will arrange to bring the children home. In some instances, it may be appropriate to arrange for parents to be taken to the children.

The leader of an off-site party may need to act 'in loco parentis' to authorise emergency medical treatment. However, they may only do this if every reasonable effort has been made to contact the parents.

The school has the details of Stephen Brown the Local Authority advisor for Cambridgeshire Outdoor service. In the event of an off-site incident *SLT and the EVC only* should use the VESN cards.

Medium Term Action

- Continue to provide updates of facts (*it may be necessary to update staff, parents and pupils for some time after the incident*).
- Monitor effects on pupils and staff.
- Prepare for involvement in funerals, memorial service etc.
- Prepare strategy for re-entry into school.

Long Term Action

- Monitor people's state of mind.
- Prepare for anniversaries.
- Be aware of legal procedures.
- Provide support as the facts progressively emerge and change.
- Review procedures.

Long Term Absence of Key Staff

If Headteacher is unavailable the Deputy Headteacher will immediately assume the role of Acting Headteacher.

If Deputy Headteacher is unavailable the Assistant Headteacher will immediately assume the role of Acting Headteacher.

If both the Deputy and Assistant Headteacher are unavailable, the school will make contact with the Headteachers of other locality schools and request emergency support.

Alderman Jacobs - 01733 202403
 John Clare - 01733 252332
 Northborough Primary - 01733 252204
 Werrington Primary - 01733 571779
 Wittering Primary - 01780 782336

If none of these options are available contact the Local Authority to ask for an officer to support the Critical Incident Plan.
 Financial matters ~ CFO. If the CFO is unavailable the COO or Operations Manager to cover as much as possible.

Data Backups, Fire & Theft

- The school server is securely hosted in the cloud.
- The school’s MIS is centrally hosted.

Key Holders:

Andy Lemin
 Christopher Scales
 Charlotte Brattan

Sensitivity in the Longer Term

The whole school will be affected by a tragedy. The Headteacher will arrange de-briefing sessions for directly-affected staff, check that procedures are in place for monitoring staff and pupils, and activate strategies for allowing all involved to express their feelings if they wish. In the case of prolonged absences of anyone injured in an incident, the Headteacher will ensure that a member of staff makes contact with the child or colleague at home or in hospital, and subsequently make sensitive arrangements for their return to school, and thereafter check that monitoring procedures are in place. Consideration must also be given to arrangements for a special assembly or memorial service. In the longer term, the Headteacher may need to introduce strategies to continue to monitor vulnerable pupils and staff, consult and decide on whether, and how, to mark anniversaries, and to ensure that new staff are aware of which pupils/staff were affected and in what way.

A list of references and support agencies and useful contact numbers can be found in Appendix 7.

Summary of Action Plan

Task	Responsibility	Timescale
1. Obtain immediate information at the start of the crisis	Head	Immediately
2. Call the emergency services	Head or Administrator	Immediately
3. Take whatever urgent action is needed to ensure the safety of others.	Head	Immediately

4. CIMT to meet to decide on key actions to be taken.	CIMT	Within 1 hour
5. Establish links with the CEO/LA		Within 1 hour
6. Contact families		Continue until all informed
7. Call staff meeting		ASAP
8. Inform children in class		As appropriate
9. Arrange de-briefing for children involved		Same day if practical
10. Arrange de-briefing for staff involved		ASAP
11. Identify high risk children and staff		ASAP
12. Identify the need for group or individual support.		In following days and weeks
13. Arrange memorials, etc		In following days and weeks

Please see Appendix 8 for a checklist and flow chart of who should be contacted in a critical incident.

School Closure at Short Notice or as a Result of Unforeseen Circumstances

As part of the preparation for unforeseen closure we keep up-to-date crucial records on a cloud system that can be accessed off site.

Examples of events covered by the guidance

Storms

Winds forecast in excess of 70mph or storm force 8 could represent a potential danger to some buildings, trees, other structures and people

- The Meteorological Office provides a regional weather forecast (email: www.metoffice.com)
- Safety of pupils, staff and visitors take priority. Lessons may need to be distributed and school movement kept to a minimum.
- Consideration will be given to movement outside of school buildings due to the risk of falling tiles, masonry, fencing and other moveable or structural objects.
- Outside activities and other events such as school trips will be cancelled.
- Pupils will not be allowed to cycle home.
- Safe areas of the school site will be identified in a risk assessment.

Floods

Flooding may result in local problems within school, making some rooms unusable and a potential impact on transport arrangements.

Cold Weather

This may be a problem due to the low temperature in some buildings or may be complicated by heavy snowfalls making access, and movement on site, difficult or dangerous.

If there is a breakdown which puts the heating system out of action for any length of time consideration will be given as to whether the building can be heated with emergency heating and continue to be used. Any plans to provide emergency heating, including how this can be obtained and where it can be safely deployed, will be outlined as part of the emergency plan.

Adverse weather conditions may result in difficulties for some staff in reaching school resulting in pupil supervision issues.

Disruption to the school's water supply

If sufficient notice that the water supply is to be disconnected a decision whether or not to keep the school open should take into consideration:

- The duration of the disruption
- The capacity of the water storage tanks (enable toilets to be flushed)

Short notice closure prior to the start of the school day

In certain situations, it may be appropriate in advance to decide that the school should not open. This will generally be as a result of a difficulty where there is advance notice i.e. planned disruption to water or energy supplies. In which case parents will be given as much notice as possible and informed of either a confirmed date when the school will re-open or advised that it will be communicated on Dojo and the school website.

In other situations, weather conditions may worsen dramatically overnight. In such circumstances decisions over closure will reflect:

- Local intelligence over the weather conditions in the school's catchment area.
- The likelihood of a sufficient number of staff being able to reach school to make it safe to operate.
- The travel arrangements of the pupils.
- Advance analyse of staff journey to work patterns.

The Headteacher will decide in consultation with the CEO, as appropriate, that severe weather warrants school closure and the following will happen:

- Inform staff, using a cascade system.
- Inform parents, using an appropriate system (Website and Dojo) including the local media.
- Inform the Chair of Governors as soon as is practicable (if the Chair was not involved in the decision making process).
- Where possible, ensure that those staff who can be at the school inform any parents or children who may not have received the closure message.
- Inform the Education Adviser.

Sending Pupils home early

In some exceptional circumstances, a review of the local situation may lead the Headteacher to decide that the school, or part of the school, should be closed early. The Headteacher will make the decision

after consultation with appropriate persons such as the CEO. The following factors will be considered in making the decision:

- It may often be safer to keep pupils in certain parts of the school rather than send them home early.
- Communication difficulties associated with contacting a large number of parents especially during the day.
- Transport and school meal arrangements.
- An informed assessment over their safety. This will reflect their age and any special educational needs and disability of the pupils.

Communication

- Where possible staff, pupils and parents will be made aware in advance of contingency arrangements.
- Emergency arrangements are on the school website.
- The staff cascade will be used to inform members of staff if school is closed before the start of the day.

Responsibility to the wider community

The Education Adviser will be contacted so that information can be communicated to the wider respective community across Cambridgeshire or Peterborough.

Building and financial information recovery

As part of any major incident it is likely that buildings and/or equipment will be damaged/lost so far as operational purposes are concerned. This section of the plan outlines the action to be taken in such a situation and the method by which a speedy return to normal, acceptable levels of service will be achieved. In the first instance, the Headteacher and subsequently the Critical Incident Management Team will follow the current emergency procedures. Beyond these procedures there are areas potentially essential to the immediate recovery plans for any facilities (see template in Appendix 4d).

Report of a missing pupil

We take the safety of children very seriously and will take every precaution necessary to ensure that the children in their care do not leave a session unaccompanied.

At the start and end of the school day there may be a greater risk that pupils who attend school, or preschool siblings may wander from their parent or carer. Similarly on an educational visit, while the risk assessment will reduce the likelihood of a child going missing, there need to be extra protocols for this eventuality.

On rare occasions a child may abscond and leave the premises with permission

The chances of finding a missing child safe are greatest if the child's absence is soon discovered. In the unlikely event that a child is noted to be missing from school premises or on an educational visit, the school puts into practice agreed procedures. These ensure the most effective resolution of this potentially distressing situation. Many of our school routines and procedures are in place to contribute to the prevention of a child going missing and to ensuring the safety and security of all children at all times. If, in the event of a member of staff not being able to account for a child's whereabouts, the following action will be taken:

Procedure if a child is missing from the school site:

A child may go missing because they have become lost by a parent, school adult or have chosen to abscond. In all cases:

Stage One - Search systematically

- All available staff to immediately check toilets, shared areas, rooms and playground to ensure the child is not hiding or locked in anywhere
- If the situation occurs at the end of the school day, the 'going home list', sports clubs and out-of-school club lists will be checked.
- One member of staff to immediately inform the school office and the Headteacher or member of staff in charge and check whether the child has been signed out for an external appointment or has an internal appointment with a visiting professional. (School Nurse/Speech Therapist etc) The online register will need checking by office staff as soon as a missing child has been reported.
- One member of staff gathers in class and calls the register to confirm that one named child is missing.
- Staff will ensure that all other pupils are kept safe and closely supervised throughout the incident should it be during the school day. Calm should be kept in the event of a child reported missing at the end of the school day.

Stage Two

- After stage one is completed without resolution (no more than 10 minutes), school office staff will contact the police and parents/carers with parental responsibility. At this point, school will support the police who will now lead the response to this incident. The Headteacher will liaise with emergency services and parents/carers.
- Staff will call registers in all classes to confirm the presence of other pupils, if the event is during the school day.

Stage Three

- The Headteacher should communicate the incident to the CEO/Chair of Governors
- A written record of the incident and any action taken should be made as soon after the incident as practicable and placed in the pupil's confidential record. The system the school uses is My Concern and all staff should input any relevant information; including conversations with parents, carers, child minders, police, and another person they feel has contributed to the collection of evidence.
- The Senior Leadership Team should conduct an internal investigation to establish how the situation occurred, how effective the response was and whether action could be taken to ensure it does not happen again. This information should also be collected in writing and My Concern.

Procedure if a child leaves the party on off-site an educational visit:

Stage one: search systematically

- If at an indoor venue such as a museum, all available staff to immediately check toilets, foyers and areas already visited in the venue to ensure the child is not hiding or locked in anywhere.
- One member of staff to immediately inform the trip leader, the school's main contact at the venue, the school office and the Headteacher or member of staff at school.

- One member of staff to gather all other children on the visit and call the register to confirm that one named child is missing.
- Staff will ensure that all other pupils are kept safe and closely supervised and calm throughout the incident.

Stage Two

- After stage one is completed without resolution (no more than 10 minutes), school office staff will contact the police and parents/carers with parental responsibility. At this point, school will support the police who will now lead the response to this incident. The Headteacher will liaise with emergency services and parents/carers.

Stage Three

- The Headteacher should communicate the incident to the CEO and the Chair of Governors.
- A written record of the incident and any action taken should be made as soon after the incident as practicable and placed in the pupil's confidential record. The system the school uses is My Concern and all staff should input any relevant information; including conversations with parents, carers, child minders, police, the Local Authority and another person they feel has contributed to the collection of evidence.
- The Senior Leadership Team should conduct an internal investigation to establish how the situation occurred, how effective the response was and whether action could be taken to ensure it does not happen again. This information should also be collected in writing and on My Concern.

A child absconds and leaves the premises without permission

Under Section 3 of the Health and Safety at Work Act, 1974 and in Common Law, schools and other education settings owe a duty of care towards their pupils. This duty of care requires that all reasonable steps are taken to ensure that pupils are safe and remain within the care of the school at all times throughout the school day and during school-led activities. A pupil who absconds is considered to have chosen to break the school rules. We take absconding to mean leaving the supervision of an adult without permission. The perimeter of the site is fenced and all gates are locked during the school day however we recognise that it is possible to circumvent these barriers if a child should decide to do so.

Procedure for searching for a child who absconds

- Adults will ensure they have a mobile phone with them.
- An adult will give a clear instruction for the child to stop where they are and wait.
- If a child is not visible within 5 minutes of the search, the parents/and or police will be notified
- Adults will follow at a safe distance. Adults will not 'give chase' as this may cause the child to run further away or put themselves at further risk. If the child stops and waits the adult will provide time to ensure the child is calm and ready to talk.
- If a child is about to put themselves at risk of danger an adult may use a physical intervention to ensure their safety
- Telephone the parents/police to inform them

After the event:

We will ensure that:

- We make regular checks to ensure that if an incident of this sort does happen, we have all the necessary phone numbers at hand – correct, up to date and kept together.
- If the Headteacher is not on the premises, she/he will be informed as soon as possible via the school office team, Deputy headteacher or senior staff member will take charge.
- Implement or review the risk management plan and discuss the event with the pupil and parents.
- If the child has been injured or remains unfound and the police are called then the Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Safeguarding Children's Board and Ofsted will also be informed.

Roles and Responsibilities

Dealing with people's reactions

We accept that the child's parents/carers will be frightened, distressed and angry. If the setting shares all policies with parents/carers, the situation will be easier for all because there will be an understanding of working within a framework of mutual trust and understanding.

We accept that in such circumstances powerful emotions are involved and people's behaviour can be unpredictable. Those who may seem quite calm about the incident at the time can later become angry, threaten legal action or approach the local press.

We will be clear about the circumstances surrounding the incident and will respond sympathetically to questions without implications or admission of responsibility.

Responses could include

- How sorry you are that the incident has happened.
- That a full investigation is in hand.
- That the Local Safeguarding Children's Board/Ofsted has been informed and will be investigating.

Dealing with the media

Distressed parents/carers may contact the local press, or reporters may hear about the incident if the police are involved. It is sensible for one person, usually the Headteacher, CEO or Chair of Governors/Trustees to be the one who speaks for the setting.

When the child is found

We recognise that during the time a child is missing, however briefly, all involved, parents/carers and others suffer great fear, guilt and distress. It is not always easy to control all these emotions when the child is found. We will accept that it is important to remember:

- That the child also might have been afraid and distressed and might now be in need of comfort.
- Remain calm, reassure the child and acknowledge it is not the child's fault.
- Ensure the child is not hurt.
- That the incident provides a good opportunity to talk to all the children to ensure that they understand that they must not leave the premises, and why.

After the Incident

- We will investigate the incident and take witness statements from all involved
- We will evaluate processes and make necessary adjustments to ensure future effectiveness. This may involve changes to whole school procedures or to a child's individual risk management plan.

Contacts

Carrie Traill - Service Directors carrie.trail@peterborough.gov.uk

Police – Tel: 101/999

Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH): 0345 045 1362

Emergency Duty Team (Out of Hours) 01733 234724

APPENDIX 1

Critical Incident Preparation Checklist

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						
LA emergency contact numbers						
Education Adviser School or LA press officer contact details						
Education Transport/bus/coach/taxi lists						
Emergency supply teachers/support list						
Information sheet about the school						
Up-to-date site plan						
Pupil/staff movement data (timetables/registration – who is where and when)						
(include sickness/day-leave rota and list of where CIMT members are during						
holidays)						
People, groups or organisations that visit or use the school would need to be						
informed						
People and groups used by the school e.g. suppliers and contractors						
Premises and sites plan of the school including critical locations, e.g. chemical						
storage, key salvage priorities, gas, electric and water mains control information						

School bank details, account number and sort code	
Location of keys to classrooms, minibus, school safe etc	
Copy of Hazard Register and appropriate risk assessments	
Server back-up disks for all administration and student records	
Educational Visits-details of names, location, significant medical information	
And contact details relating to all pupils and staff off-site	
First aider list	
List of vulnerable pupils and others with significant medical needs	

Evolve database login details (school trips)	
Evacuation and lockdown/Invacuation/return to base procedures – known,	
Visible and practised	
Telephone lines – private, mobile, emergency access	
Small room/quiet area identified for Police statements, counselling or interviews	
Plan for possible off-site location	

Management Support

Code

Access to qualified first aiders	

Screening of entrances/exits – siting of the identified emergency office	
Instant assemblies to release teaching staff	
Knowledge of resources available to deal with the recovery phase	
Familiarisation with 'Managing Bereavement in Cambridgeshire Schools'	
and access to counselling services	

APPENDIX 2	Managing Critical Incidents Time Plan	
Task	Time Scale	
Obtain as much factual information as possible at start of crisis	Immediate	
Alert Headteacher or designated substitute, Headteacher to alert the CIMT, Education Adviser/LA	Immediate	
Convene meeting of the Critical Incident Management Team	Immediate	
Start the incident log. Always keep a contemporary record of decision making to explain context	Immediate	
Make arrangements for handling the media in liaison with Education Adviser and designated school media support	Immediate	
Carry out quick appreciation of immediate response required	Within first hour	
Select and set up control arrangements – decide roles and responsibilities of CIMT	Within first hour	
Communicate details of the incident to staff, pupils, governors and parents as appropriate	Within hours if practicable	
Inform pupils in a sensitive way – small groups if appropriate	Within hours if practicable	
Arrange a debriefing meeting of 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. Consider arrangements following full consultation with all families/carers directly involved	Next few days	

Decide/agree a range of response and support measures. These have potential to run for many weeks or months after the critical incident has concluded	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

Appendix 3
SCHOOL CRITICAL INCIDENT LOG (EXAMPLE)

INCIDENT:

Date/ Time	Details of Incident	Action Taken	By Whom

Appendix 4a TEMPLATE FOR RESPONDING TO A CRITICAL INCIDENT

Issues requiring immediate action

Action Point	Guidance Note	CIMT Action	Personnel Involved	Done	Who by	Time	Comment
1. Gather information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What happened/where/when. • How many involved; who are they? • Name and contact numbers of adults at location of incident. • Details and location of injured (severity, name of injured and supervising adult(s) name(s) /contact number). • Details and location of non-injured names, and supervising adult(s) name(s) /contact number. • Has anyone else been informed e.g. Emergency Services, Education Officer (what were they told?). • Ensure Education Officer/LA and Chair of Governors are informed. 						
2. Call a meeting of the Critical Incident Management Team (CIMT) for briefing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assign tasks and ensure each individual knows what is expected and logs their action on a central log of events record sheet. • Consider whether you may need to close the school. • Identify a member of CIMT as the person to co-ordinate information. • Consider communication to school staff/pupils/community. 						
3. Establish a base for CIMT (this may be off school site) to operate with dedicated phone use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CIMT to agree a statement for all incoming calls, which can be managed by properly briefed staff or via informative answer phone messages where not all school lines can be operated personally (e.g. after school hours). 						

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● CIMT to brief personnel having direct links with public/media (factual brief statements only). (Discourage any speculative discussion; route all press enquiries to County Press Office in the case of a serious incident.). ● Establish press release in conjunction with the County Council Press Office. ● Ensure telephone line(s) or mobile phones for outgoing calls available. ● Action the ‘telephone cascade’ for staff and governors [where appropriate] to keep information flow fast and accurate. 						
--	---	--	--	--	--	--	--

Remember in most cases the first point of contact for the school will be the Education Officer who will act as your key contact with the LA. (See page 39)

COMMUNICATION

Action Point	Guidance Note	CIMT Action	Personnel Involved	Done	Who by	Time	Comment
☐ Contact families whose relatives (children and adults) are or may be involved	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Should be done quickly and with great sensitivity, preferably by a CIMT member – but remember it is the responsibility of the police to notify next of kin in the event of a death. ● Consistency of information is essential, therefore use agreed statement and most up-to-date information from your contact adult on the site. ● Try not to leave messages or use extended chains of communication. ● Establish a reception base for concerned relatives coming to the school. Think carefully about the siting of this base (access phone/internet etc). ● Ensure people who can comfort and inform relatives staff this. Maintain direct contact with this base. 						

<p>☐ Prepare general information for all parents/staff/ governors</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● If you have concerns about issues of legal liability or the likelihood of police action, any further information should be drafted with the help of the appropriate Education Officer. S/he can check with relevant agencies before letters are issued to the wider school community. ● Information should be simple, factual, express sympathy, concern, and should indicate when further information may be offered. 						
<p>☐ Briefing school staff and governors</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Ensure CIMT have a schedule to brief staff on a regular basis. ● Ensure all staff (teaching and non-teaching) and governors are discouraged from speaking to the media. This responsibility should be referred to a named person in the team and/or the County Press Office. 						
<p>☐ Briefing pupils</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Usually best managed in class or tutor groups by adults best known to the pupils. The agreed statement can then be delivered in a way that is age-appropriate to the group. ● A large gathering can generate hysteria, which can become a management problem in itself. 						
<p>☐ Briefing the media</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● By contacting the County Press Office at the earliest opportunity colleagues can liaise swiftly to direct press interest away from the school and CIMT, who have enough to arrange initially. ● County Press Officer can act as the local agent for media enquiries and can enable you to continue to manage the internal situation. Keep the Press Officer well briefed at all times. ● Even if you have good links with local media, it is essential enquiries be directed to the County Press Officer. ● If you have training sessions for CIMT on a regular basis, you may wish to invite a member of the County Council Press Office. 						

Appendix 4b TEMPLATE FOR RESPONDING TO A CRITICAL INCIDENT - Issues to be dealt with as soon as possible

Action Point	Guidance Note	CIMT Action	Personnel Involved	Done	Who by	Time	Comment
<p>1. Ensure continuing support for needs of pupils, staff and relatives of those involved in the incident is planned</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● A member of CIMT is identified as having responsibility for ensuring continuing support. ● Your Education Officer may have mobilised help from a variety of agencies able to offer support and counselling to those immediately affected: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Educational psychologists - Experienced counsellors - Social Workers - Child protection staff - Civil Protection Team - Locality teams - Area Directors - Property, Press and PR - Health and Safety ● You need to discuss likely continuing needs with relevant professional staff. Local religious communities may be able to contribute or take a lead in providing a longer-term focus for support. ● You may want to make a detailed plan of who can offer types of support and for how long this can be continued. 						

<p>2. Provide a focus for expressions of sympathy if appropriate. Refer to Bereavement Guidance in Managing Cambridge Schools (October 2006) for more detailed information</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● You may wish to place a table in the foyer or a vase of flowers, with a book for tributes/condolences. Sufficient space for items of remembrance may be helpful – the public and the school community may wish to place flowers or other tributes which can block fire exits or emergency service access points if not managed. ● It may be more appropriate to negotiate a location away from school, i.e. church or public building. 						
<p>3. Further information Bulletin</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● In your statements to the press and letters to the wider school community, you should indicate when you expect to be able to give more information. Try to honour this even if the update is very limited. You will create tension or possibly aggravate recipients of your information if your timescales are not adhered to. ● Clear your letters and statements with the County Press Officer and Police if necessary. 						

Appendix 4c TEMPLATE FOR RESPONDING TO A CRITICAL INCIDENT

Supporting people involved – action extending over time

Action Point	Guidance Note	CIMT Action	Personnel Involved	Done	Who by	Time	Comment
<p>1. Share information and advice about what has happened (this will apply immediately but will continue)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● All staff will need information about what has happened. ● Staff should be advised about how to talk to and support children. ● Information should be provided for staff on counselling available to pupils and to themselves. ● Parents may need information and advice on supporting and getting help for their children. 						
<p>2. Acknowledge the consequences of the event on the school's community, their reactions and feelings</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The incident may cause stress throughout the school. ● Acknowledge openly that the incident may affect people (children and adults) emotionally in different ways and at different times. ● Recognise that the behaviour, concentration and performance of children and adults may change. ● Recognise that not all staff will feel able to support others. ● Be aware of staff who are taking the brunt of supporting others, and ensure that they, too, receive support. 						

<p>3. Provide opportunities for pupils and staff to express personal reactions (immediate and continuing need)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Pupils should be encouraged to talk about their feelings in class, smaller groups, or individually, with active listening. ● Some pupils may show signs of needing support beyond the staff's competence or confidence. Extended counselling should be identified (with parental permission). ● Staff closely affected by the event should have opportunities for debriefing and counselling if they require it. ● Staff responsible for managing the critical incident should be offered supervision and relief. ● Some adults and children may need therapeutic help for an extended period after the event. 						
--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

Action Point	Guidance Note	CIMT Action	Personnel Involved	Done	Who by	Time	Comment
<p>4. Consider the overall response of the school</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The CIMT may need to consider: ● Attendance at a funeral. (It will not normally be appropriate to close the school.) Discuss attendance with the Education Officer. ● Visit(s) of staff/children to hospital. ● Expressions of sympathy to families affected. ● An assembly or service to mark the event. ● A memorial in the school or school grounds. It is advisable to consider this carefully and ensure full consultation with all parties. 						
<p>5. Re-establishing normal routines</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Normal routines should be established as soon as possible as these provide security and stability at a time of stress and/or emotional upheaval. 						

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Bear in mind the need to create time and space for thinking and grieving about the event.● Pupils should be encouraged to resume normal attendance.● Children who cannot attend school due to injury or distress may need other ways of maintaining the contact with the school and school personnel.● Consider how/when personal effects of deceased pupils should be removed.						
--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

Appendix 4d TEMPLATE FOR RESPONDING TO A CRITICAL INCIDENT
Building and financial information recovery

Operational threat	Steps to restores normal working practice	Contact details	Action by whom	Comments/notes
<p>Accommodation – In the event of loss of premises, or a part thereof, there will be a need for space in which to house core activities</p>	<p>We will provide for such an occurrence in the short term by prioritising accommodating key year groups (2, 5, 6) into buildings in the local schools. If it is not possible to accommodate any year groups then home learning will be posted on the school website. In the longer term the ESFA (insurance provider) and LA will be contacted to determine accommodation arrangements.</p>	<p>ESFA (RPA) RPA 0117 9769 361 Email: RPAAdvice@willistowerswatsonsecure.com Emergencies and Urgent Incidents (excluding overseas travel) Tel 0330 0585 566 or email:rpa@topmarkcms.com Cambridgeshire County Council See page 39</p>	<p>CIMT</p>	
<p>Communications – In the event of a crisis/disaster takes the existing telecommunications system out of commission</p>	<p>Mobile phones should be used and telecommunication recovery should be commenced</p>	<p>BT Business Faults T: 0800 800 152</p>	<p>CIMT</p>	
<p>Utilities - Should a major incident affect the utility supply to school premises</p>	<p>Repairs to affected utility supplies should be carried out by the contacts in this document</p>	<p>Heating - Electricity/Gas T: 0116 265 7901 Water – Anglian Water Authority T: 0345 0704158</p>	<p>CIMT</p>	

<p>Furniture – If the school furnishings are damaged beyond repair or use</p>	<p>Source temporary replacements from local school surplus if available or new alternatives if required</p>	<p>ESPO T: 0116 265 7901</p>	<p>CIMT</p>	
<p>Security and Security Hardware – ensure affected areas do not present a security risk</p>	<p>All damaged windows should be boarded and damaged roofing weather proofed. Area may require security fencing</p>	<p>RA Baker Glaziers & Merchants T: 01733 344177 A1 Fencing T: 01733 204990</p>	<p>CIMT</p>	
<p>Financial Information</p>	<p>Staff salaries are managed off-site by Payplus All financial packages can be accessed remotely off-site</p>	<p>Access Education</p>	<p>Central Team</p>	
<p>Computing facilities – Consider separately the various elements that constitute the computing facilities and services</p>	<p>Centrally hosted services to be recovered by using back up discs that are stored in the safe and off-site by the SBM. CIMT to implement a computing recovery plan including hardware if necessary</p>	<p>Prism 07951 707698</p>	<p>CIMT</p>	

Appendix 4e TEMPLATE FOR RESPONDING TO A CRITICAL INCIDENT
Building and financial information recovery – roles and responsibilities

Business continuity - initial response	Tick/sign/time
Assess the nature of the incident, e.g.: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Loss of utility supply ▪ Loss of supplier ▪ Loss of premises ▪ Loss of personnel ▪ Loss of telecommunications. 	
Establish what effect the emergency will have on the operation of the school. Try to ascertain how long the disruption will last.	
Consider how the incident will affect any extended services that use the school premises. Liaise with these services as necessary.	
Attempt to recover important documentation, records and equipment if safe to do so (consult the emergency services for advice if necessary).	
If appropriate, contact organisations which can assist in document restoration.	
Business continuity - ongoing response	Tick/sign/time
Minimise any disruption to the provision of education. Put arrangements in place to keep the school open and try to maintain normal school routines (e.g. teaching, exams) wherever possible.	
Seek support from other organisations (e.g. buddy schools, the local authority, suppliers / contractors) as required.	
Work with the 'communications' role to ensure staff, pupils and parents / carers are informed of any changes to the school routine.	
In the event of a public health incident (e.g. pandemic influenza), consider ordering infection control supplies and increasing the cleaning regime.	
Business continuity - recovery	Tick/sign/time
Work with school staff and other organisations to restore the usual school routine as a matter of urgency.	

Put in place arrangements for remote learning, if necessary.	
Make an inventory of any equipment which has been damaged. Arrange for important items / documentation to be salvaged, restored or replaced.	

TEMPLATE FOR RESPONDING TO A CRITICAL INCIDENT

Bomb threats

+ **If you receive a telephone call from someone who claims to have information about a bomb, record as much information as possible.**

Time of call:

Telephone number you were contacted on:

Exact wording of the threat:

+ **Stay calm. Being cautious, and without provoking the caller, try to ask the questions below.**

Where is the bomb right now?

What will cause it to explode?

When will it explode?

Did you place the bomb? If so, why?

What does it look like?

What is your name?

What kind of bomb is it?

What is your telephone number?

What is your address?

+ **Try dialling 1471. You may get information on where the phone call was made from.**

Did dialling 1471 work?

Time the call ended:

+ **Contact the Police (999) and headteacher / nominee immediately.**

+ **Carry out further actions based on Police advice.**

What gender was the caller?

- Male
- Female

Approximately how old was the caller?

Did the caller use a codeword?

Did the caller have an accent?

Did the caller sound familiar?

If an email threat is received, ring 999 and log the email threat. Record the Incident number given Ring Chris Meddle on 01223 703564 or 07798 571179. Complete a site walk to identify any suspicious objects. Evacuate the school if a dynamic risk assessment indicates a serious threat.

What sort of voice did the caller have?

- | | | |
|------------------------------------|--|-------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Normal | <input type="checkbox"/> Well spoken | <input type="checkbox"/> Impediment |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Loud | <input type="checkbox"/> Poorly spoken | <input type="checkbox"/> Stutter |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Quiet | <input type="checkbox"/> Deep | <input type="checkbox"/> Lisp |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Whispered | <input type="checkbox"/> High pitched | <input type="checkbox"/> Slurred |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Clear | <input type="checkbox"/> Hoarse | <input type="checkbox"/> Other |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Disguised | <input type="checkbox"/> Nasal | |

At what pace did the caller speak?

- | | | |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Normal | <input type="checkbox"/> Quick | <input type="checkbox"/> Slow |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|

What manner did the caller have?

- | | | |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Normal | <input type="checkbox"/> Upset | <input type="checkbox"/> Irritated |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Calm | <input type="checkbox"/> Angry | <input type="checkbox"/> Muddled |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Excited | <input type="checkbox"/> Rational | <input type="checkbox"/> Other |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Laughing | <input type="checkbox"/> Irrational | |

Were there any distinguishable background noises?

Notes:

Appendix 4

TEMPLATE FOR RESPONDING TO A CRITICAL INCIDENT

Suspicious Packages

Postal bombs or biological / chemical packages might display any of the following signs:

- Excessive wrapping
- Grease marks or oily stains on the envelope / wrapping
- An unusual odour including (but not restricted to) ammonia, almonds or marzipan
- Discolouration, crystals or powder-like residue on the envelope / wrapping
- Visible wiring / tin foil
- Heavy weight for the size of the package
- Uneven weight distribution
- Too many stamps for the weight of the package
- Poor hand writing, spelling or typing
- Delivery by hand from an unknown source
- Wrongly addressed or come from an unexpected / unusual source
- No return address or a postmark that does not match the return address.

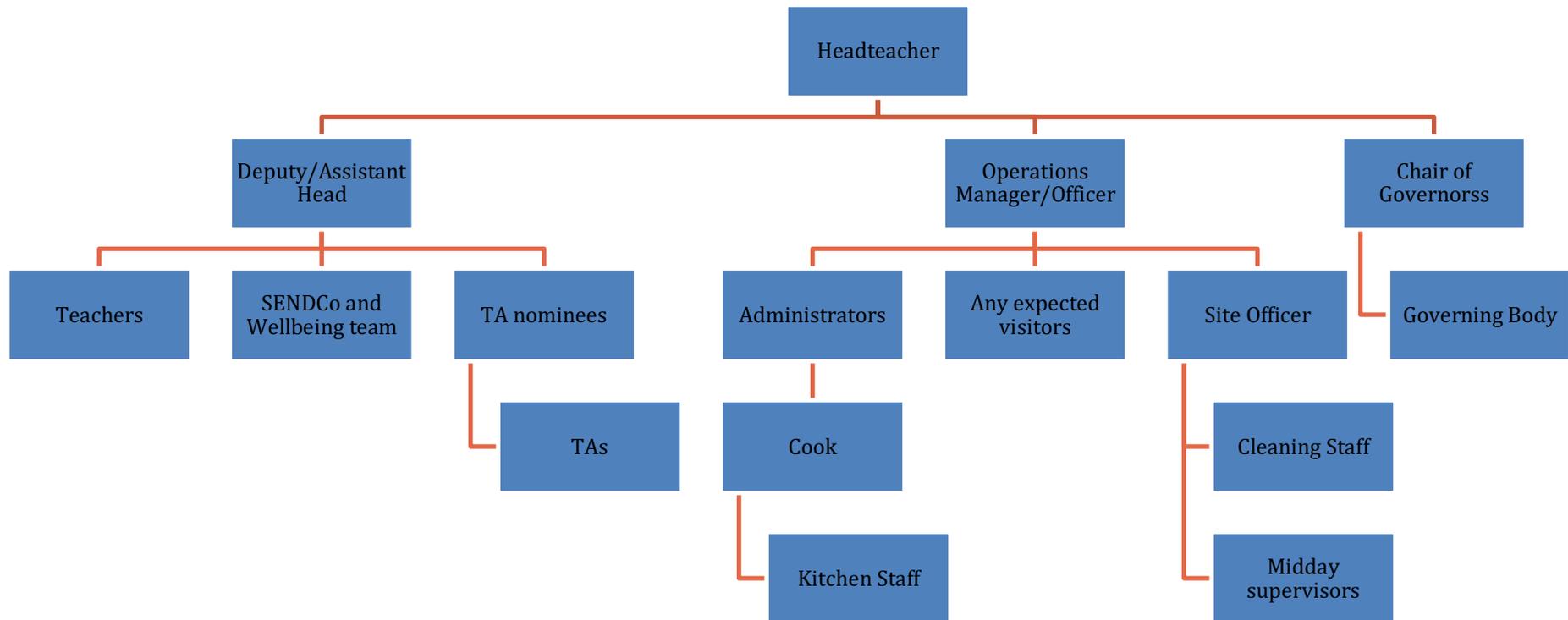
The likelihood of a school receiving a postal bomb or biological / chemical package is low. However, if you do receive a suspicious package carry out the actions below.

Initial response - upon receiving a suspicious package	Tick/sign/time
Remain calm.	
Put the letter / package down gently and walk away from it: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Do not touch the package further ▪ Do not move it to another location ▪ Do not put the package into anything (including water) ▪ Do not put anything on top of it. 	
Note its exact location.	
Evacuate the building, keeping people away from the room as far as possible. Ensure that any assembly points are located away from the danger of flying glass.	
Notify the Police (999) and the headteacher / nominated emergency contact immediately.	
Do not use mobile phones, two-way radios or sound the alarm using the break glass call points.	

If anyone is exposed to a potentially hazardous substance carry out the actions below.

Initial response - if exposed to a potentially hazardous substance	Tick/sign/time
Keep all persons exposed to the material separate from others, and available for medical examination. Ask them to remain calm and avoid touching their eyes, nose or any other part of their body.	

Ensure that ventilation / air circulation systems in the building have been turned off and that all doors (including internal fire doors) and windows have been closed.	
Anyone experiencing symptoms of chemical exposure (e.g. streaming eyes, coughs and irritated skin) should seek medical attention urgently.	



APPENDIX 6

PRESS AND PUBLIC RELATION

IN THE EVENT OF AN EMERGENCY OR CRITICAL INCIDENT, ALWAYS INFORM THE COUNTY PRESS OFFICER FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SERVICES: SIMON COBBY ON 01223 699281 OR 07584 490234.

Briefing the media

Hopefully you will have already been working effectively with your local paper and radio stations to publicise good news. 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 Local Authority to mobilise the Press Office on your behalf. The Press Office will be able to handle much of the media interest to leave you free to manage the situation at your school.

There may be occasions when a radio or TV interview may be required. The county Press Office will be able to give advice on all aspects of conducting media interviews, but the following key points may be helpful:

- Agree all press statements with the Press Office before release - or let the Press Office draft these for you.
- Ensure all information to the media comes from a single, reliable source. This could be the Headteacher, the Chair of Trustees, or the Press Office.
- 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, come across as caring, responsible and competent.
- Provide as much information as is reasonable: better the truth is published than rumour or gossip from a third party. However, 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.
- At times of intense and sustained pressure from the media, the Press Office is available to come out to the school and manage the media on your behalf. All County Press Officers are trained journalists with a wide range of newspaper, radio and television experience, at both local and national level. The Press Office also runs training courses on how to conduct interviews with journalists.

Contact for further information:

Simon Cobby 01223 699281 office
RES 1101 07584 490234 mob
Shire Hall 01223 717192 fax
Castle Hill e-mail: simon.cobby@cambridgeshire.gov.uk
Cambridge
CB3 0AP

APPENDIX 7

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: 0345 123 2304** www.tcf.org.uk
- ❑ **Cruse.** National organisation that supports the bereaved. **Cambridge helpline: 01223 633536** Monday to Friday 9.30am- 1.30pm www.cruse.org.uk
- ❑ **Centre 33.** Voluntary organisation aimed specifically at 'young adults', defined as those under 26. Can provide information, counselling and support with bereavement & loss. Tel: **01223 316488.**
www.centre33.org.uk
- ❑ **CAMHS.** Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services. Brookside Clinic, Cambridge **01223 46001.** 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. Tel: **0800 282 986 or 0808 800 6019**
- ❑ **AICH.** Advice, Information, Counselling Huntingdonshire. A registered charity, which provides free, independent and confidential counselling to young people (aged 14 – 25) in the Huntingdon area: **01480 435061**
- ❑ **The children's hospice for the eastern region:** Milton, Cambridge **01223 815500**
- ❑ **The Samaritans.** Tel: **01223 364455** www.samaritans.org.uk
- ❑ **Winston's Wish.** Provides support for bereaved children up to 18, plus their parents and carers. Family line: **08452 03 04 05** www.winstonswish.org.uk
- ❑ **National Children's Bureau.** Tel: **020 7843 6000**
- ❑ **The Refugee Council.** Tel: **020 7346 1134**
- ❑ **The child bereavement trust.** Support and counselling for grieving families. Tel: **01494 446648**
www.childbereavement.org.uk
- ❑ **The Childhood Bereavement Network.** 8 Wakeley Street, London, EC1V 7QE Tel: **020 7843 6309**
www.childhoodbereavementnetwork.org.uk Email: cbn@ncb.org.uk

Appendix 9

Hoax threat model letters

Model letter A Letter to be used if a school has not received a threat.

Dear Parent/Carer

You may have been made aware, through the press or social media, that some schools have received a hoax email threat today. I am writing to inform you that (enter name of school here) has not received a threat, but has followed the guidance given by the police and the Local Authority.

The police always assess such threats and give specific advice to schools based on the intelligence available. In this case the school were told to be vigilant and to report any concerns they had immediately to the police. In addition the school will have activated their critical incident procedures.

We understand the potential distress and alarm such threats cause parents who understandably are worried about their children. Such threats are designed to cause disruption and worry. However, I can assure you that the police and other authorities have given schools the best possible advice and (enter name of school here) has acted professionally, followed their critical incident plan and followed police advice in the best interests of your child and all members of the school community.

Yours faithfully

Model letter B

Letter to be used if the school receives a hoax threat

Dear Parent/Carer

You may have been made aware, through the press or social media, that some schools have received a hoax email threat today. The email informed the school that a bomb had been placed on the school site.

The school followed its critical incident plan and immediately phoned the police and followed their advice. The school also informed the Local Authority who were in contact with the police control room.

The police always take such threats extremely seriously and have well-rehearsed procedures to assess such threats based on all of the intelligence they have available.

As you would expect, the school leadership has acted professionally and followed police advice. For your information, the advice was that the threat was assessed as a hoax and the school were told to continue as normal. The police assessment was that there was no need to evacuate the school on this occasion. The Headteacher was told to ensure that there was a sweep of the school to check there was nothing unusual. If anything unusual was spotted then they were told to immediately request police support and to follow their advice about evacuation.

We understand the potential distress and alarm such threats cause parents, who understandably are worried about their children. Such threats are designed to cause disruption and worry. However, I can assure you that the police and other authorities have given schools the best possible advice and (enter name of school here) has acted professionally, followed their critical incident plan and followed police advice in the best interests of your child and all members of the school community.

I would also like to reassure you that as you are probably aware, schools have very secure visitor access control and it is highly unlikely that an unexpected visitor would be allowed to access the school unchallenged. Local Authority staff regularly visit schools and are aware of the security that schools have in place. It is also an aspect of our safeguarding reviews of schools.

Yours faithfully