



## School Serious Incident Management Plan

### January 2013

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**Approved:**

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Headteacher

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Date

## 1 Document History

This is the first version of this document

## 2 Scope of this Document

It is not feasible to itemise every possible type of incident that may occur in or affect a school, so this document aims to provide general guidance in the event of any type of serious incident. Such incidents may include:

- A deliberate act of violence on staff or pupils, such as the use of a knife or firearm
- An incident that necessitates evacuation of the school building, such as a fire or flood
- The destruction or serious vandalising of part of the school
- The death or serious injury of a pupil or member of staff through natural causes or accidents
- A transport-related accident involving pupils and/or members of staff
- A more widespread disaster in the community
- Serious incidents during school journeys or excursions

It is also extremely unlikely that every action described in this document will apply to any single incident. Judgement must be made regarding which parts do apply.

## 3 Preparation

To enable the school to react to and handle a serious incident professionally and effectively it is essential that every member of staff is adequately prepared in advance. This includes:

### 3.1 Roles and responsibilities

Every member of staff must:

- Understand the contents of this document and their own responsibilities
- Be able to determine when an incident is serious
- Be prepared to initiate the procedures described in this document if necessary
- Be prepared to participate in the procedures when relevant or when requested
- Be prepared to participate in planned activities to prepare for or practice the procedures described

Note that each person with responsibilities specifically mentioned in this document must have a designated deputy to take over those responsibilities in his/her absence.

### 3.2 School Records

In the case of serious damage to or theft from the school important school records may be destroyed, lost or otherwise unavailable, so copies should be stored off-site. Preferably these copies should be in electronic form (e.g. a database or spreadsheet) stored on a secure off-site server or on a protected and secured device. School procedures must maintain the copies as up-to-date as is realistically possible.

Depending on the type of incident, key information that must be available during the handling of the incident might include:

- Lists of all pupils and their contacts
- List of all staff and their contact details
- Contact details of organisations or people who may need to be involved in these procedures or asked to provide emergency repairs to the building. A current list is shown in the appendix to this document
- Lists of pupils, staff and visitors known to be on the premises at the outset of the incident

### 3.3 Practising Evacuation

Some incidents may require emergency evacuation of the school and this should be practised at least once each term to ensure good understanding and execution of the procedure.

These practices will take the form of fire drills and the performance (the time taken to evacuate, the conduct of those involved, any issues, etc.) recorded in the fire log. Evacuation exercises may include simulations of lost persons, unavailable exit routes, etc., and will take place on different days of the week and at different times of the day to allow all staff, including part-time employees, to participate.

## 4 Procedures

### 4.1 Procedures applicable to all types of serious incident

The Head teacher will firstly determine if the incident qualifies as a sufficiently serious incident to be covered by this plan. This plan will only apply if the Head teacher deems it appropriate.

#### 4.1.1 Activation

The Head teacher will:

- Open and continue to maintain, a personal log of all factual information received, actions taken, and the time of those events.
- Make every attempt to clarify exactly what has happened.
- Then consider whether the incident requires involvement of Local Authority Support Team. If so, contact one of the single point contact numbers listed in the appendix. NB the Local Authority requests that initial contact be always made with the Local Authority in emergencies in case they have wider significance.
- If relevant, establish whom the Local Authority Support Team will contact and check this includes the Education Committee Chair.
- If during term time: Unless there is overwhelming pressure or indisputable circumstances, avoid closing the school and endeavour to maintain normal routines and timetables.
- If outside term time, or outside school hours: Arrange for:-
  - The Site Manager to open certain parts of the school as appropriate and to be available (and responsive) to requests.
  - School administration support to be available.
- Try to postpone Media comment until after the LA's PR officer (who will be part of the Local Authority Support Team) has arrived.
- If deputising for the Head teacher, try if possible to contact and brief him/her.
- Inform the Chair of Governors –
  - Of the incident and, if appropriate, of the involvement of the Local Authority Support Team.
  - To be available for interview by the Media.
- Call in the designated staff members to form the School Emergency Management Team and, if not able to undertake the role personally, nominate one of the team as the On-Site Coordinator to oversee that Team. Note: The team should comprise up to 3 senior members of staff, together with office staff.
- Provide all known facts of the incident to the School Emergency Management Team
- Be prepared to receive many telephone calls
- Recognise the relevance of multi-cultural and multi-faith factors in all responses
- Brief the school administration personnel on their responsibilities during the incident

It is possible that an incident outside normal school times renders the school premises unavailable for occupation. Such incidents could be fire, flood, break-in, extreme weather conditions, power failure, etc. In such cases it will be necessary to inform relevant parties (parents, staff, etc.) that the school is not available. The Head Teacher will use local radio stations, text messages, the school website and, if possible, the school answer-phone system for the initial announcements. If put in place, pupils' contact records held at the church will supplement this

#### 4.1.2 During the incident (after the initial activation)

The School Emergency Management Team will:

- Open and continue to maintain, a personal log of all factual information received, actions taken, and the time of those events.
- If the Local Authority Support Team has been activated, arrange for On-Site facilities for the Team.
- Agree appropriate identification of staff by using badges.
- Expect to see identification of all Local Authority Support Team Officers.
- Set up arrangements to manage visitors – arrange for their names to be recorded.
- Set up arrangements to enable accurate information to flow into and out of the school and for telephone calls, by ensuring –
  - Sufficient administration staff available to answer the many calls that could be received (The Local Authority Support Team will be able to assist with a Help-Line)
  - Staff maintain records of all calls received
  - Brief, but up-to-date prepared statements are available to staff answering telephone calls
  - Media calls are directed to the LA's PR officer
  - Care is taken when answering telephone calls
  - An independent telephone is made available for outgoing calls only – a mobile phone can be useful – but remember such messages can be readily intercepted
- To arrange for all staff – not just teaching staff – to be called in and, if necessary briefed at any early stage. (Subsequent briefings say 2 times per day for 10 minutes, should be arranged).
- To be aware of how colleagues are coping.
- To arrange for all pupils to be told in simple terms at an early stage (ideally in small groups and initially by class teachers, wherever possible).
- To discourage staff and pupils from speaking to the Media.
- To arrange, if appropriate, for team members to each have a copy of the Next-of-Kin List.
- If pupils are involved, the contacting of parents will be an important early task (remember, this is a major incident, so the parents may well have already heard). It may be appropriate to ask the parents to come to the school for a briefing and support. This will need to be done with the utmost care.
- Maintain regular contact with parents.
- If the incident is away from the school seek Police advice whether parents should travel to the scene, or whether children should be taken home.
- Remember to have regular breaks, and advise others to do so.
- Maintain regular contact with staff (teachers and office staff). Make a point of seeing that all staff involved know each other's roles and responsibilities.
- Always try to think of something positive to say to staff and respond positively to ideas and suggestions.
- Be available to see staff when required.
- Remember some members of staff may be so affected that they will not be able to help in supporting children.
- Recognise also that if the burden of dealing with the situation falls disproportionately on a small number of staff they too could need professional support.
- If the incident is away from school try to dissuade shocked staff from driving parents to the scene.
- Maintain liaison with the Local Authority Support Team Senior Officer for the duration of the incident.

The School Administration Personnel will:

- Open and continue to maintain, a personal log of all factual information received, actions taken, and the time of those events.
- Under guidance from School On-Site Co-ordinator, assist and work with the Head teacher and School Emergency Management Team
- Remember the school office is likely to be first point of contact for visitors, so exercise caution in making comments.
- Concerning incoming telephone calls
  - Take special care when answering telephone calls early on.
  - Maintain a record of calls received.
  - Only give out information from prepared statements that will be made available.
  - Remember that some calls could be bogus.

#### 4.1.3 Following the closure of the incident

The School Emergency Management Team will:

- When appropriate, seek advice from Local Authority Support Team and local clergy contact on special assemblies/funerals/memorial services.
- Prepare a joint report with the named Senior Officer, for Director of Education.
- Arrange for a member of staff to make contact with any pupils either at home or in hospital.
- Make sensitive arrangements for the return to school (as appropriate).

#### 4.1.4 Longer term issues

The effects of some Incidents can continue for years. The School Emergency Management Team must give thought to:-

- Working with Staff to monitor pupils informally.
- Clarifying procedures for referring pupils for individual help.
- Being aware that some Staff may also need help in the longer term.
- Recognising and if appropriate marking anniversaries.
- Making any new staff aware of which pupils were affected and how they were affected.
- Remembering that legal processes, inquiries and even news stories may bring back distressing memories and cause temporary upset within the school.
- Remembering that if the Incident did attract Media attention it is likely that interest will continue for many weeks.

## 4.2 Procedures more specific to incidents within the school

This section gives more details regarding incidents within the school and where, for example, it is necessary to call the emergency services, or evacuate the school.

Note: The nature of some incidents will mean that some of the actions described below will be undertaken *before* the procedures in section 3.1 are commenced.

### 4.2.1 Raising the Alarm

Any member of staff detecting an incident is responsible for immediately reporting it to the school office or, in the case of a fire, sounding the alarm bells by breaking the glass of the nearest call point.

If a fire is detected, no attempt to extinguish a fire should be undertaken unless the fire is clearly very trivial or it is believed that action is necessary to save a life. Having triggered the alarm the member of staff must inform someone in the school office which alarm call point was broken and then continue to undertake normal evacuation procedures.

### 4.2.2 Calling the Emergency Services

A member of staff from the school office will call the appropriate emergency service(s) by dialling 999 and telling them the full address of the school, the details of the incident, and if the school is commencing evacuation procedures.

School telephones are located in the school office, the Head Teacher's office, the conservatory and the Site Manager's room. If the incident makes all these areas inaccessible a mobile phone will be used. If no land line or mobile phone is available, a member of office staff should go to Martins' offices across Ashwells Road and call the emergency services from there.

### 4.2.3 Evacuating the Premises

On hearing the alarm (a continuous bell) ALL occupants must proceed to the outside Fire Assembly Point.

The Fire Assembly Point is on the edge of the school playground furthest from the school building.

All pupils will line up in class groups, facing away from the school building and in name sequence to expedite checking that all pupils in the school registers are accounted for.

If the Head Teacher deems that this Assembly Point is unsuitable (e.g. because of smoke) he/she will guide everyone to an alternative area, at the furthest side of the school playing field.

Everyone will remain at the assembly point until given further instructions by the Head Teacher.

#### 4.2.4 Evacuating Pupils

Staff in charge of one or more pupils at the time of an alarm should control and guide those pupils to the assembly point, ensuring that the evacuation is expedited in a calm and controlled manner.

Pupils with disabilities or special needs will be guided and helped on a one-to-one basis by their responsible member of staff.

During the evacuation:

- **DO ensure that you and your pupils leave in an orderly manner to the Fire Assembly Point and line up in name sequence within each class**
- **DO use the recommended fire routes if safe to do so**
- **DO call the emergency services if it is your responsibility**
- **DO search the building for occupants if it is your responsibility**
- **DO close doors behind you**
- **DO account for all occupants at the assembly point**
- **DO ensure you are accounted for**
- **DO wait for further instructions**
  
- **DO NOT panic, shout, scream or run**
- **DO NOT spend time collecting personal belongings**
- **DO NOT spend time looking for missing people unless performing a formal search**
- **DO NOT leave the school premises, thereby not being accounted for at the Fire Assembly Point**
- **DO NOT attempt to fight a fire unless this is necessary to save a life**

#### 4.2.5 Evacuating Visitors

Any visitors on the school premises should be guided to the assembly point in the same manner as pupils. Staff should take a strong lead in this because visitors may not be aware of, or practiced in, the school's evacuation procedures.

#### 4.2.6 Searching for Remaining Occupants

On hearing the alarm bell a member of the school office will check the staff room (and store rooms within), conservatory, Head Teacher's room and the main hall, and evacuate anyone found there.

At the same time the Head of the Infant school will assign a member of staff in her area to check the pupils' toilets, the library and the Learning Support room, and evacuate anyone found there.

Similarly, the Head of the junior school will have someone check and evacuate the ICT suite, the Photo Gallery and the Challenge Zone.

In exceptional circumstances, such as when most people are assembled in the main hall, the above two people should quickly check all rooms in their respective parts of the school – BUT NOT IF ENTERING THOSE AREAS WOULD ENDANGER THEIR LIVES. To expedite these full searches the Infant and junior Heads may assign more than one person to search each of these areas.

#### 4.2.7 Accounting for all Personnel

A member of staff from the school office will take the following items to the Fire Assembly Point

- All class registers
- Staff register
- The pupils' contact details
- The visitors book
- A mobile telephone
- This plan.

Each class teacher will use the class register to perform a roll call to ensure that all pupils are present and safe, and report this to the Head Teacher.

The members of staff assigned to searching parts of the school will confirm to the Head Teacher that their respective areas have been evacuated.

The Heads of the Infant and Junior schools will confirm to the Head Teacher that all members of staff from their areas are present.

The member of staff from the school office will confirm to the Head Teacher that the fire emergency services have been called, and will then use the visitors book to check that all visitors are accounted for. In exceptional circumstances, such as during a school performance with many parents in the main hall, or an event such as a school bazaar, visitors will not have signed-in, so the search of the entire school premises will confirm that all persons are out of the building.

#### 4.2.8 Liaising with the Emergency Services

Having completed the actions described above, the Head Teacher will instruct one member of staff to go to the front of the school and meet and explain the situation to the emergency services when they arrive.

If able, that member of staff should also unlock the gates to the school field.

#### 4.2.9 Re-occupancy

The Head Teacher will take advice from the Emergency Services regarding if and when it is safe to re-enter the school buildings, and possibly which parts of it can be used safely. Based on this advice, the Head Teacher may then authorise migration from the Assembly Point back into the school.

##### 4.2.9.1 Full/Majority Re-occupancy

If it is possible to re-occupy all or the majority of the school this will be done and school activities resumed as normally as possible.

It will then be necessary to investigate the cause of the incident, implement any preventative actions learnt from it, and undertake any minor repairs necessary.

#### 4.2.9.2 Partial Re-occupancy

It may be that the incident has rendered some areas/rooms unavailable. In this case the school will make use of the usable areas, possibly by utilising the main hall or sharing classrooms, until repairs have been completed.

This will only take place once the Head Teacher has been assured that it is safe to do so. For example, the damaged areas must have been made safe with no danger from electricity or gas supplies, odours, smoke, water, debris, etc.

Partitions will need to be erected to prevent access to any damaged or unsafe areas of the school. The appendix to this plan contains a list of contact numbers for emergency services such as electricians and gas fitters.

#### 4.2.10 Delayed Re-occupancy

If it is determined that no early re-occupancy of the school buildings is possible the Head Teacher will instruct that all pupils be walked to Saint Paul's Church on the other side of Ongar Road where they can wait safely under cover from any inclement weather.

If re-occupancy of the school will not be possible for some time the pupils' contact details will be used to arrange for the pupils to be collected from the church.

If the school is damaged to such an extent that mid to long-term use is not possible the Head Teacher will advise the appropriate authorities and arrange for alternative schooling facilities for all pupils. All parents will need to be made aware of the new arrangements

### 4.3 Post-Incident Recovery and/or Salvage.

This is likely to be undertaken in conjunction with the Local Authorities, Education Departments and/or Church. To assist with this the appendix contains a list of useful contact numbers.

The school will also make available its inventory of its building contents, insurance valuations, etc.

## 5 Prevention

Although this plan is intended to ensure that everyone is prepared for and can handle a serious incident, a primary objective for the school is to prevent or reduce the risk of such incidents occurring.

### 5.1 Risk assessments

Standard risk assessments for every relevant event (such as a school trip, school fete, school show) will be produced and agreed in advance. Also, routine risk assessments (such as the fire risk assessment) will be reviewed each year.

### 5.2 Maintenance

All essential services (e.g. heating, lighting, water, power, security) will be maintained regularly and kept in good working order. Similarly, the school will be checked regularly for defects or health and Safety issues and any defects addressed appropriately.

### 5.3 Security

Security systems will be serviced and tested regularly, and all security procedures will be adhered to. These are documented in the school's Security policy.

### 5.4 Fire prevention

The school must have good fire prevention systems and procedures in place, and these must be adhered to at all times. See the separate Fire Risk Assessment document for more details regarding fire prevention in the school.

## 6 Appendices

### 6.1 Points to note with media interviews

- If the Incident does attract Media attention, you are likely to be inundated with requests for interviews and statements.
- Try to postpone Media comment until after the LA's PR officer (who will be a member of the Local Authority Support Team) has arrived.
- Think about what you are wearing when you go into school, in case you are unavoidably drawn into a TV interview.
- Have another person with you, if possible, to monitor the interview. If possible, agree an interview format, i.e. establish what the interviewer wants to ask.
- Be prepared to think on your feet, but try to decide beforehand what you want to say. Do not read it out.
- Remember you could be quoted on anything you say to a journalist, even if it is not part of the formal interview.
- Be prepared to say you cannot comment.
- Don't over-elaborate your answers.
- Refuse requests for photos or schoolwork of children/staff involved.
- Try to keep a grip on your emotions during interviews – especially if it is TV.
- Most journalists are responsible, but check where interview/camera team go, when interview is over.
- It is especially important that if names of those who may have been involved in the incident are known DO NOT release – or confirm – them to anyone, before those identities are formally agreed and parents are informed.

## 6.2 Useful Contacts/Numbers

<b>School Address</b>	Bentley St Paul's Primary School, Ashwells Road, Pilgrims Hatch, Brentwood, CM15 9SE	01277 372295	Fax 375348
Alarms, Emergency lights, CCTV	Eastern Security	01702 467850	Fax 01702 460178
Builders	Bakers of Danbury	01245 225876	
Church	Centre Warden – Bill Chandler (home) Diocesan Education	01277 374887 01277 374750 01245 294440	
Cleaners	L&L	01702 541845 07774 238249	
Councils	Essex County Council Brentwood Council Building Services	01245 492211 01277 312500 01245 435577	
Dept of Education		0870 0012345	
Electricians	Emergency Eastern Electricity ...Area 2 Mid-Essex Systems Brentwood Electrical	0800 7838838 01473 688688 01268 785566 01245 349349 01277 216121	
Fire	Essex Fire Brigade	01277 217977	
Gas	Emergency (Transco) Local	0800 111999 0845 7226226	
Glass	Adams - Expressglaze Brentwood Glass Abela Emergency glazing AJM Glass (Ongar Road) Glass	0800 581500 01277 218721 0800 0681677 01277 216 963 0800 409 6027	
Insurance	ECC Insurance Section	01245 431486	
Local radio	BBC Essex	01245 495050 or 01245 383838	
Locks	Brentwood Lock and Safe	01277 264364	
Martins		01277 372916	
Plumbing	Balm & Davies	01702 203939	
Police	Brentwood Kelvedon Hatch	01277 262212 01277 373180	
Post Office	Brentwood	01277 212132	
Roofers	Mansard	01268 526855	
Telephones	Fonline	0208 5977302	Fax 5992201
Boarding up	See Glass (above)		
Water	Emergency	08457 145 145	

<b>Essex County Council</b>			
County Emergency Planning	24/7 Mobile	07767 298483	
Head of Planning & Access	Manager – Martin Fee	01245 436276	07717 867330
Education Business and Information	Manager – Martin Fee	01245 436276	
Health & Safety Helpline			
<b>County Media Contacts</b>			
Head of Media	Chris Palmer	01245 430090	07717 867073
Senior Press Officer		01245 436227	
<b>County Insurance Service</b>			
Principal Risk and Insurance Manager	Richard Buttle	01245 431482	
<b>Diocesan Contacts</b>			
Church of England Schools	Tim Elbourne	01245 294440	01245 251461

**Note:**

**Staff contact numbers have been removed from the website version of this document.**

### 6.3 Evacuation checklist

This checklist was designed for the Head teacher to take to the assembly point during evacuation practices to ensure that all require checks are completed. The ticked sheet should then be filed as evidence that they had taken place. The checklist has fallen into disuse lately but is included here in case its use is ever resurrected.

<p><b>The following items have been brought to the Assembly Point</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ All class registers</li> <li>▪ The staff register</li> <li>▪ The pupils' contact details</li> <li>▪ The visitors book</li> <li>▪ A mobile telephone</li> </ul> <p>To be confirmed by Office staff</p>	√
<p><b>Emergency services have been called.</b></p> <p>To be confirmed by Office staff</p>	
<p><b>All pupils are present.</b></p> <p>To be confirmed by each class teacher</p>	
<p><b>Infant school areas have been searched.</b></p> <p>To be confirmed by staff assigned to search toilets etc.</p>	
<p><b>Junior school areas have been searched.</b></p> <p>To be confirmed by staff assigned to search toilets etc.</p>	
<p><b>All members of staff are present.</b></p> <p>To be confirmed by the Heads of the Infants school and the Junior school, for staff in their areas</p>	
<p><b>All signed-in visitors are present.</b></p> <p>To be confirmed by office staff</p>	
<p><b>Staff member now goes to meet Emergency Services at front of school and provide details of the incident.</b></p>	