

Immediate Actions for Schools Following a Critical Incident

During The Incident

Using 'A Guide to Managing Critical Incidents in Schools' DE document

Assess the risk and take necessary action

Gather factual information regarding the incident

Mobilise the School's Critical Incident Management Team

Arrange Staff Briefing

Maintain structures and routines with flexibility as required

Arrange for appropriate information to be shared with pupils

Identify vulnerable pupils and staff

Set up recovery room

Prepare for media interest

Organise debriefing for staff

Immediate Actions for Schools Following a Critical Incident

1. Assess the risk and take necessary action

- Respond to any inevitable risk or threat e.g. evacuation/first aid/emergency services

2. Gather factual information regarding the incident

- Details of person/people involved;
- Confirmation of facts from the appropriate source e.g. family/Police/hospital etc.

3. Initiate the use of the DE – A Guide to Managing Critical Incidents in Schools

- Critical Incident Management Guide Records (Appendix 3)

4. Mobilise the School's Critical Incident Management Team (CIMT) and implement the Critical Incident Management Plan

- If critical incident is out of hours use a pre-prepared telephone tree to contact CIMT members.

5. Immediate tasks for the School's Critical Incident Management Team

- Allocate roles to staff members e.g. Critical Incident Coordinator etc ;
- Contact the parents of pupil/s directly involved in the incident;
- Inform relevant key people and seek support as appropriate e.g. staff, BOG's, EA Critical Incident Team, CCMS, Local Clergy etc.;
- Agree the school routine for the day;
- Establish a central information point;
- Set up dedicated telephone line and logging system;
- Set up school visitor logging system;
- Set up a warm, quiet recovery room with drinks, tissues, suitable seating;

- Contact impacted family/s to determine their wishes regarding public announcements and staff/pupil briefings;
- For media enquiry support contact the EA Communications.

6. Arrange staff briefing (when incident is confirmed)

- Give a brief statement of factual information;
- Outline the school's response and proposed plan of action, maintaining normal structures and routines with flexibility
- Allow staff to ask questions and provide a response;
- Outline staff responsibility for monitoring pupil and staff welfare;
- Identify vulnerable staff and pupils who may be of risk;
- Clarify specific responsibilities for staff;
- Advise staff on procedure for dealing with media enquiries;
- Advise staff about confidentiality;
- Advise staff on agreed procedure for informing pupils and parents;
- Inform staff of the support services available;
- Advise staff about practical arrangements e.g. cover, flexible timetabling, recovery rooms etc.;
- Advise staff of time/place of next briefing and debriefing sessions.

7. Inform Pupils

- Inform pupils when incident is confirmed, with accurate and agreed statement (in form groups/classes/small groups);
- Make the announcement simultaneously, where possible, to ensure that pupils hear the news at the same time;
- Use clear language with age appropriate factual information;
- Identify vulnerable pupils;
- Advise pupils about the support available;
- Answer any appropriate questions and dispel rumours;

- Allow time for pupils to discuss their feelings;
- Pupils who are absent from school, on work experience, educational trips or suspension should also be informed;
- Pupils with SENs including pupils with learning and communication difficulties will require special consideration.

8. Inform Parents

- Use appropriate format to inform parents e.g by telephone, letter, home visit etc;
- In some instances you may wish to inform parents from a particular class/form/year group/key stage