



**Mission Statement**  
 "A Caring Christian Family Where We Grow Together"

## CRITICAL INCIDENT PROCEDURE

**Effective Date:** 01/04/2017

**Review Date:** September 2025 annual

Review Date	Signed Head Teacher	Signed Director RCSAT
06/09/2018	<i>J. L. J. J. J.</i>	<i>P. B. B. B.</i>
11/09/2019	<i>J. L. J. J. J.</i>	<i>P. B. B. B.</i>
22/9/2020	<i>d. m. Badger</i>	<i>P. B. B. B.</i>
30/09/2021	<i>d. m. Badger</i>	<i>P. B. B. B.</i>
30/09/2022	<i>d. m. Badger</i>	<i>P. B. B. B.</i>
30/09/2023	<i>d. m. Badger</i>	<i>P. B. B. B.</i>
30/09/2024	<i>d. m. Badger</i>	<i>P. B. B. B.</i>

Persons Responsible for Policy:	Executive Headteacher RCSAT
Approval Date	01/04/2017
Signed:	Director RCSAT
Signed:	Executive Headteacher RCSAT



## 1. Introduction

- 1.1. The handling of a crisis is a normal part of school life, but some incidents are of a critical, more overwhelming nature, and sadly in recent years, incidents previously deemed unthinkable, have occurred in schools in the UK.
- 1.2. This procedure is the RCSAT contingency plan designed to provide a framework for handling a critical incident.
- 1.3. The formulation of this procedure is intended to define clearly the roles, responsibilities and procedures to follow, for school staff dealing with such an incident. Each critical incident is unique, and it is not possible to plan for every eventuality, but similarly, each critical incident can be shocking and disorientating, so a prepared procedure is essential to ensure that the school's reaction is effective and efficient.
- 1.4. The details contained within this document will form the basis of the RCSAT approach to such a crisis.
- 1.5. Coordinated support will be available to the school from the Local Authority, and it will be practical to contact them immediately. If the incident involves the police, they will take control of certain management issues.

## 2. The Critical Incident Management Team (CIMT)

- 2.1. A critical incident management team will comprise the following staff:
  - 2.1.1. Executive Headteacher of RCSAT
  - 2.1.2. Principal
  - 2.1.3. All teaching staff
  - 2.1.4. School Administrator
  - 2.1.5. Board of Trustees & LGCs
- 2.2. Potential incidents which could affect this RCSAT are considered to be:
  - 2.2.1. Serious injury within school
  - 2.2.2. Serious injury on an out of school visit
  - 2.2.3. Death of a pupil or member of staff
  - 2.2.4. Fire/flood
  - 2.2.5. Health risk – outbreak of contagious illness/disease like meningitis
  - 2.2.6. Major arson attack
  - 2.2.7. Fatal road traffic accident
  - 2.2.8. Natural disaster within the community
  - 2.2.9. Consequences of terrorist or criminal activity

## 3. Responsibilities for Implementing the Procedure

- 3.1. The Executive Headteacher shall have overall responsibility for the implementation of this Procedure and shall ensure that all aspects of the procedure are managed appropriately.
- 3.2. To facilitate this, the Executive Headteacher has designated named staff, directors/Board of Trustees and to manage aspects of this procedure, including co-ordination, health and safety governance overview and daily checks on the conditions of the premises, reporting any issues to the Executive Headteacher.
- 3.3. The named persons are detailed in Appendix 1 of the procedure.
- 3.4. The object of this procedure shall be to outline the purpose, nature and operational management of the Critical Incident Plan.
- 3.5. Staff shall also refer to the Accident Policy, Health & Safety Policy, Complaints Policy, Confidentiality Policy, Staff and Board of Trustees Code of Conduct, Whistle Blowing Policy and Bereavement procedure.
- 3.6. In the event of a critical incident affecting the RCSAT, it is possible there may be legal ramifications. Whilst these should be considered, the prompt implementation of the plan should take priority.

## 4. Arrangements for this Procedure

The schools' reaction to a critical incident may be divided into the following categories:

**4.1. Immediate action – i.e. within hours of the incident occurring.**

- 4.1.1. Principal or representative obtains and collates information relating to the incident – uncertainty breeds rumour and accurate information is essential;
- 4.1.2. Principal decides if the CIMT (Critical Incident Management Team) needs to be gathered together or contacted – brief the team, allocate roles and responsibilities; the Chair of RCSAT will usually chair the CIMT.
- 4.1.3. CIMT chair shall trigger support from the LA and other contacts on the emergency list – establish clearly who is going to contact whom;
- 4.1.4. CIMT chair shall set up an incident management room and dedicated phone line – to deal with calls from anxious parents etc. CIMT should agree a factual statement and avoid speculation;
- 4.1.5. Principal shall inform other school staff – staff need to be cautioned about talking to the media or responding to questions from reporters. It is vital that all staff in contact with pupils are kept well informed and feel secure in handling comments or questions from pupils.
- 4.1.6. CIMT chair shall contact families affected – must be done quickly and with sensitivity. Consistency of information is vital. It may be appropriate for families to come to school and immediate emotional support could be a possibility;
- 4.1.7. Principal/EHT shall make arrangements to inform other parents – may need to take advice from LA, especially if there is the possibility of legal liability. CIMT may wish to send a letter to parents, or prepare a leaflet.
- 4.1.8. Principal shall inform pupils – can be done in small or large groups depending on which is most appropriate. Care needs to be exercised to protect both children and adults closely involved in the incident. It is important that children receive a consistent account of the incident allowing for differences in their ability to understand.
- 4.1.9. CIMT chair shall encourage people involved to talk – the incident may need to be discussed before children go home for the day, for both pupils and adults.
- 4.1.10. CIMT chair shall deal with the media – most important to seek advice from LA Office before agreeing to speak to or be interviewed by the media. If this is not an option then an agreed text for release should be prepared by the CIMT and Principal who will be briefed and prepared to respond on the school's behalf.
- 4.1.11. CIMT shall devise a plan for handling the reactions and feelings of people affected – the most common reactions will include denial, distress, guilt, anger and helplessness. CIMT need to consider outside professionals to support and debrief staff and pupils affected by the incident. Those providing support also need support. At this point the CIMT will need to plan their short term reaction to the incident.

**4.2. Short term action – the next stage**

- 4.2.1. Reunion of children with their families – especially where the incident occurs outside the school. Mostly children will need to be brought home, but sometimes parents and families need to visit the scene of the incident to understand how to deal with repercussions in terms of children's fears etc.
- 4.2.2. Managing staff – support needs organising for all staff, preferably from within the school, but using outside agencies if appropriate. Staff monitoring should be a priority, even members of the CIMT. If a crisis persists over many hours, staff become tired, weary and upset and this affects their powers to make sensible decisions.
- 4.2.3. Encourage pupils to talk – activate strategies for enabling young people to talk about the incident, and their feelings, using outside agencies if appropriate. Staff will need briefing about ways to help the children affected by the incident, and how to identify patterns of behaviour etc. This may have implications for the wider curriculum, i.e. training in bereavement counselling for staff, provision of a range of books, RSHE discussions, etc.
- 4.2.4. Debriefing meeting – it may be appropriate to hold a debriefing meeting for staff, children and parents to:
  - 4.2.4.1. Clarify what has happened
  - 4.2.4.2. Allow for sharing reactions



- 4.2.4.3. Reassure people that reactions are normal
- 4.2.4.4. Mobilise resources, e.g. parental support groups.
- 4.2.4.5. An experienced person, possibly someone from outside the school community, should lead this meeting.

4.2.5. Formal and informal recognition of rituals – it is important to remember to express sympathy to families of the hurt or bereaved. Visits to children/staff in hospital. Pupils may wish to send cards and letters. The school may also need to consider attendance at funerals, and/or the desirability of holding special assemblies or memorial services. Anniversaries are also key times when support and sensitivity are required.

4.2.6. Re-establishing routines – every attempt should be made to provide continuity for the children. The return to school of staff or pupils directly affected by the crisis will need to be managed carefully and with sensitivity but the re-establishment of routine is an important stage in emotional recovery.

#### 4.3. Medium term actions

4.3.1. Return to school for staff or children after long absence – reintegration will need to be planned carefully, and may involve home visits prior to return, part time attendance initially, reducing workloads, putting in place mentoring process, etc.

4.3.2. Consulting professionals – consideration should be given to consulting the Educational Psychology Service for support and guidance, especially to help those showing unusual or prolonged reaction to the incident.

4.3.3. Keeping parents informed – it may be appropriate to produce a leaflet for parents giving guidance on the possible delayed reactions of children to an incident and making suggestions to help them deal with these.

4.3.4. Support for staff – ongoing monitoring and support for staff is a major consideration. CIMT especially will not be immune to reaction from their ordeal.

#### 4.4. Longer term actions

4.4.1. Monitoring the vulnerable – the effects of a crisis can reverberate for years, and it is especially important that new staff and children are briefed in the school's history to help them understand and deal with potential repercussions, especially at anniversary times.

4.4.2. Marking anniversaries – these difficult times need to be treated with sensitivity. Some suggestions for schools to mark anniversaries are by annual concerts, memorial services, memorial prize giving ceremonies, memorial gardens etc.

4.4.3. Legal processes – the length of time taken over some legal processes can prolong the recovery process following a critical incident. CIMT may need to plan for this, especially where staff may be involved attending legal processes, and facing extended emotional trauma.

4.4.4. Curriculum implications – it may be appropriate to schedule INSET training for staff in loss counselling, bereavement, etc.

### 5. Record Keeping

5.1. The following records shall be kept in the school office:

- 5.1.1. Critical Incident Procedure document.
- 5.1.2. Critical Incidents Reports and Follow Ups.

## Appendix 1

## Emergency Contact List

Contact	Name	Telephone Number
Executive Headteacher	Nicola Badger	01829 260524
Principal Bunbury	Nicola Badger	01829 260524
Principal St Oswald's	Louise McDonough	01270 623826
Principal Warmingham	Kate Appleby	01270 526260
Director of Trust	Piers Bostock	01773 852111, 07730 736620
Vice Chair of Trust	Beth Holdcroft	
LGC Chairs	Vanessa Greenbury (B) Malcolm Gate (W) Brenda Brockbank (St Os)	
Site Manager Bunbury	Matt Treweek	01829 260524 (B)
School Caretaker Warmingham	Charlie Taylor	01270 526260 (W)
School Caretaker St Oswalds	Jim Kelleher	01270 623826 (St O's)
School Administrator – Bunbury	Kate Waring	01829 260524
School Administrator – St Oswald's	Claire Jordan	01270 623826
School Administrator – Warmingham	Carmen Marsden	01270 526260
Director Children's Services Cheshire East	Theresa Leavy Interim Director of Children's services	If you have any concerns about a child contact the Cheshire East Consultation Service (ChECS) on 0300 123 5012 (option 3) 0300 123 5022 – Emergency Duty Team (Outof Hours) <a href="mailto:checs@cheshireeast.gov.uk">checs@cheshireeast.gov.uk</a> <a href="http://www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/checs">www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/checs</a> Cheshire East's multi-agency Child Protection Procedures can be found at: <a href="http://www.online-procedures.co.uk/cheshireeast">www.online-procedures.co.uk/cheshireeast</a> This includes a Search engine allowing quick access to information on any safeguarding issue from Local and national sources. Cheshire East Local Safeguarding



		Children Board has its own website at: <a href="http://www.cheshireeastscb.org.uk">www.cheshireeastscb.org.uk</a>
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