



**RYDE SCHOOL
WITH UPPER CHINE**

CRITICAL INCIDENT POLICY

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Person responsible for updating this policy	Bursar		

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1. Introduction

The School has developed this policy to assist in dealing with a critical incident that affects the school community. Such an event may involve:

- the safety of children and/or staff
- the school premises
- a serious accident involving children and/or school personnel on or off the premises
- the death of a child, staff member or governor
- a violent intrusion on to school premises (e.g. an armed intruder or a bomb alert)
- extensive damage to school premises
- the release of hazardous substances near or on the school site
- a crisis which might affect the public reputation of the school

The aim of the policy is to:

- provide support to all children and staff affected by an incident
- maintain the normal running of any parts of the school not affected
- return the whole school to normal as soon as possible

The policy provides generic guides to actions that should be considered by the headteacher, his/her nominated deputy, and the critical incident management team (“**CIMT**”) in case of an emergency in school, the local community, or on an educational visit.

The policy also covers incidents occurring in school time and out of school hours, weekends and during school holidays.

2. Important Action Points

The Bursar has the responsibility to:

- Review the policy and its content (at least once each year)
- Keep the policy up-to-date regarding personnel (as required)
- Keep the school's emergency boxes updated (on at least a termly basis)

The Headmaster has the responsibility to:

- Ensure staff know their roles
- Ensure training is conducted (on at least an annual basis)

3. Critical Incident Management Team (“CIMT”)

The CIMT will comprise:

Role	Primary Responsibility	Deputy (if applicable)
LEAD COORDINATOR	Mark Waldron (MAW)	Philip Moore (PRM)
PRESS AND MEDIA	Ra Hennessy (RRH)	Becky Ball (RMB)
PARENT CONTACT	Ben Sandford-Smith (BSS)	Lexie Nestor-Powell (ANP)
WELFARE (PUPIL)	Linda Dennis (LMD)	Christina Vince (CBV)
STAFF LIAISON	Keith Dubbins (KJD)	Allan Graham (AMG)
LOGISTICS	Jonathan Marren (JAFM)	Philip Moore (PRM)
EMERGENCY SERVICES	Philip Moore (PRM)	Jonathan Marren (JAFM)
SECRETARY	Sophie McCue (SLM)	Helen Mason (HJM)
ADDITIONAL HELPERS	Ed Marsden (EDM), Emily Willetts (EEW) Stephen Baxter (SRB) Becky Craik (BMC)	

4. Base for Critical Incident Management Team

The base for the CIMT (“**Crisis Centre**”) will be the QI Centre (Junior School) where it is still possible to use this. The reserve on-site location will be the Finance Office (Westmont).

The Crisis Centre will at all times have the following equipment to hand:

- White board & pens
- Paper & pens
- 2 phones
- IT Access (3 computers)
- Emergency Box

An additional Emergency Box will be available in the Headmaster’s office.

5. Emergency Box

The Bursar is responsible for maintaining the contents of the Emergency Box which at the minimum should contain:

- (i) Checklists
- (ii) Forms
- (iii) Plans
- (iv) Lists
- (v) Contact numbers
- (vi) Emergency signage (laminated)
- (vii) Pre-prepared statements
- (viii) Record keeping

Further details of the contents of the Emergency Box are given in Appendix 1

6. Record keeping

Any emergency affecting a school may afterwards become the subject of a detailed inquiry. It is important that accurate written records are kept, and that no piece of information about either the planning or the response to the incident is lost. Records may also be in the form of a recording made via a CCTV camera, a telephone or on an answer machine. The records should be retained after the incident for future reference.

When making notes, ensure to note all relevant facts in chronological order but stick to the FACTS - do not include any assumptions (if you are noting down assumptions to show your reasoning for making a decision, make this clear). Avoid approximations and abbreviations. If you make a mistake, cross it out with a single line so that what is underneath is still visible, and initial it. Do not overwrite – if you make a mistake, cross it out, initial it and start again and do not use correction fluid. Do not leave blank spaces - or if you do, rule them out with a line. Unused space after the end of a series of entries should be ruled through, then signed in full, dated and timed.

7. Training

In order to carry out the procedures outlined in this policy, awareness raising and training should be carried out within the school. All staff that have a role in the policy should be aware of the full scope of the policy and their roles and responsibilities. Staff who may not be part of the response to an emergency should still be aware of the content of the policy, particularly the section on evacuation and shelter.

A record for training is given in Appendix 7.

8. Post Incident Care and Support

Post-incident care is aimed at helping individuals to understand their feelings following an emergency and to identify sources of future support. The overall aim of the support is to help people in a way that will reduce the possibility of them developing post-traumatic stress disorder.

It is worth giving some thought to how the topics of loss, bereavement, risks/safety and change are covered in the curriculum. Schools where these topics are discussed openly, and treated as normal life events, are likely to find it easier to cope when a difficult or tragic incident occurs.

Remember to consult with parents following an incident. It is important to communicate with parents of pupils who have been involved, and ensure that their needs and wishes are taken into account.

9. Evacuation and shelter plan

This is one of the most important sections of the policy as it outlines the initial actions that should be taken to safeguard pupils and staff, both from internal and external hazards. All staff must be aware of these procedures, as warning signals may need to be triggered immediately, before advising others of the threat.

Your evacuation plans should include information about what route to take and what assembly point to use as these may need to be different from those used for other types of incident (e.g. fire).

It is equally important to have pre-planned arrangements for signalling the need for sheltering (keeping pupils indoors and close doors and windows) in the event of an external hazard, and signalling lockdown of the school in the event of an intruder.

10. Bomb Threats and suspect packages

Although bomb threats usually turn out to be hoaxes, they must always be taken seriously. It is important that office staff know what questions to ask if they do take a call from someone claiming to have information about a bomb. The bomb threat prompt card gives questions to ask and immediate actions to take in this situation. Staff should be familiar with this information, and preferably have a copy to hand near the telephone.

Equally important is dealing with suspect packages - in most cases the package turns out to be a hoax or genuine mistake, but it is better to take all appropriate precautions if a suspicious letter or package is received. Any member of staff who may deal with incoming mail in the school should be aware of the guidance.

APPENDICES (index)

- 1. Contents of Emergency Box**
- 2. Checklists**
- 3. Forms**
- 4. Evacuation and shelter plan**
- 5. Bomb Threats and suspect packages**
- 6. Training**

APPENDIX - 1 (Contents of Emergency Box)

The Bursar is responsible for maintaining the contents of the Emergency Box which at the minimum should contain:

(i) **Checklists:**

- *Activation* - Responsibilities of initial action by Headmaster or Deputy
- *Implementation* – Lead Coordinator
- *Implementation* – Press and Media
- *Implementation* – Parent Contact
- *Implementation* – Welfare (Pupil)
- *Implementation* – Staff Liaison
- *Implementation* – Logistics
- *Stand-down* – Recovery
- *Stand-down* – Post Incident care and support

- *Other* – checklist for group leader on educational visit

(ii) **Forms:**

- *Activation* – Initial information recording
- *Activation* – Initial action for emergencies trips and visits

(iii) **Plans:**

- High level plan of entire school site
- Plan of each individual building (including rooms and separate floors)
- Fire zone site plans

(iv) **Lists:**

- Pupil lists by form group
- Staff list (from SCR)
- Staff Handbooks (A-D)
- Parent Handbooks

(v) **Contact numbers:**

- Crisis Centre Phone Numbers
- School internal telephone list
- CIMT (mobile and home)
- SMT (mobile and home)
- IT Department (mobile and home)
- Governor
- Parent contact details
- LADO
- Local Police

- Local Hospital
- IOW Emergency Number to report missing child
- Ferry companies
- IOW Educational Authority
- Insurance Broker
- Press (IW Radio/IWCP)
- School bus companies

(vi) **Emergency signage (laminated):**

- Press Room
- Child Collection
- Emergency Parking

(vii) **Pre-prepared statement(s):**

- Immediate statement

(viii) **Record keeping:**

- Logs

APPENDIX - 2 (Checklists)

2.1 Activation – Initial information recording

Information about an incident may come from a staff member, pupil, parent, the emergency services or the local authority.

Whoever receives the alert should ask for, and record, as much information as possible:

Name of the person informing of the incident	
Details of the incident	
Who else has been informed (e.g. emergency services etc)	
Exact location of the incident	
Details of any casualties	
Any action taken so far	
Name of contact at the scene	
Number of contact at the scene	
What assistance is needed	

Immediately inform the Headteacher or Deputy/nominee

2.2 Activation - Responsibilities of initial action by Headmaster or Deputy

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

- Take charge of events
- Establish a crisis team meeting place, close to the incident control point

Potential action to be taken	✓ when complete
Ascertain details of incident	
Take immediate action to safeguard pupils and staff where necessary	
Alert relevant emergency services (Police, Fire, Ambulance) via 999 system Be prepared to give the following information: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emergency Service(s) required • Exact location of the incident • Number of casualties • Nature of injuries • Location and telephone number where call is being made from • Hazards which may be encountered by the Emergency Services at the site 	
Assemble a Critical Incident Management Team (from pre-identified staff)	
Notify: Chairman of Governors (Chris Martin) Vice Chairman of Governors (Christoph Lees)	

DON'T FORGET

- Log all communications and actions
- Where possible, avoid closing the school and try to maintain normal routines
- Refer to the list of emergency contact numbers in the emergency box for additional support if required

2.3 Implementation – Lead Coordinator

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

- Take charge of events and act as the main contact to co-ordinate the response
- Draw up an action plan for the specific incident
- Delegate responsibilities and give task sheets to the chosen person on CIMT
- Consult with the Police and the person responsible for liaison with the media about the release of information to students, staff, parents, general enquiries and the media

Potential action to be taken	✓ when complete
Allocate tasks to members of the CIMT as appropriate	
Ensure that accurate, factual information is available for those arriving at the scene	
Liaise with the local authority, police, fire and ambulance services, and other agencies who may become involved	
Ensure all staff maintain a log of actions and decisions in real time	
Inform all staff, and parents of injured pupils	
Decide how to inform other parents about pupils having been injured	
Provide regular briefings for staff	
Inform staff involved to prepare a written report of their involvement, noting events and times as soon as possible after the event	
Inform the Health and Safety Executive within 24 hours in the event of serious injuries or a fatality	

DON'T FORGET

- Try to maintain normal routines as far as possible

2.4 Implementation – Press and Media

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

- Liaise with and co-operate with the media and to answer their queries, as appropriate

Potential action to be taken	✓ when complete
Ensure that any media access to the site, staff and pupils is controlled In a major emergency, the police will deal with the press and prevent access to the school	
Discuss and agree the ongoing strategy for dealing with the press with lead coordinator	
Ensure basic information about the school is prepared and to hand	
Liaise between the press and those affected about interviews. Any students involved in interviews should be supported (note permission required as below)	

DON'T FORGET

- Be aware of the potential problems caused by the spread of misinformation through pupil and/or staff use of mobile phones
- Be prepared to be interviewed by the press if necessary and agreed
- PUPILS SHOULD NOT TALK TO THE MEDIA UNLESS ARRANGED BY STAFF/PARENTS AND THEN ONLY WITH WRITTEN PERMISSION FROM PARENTS/GUARDIANS

Advice for Official Spokesperson(s)

- ✗ DO NOT speculate - your interpretation or understanding can and probably will be exaggerated or quoted as hard fact
- ✗ DO NOT give any fact unless you are certain it is correct
- ✗ DO NOT say "NO COMMENT" - it can be taken as a negative answer which could be inaccurate and lead to difficulties later
- ✗ DO NOT be afraid to say "I DO NOT KNOW"
- ✓ DO have the confidence in yourself and your command of the situation to take a positive attitude towards the media
- ✓ DO inform the Press Officers of any development which may assist them and of any journalist you suspect of acting inappropriately.
- ✓ If you know that everyone is safe and well, or those parents of injured children have been told - say so as soon as possible - it stops other panicking.

2.5 Implementation – Parent Contact

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

- Coordinate, implement and monitor process for speaking to parents

Potential action to be taken	✓ when complete
Ensure that staff are fully briefed on facts and are aware of what information can be released	
Immediately inform parents of any injured pupils of what has happened and where their son/daughter is, recording what their plans are, e.g. to travel to their son/daughter, any assistance they need and any means of communications with them (e.g. mobile phone number)	
Inform parents of children not directly involved in the incident, as decided by the headteacher or nominee - use any existing arrangements for contacting parents quickly and efficiently	
Receive parent visitors to the school, ensuring they sign in and out and are issued with identification badges	

DON'T FORGET

- If there is any possibility of legal liability, police action, or a health issue, the School's Insurer and Solicitor should be contacted before the school issues information to parents.
- Parents should first hear of the incident from the school (or from the party leader), not from hearsay or from the media. Information given must be limited until the facts are clear and all involved parents/next of kin are informed

2.6 Implementation – Welfare (Pupil)

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

- Focus on safety and welfare of all pupils in the school whether directly or indirectly affected

Potential action to be taken	✓ when complete
If not already actioned, secure the immediate safety of pupils - this may include evacuation or keeping pupils and staff inside the building (sheltering)	
Establish the location of all pupils using timetables and registers and make a list of those unaccounted for	
Identify those pupils who are badly affected, and who need extra support	
Make arrangements for reuniting pupils with their parents	

DON'T FORGET

- Pupils should be told to avoid talking to the media or spreading the story unnecessarily (particularly via use of mobile phones)
- Inform pupils, in groups as small as practicable, considering the best way to impart tragic news (advice is available from the educational psychology service)

2.7 Implementation – Staff Liaison

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

- Focus on safety and welfare of all staff and visitors to the school and act as the first point of contact between them and the CIMT

Potential action to be taken	✓ when complete
If not already actioned, secure the immediate safety of staff - this may include evacuation or keeping pupils and staff inside the building (sheltering)	
Establish the location of all staff, and visitors using timetables, registers and the visitor's book, and make a list of those unaccounted for	
Establish a staff rota and ensure that staff take regular rest periods	
Inform school staff as appropriate, depending on the time and scale of the incident	
Identify those staff who are badly affected, and who need extra support	
Inform staff to avoid talking to the media or spreading the story unnecessarily (particularly via use of mobile phones)	

DON'T FORGET

- You may also need to inform next-of-kin of any staff who have been involved
- Where possible, avoid closing the school and try to maintain normal routines

2.8 Implementation – Logistics

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

- Take charge of events

Potential action to be taken	✓ when complete
Check that all available communications and office equipment are working (phones, fax, copiers), in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CIMT Base • School Office • CIMT Alternative Base (in the event of back-up being needed) 	
Ensure the security of the school premises	
Ensure access to site for emergency services	
Consider emergency communications needs	
Open/close parts of school as required, and turn off water, gas and electricity supplies if necessary	
Arrange a place to receive parents and children involved	
If necessary, evacuate the building in accordance with the School Fire Procedures	
Arrange for the staffing of switchboard/telephone	
Ensure that parents do not take students away, unless directed to do so	
Consider need to contact school buses (under contract) to rearrange pick-up times	
If the incident has occurred offsite, consider logistical needs for repatriating those involved	

DON'T FORGET

- Dedicate lines for incoming and outgoing calls and arrange extra support for reception.

Line to be used for:	Incoming calls only	Outgoing calls only
QI	01983 617967	To be advised
Finance Office	01983 617937	01983 617920

2.9 Stand-down – Recovery

Potential action to be taken	✓ when complete
As soon as possible after the emergency:	
• Arrange debriefing meetings for staff and pupils	
• Arrange debriefing meetings for the headteacher and CIMT	
• Identify and support high-risk pupils and staff	
• Promote discussion of the emergency in class	
• Consider the need for individual or group support	
• Help affected pupils and staff to come back into school	
• Liaise with parents regarding plans for attendance at funerals	
• Liaise with parents regarding plans for attendance/representation at memorial services	
• Initiate a review of the school emergency plan, evaluating the school's response and feeding in any lessons learnt	

2.10 Stand-down – Post Incident care and support

Potential action to be taken	✓ when complete
In the longer term:	
Consult and decide on whether and how to mark anniversaries	
The impact of some incidents can continue for years, so thought may need to be given to ongoing identification and support measures for both pupils and staff who are affected	

DON'T FORGET

- Remember that legal processes, enquiries and news stories may bring back distressing memories and cause upset within the school
- Remember to make any new staff aware of which pupils were involved and how they were affected

2.11 Other – checklist for group leader on educational visit

Action to be taken	✓ when complete
Ascertain details of incident	
Alert relevant emergency services (Police, Fire, Ambulance, Coastguard) via 999 system	
Call for assistance if available (staff, passers by)	
Administer first aid where possible	
Account for all members of the party and ensure that all persons uninjured stay together	
Allocate staff member(s) to travel to hospital(s) with casualties	
Ascertain if there are any witnesses	
Allocate staff member(s) to stay at incident site to liaise with the emergency services	
Arrange for all non-casualties to return to base (accompanied by a member of staff) and that all members of the group are informed of the incident as soon as possible	
Inform headteacher/member of senior management team (at school) as soon as possible. Give as much of the following information as possible: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ date, time, location and nature of incident ○ names of those involved ○ details of any injuries. ○ actions taken. ○ contact point to be used 	
Consider requesting additional assistance.	
Keep headteacher/member of senior management team regularly updated.	
Consider whether activity should be abandoned. If so, arrange for non casualties to return to school. Liaise with headteacher/senior management team over transport arrangements.	
Do not discuss legal liability	

APPENDIX - 3 (Forms)

3.1 Activation – Initial information recording (general)

Information about an incident may come from a staff member, pupil, parent, the emergency services or the local authority.

Whoever receives the alert should ask for, and record, as much information as possible:

Name of the person informing of the incident	
Details of the incident	
Who else has been informed (e.g. emergency services etc)	
Exact location of the incident	
Details of any casualties	
Any action taken so far	
Name of contact at the scene	
Number of contact at the scene	
What assistance is needed	

Immediately inform the Headteacher or Deputy/nominee