



# CRITICAL INCIDENT POLICY

**Approved by:** Finance & Premises  
Portfolio

**Date:** October 2022

**Last reviewed on:** February 2023

**Next review due by:** February 2024

**Dissemination of the Policy: All staff and Governors, School Website**

## History of policy changes

Date	Version	Change	Origin of change e.g. change in legislation, request by TU	Changed by

## **CRITICAL INCIDENT POLICY AND PROCEDURES**

### **1. Rationale: What is a critical incident or a crisis?**

An event or events, usually sudden, which involve the experience of significant personal distress to a level which potentially overwhelms normal responses, procedures, and coping with strategies and which is likely to have emotional and organisation consequences.

Examples In school:

- The death of a student or a member of staff through natural causes, such as illness
- A traffic accident involving a student or a member of staff
- A deliberate act of violence, such as knifing or the use of a firearm
- A school fire or an explosion

Examples out of school:

- Deaths or injuries on school journeys
- Tragedies involving children from many schools
- Civil disturbances
- Capture, wounding or death of an individual or several parents involved in active service

### **2. Aims and objectives**

The purpose of the Critical Incident Policy is to;

- ensure that all staff and governors are equipped with a concise working document to deal with any event that affects Pittville School, its staff or students.
- Ensure that swift and appropriate action is taken the moment the school is made aware that a critical incident has occurred.
- To provide accurate information effectively to staff, students, parents, governors and the LA
- To offer sensitive, non-intrusive support in the short and medium term to all those affected directly or indirectly by what has happened.
- To maintain, as far as possible, the normal routines of school life
- To offer a secure framework of continuities to all students, staff, parents and the wider community

**Objectives:**

- To safeguard the welfare and safety of students, staff and visitors and to resume provision of education services at the earliest opportunity and, where possible, secure a continuation of learning.
- To maintain the community and identity of the School and return the School to normality.

### 3. What this Policy covers

- The Critical Incident Management Team
- Dealing with intruders on the School premises.
- Keeping Staff Safe
- Fire
- Adverse Weather
- Death of a Student or Staff member
- Tragedy during a School trip
- Infectious diseases
- Loss of Heating, Power, Water or Drainage
- Coping With Crises in Pittville School
- Ensuring the Safety of Students

### 3. Background, roles and responsibilities

*The following guidance notes are to help the school manage a critical incident. Not all of the actions described will be needed. The Critical Incident Management Team (CIMT) will decide how much of what follows will be followed when they have their first briefing meeting as described below. A second assumption in this advice is that the school is in session. If the critical incident occurs outside school hours, the Headteacher (or the delegated member of the SLT) will decide how much of what follows should be implemented. There is an assumption that the appropriate emergency services have been called as necessary.*

<b>The Critical Incident Management Team</b>		
<b>Role</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Contact No</b>
Team Leader	Richard Gilpin	01242 650910 07593 443243
Staff Liaison	Amanda Peck Penny Kavanagh	07719 533124 07706 353478
Student Liaison	Martin Watkins	01242 650908 07394 567630
Parent and Community Liaison	Andrew Raistrick	01242 650905 07706 353495
Police Liaison	Richard Gilpin	01242 650910 07593 443243
Media Liaison/Social Media Monitoring	Richard Gilpin	01242 650910 07593 443243
Administrator	Jo Hamblin	01242 524787
<b>Gloucestershire LA will:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide officers to support the school;</li> <li>• Call upon services of other departments of the County Council;</li> <li>• Help in planning for a return to normal after the incident, including advice about grief and bereavement issues, care, counselling and practical support.</li> </ul>		

The Emergency Duty Team at County can be contacted 24 hours 01452 614194. Detailed contact numbers and the Gloucestershire Schools Critical Incident Support information (updated May 2022) is contained in Appendix 2.

Gloucestershire LA Media Unit will:

- Co-ordinate all approaches from radio, television and newspapers and liaise with Pittville School to ensure that the media have the correct information. The Media Unit will:
  - Keep the media informed with details of known and confirmed facts via press releases/media briefings
  - Arrange media briefings away from the school site to try and keep them away from the actual incident
  - Arrange limited access to the school site should that be deemed appropriate
  - Arrange interviews with appropriate spokesperson for the LA/School
  - Handle all enquiries on behalf of the LA and Pittville School.

The Communications Manager may be contacted during office hours on 01452 427965.

The Critical Incident Management Team will:

- Meet daily to share information and plan the next stage of the response by referring to the Critical Incident Action list in Appendix 1.

## **Intruders on Pittville School Site**

Pittville School will maintain an open-door policy for parents and visitors alike but this must be balanced against the likelihood of serious threats to staff, students, and property in Pittville School.

These threats may take the form of...

- Theft of equipment and/or personal belongings of either staff or students.
- Vandalism of equipment and/or premises.
- Violent students threatening either fellow students and/or staff.
- Violent parents threatening either students and/or staff.
- Unknown intruder threatening either students and/or staff.

All visitors are requested to enter the School via main reception, sign in via the electronic registration (including photograph) and be issued with a visitor's badge and lanyard. This process also ensures visitors' safety if a fire evacuation or drill should take place during their visit.

Any serious concerns or threats staff should follow the procedures below.

### Challenging the Intruder

- Do not stand too close or invade personal space, this could trigger violent confrontation.
- Avoid an aggressive stance such as finger wagging or folded arms.
- Be polite. Stay calm; speak gently, slowly and clearly.
- Explain your authority to challenge them if it is questioned.
- Always tell another person when going to speak to possible intruders.
- Avoid arguments.
- Never place your hand on a potentially aggressive intruder.
- Do not turn your back, and if you leave the room, do so backwards.
- Try to leave yourself an escape route which you have planned on entry to the area.
- Be on the look-out for weapons.
- If there is more than one intruder, do not confront them on your own, seek support first or enlist the help of the police.
- If you do not feel sufficiently confident to challenge an intruder, do not do it. Seek help.

You will need to get a message to Reception or to the Business with details of the situation and instructions to either call the police, alert members of SLT, raise the fire alarm for a FULL EVACUATION, see appendix 4 for Fire Evacuation Procedure, or to give the school bell alarm of an intermittent tone which means LOCK DOWN, see appendix 5 for Lockdown Procedures.

### During the Event

If there is any question of a risk to students and/or staff, evacuate the School using normal fire evacuation procedures (red notices on the back of each door).

There may be situations where evacuation would increase the risk or exacerbate a sensitive situation. Circumstances will dictate the action to be taken and either the Headteacher or, in

his absence, the Deputy Headteacher will have to take the responsibility of making a judgement as to the right course of action.

In the case of attempted abduction or direct physical threat to a student you will be required to make an immediate judgement.

Consider –

- Will the victim be in greater danger or lesser danger if the intruder is confronted?
- Is it possible to speak to and reason with the intruder?
- Is the intruder known to you and the student?
- Do you have any knowledge of the victim or intruder that may assist your judgement?
- It is not reasonable to suggest that the Headteacher or other staff can do more than follow their own assessment of the situation and act accordingly.
- The only principles which must be followed are to take the course of action which you believe presents the least risk to the student, staff and visitors and summon the police as soon as possible.

### After the Event

Any violent incident that takes place in the School must be reported in accordance with the School's reporting procedures using the Incident Log form.

It is possible that staff or students may be traumatised by intruder incidents, even if they do not display immediate signs of trauma or disturbance. The opportunity of counselling should always be offered.

It may be appropriate for the Headteacher or Chair of Governors to brief Officers from the Children's and Young People's Services about the incident, particularly if there is any media interest.

**No other member of staff or governor should speak to the press or broadcast media without first consulting the Headteacher.**

Although trespass is not a criminal offence, Pittville School staff may order any unwelcome or unauthorised visitors to leave the School site.

### Exercise of Section 547 & Police Involvement

Any member of Pittville School staff or elected Governor can ask unauthorised persons to leave the School premises, but only a Police Officer can remove a person from the School premises provided they have reasonable cause to suspect that the person is committing or has committed an offence under Section 547.

### **Keeping Staff Safe**

It is advisable to consider the circumstances in which violence or threat might occur and the precautions which can be taken to minimise risk.

### Be Aware of Your Own Behaviour

Violent confrontation may occur as a result of inappropriate behaviour by School staff.

Whilst there is no excuse for violence, all staff should ensure that their own behaviour is assertive but controlled and reasonable.

### Be Prepared

Staff may know in advance that a meeting is likely to be difficult and that certain parents are prone to over-react, or that they will strongly disagree with a Pittville School action or decision. If staff think these circumstances may apply, they should seek the advice of either the Headteacher or a member of the Senior Leadership team and ensure that a colleague is present throughout any such meeting.

### Drink, Drugs & Stress

If it is apparent that someone you are meeting has been drinking, or if there is a suspicion that they may be under the influence of drugs, all staff should be very cautious. If it is possible to withdraw from the situation to enlist assistance then do so.

### Be Aware of Your Surroundings

Ensure you are aware of the following –

- If in an office or classroom, how could you get help if it was needed?
- Do you have an escape route?
- Always position yourself between the person you are meeting and the door.
- Do not turn your back, and if leaving the room, do so backwards.
- If possible, remain behind a barrier such as a desk.
- Avoid potentially dangerous locations such as the tops of stairs, restricted spaces and areas where there is equipment which could be used as a weapon.
- Is there another member of staff within earshot?
- Try to remain calm
- In a confrontational situation, try to gently persuade the aggressor to back down or compromise
- Keep calm, speaking gently, slowly and clearly.
- Do not show aggression in response to aggression.
- Do not argue.
- Do not invade personal space by standing too close.
- Avoid wagging your finger or folding your arms.
- Never place your hand on an aggressive person.
- Be aware of the person's movements and body actions which might signal that it is time to withdraw from the situation/seek help.

### Staff Working Alone

If a member of staff is working outside normal school hours at the School or is working alone they should –

- Consider whether it is really necessary to work alone.
- Ensure that the building is secure and that no other person can enter without their knowledge.
- Notify someone of their whereabouts and agree with them a system of checking on their safety at regular intervals.
- Consider how they would summon help and who they would contact.
- Consider the use of personal alarms and mobile telephones.

### Assaults on Pittville School Staff

Staff should bear in mind the following key points –

Violence does not only include physical assault but also distressing or intimidating verbal aggressions. Incidents arising from racial, sexual or religious harassment are also included. Intimidating behaviour can also include malicious damage to property, rude gestures and innuendo.

All violent incidents, including threat and abuse from whatever source (e.g. intruders, parents, other employees, students, etc) must be recorded and reported.

People will have differing reactions to violence, threats and abuse and differing perceptions of what constitutes such behaviour. All staff should bear in mind that what might seem trivial to one person may cause another substantial distress.

Report any violent incident to a member of the Senior Leadership Team as soon as possible, however minor it might seem.

Counselling support is available for employees and may be appropriate following a violent incident. Counselling services are provided by Gloucestershire County Council and can be accessed through the Employee Assistance Programme.

## **Fire**

Please refer to the Health and Safety Policy. A full copy of the Fire Evacuation Procedure is on a red notice on the back of each door in the school. See Appendix 4 for Fire Evacuation Procedure. Regular updates are given via email from the Business Manager. Regular fire drills are conducted early each term to ensure staff and students are aware of exit routes and where to muster. Staff will be debriefed on any issues arising from the fire drills.

## **Adverse Weather**

In adverse weather conditions staff are expected to make all reasonable efforts to get to Pittville School, even if their arrival is delayed.

There are some circumstances where the school is closed to students, but not to staff. This will be made quite clear via text and email and as a message on the School website. For staff, the School has a cascade communications procedure to reach all staff.

Staff should be effectively deployed in the School to deal with the emergency. Duties would typically include –

- Moving students to a safe area at first sign of emergency in easily contacted groups for support and reassurance. Any adult helpers should stay with the class they are with.
- Headteacher, or Senior Leadership team to make a check of the School to ascertain all staff and students are clear of dangerous area.
- Cut off electricity/gas/water, if necessary, by the Premises Manager.
- Check damage.
- Keep all staff up to date on the developing situation. Re-assure the students re. siblings and provide games, videos etc, if possible.

- When situation allows, check the affected area (only if safe to do so). Spare staff to salvage belongings.
- When all the students have left the site hold a short staff meeting to assess the situation and plan for the next day.
- Ensure governors are notified of details of the emergency.
- A letter/text/web-site information to parents should be issued as soon as possible to give them the latest information.

### **Death of a Student or Staff Member**

**It is the responsibility of the Police to advise the parents, or next of kin of the staff member, of the tragedy.**

The Critical Incident Team should ensure that all staff members (this must include those who may be off sick and regular supply/volunteers) and governors are made aware as quickly as possible of the situation. The Chair of Governors should ask fellow governors to assist in this process.

An initial press statement is to be devised with the aid of the Local Authority Communications Team.

**All staff should be asked to respect the need for all communications with local community, parents, media etc. to only be done through the Headteacher.**

### **Tragedy during School Trip**

The Critical Incident Team will be brought together.

The Business Manager should ensure that at least one telephone line is available to ensure emergency contact with the School. A school mobile can be used for this purpose.

The leader of the trip should ensure that the Headteacher is informed of the tragedy and the Critical Incident Team will then make the necessary arrangements to inform the LA and other parents.

**HOWEVER: Parents should only be informed once the Police have given the authority to do so.**

The leader of the trip, or nominated person, should ensure that they are able to keep telephone communication open with the Headteacher at all times.

**The Police will advise the relevant parents, or next of kin of staff member, of the tragedy.**

Once this has happened the police will give authority for Pittville School to inform others.

The Critical Incident Team should ensure that all staff members and governors are made aware as quickly as possible of the situation; the Chair of Governors should ask his/her fellow governors to assist in this process.

**All staff and governors should be asked to respect the need for all**

**communications with local community, parents, media etc. to only be done through the Critical Incident Team.**

## **Infectious Diseases**

Cases of infectious disease may occur from time to time in schools. Their importance depends on several factors:-

- The severity of the disease
- The number of students affected
- The mode of transmission
- The amount of fear they generate
- Whether any specific action is necessary to stop further cases (e.g. immunisation, improving food-handling practices etc.)

### How do we know there might be an outbreak?

There are several ways in which the School may come aware that there is a case of infectious disease.

- Students may be ill
- There may be a sudden increase in the number of absentees
- Parents may advise the school that their children are suffering from an infectious disease
- Medical practitioners may contact the school

### What should the Headteacher do?

If a member of staff thinks there may be a case, this should be brought to the attention of the Headteacher or SLT so that appropriate action can be taken.

It is helpful for the initial assessment of the situation if a member of staff can find out:-

- How many students are ill
- How the illness is being presented
- When did each student fall ill

**Please note that First Aiders in school staff have defibrillator training and first aid training.**

## **Loss of Heating, Power, Water or Drainage**

### **Loss of Power and/or Heating**

The effects of loss of power to the School will depend much on the time of year. The summer months should not provide too much of a problem but the lack of electricity/gas during the winter months could mean the school becomes too dark and too cold for staff or students to work properly. In addition, loss of power will inevitably disrupt the ability to prepare meals and deliver learning through the use of ICT.

It is the Headteacher's (or Deputy Headteacher's in his absence) responsibility to make the decision about whether the students need to be sent home and to ensure that parents/carers are contacted.

## **Loss of Water and/or Drainage**

The loss of water to the School site can pose serious Health & Safety problems including the inability to flush toilets and wash hands for both students and staff, as well as the lack of water for any food preparation activities.

The Premises Manager/Business Manager and Headteacher must all be aware of, and have access to, the mains water cut-off tap.

The Premises Manager should firstly try to establish the reason for lack of water or drainage, e.g. check for burst water pipes, overflowing drains.

The Headteacher (or Deputy Headteacher's in his absence) is responsible for making any necessary decision about vacating the School site and whether that action is necessary.

All emergency contact details for the utilities can be found in Appendix 2.

## **Coping With Crises in Pittville School**

### Reactions of Students

The effect upon the School community of a tragedy, whether through violent, accidental, or natural causes, will inevitably be severe and long lasting. The most immediately affected survivors will only be able to return to normal Pittville School life with a considerable degree of support and understanding on the part of other members of the School.

It is important to encourage students to express their feelings in an environment where they feel it is safe to do so. Students should be praised for recognising problems they may be experiencing and allowed to talk about or relive the experience – perhaps through mime, dance or other art forms. This is not a sign of ghoulish obsession with death or injury, but a way of avoiding a repressive approach, which has inherent dangers. Survivors should be encouraged to attend funerals; a formal farewell helps people to come to terms with grief.

Students whose appearance has changed as a result of injuries will need to be prepared for their return to the School and the likely reactions of fellow students. They may need home visits from teachers or the ability to attend part time for a while.

The reactions of students involved in a crisis will vary. Staff can help students by looking out for signs of nervousness, anxiety or depression, difficulties with concentration, memory or sleeping and anti-social behaviour. Some survivors of tragedies suffer from severe feelings of guilt that they have been spared, when their friends have died.

### External Support

Regular staff meetings will be needed to keep students under review and decide upon appropriate action, including any need for specialist referral. Therapists and counsellors can be made available to supplement (not replace) the resources of the School.

It is important that Pittville School remains in control of the situation and any supportive external guidance that may be offered, staff should not allow themselves to be overwhelmed by well-meaning but potentially intrusive assistance.

In a major incident involving the wider community outside Pittville School, special procedures will be initiated by the LA Children Services Department to co-ordinate the provision of aftercare of victims.

### Reactions & Roles of Pittville School Staff

The most important role of Pittville School staff after a tragedy is to observe and listen to students. They need to be sensitive that students respond in different ways and to be aware of the danger of adding to the burden of young people through inappropriate behaviour on their part.

The Headteacher should monitor work pressures and look for any signs that staff are becoming overwhelmed with the distress of the students and themselves. Staff may need their own support group.

### Dealing with the Media

The experience of some schools has shown the relationship with the media is not always positive. The press can be invasive to the point of rudeness and constantly looking for "an angle". This can sometimes take the form of attempts to attribute blame for the tragedy to parents, the School and other public agencies involved.

The Headteacher, Senior Leadership Team and Chair of Governors should be prepared for likely questions and should be clear what they are prepared to say and what not to say to the media.

**The Critical Incident Team should meet to agree this before anyone talks to the media**

### Reactions of Parents

There are obvious limits to the amount of support and assistance that the School can offer to parents but it is important that staff should be aware of parents' likely reactions. Parents whose children have died will find themselves cut off from many of their usual social contacts/routines and communications networks and may welcome informal contacts from Pittville School staff and other parents.

### Rebuilding

Allowing the whole community ample opportunity to try to make sense of what has happened, to express and share emotional reactions and to say farewell in an appropriate manner can all form important steps in the rebuilding process.

Expressions of sympathy, visiting of the injured and attendance at funerals should not be discouraged. Special assemblies, memorial services, open days or debriefings can be therapeutic, positive events for survivors and friends, and a garden blooming at the appropriate time can be a fitting permanent memorial to those who have died.

### **Ensuring the Safety of Students**

Even where Pittville School has planned in fine detail their reaction to any emergency, circumstances may arise that cannot be anticipated.

In facing such emergencies the main consideration must be the safety of students. This may involve a good deal of additional work on the part of staff, which is greatly appreciated by all.

The following points should ensure students' safety and should always be observed –

- If there is any doubt that students can return home safely in prevailing conditions, regardless of age, every attempt should be made to secure alternative arrangements for them.
- Alternative arrangements must only be made following parental/carer permission.
- If the parents or guardians of younger students are not at home to receive them, they should not be released.
- Any unsupervised students arriving at Pittville School should be accepted onto the site and sent home only if it is known that they can return safely to a parent or guardian.
- If a course of action includes any greater element of risk of injury to a student, it should not be taken.

## **FURTHER INFORMATION**

Background information supporting the advice in this guidance and a list of other sources of information, can be found on the Health Protection Agency website:

[www.hpa.org.uk/infections/default.htm](http://www.hpa.org.uk/infections/default.htm)

## Appendix 1

### Critical Incident Actions

Actions: First Day	Notes						
<b>Assess the situation and provide appropriate immediate emergency response</b>	<p>When an incident takes place on or beside school premises an immediate emergency response may involve:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ensuring immediate safety of individuals</li> <li>• contacting emergency services</li> <li>• administering first aid</li> </ul>						
<b>By WHOM? RG/AR</b>							
<p>Gather and record accurate information</p> <p><b>What</b> has happened?  <b>Who</b> was involved?  <b>When</b> did it happen?  <b>How</b> did it happen?</p>	<p>It is important to establish the facts otherwise rumours may take over and add to the distress of those involved. This action should be started immediately but may be on-going as information may be incomplete initially.</p> <p>Specific details should include the names of everyone involved including any children/staff from other schools/settings.</p>						
<b>By WHOM? JH/AP</b>							
<p>Notify the Local Authority of Critical Incident on:  01452 614194</p>	<p>Schools should inform the Local Authority where:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• events challenge the internal coping mechanisms within the organisation</li> <li>• events have wider implications e.g. a high media profile</li> </ul> <p>If a tragic incident occurs that can be managed from within internal resources there is no requirement to notify the LA however schools may wish to call to discuss the event and their actions.</p>						
<b>By WHOM? JH/AP</b>							
<b>Contact school governors and outside agencies</b>	This is facilitated by recording contact numbers in advance (see appendix 2).						
<b>By WHOM? JH/AP</b>							
<p><b>Convene a meeting to brief the Critical Incident Management Team to:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Brief the team</li> <li>• Make specific plans</li> <li>• Delegate specific roles and responsibilities</li> </ul>	<p>Depending on the incident it may be advisable to meet the evening before or early in the morning to ensure a plan is in place for the school day. At this meeting determine what information is to be shared beyond the group and with whom (this may involve liaison with the family).</p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td>Control Centre</td> <td>Richard Gilpin's office</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Reserve</td> <td>Room 1a</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Off site reserve</td> <td>The Royal Oak 522344</td> </tr> </table>	Control Centre	Richard Gilpin's office	Reserve	Room 1a	Off site reserve	The Royal Oak 522344
Control Centre	Richard Gilpin's office						
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<b>By WHOM? RG/AR</b>							

Ensure a dedicated emergency telephone line is operational:	Communication is vital however lines can during a CI telephone lines can quickly become overwhelmed.
<b>By WHOM? AP/VM</b>	
Alert Local Authority press office 01452 427965	Many incidents may cause media interest; the press office can give advice and support about the preparation of an official statement. Individual staff and students should be strongly discouraged from talking to the media as partial information, speculation and personal opinion can cause significant distress to families, especially when inaccurately reported; this is also true of information posted on social networking sites.
<b>By WHOM? AR/AP</b>	
<b>Compile a list of vulnerable students and adults</b>	Identify and monitor vulnerable individuals (students and staff), plan additional support from adults or peers. Staff can be reminded that their colleagues may need some additional support such as a phone call later that evening.
<b>By WHOM? EB/MW</b>	

Establish procedure for informing/briefing staff to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inform about the incident</li> <li>• Discuss plans for the day</li> <li>• Discuss how best to support students and each other</li> <li>• Make plans for further information to be disseminated as it becomes available</li> </ul>	It is important that all staff receive accurate facts and are kept updated. This may require two separate groups to allow supervision of students. Staff who are likely to be particularly affected may need separate arrangements. Arrangements may need to be made for staff who are not present on the day to be informed. The meeting would normally be led by the head teacher or senior member of staff. It may be helpful for an EP, a member of the clergy or a police officer to have some input to this meeting. Staff should be given advice and share ideas on how best to support students during this time.
<b>By WHOM? AP/PK</b>	
<b>Establish procedure for informing students:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In groups</li> <li>• In a familiar environment</li> <li>• By people they know and trust</li> </ul>	Whole school announcements should be avoided. Students should be informed in class or tutor groups by people they know and trust. Outside professionals can provide advice and support to staff where needed. Students who are likely to be particularly affected (e.g. close friends of a deceased student) should be told separately first. For further information see appendix 3.
<b>By WHOM? MW/EB</b>	
<b>Plan to re-establish routines and keep the structure of the day as regular as possible</b>	Re-establishing routines restores predictability and normality which promotes a sense of safety.

<p><b>BUT</b></p> <p><b>Build in adjustments to explicitly acknowledge the incident:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• whole school activities</li> <li>• class/tutor group activities</li> <li>• rituals</li> </ul>	<p>The capacity of students and staff to face additional challenges is reduced so the principle should be to keep busy with low stress work (avoid new subjects and tests).</p> <p>It is important to formally acknowledge the event particularly when it involves a bereavement affecting many in the school community. Whole school assemblies must be treated with caution to avoid hysteria however it would not be appropriate to continue as if nothing had happened. Where impact is severe classes may need to engage in alternative sessions (e.g. letters, poems or artwork for book of remembrance).</p>
<p><b>By WHOM? MW/RG</b></p>	
<p><b>Arrange room and staffing to provide opportunities for individuals who are overwhelmed to express feelings in a safe, supportive environment</b></p>	<p>Designate room(s) and equip with drinks, tissues, art equipment, appropriate literature</p> <p>Agree staff to cover. Support for students should come from staff or other familiar adults with whom the students already. EPs may be involved in this support however they are there to support, not take over from, staff.</p>
<p><b>By WHOM? AP/PK</b></p>	
<p><b>Contact bereaved/affected families to:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ascertain the family's wishes</li> <li>• Express sympathy/condolences</li> <li>• Plan further contact/actions</li> </ul>	<p>Contact should be made with family or families within the school community who are directly affected by the incident within 24 hours if possible.</p> <p>The nature of the contact should be guided by the wishes of the family although it may involve a home visit by staff representatives to extend sympathy.</p> <p>In some cases it may involve planning for return to school of injured/bereaved children.</p>
<p><b>By WHOM? RG/AR</b></p>	
<p>Establish a procedure for informing parents</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• By letter</li> <li>• In a meeting</li> </ul>	<p>Depending on the nature and timing of events parents may already be aware of the incident. An appropriate letter should be compiled to be sent home with students. In certain circumstances staff may decide to hold a parent meeting, either at the end of school or in the evening, to cover issues in more depth and allow questions to be raised. It may be appropriate to involve outside agencies, such as the police, clergy or EPs. For further guidance, including sample letter, see Appendix 3</p>
<p><b>By WHOM? RG/AR</b></p>	

<b>Arrange for staff to meet at the end of the day to debrief and plan for following day</b>	After an emotionally exhausting day it is important for staff to meet for a short session, for an update and to share plans, as talking things through with others provides an opportunity for peer support.
<b>By WHOM? RG/AR</b>	

<b>Further Actions: Day 2 onwards</b>	<b>Notes</b>
<p><b>Convene a meeting of Critical Incident Management Team to:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• consider any new developments</li> <li>• review actions and events to date</li> <li>• plan for the day</li> <li>• identify future tasks/ assign roles</li> </ul>	<p>Sometimes the first day appears quite calm as people may be in shock. Day 2 can present more issues as events begin to sink in so it is important to meet each day until the school returns to normal functioning.</p> <p>Adjustments should be reviewed on a daily basis and the balance between providing support for as long as required and returning to normal given careful consideration.</p>
<b>By WHOM? RG/AR</b>	
<p>Convene a meeting for staff to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• update staff on any new developments</li> <li>• inform staff of plans for the day</li> <li>• give staff an opportunity to ask questions and raise concerns</li> </ul>	<p>In major critical incidents staff should be brought together at the start of the following day. As well as practical purposes this gives emotional support in difficult circumstances and allows a reminder that both staff and students may need some nurturing and time to talk. Plans should be made for subsequent meetings as required.</p>
<b>By WHOM? RG/AR</b>	
<p><b>Liaise with affected family including:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• visits by staff or students to injured or bereaved</li> <li>• family's wishes and plans regarding funeral arrangements</li> <li>• return to school of injured or bereaved</li> </ul>	<p>Contacts/visits should be planned/ made to anyone injured, either at home or in hospital, with cards and get well messages from staff and students.</p> <p>In cases of bereavement there may be possessions to be returned to the family and timing of this should be carefully planned.</p>
<b>By WHOM? RG/AR</b>	
<p><b>Continue to monitor and provide additional support to:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• vulnerable individuals previously identified</li> <li>• other students (or staff) causing concern</li> </ul>	<p>Following a Critical Incident a level of shock, anxiety and distress is normal, especially amongst those closest to the incident.</p> <p>Most people will have returned to normal functioning within six to eight weeks. Further support may be required for individuals continuing to show significant signs of distress beyond this.</p>
<b>By WHOM? AP/EB</b>	
<p>Begin to plan school response to memorial to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the wishes of the family</li> <li>• active involvement of the peers and friends of the deceased</li> </ul>	<p>A lasting memorial and/or a ceremony give an important message about the value of the deceased; offers comfort to friends and family and may provide a sense of closure.</p>
<b>By WHOM? RG/AR</b>	

<b>Follow up and Long Term Actions</b>	<b>Notes</b>
<b>Review Critical Incident response and amend plan</b>	Once the school has returned to normal functioning it is important to reflect on the response to the incident including what went well and what lessons can be learned. This can be used to evaluate and amend the Critical Incident Management Plan.
<b>By Whom? RG/AP</b>	
<b>Make a note in the school calendar of important dates</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• anniversary of incident</li> <li>• birthday of deceased</li> <li>• inquests or court cases</li> <li>• events in which the deceased would have played a part</li> </ul>	The anniversary of a Critical Incident can trigger emotional responses and the school may wish, in consultation with the family, to acknowledge and commemorate the date.
<b>By WHOM? JH/EB</b>	

## Appendix 2

### Gloucestershire Schools Critical Incident Support – updated May 2022

#### Dealing with an Emergency - When to call 101 or 999

You should call **101** to report crime and other concerns that do not require an emergency response or report online:

<https://www.gloucestershire.police.uk/ro/report/ocr/af/how-to-report-a-crime>

#### Advice for calling 999:

- call when it's an emergency;
- a crime is in progress;
- someone suspected of a crime is nearby;
- when there is danger to life;
- when violence is being used or threatened;
  
- For safeguarding issues outside office hours you should contact the Emergency Duty Team 01452 614194 or email [edt@gloucestershire.gov.uk](mailto:edt@gloucestershire.gov.uk) The Emergency Duty Team Hours are 16:45 - 08:45 Monday to Thursday and 16:45 Friday - Monday 08:45 (including Bank holidays and Xmas Day and New Year's Day).

**If an emergency call is being made *out of hours*, the Emergency Services will make contact with the Civil Protection Team Duty Officer (CPTDO) who will contact and coordinate the council service response.**

**During normal working hours please contact the following directly for further advice:**

- For Safeguarding for schools contact: 01452 426221.
  
- **For health and safety advice contact the SHE team: 01452 425350**  
[she@gloucestershire.gov.uk](mailto:she@gloucestershire.gov.uk)
  
- **For Premises issues contact: 01452 328383 (08:30-17:00hrs).**
  
- **For Press Office/Communications issues contact: 01452 427965 (Mon-Fri 09:00-17:00hrs)**
  
- **For notifiable diseases – Avon, Gloucestershire and Wiltshire HPT (Public Health England South West) contact: 0300 303 8162 (option 1, then option 2).**
  
- Guidance on infection control in schools and other childcare settings can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/health-protection-in-schools-and-other-childcare-facilities>

#### For other emergencies:

- **Gas EMERGENCY** - dial **0800 111 999** (national number) for gas leaks.
- **Electric POWERCUT** - dial **105 from a landline** or **0800 6783 105 on a mobile** - the New National telephone line for power cut queries.
  
- **Water EMERGENCY, all are 24/7:**

- WaterPlus (Severn Trent area) 0800 783 4444
- Castle Water (Thames Water area) 0800 316 9800
- Water2Business (Bristol Water area) 0345 702 3797
- Welsh Water - Water 0800 052 0130 or Sewerage 0800 085 3968
  
- Schools Team can be reached during office hours on the following numbers: 01452 328681, 01452 328678 or **01452 427547**. **Please keep your out of hours emergency contact details updated with the schools team –**  
[Stephen.bradley@gloucestershire.gov.uk](mailto:Stephen.bradley@gloucestershire.gov.uk) or  
[Deborah.peake@gloucestershire.gov.uk](mailto:Deborah.peake@gloucestershire.gov.uk)
  
- Please note that in the event of an out of hours critical incident involving a school, Emergency Services will **contact the Civil Protection Team who will contact a Senior Education Officer directly. However, if you are experiencing difficulty in speaking to someone please call 07747 532852 this number will be monitored by the Senior Education Duty Officer.**

## Appendix 3a

### SAMPLE LETTER TO PARENTS



**Pittville School**  
Cheltenham

Albert Road, Cheltenham, GL52 3JD

**telephone** 01242 524787

**fax** 01242 228750

**email** [achieve@pittville.gloucs.sch.uk](mailto:achieve@pittville.gloucs.sch.uk)

**website** [www.pittville.gloucs.sch.uk](http://www.pittville.gloucs.sch.uk)

**Headteacher** Richard Gilpin

Dear Parents/Carers

The school has experienced (the sudden death/injury) to one of our students/staff. We are deeply saddened by this death/injury.

*(Brief details of the incident, and in the case of death, perhaps some positive remembrances of persons lost).*

We have support structures in place to help your child cope with this tragedy. *(elaborate).*

It is possible that your child may have some feelings that he may like to discuss with you. You can help your child by taking time to listen to him/her and encouraging him/her to express their feelings. It is important to give truthful information that is appropriate to his/her age.

If you would like any advice or support you may contact the following people at school:

*List names*

Yours faithfully

R Gilpin  
Headteacher

## Appendix 3b

### **SAMPLE LETTER REQUESTING CONSENT FOR INVOLVEMENT OF OUTSIDE PROFESSIONALS**



**Pittville School**  
Cheltenham

Albert Road, Cheltenham, GL52 3JD

**telephone** 01242 524787

**fax** 01242 228750

**email** [achieve@pittville.gloucs.sch.uk](mailto:achieve@pittville.gloucs.sch.uk)

**website** [www.pittville.gloucs.sch.uk](http://www.pittville.gloucs.sch.uk)

**Headteacher** Richard Gilpin

Dear Parents/Carers

Following the recent (tragedy/death of x) we have arranged specialist support for students in the school who need particular help. (X) is available to help us with this work. The support will usually consist of talking to students either in small groups or on a one to one basis and offering reassurance and advise as appropriate.

You child has been identified as one of the students who would benefit from meeting with (x). If you would like them to receive this support please sign the attached permission slip and return to school by ..... If you would like further information on the above please contact the school on the above number.

Please give your consent to this support by completing the consent form which you will find in the forms section of Edulink.

Yours faithfully

R Gilpin  
Headteacher

## Appendix 4

### FIRE EVACUATION PROCEDURE

Upon discovering a fire you should follow the guidelines as set out below:

- Sound the alarm by activating the nearest call point.
- Leave the building immediately.
- Each member of staff is responsible for the evacuation of their classroom/teaching area and conduct a quick, quiet and orderly evacuation.
- Staff, students or visitors **MUST NOT** stop to collect any belongings.
- Staff, if able, to close windows and doors and **leave doors unlocked**.
- Staff teaching in a room close to toilets should check that the toilets are clear of students as you make your way out of the building.
- Assemble at the fire assembly points on the front field
- All staff, students and visitors are to remain outside until directed otherwise.

#### Please note:

- **Staff, students and any visitors are to evacuate the building by the nearest and safest exit, regardless of one-way system.**
- **Do NOT walk through the building to the most convenient or easiest exit to access the fire assembly points.**
- **If the nearest exit is to the back of the building you must use and direct students to use this exit and walk around the outside of the building to the front field area.**
- **VISITORS should be escorted to the front of the building and accounted for with AP/EB.**
- **ALL SUPPORT STAFF must report to AP/EB OUTSIDE reception.** Once you have reported **support staff must descend the steps directly in front of reception and congregate on the grass below the steps, remaining quiet.**
- **ALL TEACHERS** that are tutors must report to the year group SLT and go to their tutor group to register their students. **All teachers that are not tutors must report to AP/EB then descend the steps directly in front of reception and congregate on the grass below the steps, remaining quiet.**
- **SLT must remain with their year group, wear hi-vis vest/jacket to enable easy identification and must have their radios with them.**

#### FORM TUTORS PLEASE NOTE:

- **STUDENTS** should line up in alphabetical order **IN THEIR TUTOR GROUP** and throughout this time there should be no talking.
- **TUTORS** should confirm that their entire group are present/missing and must report them to the staff below depending on year group and return to supervise their tutor group.

Year 7	D Kavanagh / E Bottell
Year 8	L Allan / K Foster
Year 9	P Sharma / B Crowe / C Bury-Brunsdon
Year 10	A Raistrick / J Pitt
Year 11	P Kavanagh / M Watkins

Missing students will be reported to a member of SLT/HoH.

Heads of House/SLT are to sign off on their areas of responsibility, and any information with regard to missing staff, students or visitors is to be URGENTLY passed to the Headteacher/Business Manager who will pass on this information to the Site Manager or Fire Brigade.

**SITE TEAM** will check the Fire Alarm panel in reception for point of activation, advise the Headteacher/Business Manager and deal with any refuge.

The Headteacher, in discussion with the Site Team, will decide if and when anyone can re-enter the building (in the absence of the Headteacher the Deputy Headteacher will decide this).

## Appendix 5

### LOCKDOWN PROCEDURES

Lockdown procedures should be seen as a sensible and proportionate response to any external incident which has the potential to pose a threat to the safety of children and adults in the setting.

Lockdown procedures may be activated in response to any number of situations, but some of the more typical might be:

- The close proximity of a dangerous animal
- A reported incident or disturbance in the local community (with the potential to pose a risk to students and adults in the school)
- A warning being received regarding an environmental risk locally, of air pollution (smoke plume, gas cloud etc.)
- A major fire in the vicinity of the setting
- An intruder onsite (with the potential to pose a risk to students and adults in the school)

Information regarding the perceived threat could come from a variety of sources:

- Communication from an outside source via reception
- Staff or students spotting an intruder/animal on site

Such information should be reported immediately to a member of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT).

**A full lockdown signifies an immediate threat to the school. Any member of SLT has the authority to put the school into Lockdown.**

It is difficult to plan for every eventuality; these procedures may have to be adapted.

#### **Immediate action:**

An intermittent bell will be rung continuously. An email sent to all staff saying lockdown and where IT allows a message published on screens.

The Emergency Services will be contacted on the instructions of a member of SLT.

The Business Manager/Assistant Headteacher will monitor CCTV. By monitoring CCTV, the police can be kept up to date with live updates.

#### **Checklist**

- All students and staff should quickly move away from the threat and return to/stay in the building.
- Students and staff on the sports field should make their way to the back field or Gym (whichever is closest) using the rear doors from the field and remain there until the all clear is given.
- External doors should be locked by Site staff or a member of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) if possible.
- Internal doors may be locked (where a member of staff with a key is present)
- Move furniture behind the classroom door if it is not locked

- Shut and lock windows, draw blinds and curtains, move students away from internal door windows (so an intruder cannot see in)
- Turn off lights and computer monitors
- Turn off all mobile phones immediately
- All radio communication to be used discreetly
- The end of lockdown will be signalled by the ringing of the intermittent bell **five** times – there will be limited communication during lockdown
- Students will not be released to parents/carers during a lockdown and staff should not leave the premises unless instructed to do so.

We ask that Parent/Carers:

- Do not contact the setting during lockdown as this could block telephone lines that are needed for contacting emergency services
- Do not come to the setting during lockdown as this may place themselves and others in danger
- Wait for the setting to contact them about when it is safe for them to come and collect their child

After lockdown has taken place:

- A message to parents/carers will be sent home as soon as possible following any serious incident to inform parents/carers of the context of lockdown.
- Following the need for lockdown, the SLT will create a full record of the event. Policies and procedures will be reviewed as soon as possible to identify any areas for potential development.
- **Staff and students will practice this annually.**