



Gulf British Academy

Critical Incident Management

Whole School Policy

Definition of a Critical Incident

A critical incident may be defined as any sudden and unexpected incident or sequence of events which causes trauma within a school community and which overwhelms the normal coping mechanisms of that school.

Aims

The aims of this policy are to lessen and manage the effect of a critical incident on the staff, students and parents at Gulf British Academy. It is anticipated that by adopting the procedures outlined in this policy it will be possible to provide a more secure environment for everyone associated with the school.

Every reasonable step will be taken to:

- Prevent or minimise the loss of life and injury to pupils and staff
- Alert relevant parties, e.g. the emergency services, the local authority, parents/carers and school governors
- Take control at the scene until the emergency services arrive
- Minimise disruption to the normal daily routine of staff and pupils
- Support staff, pupils and parents in the aftermath of an incident

Examples of in-school critical incidents

- A serious accident to a child or adult
- The death of a student or member of staff
- A traffic accident involving a student or staff member
- Violence or assault within school
- A school fire or explosion
- Destruction of part of the school building
- Abduction of a student
- A student or students absconding
- An illness such as meningitis within the school or the local community
- Severe weather requiring closure of the school
- Bomb threat
- Terrorist alert
- Aeroplane crashing on or near the site

Examples of out-of-school critical incidents

- An accident to a student or staff member while out of school on a visit or swimming
- Death or injuries on a school journey
- Tragedies involving children from many schools, e.g. the tragedy at Hillsborough Football Ground
- Civil disturbances - in the event of a crisis like this there can be three aspects to deal with at once:
 - the critical incident itself
 - the impact on your school as a community
 - the public impact of the incident, including how it is reported in the media (including social media)

Practice within school

Individual class teachers have an important role to play in managing critical incidents and may well be the best people to deal with the students in their classes.

In times of crises, teachers must react as they feel is appropriate and there can be no easy formula for dealing with critical incidents. However, by ensuring good communication within school, a crisis may be managed more effectively.

We recognise that planning is essential if emergencies are to be managed effectively.

We cannot plan in detail for every possible scenario, but our general plan ensures that those involved in the initial stages have a firm basis from which to develop their response.

Critical Incidents Team

A central component of this policy is the identification of the composition, roles and responsibilities of the Critical Incidents Team.

The role of Critical Incidents team is to review and direct the handling of the incident and the response and recovery process in order to:

- ensure the safety/security of students, staff, visitors, other users of premises
- minimize the loss to the school in physical, human and financial terms
- manage an incident to minimize disruption to regular operations
- liaise with appropriate agencies, including the Media

The Critical Incidents Team will comprise the following personnel:

- Head of School
- Key Stage Coordinators
- The school's designated Child Protection Officer
- School Premises Manager
- Director

The Critical Incidents Team will, dependent upon the nature of the incident itself, be concerned with any of the following issues:

- adequate assessment of hazards and situations which may require emergency action
- analysis of requirements to address these hazards
- establishment of liaison with all relevant emergency services
- development of an effective management plan
- dissemination of planned procedures
- dissemination of information to:
 - all staff
 - parents
 - pupils
 - Media
- organisation of practice drills to test the plan
- annual review of this policy
- assisting the Head of School with all aspects of the implementation of the plan

Action plan during an incident

- Assess the situation.
- The Head of School or Key Stage Coordinators must be informed of any critical incident as soon as possible. They will be designated as the Emergency Manager.
- As soon as an incident is confirmed, the Critical Incidents Team will meet to decide strategies.
- Inform the Director immediately.
- Collect, record and convey as much accurate information as possible.
- Arrange for staff directly involved to meet with the enforcement agencies (Police, Fire service and/or Environmental Health). Emergency Manager to be present at meeting to decide what information will be released to the media, parents and governors.

- The Director, alone, to act as 'press officer'. Do not speak to the press or media yourself.
- Call a meeting for staff:
 - to give facts about the incident
 - to outline what support is available to staff
 - to plan with staff how and what they can tell other people and pupils about the incident
 - to prepare a statement for them to use
- School office area, if appropriate, to be used for enquiries.
- Use the up-to-date list of students' next of kin (record files) and contact parents of any affected children.
- Ensure that pupils not involved in the incident are informed, in small groups.
- Make arrangements for Emergency Agencies to interview staff /pupils. Ensure that pupils are accompanied by a parent or senior member of staff.
- Refuse access to press/television on school premises.

Severe weather resulting in closure of the school

Before school opens

In the event of severe weather requiring closure of the school, the Head of School will contact the Director as a first point of call to assess the weather conditions locally.

In the unlikely event of closure, the Head of School will contact the Key Stage Coordinators and Premises Manager who will then disseminate all information to their staff. All parents and staff are advised to check WhatsApp groups for information.

During school hours

If severe weather requires closure of the school whilst students and staff are on the premises, the Head of School will assess the local and surrounding area weather conditions.

The Head of School will contact the Director to consent to the closure of the school. The school office will contact all parents for the children to be collected as soon as possible.

Once the safety of the students has been secured, the staff who have longer commuting distances will be given the opportunity to leave, ensuring all children have appropriate supervision. All staff and parents will be advised to check WhatsApp for information.

Action plan during a major emergency / fire on or around the school:

- The most senior member of staff will take over as the Emergency Manager.
- An assessment of the situation should be quickly made.
- Contact Emergency Services.
- First Aiders to give Emergency First Aid.
- If appropriate, evacuate the building as per fire drill using the continuous fire bell. Procedures and evacuation routes are displayed in each school room.
- The children should be kept together in class groups in the normal assembly point for fire practice. Nobody should re-enter the building for any reason.
- If the assembly points are deemed dangerous then the children should be taken to the nearest safe point around the school grounds. The Fire Marshall will converse with the Headteacher and direct safe evacuation of building and area.
- In the event of the whole area becoming unsafe (e.g. an aeroplane crashing on the site) then instructions will be given by the Emergency Manager and Fire Marshall as to where to evacuate the site.
- No child should leave the care of the teacher or appointed adult in charge of the class except in the company of a parent.
- Where possible the parents will be contacted by the Emergency Manager and advised of the best course of action.

Earthquake response

Most earthquake injuries are caused by falling contents and equipment. Keep away from these. Ensure you and your students following this rule:

Drop, Cover, Hold On

- Drop to your hands and knees
- Cover your head and neck with your arms. Seek cover under a nearby sturdy table
- Hold on to any sturdy furniture until the tremor stops

If inside, remain there until the shaking stops. Crawl only if you can reach better cover.

If outside, move away from the building.

What *NOT* to do:

- Do not run outside
- Do not use the lift
- Do not stand under a doorway

Instructions will be given by the Emergency Manager and Fire Marshall to evacuate the site only when it is safe to do so.

Remember to evacuate in an orderly fashion as practised in the drills.

Bomb threat response

Staff have responsibility:

- To know what to do in the event of a bomb threat
- To know what to do if a suspicious package is discovered

The following instructions set out the procedures to be taken in the event of a bomb threat becoming apparent in any of the school buildings or properties.

All actions resulting from a bomb threat will be coordinated by the Head of School or, in their absence, Key Stage Coordinators.

Bomb threats received by telephone

Terrorists, militants or organised groups frequently, but not always, give telephone warnings of bomb explosions. So, unfortunately, do hoaxers whose threats are empty.

A warning may be received that any part of the premises is at risk. In such cases, we will have to decide how to respond and whether it's appropriate to evacuate the premises.

In all cases, the person receiving the call considers should always:

- Remain calm and note the caller's number if displayed
- Record the call if possible
- Listen to the caller carefully. Try to obtain the answers to the following questions:
 - Where is the bomb?
 - When will it detonate?
 - What does it look like?
 - What kind of bomb is it?
 - Why are you doing it?
 - Who am I speaking to?

If possible, keep the caller talking and alert the Headteacher or Head of Key Stages so that they can assess the threat and immediately inform the Police of what action is being taken.

This information will help the Head of School/Key Stage Coordinators to:

- describe the location of the bomb
- identify the type of device
- consider whether to evacuate the premises

NO ONE should attempt to search for the bomb!

Email/Social Media bomb threats

If the threat is received via email or social media:

- Do not reply to, forward or delete the message
- Note the sender's email address or social media user name/user ID
- Preserve all log files for your school to help the police investigation

Suspicious packages

If a suspicious object or package is found:

- Do not touch or interfere with the object or package
- Clear people away from the immediate vicinity and secure the area
- Inform the police

All members of staff should be made aware that anyone discovering such an object must report it to the Head of School or other member or the Senior Leadership Team immediately in order that they take the action outlined above

**IN ALL CASES IT IS IMPORTANT TO CONTACT THE POLICE IMMEDIATELY WITH
DETAILS OF THE BOMB THREAT**

Lockdown procedure

A lockdown is implemented when there is a serious security risk of the premises due to, for example, nearby chemical spillage, proximity of dangerous dogs, attempted access by unauthorised persons intent in causing harm/damage.

Reasons for a lockdown to be initiated:

- An out of control student who is a threat to the safety of our students, staff, or himself/herself
- Someone who has a gun or weapon
- An intruder
- Hazardous chemical outside the building
- A weather-related event

How will I know a lockdown is occurring?

You will be notified by the sound of _____ being sounded in the corridor. The alarm is situated in the security office. An office staff member will also phone the Key Stage Coordinators to alert them of the nature of the lockdown.

Lockdown action plan

1. If you hear the "LOCKDOWN" alarms:

- Everyone is to stay where they are.
- Classroom teachers are to:
 - Quickly glance outside the room to direct any students or staff members in the hall into your room immediately
 - Lock all external and internal doors
 - Lower or close any blinds
 - Place students under tables. Look for a possible 'safe corner'
 - Locate and hold on to class registers in preparation for an evacuation
 - Turn out the lights and computer monitors
 - Keep students quiet

- Physical education classes being held in the gym should move into the KG staffroom and lock the doors.
- If students and teachers are outside the school building, they should stop, drop and remain still.
- If teachers and students are in the toilets, they should move to a cubicle, lock it and stand on the toilet.
- Anyone in the hallway should move to the closest classroom immediately.
- Canteen staff should move quickly to the Doctor's office and lock the door

The Head of School and/or Fire Marshall will signal all personnel if the lockdown has been lifted by sounding the same alarm.

If an evacuation occurs, all persons/classrooms will be directed by a Police Officer or Head of School to a suitable safe location. Once evacuated from the building, teachers should take the register to account for all students present in class.

DO NOT MOVE UNTIL YOU HAVE HEARD _____.

THIS IS THE SIGNAL THAT THE LOCKDOWN HAS BEEN LIFTED

Reviewed: September 2019
To be reviewed: Annually by September
Responsibility: Head of School / Key Stage Coordinators