GRESHAM PRIMARY SCHOOL

CRITICAL INCIDENT POLICY

April 2026

This policy sets out the procedures to be followed to ensure the safety and protection of the whole school community in the event of a critical incident.

Definition

A critical incident can be a physical incident or psychological trauma that has a severe immediate impact and likely long term effect on pupils, staff or parents. This may include:

- Incidents that involve staff, children or young people or others
- People-made disasters/emergencies, acts of terrorism
- Natural disasters/emergencies.

In-school

- the death of a pupil or member of staff through natural causes, such as illness;
- a traffic accident involving a pupil or staff member;
- a deliberate act of violence, such as a knife attack or the use of a firearm;
- a bomb hoax;
- a pupil or teacher being taken hostage;
- a school fire or flood;
- allegations or actual incidents of abuse against pupils by staff and staff against pupils;
- an arson attack on the school.

Out-of-school

- deaths or injuries on school journeys, trips or residential trips;
- tragedies involving children from many schools at public events such as football matches;
- civil disturbances;
- refugee children joining a school, uprooted from their countries and perhaps shocked by wars or atrocities;
- abductions / disappearances;
- Incidents involving the murder of school children that attract the attention of national and international media over prolonged periods;
- a civil disturbance or terrorism;
- a disaster in the community;
- a transport accident involving school members.

Major Incidents Focused on People

Whilst all critical incidents are difficult for all concerned, those that involve serious injury or death are inevitably traumatic. By their very nature and definition, critical incidents tend to disorientate and may overwhelm those involved. Planning ahead is a necessary precaution and can be crucial. Communication during and following an incident is, of course, of great importance.

Preventative and precautionary measures

Whilst no amount of planning can totally prevent accidents and problems occurring, it is hoped that some can be prevented and the effects of others minimised by taking sensible precautionary measures.

Staff will attempt to use the following to become aware of critical incident updates;

* BBC local radio

* Metropolitan Police Twitter account @metpoliceuk

It is expected that:

- Staff and pupils will be familiar with the school routines for fire and the evacuation of the school building on hearing the fire alarm;
- Staff will be familiar with the routines and procedures for dealing with emergencies;
- Staff and pupils will be familiar with the school's security procedures, in particular that all visitors not wearing a visitors badge should be questioned and escorted to the school entrance area;
- Staff organising school trips and visits follow the guidelines and write a risk assessment to be signed off by the Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher;
- Staff will sign in and out of the premises;
- Staff are aware of pupils with medical needs or health problems;
- Staff are aware of school policy in dealing with violence at work;
- Staff are aware that they should assess associated risks to children before carrying out a curriculum or other activity;
- Staff are aware that they are responsible for assessing risks to themselves before undertaking an activity.

Additionally, in the event of a critical incident the priorities of those adults in charge of the school or trip will be able to:

- Attempt to save life
- Minimise personal injury
- Safeguard the interests of all pupils and staff
- Minimise loss and to return to normal working as quickly as possible

Post Incident Care

We recognise that all pupils, staff and parents may need post incident care and will utilise all available school counselling services available, as well as those available from other schools, the Local Authority and external agencies to provide the level of support required.

In the event of a school related emergency the proposed arrangement is outlined here:

INCIDENT OCCURS

The Headteacher (Ms Karen Steele) is notified on School landline 0208 657 1807, or mobile 07526 387 696

The Headteacher or member of the Senior Leadership Team will then contact:

- Emergency Services 999 if appropriate
- The Chair of Governors - Kim Durling
- Deputy Headteacher - Tracey Butler-Kemp
- Site Manager - Becky Broder
- Caretaker – Paul Conroy
- Local Authority - Rachel Fox (Link Adviser)

Out of School Hours

A site team member or member of staff witnessing or first discovering the incident will be responsible for initiating the immediate response to the emergency situation. He/she will:

• Call the emergency services 999

• Evacuate the premises immediately, if necessary

• Inform the Headteacher of the Off-Site Incident

• Group leaders will:

o Account for all party members

o Delegate a member of staff to take care of uninjured members of the party

o Call the School

o Keep a log of actions taken and conversations held

Communications during an Emergency Situation

• The Headteacher / SLT will be in communication with emergency services via mobile

• The school switchboard should be used for incoming calls only

• Mobiles will be used for outgoing calls

• Staff dealing with incoming calls will receive written briefings

• All calls will be logged with date, time and details of each call

• The Headteacher **only** will handle media enquiries

Shelter/Lockdown Procedures

Shelter in school buildings may be appropriate if there is a;

a. toxic release posing a threat to safety
b. threat from an intruder or animal on the school grounds or within the vicinity of the school
c. an act of terrorism within the school
d. a terrorist hoax event (e.g. bomb, firearm) or warning of such an event

See separate Lockdown Procedure

Evacuation

In event of the need to evacuate the building, the school's Fire Drill procedures will be followed.

Bomb Hoax Warning

If a bomb warning is received, the school will be evacuated using the Fire Drill Procedure.

Children will line up the playground/school field with the register taken by the teacher.

Children and staff will then evacuate via the gate to the Recreation Ground and will travel by foot to Atwood School.

Communication

As soon as the situation is secure and the school is in 'lock down' the Headteacher, Deputy Headteacher or nominated member of staff will attempt to undertake the following – IF SAFE TO DO SO;

a. Contact parents/carers by email notifying them that the school is in 'lock down' and they should not attempt to attend the school.
b. Contact staff who may be en-route to notify them that the school is in 'lock down' and they should not attempt to attend the school.

School Closure

The decision to close the school will only be made in exceptional circumstances by the Headteacher.

Due to the timing of the school day, the decision to close the school due to say severe weather conditions will need to be made the previous day or by 6.30am on the day. A decision to close the school on subsequent days will be made by 2.30pm.

This will be communicated via the school's email or texting system and published on the website, and Opencheck.

Important Areas in an Emergency Situation (when evacuation is not needed)

- Control Point - Headteacher's office
- Parents/Pupils - Hall
- Media Briefing Point – Hall
- Staff Welfare Facilities – Staffroom

Incident Response Team & Roles

Role	Name	Responsibilities
School Incident Response Team	Headteacher Deputy Headteacher	As listed below
Incident Manager	Headteacher	Consider the need to alert other colleagues and external agencies. Collate all relevant information relating to the emergency. Coordinate the emergency response strategy, liaising with relevant agencies, e.g. the emergency services, School Governors as appropriate. Monitor the emergency response. Provide regular staff/team briefings. Authorise any additional expenditure
Deputy Incident Manager	Deputy Headteacher	Assists Incident Manager. Co-ordinates and manages staff in the Incident Response Team. Monitors staff welfare and organises staff roster.
Parent Liaison Officer(s)	SENco or SLT member	Advises parents and provides information. Provides point of contact. Arranges on site coordination of visiting parents. Maintains regular contact with parents where appropriate.
Administrators	School Secretary	Man telephone lines. Help to collate information. Relay incoming and outgoing messages by telephone, fax, email, etc. in a prompt manner. Provide admin support to the Incident Manager and Deputy Incident Manager. Maintain a master log of key events and decisions, including expenses incurred.
Communications Officer/Media Spokesperson	Headteacher/Deputy Headteacher	Acts as point of contact for media enquiries. Assist with internal communications.
Teachers		Maintain supervision. Ensure the safety and security of pupils. Provide information and offer reassurance. Monitor pupils' physical and psychological welfare.
Site Leader	Site Manager	Ensure site security at all times. Provide information about site facilities/layout as necessary. Assist with access/egress to the school.
Liaison Officer	Headteacher	Communicate with colleagues at the school on a regular basis and receive updates/progress reports.

Timeframe for Action

	Task	Time scale	Lead person/team
	Contact Headteacher, SLT with details of Incident	Immediately	Member of staff/public who discovered the incident
	Obtain factual information at start of crisis	Immediately	Headteacher
	Contact 999, CoG, Exec Dir Education, LA emergency response team	Immediately	Headteacher
	Leadership team meet with Administrators to establish record of phone calls/visits/log	Within hours	Headteacher, Deputy Headteacher, Chair of Govs
	Establish Response team protocol for handling information coming in and out of the school	Within hours	Headteacher, Deputy Headteacher, Chair of Govs
	Call a staff meeting to give information	Within hours	Headteacher, Deputy Headteacher, Chair of Govs
	Contact families – establish point of contact, protocol for updating parents	Within hours Continue until all are informed	Office staff directed by Assistant Headteacher
	Inform pupils in small groups	Same day if practicable	Deputy & Assistant Headteachers & Teachers
	Establish communications strategy	Within hours	Headteacher/Deputy Headteacher
	Liaison between LA & School	Within hours and continuously	Headteacher/Deputy Headteacher
	Debrief with all staff and agencies involved in incident – lessons learnt	same day if practicable	School Incident response team
	Arrange a debriefing meeting for staff involved in disaster	same day if practicable	School Incident response team
	Debriefing for parents/pupils involved in the disaster	as soon as possible, allowing for health and safety	School Incident response team
	Implement any lessons learnt from Incident	as soon as possible	School Incident response team

Information to be available on and off site.

The following information will be held in school and accessible to members of the School Incident Team, by means of paper documents or it is accessible via gridstore that can be accessed via a computer from another site if Gresham's site is compromised.

- Telephone numbers of all members of staff
- Names of key holders (probably including the Incident Managers)
- Pupil contact information

- Details of names, location and contact details relating to all pupils and staff off site at any time, e.g. school outings, etc.
- Significant medical information relating to pupils and staff off site on school outings at any time
- Telephone numbers of all Governors
- User names and passwords to all critical systems (Arbor, emailing texting system etc.)
- Contact list of all people, groups or organisations who visit or use the school and would need to be informed (breakfast & afterschool clubs)
- Contact list of people and groups used by the school, e.g. suppliers, contractors
- School's Bank details, e.g. account number and sort code
- Premises and site plan of the school, including critical locations, e.g. chemical storage, key salvage priorities
- Gas, electric and water mains control positions
- Copy of the Asbestos Log
- Computer based copy of Schemes of Work, Policies, etc. on disk