

Critical Incident Policy

Lockdown Procedures

Premises covered in this policy:

The Meriton – Meriton Street – BS2 0SZ

(Education 1st Learning Centre)

Policy Review

The responsibility of reviewing and maintaining this policy is Craig Dembicki (Managing Director). This policy will be reviewed annually.

Start date of policy: **19th December 2016**

Reviewed: **12th July 2024**

Reviewed: **16th December 2024** (move of premises)

Date of next review: **12th July 2025**



Craig Dembicki
Managing Director
Education 1st

Critical Incidents

A critical incident can be defined as a sudden, unexpected and tragic event or sequence of events which causes trauma and confusion within Education 1st's community, overwhelming the normal coping mechanisms.

It may affect staff, pupils and parents. It may also relate directly to the safety of the organisation's community or even externally to the premises of the organisation.

As a critical incident is very likely to have a severe impact upon the provision both in the short term and the long term, our aim is to ensure that the strategies and procedures are in place to protect the wellbeing of all the staff and students at Education 1st.

The Critical Incident Policy cannot cover every aspect of recovery from a critical incident, as all occurrences cannot be foreseen or considered.

A critical incident could occur during provision hours, after provision hours and on holidays and trips. It is essential that the policy is understood and is able to swing into action immediately.

Related Policies:

Health and Safety Policy

Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

Code of Conduct

First Aid Policy

Staff Wellbeing Policy

Trips and Visits Policy

Example of Critical Incident

A critical incident is likely to involve death or serious injury to one or more members of the provision's community and, or their families either at the provision, journeying to or from the provision, participating in an educational related activity, at home or in some other context.

Examples include but not limited to:

- Death of a student and/or a member of staff.
- Serious injury or death on a trip.
- Epidemic in the provision or the local community.
- Violent incident at the provision.
- Missing student.
- Destruction or major vandalism at the provision.
- Hostage taking.
- Transport accident involving members of staff or students.
- Terrorism.
- Civil disturbance.
- Major fire or arson attack at the provision.
- Abductions/ Disappearances.
- Allegations or actual incidents of abuse against students by staff/ staff by students.
- Incidents involving the murder of students that have attracted media attention nationally and internationally over prolonged periods.
- Floods.
- Violent attacks on members of staff and students.

- Use of the facilities in an emergency.

Purpose

The purpose of the policy is to ensure that in the case of a critical incident, Education 1st is able to effectively manage and ensure that the welfare of all staff and students is maintained. Moreover, the policy will aim to minimise the academical disruption caused by a critical incident and eventually enable the resumption of normal working in the shortest time possible.

The policy will look to:

- Ensure that swift and appropriate action is taken in the case of the organisation being made aware that a critical incident has occurred.
- Ensure that the welfare of staff and students is paramount.
- Ensure that Education 1st responds in a sensitive, consistent and effective manner
- which reduces confusion, panic and extreme emotion.
- Have in place a Critical Incident Management Team (CIMT).
- Have in place a Critical Incident Management Plan.
- Maintain normality as far as possible in the environments that have not been affected.
- Have immediate access to all relevant contact details. (Including outside agencies).

Critical Incident Management Team (CIMT)

The Critical Incident Recovery Team (CIMT) has responsibility for ensuring that procedures are properly addressed at times of high emotion. If the incident involves legal action, a precise response to the incident should be known and is able to be verified by more than one person.

The members of the CIMT **for the Learning Centre at the Meriton site are:**

- Managing Director
- Operations Director / DSL
- Deputy DSL
- Operations Managers

Guidelines for a Critical Incident

In the case of a critical incident, Education 1st will look to follow these guidelines to ensure it is dealt with in an appropriate manner:

- The Managing Director will take charge of the organisations response.
- In the case of the Managing Director being unavailable the CIMT will take charge.
- **The Meriton Centre will be the central liaison point.**
- The CIMT will assess immediate practical needs.
- The CIMT will contact the next of kin of those directly involved.
- A short simple statement of facts will be prepared by the Managing Director/Operations Director.
- All contacts from the media will be dealt by the Operations Director.
- The individual managing the Education 1st Office Phone will only issue a statement prepared and agreed by the CIMT to anyone that calls.
- When necessary, all staff will be informed and guided when they should inform students.
- The CIMT will determine the involvement of parents; only if appropriate.
- Short and long term support will be offered.
- An evaluation will take place of how the incident was managed.

Critical Incident Management Plan

In the event of a critical incident:

Initial Response - Within hours of the incident.

- The Operations Director should be contacted first, who in turn will notify the Managing Director.
- The Operations Director should seek clarity from the relevant sources regarding the nature and circumstances of the Incident.
- The CIMT will meet at the earliest opportunity and agree on the procedures for the management of the critical incident.
- Make contact with the Local Authority and the appropriate emergency services/ contacts.
- CIMT to set up a statement for the Education 1st Office Phone - so that it is able to deal with calls from anxious parents. It is vitally important that the statement is factual and avoids speculation.
- Contact the families affected - It is essential this is done quickly and sensitively. Ensure consistency of information. In some cases families may need to come to the centre. Provide emotional support if necessary.
- Make the appropriate arrangements to inform other parents - obtain advice from the LA. CIMT may choose to inform parents through a letter, leaflet or email.
- Informing the pupils - Operations Director and Operations Manager to decide how this is to be done.
- Deal with any media - It would be advisable to consult the Local Authority before facing any media. If in the circumstances, this isn't possible, the CIMT should prepare a text statement to be released by a designated spokesperson on behalf of the organisation.

Short Term Response

- Reunite students with their families/ Mentors to take students home.
- Manage staff - staff monitoring should be a priority, even members of the CIMT. If a crisis persists over many hours staff become tired, weary and upset and this affects their powers to make sensible decisions.
- Encourage students to talk - enabling young people to talk about the incident, and their feelings, using outside agencies if appropriate. Staff will need briefing about ways to help the children affected by the incident, and how to identify patterns of behaviour etc. This may have implications for the wider curriculum i.e. training in bereavement counselling for staff, provision of a range of books, PSHE discussions etc.
- Debriefing meeting - It may be important to hold a debriefing for staff, students and parents to:
 - Clarify what happened.
 - Allow for sharing of reactions.
 - Reassurance.
 - Mobilization of resources.
- The debriefing meeting should be held by an individual with experience and should take into account formal and informal recognition of rituals. It is important to remember to express sympathy to the families of the hurt or bereaved. Visits to children/staff in hospital. Pupils may wish to send cards and letters. The organisation may also need to consider attendance at funerals, and/or the desirability of holding special assemblies or memorial services. Anniversaries are also key times when support and sensitivity are required.
- Re-establishing routines – every attempt should be made to provide continuity for the children. The return to education of staff or pupils directly affected by the crisis will need to be managed carefully and with sensitivity but the re-establishment of routine is an important stage in emotional recovery.

Medium Term Response

- Return to education and work for both staff and students - It's vitally important that the reintegration process is planned carefully. This may mean that home visits are required, temporary part time attendance and reducing workloads.
- Consultation of professionals - Consideration should be made into consulting the Educational Psychology Service for support and guidance especially to those that may be experiencing prolonged effects from the incident.
- Communication with parents - keep parents informed, this could be done by producing a leaflet giving parents guidance on the possibility of delayed reactions and suggestions on how to help.
- Support for staff - ongoing support for all staff should be a major consideration including members from the CIMT.

Long Term Response

- Monitor those that are vulnerable - the effects of a crisis can reverberate for years.
- Brief new staff and pupils of the provisions history to help them understand and deal with any repercussions.
- Mark anniversaries.
- Legal processes - Legal processes can take a long period of time and can prolong the recovery process following a critical incident. The CIMT needs to consider planning in the circumstance where staff are involved in the legal process and are facing extended emotional trauma.
- Training for staff in counselling etc.

Lockdown Procedures

In the event of the premises needing to go into lockdown the following measures must be taken:

Partial Lockdown

- This may be as a result of a reported incident / civil disturbance in the local community with the potential to pose a risk to staff and pupils in the provision. It may also be as a result of a warning being received regarding the risk of air pollution, etc.
- All outside activity will cease immediately and staff will ensure that all students are inside of the building.
- Lock and secure all entrance points to prevent anyone from entering the building.
- Movement within the premises is permitted depending upon the circumstances but students may only move supervised by a designated member of staff.
- All situations are different, once all staff and students are safely inside, senior staff will conduct an ongoing and dynamic risk assessment based on advice from the Emergency Services. This can then be communicated to staff and pupils.
- 'Partial lockdown' is a precautionary measure but puts the provision in a state of readiness (whilst retaining a degree of normality) should the situation escalate.

Full Lockdown

- This signifies an immediate threat to the premises and may be an escalation from partial lockdown
- Ensure that all students are inside of the building, alternatively ask students to hide or disperse if this improves their safety.
- Lock and secure all entrance points to prevent anyone from entering the building.
- Staff to check register and ensure all students that are on site are accounted for
- Ensure students inside the building are in a designated room and encourage them to remain quiet and calm.

- Contact the emergency services (Dial 999).
- During the lockdown, staff will keep agreed lines of communication open, via two way radios, but will not make unnecessary calls to the central office as this could delay more important communication.
- Only evacuate the building if safe to do so. (Establish an exit point in the case of an intruder gaining access to the building).
- Notify parents as soon as practical.
- The all clear will only be given by a member of the CIMT.