

Longlands Primary School

Critical Incident Policy and Management Plan



Last reviewed on: 01/03/2025

Next review due by: 01/03/2027

At Longlands Primary School we place the safety and well being of our whole school community as our highest priority. We will ensure that we have thorough critical incident planning and management to ensure that every member of the community is protected in the event of a critical incident occurring.

Introduction

At Longlands Primary School in responding to an incident the aim should always be to ensure:

- *rapid and appropriate action is taken;*
- *accurate information is provided;*
- *normal school routines are maintained as far as possible, giving continuity to children;*
- *immediate, sensitive and non-intrusive support is offered.*

Definition of a Critical Incident

At Longlands Primary School an incident becomes a critical incident when it constitutes a serious disruption arising with little or no warning on a scale beyond the coping capacity of the school operating under normal conditions, and requiring the assistance of the Emergency Services or other agencies involvement.

Examples of such incidents impacting on schools could include:

- *death or serious injury as a result of violence, accident, self harm and/or sudden/traumatic illness;*
- *major fire;*
- *building collapse;*
- *riot and/or civil disorder;*
- *natural and/or man-made disaster;*
- *terrorism;*
- *missing person(s)/abductions.*

These incidents might occur:

- *on the school site during school hours;*
- *on transport used in;*
- *whilst the children are taking part in activities away from the school site;*
- *on school premises as part of after school activities;*
- *within the local community involving children from the school.*

Using this definition as a basis for decision-making, an incident is declared to be a critical incident following consultation between the person(s) managing the incident within the school (normally the Head Teacher and/or the senior leadership team) and the senior officer in Education Services. If there is doubt it is always better to consult and err on the side of caution and declare an incident critical.

Preventative Practice at Longlands Primary School

Curriculum

At Longlands Primary School we will address sensitive issues such as death, bereavement and serious injury as appropriate within the general curriculum. Therefore, children will not have to address these issues for the first time following a critical incident. These issues may be covered through studies in R.E., geography, history, PSHE and RSE.

Pastoral support

At Longlands Primary School we will develop an atmosphere of support and trust amongst our children and parents, and provide opportunities for them to talk and share their feelings.

Whilst careful pre-planning and effective risk management will minimise our children's exposure to dangerous situations, unforeseen hazards may well occur. In these situations, we will immediately brief children about how to proceed and require their compliance with any rulings we make.

CPD

At Longlands Primary School we will, from time to time, brief or train all relevant staff groups on their role in the prevention, management and response to incidents, including 'epipen' training for anaphylactic reactions and basic first aid for accidents.

Security

At Longlands Primary School we will employ effective security measures to prevent unwelcome visitors entering the school including locked rear doors and an entry system on the front gate. All visitors should only be admitted through the front door during school times and need to sign in at the office using the visitor electronic signing in system. They will also be required to wear a visitor's lanyard and sticker to denote they are visitors.

Administrative Practices at Longlands Primary School

- ✓ *We will maintain a list of all children and staff with next of kin contact details held centrally at the school both on computer and on a cloud system.*
- ✓ *Back-up will be kept on the ATS back up server.*
- ✓ *We will complete registers promptly at the beginning of each morning and afternoon session.*

- ✓ Names of children who are late or leave school early will be recorded on registers.
- ✓ We will maintain an inventory of equipment held on site in accordance with LA guidelines.
- ✓ A digital copy will be saved on the servers
- ✓ The inventory will be regularly updated.
- ✓ We operate a signing in and out procedure for all visitors and volunteers in school.
- ✓ We will display details of emergency evacuation procedures in all areas of the school site including in each classroom.

Planning for Trips and Visits

- ✓ We will follow DfE and LA guidance when planning and organising school visits.
- ✓ A full risk assessment will be carried out prior to any off-site visit.
- ✓ We will have a trained Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC).
- ✓ All supervising adults will carry details of the members of the party and a list of contact numbers (including the other adults' mobile phones and school emergency contact numbers).

Health and Safety

- ✓ All relevant school policies will include reference to health and safety procedures and how these relate to the teaching and organisation of the subject. This is particularly pertinent for physical education, design and technology, and science.
- ✓ We will follow LA guidelines on the testing and maintenance of equipment, fixtures and fittings. All electrical, PE and firefighting equipment will be inspected and tested annually. We will follow regulations for the storage and security of potentially hazardous substances and chemicals.
- ✓ We will conduct regular health and safety checks on the buildings and site, with any potential dangers being reported and dealt with.

Procedure for Dealing with a Critical Incident at Longlands Primary School

1. If necessary and appropriate the emergency services should be contacted immediately.
2. At this stage, it may be most appropriate to take whatever urgent action is needed to ensure the safety of others.

3. *As soon as possible, the Head Teacher (or next-most senior person) will start to keep a simple log of all events and actions.*
4. *The Head Teacher should communicate with the LA, emergency services, etc. via the school's email or via mobile phone. This will leave the school's main phone line free for incoming calls from parents, etc. (The same procedure should be used for keeping contact with off-site parties if they have been involved in a critical incident.)*
5. *The Head Teacher (or next-most senior person) will deploy staff as necessary to manage the situation and ensure the safety of all concerned. This may involve the senior management team being relieved of their classroom duties, and their classes being covered by other colleagues.*
6. *The chair of governors will be informed as quickly as possible. The Chair will then take on the responsibility of informing the other governors.*
7. *In many cases, the LA's senior education officer and his/her team will take over much of the management of the incident, leaving the Head Teacher free to deal with children, parents and colleagues.*
8. *The Office Manager will generally answer all calls from anxious parents. They should keep a log of callers and check this against school records to determine who might still need to be contacted.*
9. *Parents will need to be contacted promptly, but the way in which this is done will depend on the nature and scale of the incident. In some instances, we may use Parentmail for this purpose. The decision to do this will be at the discretion of the Head Teacher. Contact may be made in person or by phone. In very serious circumstances, it may be appropriate for the police to make the initial contact.*
10. *If it is deemed necessary to evacuate the premises and locate at another school, the nominated school is Dulverton Primary School. Dulverton Road, SE9 3RH*

Procedure Prior to Contacting Parents

1. *The Head Teacher will confer with those who will be making contact about what to say, possibly rehearsing the message first. We will limit our comments to the known facts, and not speculate on the causes or responsibility for the crisis.*
2. *The Office Manager or other colleagues will keep a strict log of those parents who have been contacted, noting date and time of call, the number called and the person who was spoken to*

(or if there was no answer). This list should be cross-referenced with those who have contacted us.

3. We will ascertain if there are any colleagues who might offer help with transport to the school if required.
4. Sensitivity - We will check that parents are not left alone in distress, perhaps making suggestions for making contact with relatives or neighbours. We will offer any important phone numbers such as hospitals.
5. An important task is to protect children, parents and staff from publicity. Press and television will not be given permission to enter the school premises or be given access to staff or children.
6. One of the Head Teacher's first tasks on hearing of a crisis will be to contact the LA's support services. All enquiries by the media will be directed to the LA press officer, who will give factual information to the media whilst maintaining the privacy of staff, children and their families. In any event, the only other persons to speak to the media would be the Head teacher or Chair of Governors.
7. Children should be told simply and without fabrication what has happened, in the smallest group possible – usually within their class. Questions should be answered as straight forwardly as possible.
8. Children and parents should be informed (preferably by letter) by the end of the day if the school has to be closed. As far as possible the school's normal routine should be followed to maintain security and continuity for the children.
9. In the event of deaths or serious injuries, the Head Teacher will maintain close contact with the families involved and make arrangements for the school's representation at funerals, respecting the view, customs and wishes of parents.
10. If an incident happens off-site, the Head Teacher will arrange for all contact with the party to go via the school and LA. Therefore, we will contact parents, the LA et al on behalf of the party leader. It is also highly probable that the best course of action will be for children to be re-united with their families as soon as possible. The Head Teacher, with advice and help from the police and the LA, will arrange to bring the children home. In some instances it may be appropriate to arrange for parents to be taken to the children.
11. The leader of an off-site party may need to act 'in loco parentis' to authorise emergency medical treatment. However, they may only do this if every reasonable effort has been made to contact the parents.

12. The whole school will be affected by a tragedy. The Head Teacher will arrange de-briefing sessions for directly-affected staff, check that procedures are in place for monitoring staff and children, and activate strategies for allowing all involved to express their feelings if they wish. In the case of prolonged absences of anyone injured in an incident, the Head Teacher will ensure that a member of staff makes contact with the child or colleague at home or in hospital, and subsequently make sensitive arrangements for their return to school, and thereafter check that monitoring procedures are in place. Consideration must also be given to arrangements for a special assembly or memorial service. In the longer term, the head teacher may need to introduce strategies to continue to monitor vulnerable children and staff, consult and decide on whether, and how, to mark anniversaries, and to ensure that new staff are aware of which children/staff were affected and in what way.

Disability Equality Impact Assessment

This policy has been written with reference to and in consideration of the school's Disability Equality Scheme. Assessment will include consideration of issues identified by the involvement of disabled children, staff and parents and any information the school holds on disabled children, staff and parents.

Name	Role and Responsibilities	Contact Details
Tom Baines	Headteacher and lead in critical incident scenario	Longlands Primary School
Tammy Allen	Deputy Headteacher and deputy lead in a critical incident situation	Longlands Primary School
Michelle Short	Office Manager	Longlands Primary School
Ian Hulf	Premises Manager	Longlands Primary School

This policy should also be read in conjunction with Bexley's Managing Critical Incidents in Schools with particular attention to Sections E and F plus Appendices 1, 2 and 3.