



***Pattishall Primary is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.***

## **Critical Incident Response Plan**

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## 1. DEFINITIONS

A “Critical Incident” is an event which causes the appropriate elements of this plan to come into operation. There are four categories of Critical Incident, all of which are events (usually sudden) which impact upon the whole school and can involve:

- the experience of significant personal distress to a level that can potentially overwhelm individuals involved;
- major media attention;
- the powerful fear of something occurring, whether realistic or otherwise (e.g. a terrorist attack or act of war).

*The four categories are:*

**CATEGORY 1** - A serious accident or other incident requiring the urgent attendance of any emergency service, which involves pupils and/or staff on any activity:

- on the school site (e.g. accidental fire or explosion, or violent incident involving intruders)
- off the school site (e.g. accident while involved in a school-based activity):-
  - during the school day or
  - on a residential activity

**CATEGORY 2** - A personal tragedy which has occurred outside the structure of a school activity:

- the death or very serious injury, under any circumstances, of a pupil;
- the death or very serious injury, under any circumstances, of a member of staff;
- a pupil or teacher being held hostage, otherwise being declared “missing” or abducted.

**CATEGORY 3** - An incident rendering any area of the school unusable for any reason (e.g. gas explosion, fire)

**CATEGORY 4** - A local disaster/civil emergency – flood, tanker leak, pipeline leak, risk of major explosion – resulting in the school being needed as a reception centre.

A coherent, planned response is essential to minimizing the impact of that distress in each of these cases.

There are 2 “levels” of Critical Incident:

- Level 1, the fullest response, applies when a Category 1 incident occurs
- Level 2 applies in the case of Category 2, 3 and 4 incidents.

## 2. TAKING THE DECISION TO ACTIVATE THE CRITICAL INCIDENT RESPONSE PLAN

The decision to activate the C.I.R.P. should be made by the Head, they will become the Critical Manager (CIM) but, in the Head’s absence, in the event of it being impossible to contact the Head or in the event of the Head being involved in the incident, the decision must be taken by:

- the Deputy Head, or



- in the absence/unavailability of the Deputy Head, the most senior member of the school staff on the school premises (normally a member of the Senior Leadership Team) at the time the incident is reported, or
- by the first SLT member to be contacted if the incident occurs/is reported when the school is closed/vacated.

### 3. TAKING A DECISION AS TO THE CATEGORY OF THE CRITICAL INCIDENT

The person making the decision must judge whether to call a Level 1 or Level 2 Response using the criteria laid down in Section 1 above. This judgement must be made on the basis of the nature and scale of the problem as it is presented to them. If in doubt a Level 1 Response should be activated. This can be “scaled down” later if necessary.

Broadly, a Level 1 Response should be activated if the incident involves:

- a) a death
- b) serious injury
- c) extensive damage to the premises making an immediate re-opening unlikely or impossible
- d) the likelihood of major media interest

### 4. THE CRITICAL INCIDENT RESPONSE TEAM (CIRT)

The CORE CIR Team (all of whom must have a copy of the CIRP) comprises:

- The Head
- The Deputy Head
- Key Stage Team Leaders
- Bursar

The EXTENDED CIR Team would possibly be involved in a Level 1 Response could be the:

- Chair of Governors,
- Vice Chair of Governors
- Administrator

Also, any available member of the School Team living nearby may be called in if it is judged necessary.

Normally:

- In a Category 1 incident, generating a Level 1 Response **all team members would be contacted as soon as possible and the decision agreed when and where to meet. This would normally be at school and immediately.**



- In a Level 2 Response, all team members should be contacted as soon as possible by telephone informing them of the incident, informing them of proposed action and arranging a meeting for the designated CIRT members at a designated time.

### **DATA TO BE CARRIED BY ALL TEAM MEMBERS**

The following papers should be close to hand for all members of the CIRT and a copy kept at home in a Critical Incident Response Plan File:

- The current CIRP
- Emergency Contact List for all staff
- Emergency Contact List for all pupils

A copy of this information should be available in the school office. The current CIRP should also be available on the school website under the policies section.

### **LEVEL 1 RESPONSE: A SERIOUS INCIDENT OFF SITE ON A DAY OR RESIDENTIAL VISIT**

The roles adopted by members of the team may vary. It is the responsibility of the team's members to use their judgement and experience to manage the crisis in the light of all the circumstances and given all the data at their disposal. In general, however, the following steps will apply:

**Bursar** is responsible for:

- delegating Administration Team members to manage the telephones and any enquiries
- ensuring adequate communications are available (as far as possible)
- contacting other Team Members as necessary if the Head is unable to do so,
- arranging food and drinks for key staff
- maintaining, and circulating to Team Members, up-to-date lists of contact numbers for :
  - all staff (including mobile phones, labelling the CIR Team)
  - all pupils
  - local hospitals
  - local newspapers, radio and television stations
- ensuring this data is circulated to all members when changes occur, or annually, whichever is earlier.

**Chair/Vice Chair of Governors (as available and appropriate)**, in addition to being involved in key decisions to do with managing the crisis, are responsible for acting as "figureheads" . They MAY be involved in talking directly to the media representatives on camera/radio. NB. The first to be contacted is responsible for reporting to all other governors.



### Action to be taken:

**NB. AN ACTION LOG NEEDS TO BE KEPT AT EACH STAGE, USING THE LOG SHEETS PROVIDED.**

1. Incident Reported to school and as much information as possible gleaned.
2. Critical Incident Manager (CIM) briefed.
3. CIM checks facts with staff to ensure it is not a hoax.
4. Decision to Activate the Plan.
5. Decision as to whether or not to call an IMMEDIATE meeting in one of the Leadership Office's or, if not, WHEN a meeting should take place.
6. CIM contacts emergency services and staff on the scene to glean further details.
7. CIRT summoned and briefed. All CIRT members complete (and keep up to date) INCIDENT FACTSHEET.
8. Admin Team briefed and rota set up to answer phones and deal with queries.
9. Head contacts police and gives direct mobile number to Police Liaison Officer.
10. CIM prepares script with SLT members for parents.
11. CIM deals directly with parents and others most substantially and directly affected in as careful, unhurried a manner as possible (and freed to do so by the work of other key staff) to call parents with bare details of known events. SLT members involved with parents of those known to be safe/unaffected.
12. Head proposes arrangements "cover story" to be given to siblings of pupils.
13. If necessary/possible classteachers involved are informed at this point.
14. Parents contacted and informed. Agree with parents of siblings in school what should be said, when and by whom.
15. Head contacts:
  - a. the Chair and Vice Chair of Governors
  - b. the relevant officers at NCC
  - c. the Critical Incident Support Team (if counselling seems likely to be needed)
16. Arrangements made for room for parents (Community Room) and siblings. Snacks and cold drinks, boiler, tea and coffee etc in Community Room.
17. Arrangements to set up "Media Centre". Chair/Vice Chair with Deputy Headteacher (designated by the Head) will:
  - a. Plan the Media Centre (if needed) including provision of facilities and drinks
  - b. Ensure this is as far from the Head's room as possible
  - c. Provide the media representatives with initial background/data
  - d. Plan a cycle of briefings/updates/statements
  - e. Keep the media representatives "on side" by ensuring the "message" is honest, fair and consistent
  - f. ENSURE THE INFORMATION FLOW IS THROUGH ONE POINT ONLY to avoid confusion.

- g. The designated SLT will:
- i. “meet and greet” media representatives and escort them to the Media Centre
  - ii. ensure vehicle parking is orderly and sensible
  - iii. operate and service the centre.
18. Siblings collected by support staff and taken to safe place in school (away from all other involved rooms). No explanations other than “cover story”. Cared for by support staff.
19. Arrangements made for two members of staff (1 SLT & 1 support staff) to leave a.s.a.p. for the site. Their responsibilities are to:
- a. relieve and support the group leader(s)
  - b. offer reassurance to the party
  - c. liaise with authorities regarding any investigation
  - d. liaise with the authorities regarding the return of the party
  - e. prepare for the arrival of, and support for, parents of pupils affected.
20. All staff “clear decks” of all other work.
21. Head keeps Chair and Vice Chair of Governing Body informed.
22. Head keeps CIRT informed, so Incident Factsheets can be kept up to date.
23. If time permits and if judged appropriate, prepare for end-of-day assembly.
24. Arrange for ALL after-school activities and community events to be cancelled. Admin team to alert parents.
25. Prepare brief letter for parents for pupils to take home, collecting these as they leave end-of-day assembly.
26. Message drafted by Head and sent round by admin team to all classes re assembly and cancellation of all after school activities.
27. Staff asked to meet in Staffroom for briefing by Deputy Head as pupils go into assembly. Staff then join pupils.
28. Hold end-of-day assembly passing on the bare facts to pupils in preparation for news they may hear overnight.
29. Teaching staff see them out of school.
30. If incident occurs after school hours OR if updates to staff are needed, the “staff phone text tree” to be deployed.
31. Press Release prepared (and updated as appropriate)
32. Day 2 Further briefing for staff
33. Assembly for all pupils with information as known.
34. Contact families of injured and bereaved families, to express sympathy and identify support needed.
35. Check and activate procedures for monitoring pupils and staff reactions and emotional health.
36. Identify and activate strategies for allowing pupils to express their feelings if they wish.
37. Arrange for reunion of pupils involved.



38. Arrange for debriefing of pupils with support of the LA CIST.
39. In the event of any child's or member of staff's death refer to LEVEL 2 responses.



## LEVEL 2: IN THE EVENT OF THE DEATH OF A CHILD

Painful experience suggests that the appropriate way forward involves ensuring all members of the community have a chance to grieve, and that pupils, who may never have lost a loved one or friend, are “taught” to grieve and supported as they do so. This may include:

- The Head making direct contact with the family – by making a personal visit a.s.a.p.
- Ensuring that the DHT, child’s class teacher, and Key Stage Team Leader are made aware at the earliest possible moment (by phone if necessary)
- Announcement to staff in a full Staff Briefing (at the beginning of a morning/afternoon session). This may be called by staff being “summoned” by special messages during the session.
- Arrangements to be made for the Head to inform all other Team members:
  - Administration
  - Kitchen
  - Community

The pupils are told via Key Stage Assemblies, led by the SLT (the colleague most associated with the Key Stage) accompanied by another teacher.

NB: Whole School Assembly could be too overwhelming, especially for younger pupils. Tutors should make no announcement to pupils themselves before this assembly, but take pupils down after Registration. The assembly is based on a text prepared by the Head and agreed by the SLT.

This assembly should include opportunity for quiet reflection and be followed by time in class in order to:

- Remember the pupil
- Record any memories or feelings they may have
- Consider ways of celebrating his/her life and making a permanent memorial

SLT to ensure:

- Part-time staff informed
- Letter written to go home to parents giving such details as it is proper/possible to give
- Liaison with family (and vicar?) re. the funeral arrangements
- Collating suggestions for a lasting memorial
- Card(s) sent to family and any other pupil(s) directly affected – from SLT

### *School Day before the Funeral*

Whole School Assembly (Head) with proposed arrangements for the funeral. This may well be preceded by requests to attend the funeral. Arrangements to be based around:

- Friends wishing to go, and to be accompanied by staff in an “official party” to bring reply slips giving parental consent





- Parents taking their children independently to send in reply slips to that effect.

### *Day of the Funeral*

Whole School Assembly in the morning to go through all arrangements. A second WSA after the funeral to seek “closure” and ensure all pupils “move on”. Close the school early.

### *Other issues to be dealt with during this period:*

- Counselling to be arranged via the LEA Critical Incident Support Team?
- Support for staff affected?
- School providing continuing support for, and contact with the family.
- Removal of the child’s name from the school roll on the day after the funeral.
- Collection of work for return, at the appropriate time, to the child’s parent/guardian/carer.

### *Follow-Up*

Designed to create a permanent memorial and enable pupils to create something positive out of the tragedy:

- Creation of a memorial garden etc.
- Presentation of a Book of Condolence to the family
- Charity events in the name of the lost member of the school community

We are advised to keep a “log” of matters related to the crisis and actions carried out, from which to learn and for future reference in the event of problems arising. Preparing for the possibility of such an eventuality must include consideration of the possibility that a pupil might die as a result of an incident during the school day.

**If this is so, it may be necessary to activate the appropriate part of the plan regarding partial closure of the building.**

## LEVEL 2: IN THE EVENT OF THE DEATH IN SERVICE OF A MEMBER OF STAFF

As with the death of a child, the loss of a member of staff will be a painful experience. Preparing for the possibility of such an eventuality must include consideration of the possibility that a member of staff might die during the course of a school day. **If this is so, it may be necessary to activate the appropriate part of the plan regarding partial closure of the building.**

Advice received, and experienced by some colleagues, suggests that the appropriate way forward involves:

- informing those most closely affected as quickly and sensitively as possible,
- supporting family and friends appropriately,
- ensuring all members of the community have a chance to grieve and
- where pupils are most affected, especially where they may never have lost a loved one or friend, are “taught” to grieve and supported as they do so.

Actions are likely to include:

- The Head making direct contact with the family – by making a personal visit a.s.a.p. (This visit should include another SLT member and/or close colleague).
- Ensuring that the closest colleagues are made aware first and at the earliest possible moment (by phone if necessary),
- An announcement would need to be made to the whole staff in a full meeting (at the beginning of a morning/afternoon). This may be called by staff being “summoned” by special messages during the session.
- It may be necessary for arrangements to be made for the Head to inform all other Team members:
  - Administration
  - Community
  - Welfare

The pupils are told via **Key Stage Assemblies**, led by the SLT (the colleague most associated with the Year Group) accompanied by another teacher.

NB: Whole School Assembly could be too overwhelming, especially for younger pupils, and could give scope to self-indulgent hysteria from some pupils. Tutors should make no announcement to pupils themselves before this assembly, but take pupils down at after Registration. The assembly is based on a text prepared by the Head and agreed by the SLT.

This assembly should include opportunity for quiet reflection and be followed by time in class in order to:

- Remember the member of staff
- Record any memories or feelings they may have



- Consider ways of celebrating his/her life and making a permanent memorial

Senior staff to ensure:

- Part-time staff informed
- Letters home to parents giving such details as it is proper/possible to give
- Liaison with family (and priest?) re. the funeral arrangements
- Collating suggestions for a lasting memorial
- Card(s) sent to family
- SLT meeting to plan the school's "response" to the funeral arrangements THIS MAY INVOLVE CLOSING THE SCHOOL FOR THE DAY OR HALF DAY.
  - For a colleague whose passing is likely to impact on the emotions of large numbers of pupils and other colleagues a closure for the whole day will be necessary.
  - For a colleague who may have had less daily contact with pupils, a half-day closure to allow colleagues and some pupils to attend the funeral, and as a mark of respect, may be more appropriate.

#### *School Day before the Funeral*

Whole School Assembly (Head) with proposed arrangements for the funeral. This may well be preceded by requests to attend the funeral. Arrangements to be based around:

- pupils wishing to go, and to be accompanied by staff in an "official party" to bring reply slips giving parental consent
  - pupils to be carefully "sifted"
- parents taking their children independently to send in reply slips to that effect.

#### *Day of the Funeral*

If the school is open in the morning, a full school assembly to be held to go through all arrangements.

If the school has not closed for the full day, at the end of the appropriate session OR the following day as appropriate, a whole-school assembly will take place, to seek a degree of "closure" as regards the recent events and ensure that all pupils (especially) "move on". Close the school early if appropriate.

Other issues to be dealt with during this period:

- Counselling to be arranged via the LEA Critical Incident Response Team?
- Support for staff affected?
- School providing continuing support for, and contact with the family.
- Removal of the colleague's name from the staff roll on SIMS on the day after the funeral.
- Collection of possessions for return, at the appropriate time, to the colleague's family.



## Follow-Up

Designed to create a permanent memorial and enable the school community to create something positive out of the loss:

- Creation of a memorial garden etc.
- Presentation of a Book of Condolence to the family
- Charity events in the name of the lost member of the school community

It will be important to keep a record of matters related to the crisis and actions carried out, from which to learn.

## LEVEL 2: IN THE EVENT OF CLOSURE OF ALL/PART OF THE BUILDING.

The way in which the Plan is applied will be decided on the basis of the circumstances. Broadly, the reasons for a complete or partial closure of the building will include:

- the building being rendered unusable because of:
  - fire or explosion
  - flood/pipe burst
  - major mechanical, electrical or water supply breakdown
  - impact damage (e.g. lightning strike)
- an incident which means it is necessary to remove pupils as quickly and discretely as possible from part of the building
- closure necessitated by seriously disruptive weather

In the event of the building being rendered unusable, the steps normally taken will include (in the most appropriate order under all the given circumstances):

- all staff being informed of the situation and arrangements for update through the established means
- information to parents and pupils, again by the established means
- inspection of the building by the relevant senior staff (including Head and Bursar)
- liaising with LA officers regarding the recovery of the building and other resources
- making the decision as to whether any, some or all year groups are to be brought in
- search, via the LA, any spare capacity to house displaced year groups
- arrangements, via the office, for re-siting any Community activity
- allocation usable rooms to run as normal a timetable as possible for the year group(s) brought into school
- establishment of curriculum arrangements for pupils out of the main school site
- arrangements for regular information updates to staff, pupils and parents
- following the necessary arrangements for the repair and re-commissioning of the affected rooms/areas

In the event of a partial evacuation, the normal procedure would be to:

- inform any emergency service as appropriate
- screen off any potentially upsetting view
- arrange for the hall to be cleared, if necessary, as a waiting area for pupils and staff in the affected area
- inform, as discretely as possible, the members of staff in the affected area and lead pupils out of their classrooms (with all their personal equipment if appropriate) to the hall until further instructions are given



- register pupils in the waiting area to ensure all are present and record anyone who may be a witness (if appropriate)
- establish when the area may be used again but arrange for any possible cleaning/other modifications

If closure is necessitated by seriously disruptive weather NCC's School Closure procedure is followed.



## LEVEL 2: IN THE EVENT OF CIVIL EMERGENCY

The precise response we will have to make will be decided on the basis of the circumstances. The most likely scenarios include the need to re-house local residents temporarily (for 12-48 hours) as a result of a major gas explosion, flood, dangerous tanker fire etc.

Our response will be influenced by a meeting/consultation with the officer of NCC/SNC, charged with coordinating such emergency arrangements.

ASSUMING THE INCIDENT BEGINS OUT OF SCHOOL HOURS, the following steps will be taken, but not necessarily in this order:

- Bursar, Head & Deputy Head make contact by telephone to assess the known situation
- All colleagues will consult the notes of arrangements made in the review meeting with the relevant council officer. These should clarify arrangements for providing “refugees” with:
  - Food
  - Water
  - Toilets
  - Showers/washing/shaving facilities

On the basis of the numbers, ages and needs of people affected decisions will be made about which areas of the school will be used for:

- Sleeping (including young children/babies)
- Eating
- Toileting
- Heating
- Washing/showering (hot water)
- Recreation
- Meetings with officials etc
- One-to-one support/counselling

If it appears likely that refugees will remain in the building into the following school day, the same procedures for an unscheduled closure for other reasons (e.g. heavy snowfall) will be followed. The assumption will be that unless there are urgent reasons for any year group being in the building to take examinations (in which case we seek to re-locate the venue for the examinations to another school) which cannot be rescheduled the school will be closed for at least the morning. This is because:

- Members of the public will not be “police cleared”
- There will inevitably be cleaning and possibly repairs to be effected before pupils and staff can reoccupy the building



- The decision to delay opening must be made during the evening/overnight and relayed to pupils via the media by the usual means
- The CIRT should assemble at school as early as possible, ideally at around 08:00 the following day, to assess the situation and agree on:
  - The length of school closure
  - The possibility of a partial or staggered return for pupils
  - The order of events in which this would be needed.

IF THE INCIDENT OCCURS DURING THE SCHOOL DAY AND IT IS NECESSARY TO CLOSE THE SCHOOL, the same procedures apply as in the event of heavy snowfall, with the following decisions being taken:

- is it safe for children to be released from the building?
- what arrangements do we make if we cannot release children?

Staff and pupils (except the CIRT) would leave the premises as soon as possible.

**IN ANY OF THESE EVENTS:**

- A “post mortem” on the management of the incident should be held asap.
- A follow-up meeting with the relevant LA /diocesan officers should be arranged asap to effect any necessary remodelling of the procedures.





## Appendix 1

# PATTISHALL PRIMARY SCHOOL School Emergency Planning Contacts

### School Critical Incident Response Team (CIRT)

CORE	Role	Contact Details
Emma McLean	Headteacher	01327 830301
Stephanie Bruce	Deputy Headteacher	
Rhian Jeffrey	Senior Teacher	
Hannah Bowden	SLT	
Jane Chapman	Bursar	
EXTENDED		
Geoff Brand	Chair of Governors	
Sharon Onley	Vice-Chair of Governors	
Claire Sceats	Administrator	

### NCC LA Contacts

#### Emergency Planning Team

Office Hours: 0300 1261012

Out of hours: 07885 292851

#### Communications/Press Office

0300 126 1000

#### SSIM

Sharon Bray

#### Insurance

01604 237037

### EMERGENCY SERVICES CONTACTS

#### Northamptonshire Police

999 or 101

#### Local Hospital

Northampton General: 01604 634700

### OTHER CONTACTS

#### Media

BBC Radio Northampton



Chronicle & Echo  
Daventry Express

**Children and Young Person's Bereavement Service** (Northampton General Hospital)  
01604 545131 or 07810551318

### **Youth Counselling Services**

The Lowdown (Northampton) 01604 622223  
Time to Talk (Daventry) 01327 706706

### **CRUSE – Bereavement Care**

Phone: 0870 167 1677 / 0844 477 9400 (national rate)  
Website: [www.crusebereavementcare.org.uk](http://www.crusebereavementcare.org.uk)

*Telephone counselling service for those who are bereaved and those who care for bereaved people. Can offer referrals to local Cruse branches and other bereavement and counselling services throughout the UK.*

### **The Compassionate Friends**

Phone: 0117 953 9639 / 0845 123 2304 (national rates)  
*Support for bereaved parents who have lost a child of any age from any circumstances.*

### **Winston's Wish Family Line**

Phone: 0845 2030 405 (local rates)  
Website: [www.winstonwish.org.uk](http://www.winstonwish.org.uk)

*Information and guidance for families of bereaved children. Can provide contact details for local groups which support bereaved children.*

### **Child Bereavement Trust**

Phone: 0845 3571000 / 01494 568 900 (local rates)  
*Information line for parents who have been bereaved.*

### **The Samaritans**

Phone: 0845 790 9090 (local rates)  
Website: [www.samaritans.org](http://www.samaritans.org)  
*Confidential emotional support for anyone in a crisis*

### **Survivors of Bereavement by Suicide**

Phone: 01482 610728 / 0115 944 1117 (national rate)  
*Can provide details of local self help groups for those bereaved by suicide.*

### **Childline**

Phone: 0800 1111 (free phone)



*National help line for children*

**British Red Cross National Office**

*Advice on memorials and donations*

9 Grosvenor Crescent, London SW1X 7EJ

Tel. 020 7235 5454



## Appendix 2 – Critical Incident Account Sheet

To be completed on your own and as soon as possible after the incident. Turn over for more space, making sure you sign any extra pages.

Name: ..... Role: .....

Date: ..... Time: .....

### *Factual account*

*What events led up to the incident? What was your involvement? Where and when did the incident happen? Who have you discussed this with?*



Signed: .....

**Appendix 3 – Receipt for Documentations and/or Other Items**

DO NOT LET ANYTHING BE REMOVED FROM SCHOOL WITHOUT A SIGNED RECEIPT. COPY ITEMS IF PERMITTED

**Description of Documentation or Other Items**

**Received by:**

PRINT NAME: ..... POSITION: .....

REPRESENTING: .....



SIGNED: ..... DATE: ..... TIME: .....

Counter signed by PATTISHALL CE PRIMARY SCHOOL representative

PRINT NAME: .....

SIGNED: .....





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## Appendix 5 Staff Meeting Agenda

The Critical Incident Response Team can facilitate the meeting.

1. Attendance – anyone who is not present should be informed of the critical incident as soon as possible following the meeting.
2. Provide as much accurate information as possible, including:
  - names of the students or staff members directly involved,
  - time and place of the event,
  - any additional information surrounding the event, and
  - names and grades of the siblings of those directly affected who are also in the school.
3. Introduce the Critical Incident Response Team, and any additional support staff or community resource people who are present and explain their roles.
4. Briefly review the school critical incident plan. Provide extra copies.
  - Prepare teachers to deal effectively with informing their students of the critical incident.
    - Give out a script and model how students should be told.
    - Encourage teachers to allow time for classroom discussion.
    - Provide all staff with a copy of the protocol for class discussion. See Appendix 7 for guidelines on leading a classroom discussion.
  - Clarify procedures for handling students who want to leave the classroom.
    - Students who are highly emotional should be accompanied to the designated area.
    - Students who wish to leave the school should only be released to a parent, guardian or their designate.
  - Inform teachers of support plans.
    - Identify staff who will run the support and the appropriate procedure for sending students for the support.
    - Advise staff to be aware of their feelings and support each other.
    - Clarify the way to get counselling assistance for staff members.
    - Inform staff of any outside agencies involved in student or staff support.
  - Ask for staff help to identify students who may be at risk or need extra support.
    - Make counselling plans for all students who are potentially at risk for suicide or other serious emotional responses to the critical incident.
    - Direct staff to refer students who appear to be emotionally unstable to the counsellors.
  - Review media policy.
  - Inform all staff of any changes to the regular school schedule or cancellation of normal school events.
5. Set the date and time of a follow-up meeting.
  - Assure staff that they will be kept informed of any relevant information in this update meeting.





- Follow up meeting will provide an opportunity for staff members to discuss classroom experiences and report information back to the group.



## Appendix 6 - Sample Letter to Parents

Dear Parents/Carers,

You may have heard...../ It is with sadness and regret that I have to inform you.....

(known facts of the incident)

As a school community, we are all deeply affected by this tragedy/ I am sure that you will wish to join me and my staff in offering our condolences and sympathy to those affected/to .....

(refer to individuals/families affected only where it is appropriate to release this information)

I have now spoken to all pupils and staff in school about what has happened and you will need to be aware of the following arrangements that we have now made:

*(Details about:*

- *school closure,*
- *changes to timings of school day*
- *transport*
- *lunch time arrangements*
- *changes to staffing*
- *arrangements for specific classes/year groups*
- *counselling support*
- *provision of further information as relevant)*

(If appropriate, advice about media contacts)

I think it is very important that we all take the time to talk with and reassure children about what has happened. This is likely to be a very difficult time for us as a school community and we will all need to support each other.

We appreciate the expressions of concern we have received, however it would be helpful if parents did not telephone the school during this time so we can keep phones and staff free to manage the situation.

Yours sincerely

## Appendix 7 - Informing Pupils

- Pupils should be told simply and truthfully what has happened, in small groups if possible, eg, class, tutor, year, etc. In some circumstances, it may be appropriate to bring pupils together as a whole school. Where this is the arrangement, ensure that pupils have an opportunity to ask questions and talk through what they have heard with form/class teachers in smaller groupings afterwards.
- Begin by preparing the pupils for some very difficult/sad news.
- Taking account of children's needs and backgrounds, give simple, factual information using language and concepts appropriate to the age of the children.
- Avoid using euphemisms, use words like 'dead' and 'died', etc.
- Pass on facts only; do not speculate on causes or consequences.
- If questions cannot be answered this should be acknowledged.
- Address and deal with rumours.
- Try to give expression to the emotions that individuals may be experiencing (eg, shock/disbelief, etc) and explain that strong and difficult feelings are a normal part of the process of coming to terms with this sort of experience.
- Do not refrain from referring to the deceased by name, perhaps highlighting some positive aspect(s) of their lives.
- Finally, explain what arrangements the school has in hand for coming to terms with what has happened.

*"I've got some very sad news to tell you today that might upset you. There is a serious illness called meningitis. Sometimes people with meningitis get better but sometimes people die from it. Some of you will have known that Jane Smith in year 4 was suddenly taken ill last week. I have to tell you that Jane died in hospital yesterday.*

*Like me, many of you will find it hard to believe that this has happened. It is obviously a very big shock for us all. Jane was such a happy girl who got on well with everybody. We will all miss her.*

*It is important for you to know that strong and perhaps difficult feelings are part of the normal process of coping with this sort of situation. It will help to talk about what has happened and about your thoughts and feelings. Please do take the opportunity to talk to your family, friends, teachers and adults in school. This is likely to be a difficult time for us as a school community and we should all try to support each other. Please come and talk with me if you have any questions or if you just want to talk."*

## Appendix 8 - Supporting the Individual Pupil

- Be accepting and allow the pupil to express their emotions. Ask open ended questions (eg, “How are you today ?”) or just sit with them if this is what you feel is appropriate. Avoid touching or hugging but try to be as natural and unembarrassed as possible. Have some tissues to hand. It might be appropriate to use reflective listening (ie, repeating back to the child what they have said) and/or summarise what they have said. This gives an opportunity for the child to elaborate and/or modify what they have said as well as an opportunity to hear a perspective on their own experiences. Sometimes it is helpful to give a name to the emotion that you are hearing being expressed (eg, “That sounds very sad”, “Did you feel angry then?” , etc).
- You might have to explain your limits of confidentiality (ie, confidentiality can be maintained except where you believe that the pupil is at risk or there are issues relating to a possible criminal act).
- Don’t forget that knowing what to say is far less important than being able to listen in a sympathetic and supportive manner. If it seems appropriate to offer advice, then strategies for the pupil that you might want to suggest could include:
  - Talking to their family and friends.
  - Crying and expressing their emotions in a suitable safe context.
  - Maintaining normal routines.
  - Eating normally.
  - Taking physical exercise.
  - Maintaining normal sleep patterns.
  - Carrying on seeing and being with friends.
  - Listening and playing music.
  - Being creative through art, drama, music, etc
  - Maintaining interests and pastimes.
- As part of such sensitive support, it will be important to ensure that the pupil can continue to seek support from you but without them becoming dependent. If appropriate, agree to a set number of sessions at a set time and place where you can be confident of not being disturbed (in terms of your own safety and accountability ensure that parents and relevant staff are aware of any such arrangements).
- Using a visual aid such as an outline of a hand, ask the pupil to identify 5 individuals (eg, staff, peers, family, other adults) who they feel they could approach as part of their support network to help them feel safe. Ask them to test it out. If all else fails, what else could they always have ‘up their sleeve’ (eg, Childline, etc) ?

# Appendix 9 – School Incident Form & Incident Management Situation Report

Use this form to record initial information received on the incident and to log situation updates. This form should be started as soon as possible, and all boxes completed.  
 New or updated information on this form should be entered in RED so those receiving a copy will know what is new or has changed.

## CALL INFORMATION

Date:  → Time:  → Your Name:

Name of School(s): PATTISHALL CE PRIMARY SCHOOL

## INCIDENT DETAILS

*Description: detail nature of incident; names of any pupil(s) involved, including age; names of siblings attending or having just left school; if individuals affected are adults, note the time they have been at the school, links to other schools and any precursors (e.g. illness, absence from work and length of time)*

  
  
  
  

How were you made aware of the incident?

### IS IT A CRITICAL INCIDENT? Is it an incident requiring immediate action or is there significant disruption to day to day operation of the school?

No      Yes     →     Date and Time declared critical:

Are there any casualties or fatalities?

Have the emergency services been called?

Is the incident currently affecting school activities? If so, which areas?

What is the estimated duration of the incident?

What is the actual or threatened loss of staff/pupils?

1 – 20%      20 – 50%      Over 50%



Has access to the whole site been denied? If so, for how long? (provide estimate if not known)

Which work areas have been destroyed, damaged or made unusable?

Is there evidence of structural damage?

Which work areas are inaccessible but intact?

Are systems and other resources unavailable? (include computer systems, telecoms, other assets)

If so, which staff are affected by the ICT disruption and how?

Have any utilities (gas, electricity or water) been affected?

Is there media interest in the incident? (likely or actual)

Does the incident have the potential to damage the School's reputation?

Other relevant information?

**IN AN EMERGENCY SITUATION – CONTACT:**

**NCC EMERGENCY PLANNING DUTY OFFICER 07885 292851**

The Duty Officer will be able to advise and coordinate NCC services to support you.



Enter any further information on the incident in the Action Log.