ST CUTHBERT MAYNE SCHOOL

Joint Catholic and Church of England 11-18 Comprehensive School

Dioceses of Plymouth and Exeter

St Cuthbert Mayne School
Critical Incident Plan

Approved by Governors: **September 2026**

Next Review Date: **September 2027**

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USE OF CRITICAL INCIDENT PLAN POLICY AT ST. CUTHBERT MAYNE SCHOOL

1.1 Our vision of joint Catholic and Anglican education calls us to acknowledge that the Body of Christ is in the school community. We believe that God is incarnate (present) in the 'day to day' life of our school. Our understanding of Christian spirituality is therefore as much about dealing with each other as it is about meeting God.

1.2 We believe that each member of our community has a divine origin and an eternal destiny.

1.3 We believe that through his Incarnation Jesus affirmed us as whole people and redeemed us through his resurrection.

1.4 We believe therefore that the intrinsic dignity of each member of our school community is to be honoured in spirit, in word, in deed and in law.

1.5 These beliefs underpin our approach to the use of the critical incident plan policy and thereby commit us to encouraging all members of our community, staff and pupils alike, to grow towards human wholeness. The Governing Body aims to meet this responsibility by:

- Affirming, consolidating and celebrating the achievements of our teachers (Challenge, affirmation, evaluation, consolidation, celebration and prayerful reflection will be important characteristics to our approach in this school and will be an accepted part of the process)

- Challenging ourselves, staff and pupils to recognise the unique contribution that each of us can make and work towards making that contribution in the fullest sense

- Supporting staff in this process in a positive manner

2. Introduction

This plan is intended to provide guidance and a response and recovery plan for use when a critical incident occurs.

3. Definition

A critical incident is one that is likely to cause:

- Immediate or delayed emotional reactions in large numbers of staff, pupils and parents, surpassing their normal coping mechanisms and/or
- Serious disruption to the running of the school and/or
- Significant public/news media attention on the school

Aims

The aim of this plan is to encourage and support pre-planning to help reduce the impact of an incident, and provide a pre-planned course of basic actions. It is not intended to be prescriptive or to attempt to cover all possible events as each event will require different types and scales of response, and will involve different agencies.

In a crisis the central objective is to safeguard the safety of pupils and staff. The Head Teacher will establish early control and in partnership with other agencies look to minimize disruption and to recover a full educational programme as quickly as possible.

This plan aims to:

- Create an awareness of the need for planned arrangements to be made.
- Provide reassurance of the practical help that is available from the Local Authority and other agencies, at short notice.

- Provide practical guidance and reference during a critical incident
- Provide checklists to enable the School Leadership Team to respond to an incident in an appropriate and logical way

4. Scope of the plan

In School

- A deliberate act of violence, such as the use of a knife or firearm
- A fire or explosion
- A pupil or teacher being taken hostage
- The destruction or serious vandalising of part of the school

Outside School

- The death of pupils or members of staff through natural causes such as illness, an accident, or by a deliberate act of violence
- A transport-related accident involving pupils and/or members of staff
- A more widespread disaster in the community
- Death or injuries on school journeys or excursions
- Civil disturbances including terrorism
- Outbreak of a communicable illness or disease

In respect of school trips and visits guidance is available from the DCFS good practice guide Health & Safety of Pupils on Educational Visits. With regard to an outbreak of a communicable illness or disease guidance should be sought from Public Health England tel. 0300 3038162, Torbay Health Protection tel. 01803 207354 and Local Authority Health & Safety Team tel. 01803 207170

Emergency Procedures

The Headteacher must ensure that relevant emergency procedures are in place and tested regularly. In this connection refer to separate policy document entitled 'Fire Precautions, Policy and Emergency Procedure Guidance' which is annually approved by Governors and details:

- Fire and emergency evacuation procedures
- Bomb threat procedures
- Environmental emergencies
- Gas leaks and electrical emergencies

5. Preparations for responding to an emergency

Plan Preparation

- Make all staff and governors aware of the names of the Critical Incident Managers
- Undertake a review of the plan at least once a term
- Meet with all members of the Critical Incident Management Team at least annually to ensure familiarity with the plan

Communications

- The school administration office is the Control Point for critical incidents as this is the hub for communication services.
- All staff, including support and temporary staff, are to be notified as soon as possible
- Use one or more mobile school phones for use by the critical incident team handling the crisis
- Identify members of staff who can respond to enquiries from the news media. If additional training is required liaise with Torbay Council's Communications Team.
- A mobile phone should be carried on all off site activities, and a member of staff at the school nominated as a contact person for the off-site group ● For trips abroad:
    - Check with the phone provider that the phone will operate in all areas travelled through or visited
    - Take emergency contact details: School, Insurance Company, nearest British Consulate
    - Subscribe to a telephone interpretation service and take contact details

Schools Critical Incident information

The School Critical Incident Team details must be regularly updated and held in plans held by other members of the Critical Incident Team:

- Up-to-date information must always be available on and off site and readily accessible
- Nominated Critical Incident Managers and other key staff must be provided with this information
- Due to the sensitive nature of much of the required information, those in possession must ensure it is secure at all times

Testing the plan

Headteachers must regularly exercise important parts of this plan and supporting procedures to assist in familiarisation of plans and related procedures, e.g. Notification/cascade exercises, fire drills, evacuation procedures.

- Exercises should not be too realistic to prevent causing distress to those taking part
- Learning points from exercises should be incorporated into the plan

6. Critical Incident Response

IF AN INCIDENT OCCURS:

- **Assess the situation**
- **Remove people from danger**
- **Make sure other people are safe from danger and looked after**
- **Render first aid to casualties**
- **Call the emergency services as required and provide the following information:**
  - Precise location (including Post Code)
  - Description of the incident
  - Time of the incident
  - Number of casualties
  - Nature of injuries
  - Total number in the party (if an off-site trip)
  - Your name and telephone number
  - The name of the school
- **Relay information to senior management within the school**
- **Senior management refer to Response Flowchart and take action as required**

The headteacher will be responsible for managing the response to the incident through a Critical Incident Team, working with the emergency services and with the support of Torbay Council as required.

There can be no rigid formula for responding to incidents. The response will depend on the nature and scale of the incident. In all situations, it is important that staff from the school and other agencies work collaboratively. Accurate records must be maintained of all decisions, actions and expenditure to assist cost recovery and to inform post-incident debriefs.

Once the initial emergency phase is over, the recovery phase must begin. The Recovery Team will be formed by expanding the Critical Incident Team to include additional representatives.

7. Business Continuity

In the event of non-availability of premises for an extended period e.g. due to fire or flood:

- Teaching & learning will continue via remote learning protocols until such time as alternative accommodation can be established with liaison with Torbay Council and the Plymouth and Exeter Diocese.

In the event of major staff absence:

- Remote Learning protocols will be used and consideration given to whether some year groups can still attend school whilst other year groups are set work remotely via google classroom. Vulnerable students will always be expected to attend school regardless of what year they are in

In the event of ICT and core financial systems failing:

- Our core financial systems (includes SIMS) are hosted and backed up by SCOMIS.
- Our on-site workspaces are backed up every evening by Microsoft Azure back up. This is cloud based and work for the previous day can be retrieved.

8. Response flowchart

A senior member of staff should use the flow-chart below to assist in determining the level of response to an incident:

Does the incident involve injury, death, or significant damage to property?

*If between 15-20% teaching staff are absent, then a closure must be considered. **Notify**

Torbay Council via

SWISCO Customer Support 01803 701310 (8am to 5pm)

No

Yes

RECORD ALL KEY DECISIONS AND ACTIONS ON AN INCIDENT LOG

No

Yes

Are large numbers of staff/students involved?

and/or

Serious disruption to the running of a school?*

and/or

Significant public/news media attention on the school?

Notify Emergency Services if required

No

Yes

Manage with schools resources

- School Critical Incident Team may be required

- Notify Children's Services for information via SWISCO Customer Support 01803 701310 (8am to 5pm) (Diverts to call centre for out of hours**)** Torbay Council Support Required?

Establish School Critical Incident Team

9. S**chool Critical Incident Team – Contact List (**copies to be given to other members of the school's Critical Incident Team)

- The 'Critical Incident Radio Channel' is channel 10
- Review at least once per term

Date Reviewed: 17/09.26	
School Critical Incident Team	**Contact Details**

Role	Name	Work	Mobile	Home	Time Contacted
Critical Incident Manager 1	James Down				
Critical Incident Manager 2	Suzanne Kingdom				
Critical Incident Manager 3	Sam Toohey				
Critical Incident Manager 4	Matt Burrell				
School Management	Kris Statham				
Pastoral Support	Colin Horrocks				
Site Management	Matt Burrell				
School Administration	Matt Burrell				
Other School Staff	Gavin Newell - ICT				
	Dan Ashington – Senior Caretaker				
School Governors	Sam Fraser				

	Jordan Williams				
Loss & Bereavement	**School Chaplain and Exeter/Plymouth Diocese**				

School Incident Control Point			
Primary Location	**Fax Number**	**Telephone Number(s)**	**Notes**
School Reception		**01803 328725**	
Secondary Location	**Fax Number**	**Telephone Number(s)**	**Notes**
St Marychurch Parish Church		**01803 327661**	

10. Emergency Contacts

- Copies to be given to other members of the school's Critical Incident Team
- Review at least once per term

Date Reviewed: 01/09/25		
SERVICE	**TELEPHONE NUMBER**	**COMMENTS**

• **Police** • **Fire & Rescue** • **Ambulance** • **HM Coastguard**	01392 420320 01392872200 999 999	or 101/999 or 999
SWISCO Customer Support	01803 701310	(8am to 5pm)
South West Water	0344 346 2020	
National Gas Emergency Service	0800 111999	Gas emergencies
Western Power Distribution	0800 678 3105	Electricity supplies
Environment Agency	0370 850 6506	General Enquiries
	0800 807060	Incident Reports
	0345 988 1188	Floodline
UK Health Security Agency	0300 303 8162	Emergencies
Devon Health Protection Team	01392 383000	main switchboard - Working Hours
Torbay Hospital	01803 614567	
Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO)	0207 009 500	
Bus Company - Stagecoach	0345 241 8000	
Local Radio - Heart • **Palm** • **BBC**	0345 481 0088 07831 967222 01752 260323	
T.V. - BBC	01752 234511	
RC Diocese - Plymouth	01364 645360	
Anglican Diocese - Exeter	01392 272686	
Alarm (Fullstop Fire & Security Ltd)	01392 466000	
CCTV (Sound & Visual)	01626 336030	
Chair Of Governors (Sam Fraser)		
Vice Chair Of Governors (Jordan Williams)		
Torbay Council	01803 207170	main switchboard - Working Hours
UK Health Security Agency	0300 303 8162	Emergencies
Torbay Council Public Health	01803 208030	healthprotection@torbay.gov.uk
Torbay Council Health & Safety Team	01803 208010	

11. Emergency action by The Headteacher (or Deputy Headteacher)

Initial Actions

- Open and continue to maintain a personal log of all factual information received, actions taken, and the time of those events.
- Make every attempt to clarify exactly what has happened.

- Then consider whether Incident requires involvement of 'Local Authority Support Team' NB it is requested that initial contact be always made with the Local Authority in emergencies in case they have wider significance.
- Establish whom they will contact. Check this includes the Education Committee Chair.

If during term time

- Unless there is overwhelming pressure, avoid closing the school & endeavour to maintain normal routines & timetables.
- In emergency evacuate the whole school to a place of safety (**St Marychurch Parish Church**).

If outside term time (or outside school hours) ▪

Arrange for:-

- the Caretaker to open certain parts of the school as appropriate and to be available (and responsive) to requests.
- Immediate School Administration support.

- Think about what you are wearing when you go into school, in case you are unavoidably drawn into a TV interview.
- If the Incident does attract Media attention, you are likely to be inundated with requests for interviews and statements. Try to postpone Media comment until after the LA's PR Officer arrived (who will be part of the 'Local Authority Support Team'). If you cannot, see Appendix 1 for some key points to remember.

NB: It is especially important that if names of those who may have been involved in the incident are known DO NOT release – or confirm – them to anyone, before those identities are formally agreed and parents are informed.

- If deputising for the Headteacher, try if possible to contact and brief him/her.
- Inform Chair of Governors-
  - of Incident and, if appropriate, of involvement of 'Local Authority Support Team'.
  - they should standby to be available for interview by the Media. ●

Call in the designated staff members to form the 'Critical Incident Team',

- Be prepared to receive many telephone calls.

- Recognise the relevance of multi-cultural and multi-faith factors in the response.

12. Once established

- If 'Local Authority Support Team' has been activated, arrange for On-Site facilities for the Team.
- Agree appropriate identification of staff by using badges
- Expect to see identification of Local Authority Support Team Officers.
- Set up arrangements to manage visitors – arrange for their names to be recorded.
- Set up arrangements to enable accurate information to flow into and out of the school and for telephones calls, by ensuring –
    - sufficient help is available to answer the many calls that could be received (The Local Authority Support Team will be able to assist with a 'Help-Line')
    - staff maintain records of all calls received
    - brief, but up-to-date prepared statements are available to staff answering phones
    - media calls are directed to the LA's PR

    officer ○ care is taken when answering

    telephone calls
    - an independent telephone is made available for outgoing calls only – a mobile phone can be useful – but remember such messages can be readily intercepted
    - telephone staff are reminded that some calls could be bogus
- To arrange for <u>all</u> staff – not just teaching staff – to be called in and, if necessary, briefed at an early stage. (Subsequent briefings say 2 x per day for 10 minutes, should be arranged.
- To be aware of how colleagues are coping
- To arrange for all pupils to be told, in simple terms, at an early stage (ideally in small groups and initially by class teachers, wherever possible).
- To brief Team to discourage staff and pupils from speaking to the Media.
- To arrange, if appropriate, for Team members to each have a copy of the Next-of-Kin List.

Parents:

- If pupils are involved, the contacting of parents will be an important early task (remember if it is a major Incident, the parents may well have already heard). It may be appropriate to ask the parents to come to the school for a briefing and support. This will need to be done with the utmost care.

- Maintain regular contact with parents.
- If Incident away from school seek Police advice whether parents should travel to the scene, or whether children should be taken home.

Staff:

- Remember to have regular breaks, and advise others to do so.
- Maintain regular contact with staff (Teachers and office staff). Make a point of seeing that all staff involved know each other's roles & responsibilities.
- Always try to think of something positive to say to staff & respond positively to ideas and suggestions
- Be available to see staff when required.
- Remember some members of staff may be so affected, that they will not be able to help in supporting children
- Recognise also that if the burden of dealing with the situation falls disproportionately on a small number of staff, they too could need professional support.
- If Incident is away from school, try to dissuade shocked staff from driving parents to the scene.

'Local Authority Support Team'

- Maintain liaison with 'Local Authority Support Team' Senior Officer for duration of Incident.

Period following the close of the incident

- When appropriate, seek advice from 'Local Authority Support Team' and local clergy contact on special assemblies/funeral/memorial services.
- Prepare joint report with named Senior Officer, for Director of Education.
- Arrange for a member of staff to make contact with any pupils either at home or in hospital.
- Make sensitive arrangements for the return to school (as appropriate).

Longer term issues

The effects of some Incidents can continue for years. Thought will need to be given to:-

- Work with Staff to monitor pupils informally
- Clarify procedures for referring pupils for individual help
- Be aware that some Staff may also need help in the longer term.
- Recognise and if appropriate, marking anniversaries
- Remember to make any new staff aware of which pupils were affected and how they were affected.
- Remember that legal processes, inquiries and even news stories may bring back distressing memories and cause temporary upset within the school.
- Remember if the Incident does attract Media attention, it is likely that interest will continue for many weeks.

Emergency action by the Critical Incident Team

Initial Actions

- Obtain full facts of Incident from Headteacher
- Open and continue to maintain a personal log of information received, actions taken and the time of those events.
- If coming in from home, remember to bring useful items, such as any keys needed and identity badges
- Assist, where appropriate, in assessing the emotional needs of the staff and pupils.

Coordinate rapid action to sensitively inform staff and pupils to provide appropriate support ▪ Assist class teachers who will undertake classroom briefings ▪ Arrange special groups for very distressed pupils.

Once Established

- Assist Headteacher (or Deputy Headteacher)
- Work with LA Support Team, the Headteacher (or Deputy Headteacher) as directed.
- Remember the School Reception is likely to be the first point of contact for visitors, so exercise caution in making comments ▪ Concerning telephone calls
    - Take special care when answering telephone calls early on
    - Maintain a record of calls received
    - Only give out information from prepared statements that will be made available ○ Remember that some calls could be bogus

Period Following Close of the Incident

- When appropriate, seek advice from Head teacher, 'Local Authority Support Team' and local clergy contact on special assemblies/funeral/memorial services.
- Arrange for members of staff to make contact with any pupils either at home or in hospital.
- Assist in making sensitive arrangements for the return to school (as appropriate).

APPENDIX 1

Points to note with media interviews

- Have another person with you, if possible, to monitor the interview

  If possible, agree an interview format i.e. establish what the interviewer wants to ask.
- Be prepared to think on your feet, but try to decide beforehand what you want to say. Do not read it out.
- Remember you could be quoted on anything you say to a journalist, even if it is not part of the formal interview.
- Be prepared to say you cannot comment.
- Don’t over-elaborate your answers
- Refuse requests for photos or schoolwork of children/staff involved.
- Try to keep a grip on your emotions during interviews-especially if it is TV.
- Most journalists are responsible, but check where interview/camera team go, when interview is over.