



# Critical Incident Policy

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St Paul's Academy

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## Scope

St Paul's Academy aims to protect the well-being of its pupils by providing a safe and nurturing environment at all times. The school has taken a number of measures to create a supportive and caring ethos. The school has also formulated a number of policies and procedures to be followed with a view to ensuring the physical and psychological safety of both staff and students during the normal course of the school day and in the event of a critical incident.

## Definition of Critical Incident

St Paul's Academy recognises a critical incident to be "an incident or sequence of events that overwhelms the normal coping mechanisms of the school, and disrupts the normal running of the school".

Critical incidents may involve students, staff, the school and the community.

### Examples of a critical incident might be:

- The death of a member of the school community, through sudden death, accident, suicide or terminal illness;
- Serious injury or death of a student or staff member while off-site;
- A serious accident or tragedy in the school community;
- A physical attack on a staff member or student. This may take the form of an assault with a weapon;
- Acid attack on a staff member, visitor or student;
- Serious damage to the school through fire, flooding, vandalism etc.;
- The disappearance of a member of the school community;
- Cyber-attack/network hacking;
- Intrusion into school;
- Building collapse;
- Sexual assault by a student or reported by a student by a member of the public.

## Aim of Plan

The aim of the Critical Incident Plan is that in the event of such an incident as outlined above, the plan will help staff and management to react quickly and effectively and to maintain control of the situation. The plan will also help the school to return to normality as soon as possible and limit the effects of the incident on the staff and students.

## Critical Incident Management Team

Critical Incident Management Team will consist of the following personnel.

- Principal (Siobhan Malone)
- Vice Principal (Emily Tudor)
- Designated Safeguarding Leads (Kim Nicholas & Áine Allen)
- Behaviour Leads (Michelle Hepburn & Alan Grogan)
- School Police Officer (PC Mark Verrall)
- Joanne Callow (HOLZ Pure and Applied Science)
- Inclusion Co-ordinator (Balvinder Assi)

The Critical Incident Management Team may nominate other members of staff to assist them, should they deem it necessary at the time of the incident, including the Academy's Police Officer.

## Incident Categorisation

Depending on the nature of the critical incident, either the Designated Safeguarding Lead (Kim Nicholas or Ainé Allen) or the Behaviour Lead (Michelle Hepburn or Alan Grogan) will act as Team Leader. *\*In the event of a laboratory explosion or acid attack, Joanne Callow, in conjunction with the designated Behaviour Lead, will coordinate the Critical Incident Team.*

<b>Incident categorisation</b>	
<i>*This list is not to be used as an exhausted list but rather a guide</i>	
<b>Designated Safe-guarding Lead</b>	<b>Behaviour Lead</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Serious injury or death of a student or staff member while off-site</li> <li>- Incident of sexual assault reported by a student against a member of the public</li> <li>- The sudden death/serious injury of a member of staff or pupil through natural causes</li> <li>- Public Health threats (e.g. meningitis)</li> <li>- A transport-related accident involving students and/or members of staff</li> <li>- Death or injuries on school journeys or excursions</li> <li>- Collapse of school building</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- A deliberate act of violence, such as the use of a knife or firearm</li> <li>- A student or teacher being taken hostage</li> <li>- The destruction or serious vandalism of part of the school</li> <li>- Acid attack</li> <li>- A school fire or laboratory explosion</li> <li>- Civil disturbances and terrorism</li> <li>- Intrusion into school</li> <li>- Cyber-attack/hacking</li> <li>- Incident of sexual assault (always in conjunction with a member of the Safeguarding Team)</li> </ul>

## Academy procedures

### On-site incident during school hours

In the event of a School related emergency the following steps will be taken:

1. Incident occurs *\*If appropriate, Emergency Services should be contacted as soon as possible. Decision to do this should be made by first aiders;*
2. The Principal is notified. At this, a decision to lockdown the school should be made if the safety of staff and students will be compromised;
3. The **Principal** will allocate the incident to the appropriate Critical Incident Team Leader (Safeguarding Lead or Behaviour Lead);
4. The Critical Incident Team Leader will instruct Administrator/Secretary to ring or contact: Emergency Services 999 (if not already done and appropriate) and parents/carers;
5. The Critical Incident Leader will liaise with all Emergency Services on site and lead on any internal investigation which needs to take place;
6. The Principal will notify the rest of the Critical Incident Management Team;
7. The Principal will notify the Chair of Governors that an incident has occurred and is being managed;
8. The Principal will brief and advise staff/pupils on site (all staff email). The following advice, should the incident have become a Police incident, to respond to any external contact from parents or the media is to be included in this email.

*"Thank you for your enquiry; this is an on-going police investigation. The school cannot comment at this time, but we can say that all our procedures were fully followed and appropriate support has been put in place."*

9. Critical Incident Team Leader to keep the Principal briefed throughout;
10. The Principal will send an In-Touch message home to all parents/carers advising them of an incident on site;
11. Additional support from staff may be required when dismissing students in the local area at the end of the day
12. Debrief of the incident and update on investigation to take place at the end of the day. All personnel present initially or involved subsequently must attend;
13. If appropriate, a whole staff briefing should be held after an initial debrief of personnel present.

### On site incident out of Academy Opening 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 if appropriate;
- Contact Designated Safeguarding Leads (Kim Nicholas or Áine Allen) or any other member of the Safeguarding Team;
- Evacuate the premises immediately if necessary;
- Inform the Principal [who shall follow the procedures above].

### Off Site Incident

Group Leaders will take a copy of the procedures with them on any offsite activity.

- Group Leaders will:
  - o Call the Emergency Services if appropriate;
  - o Account for all party members;
  - o Contact Designated Safeguarding Leads (Kim Nicholas or Aine Allen) or any other member of the Safeguarding Team;
  - o Delegate a member of staff to take care of uninjured members of the party;
  - o If injury has occurred to a student a member of staff must accompany the student with paramedics to A&E until an appropriate adult arrives;
  - o Keep a log of actions taken and conversations held;
  - o If a student is arrested, the Police will make contact with the student's family for an appropriate adult to accompany them to or meet them at the Police Station.

### Communications during an Emergency Situation

- The School main contact line (switchboard) to 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;
- **Only the Principal will handle media enquiries. [See point 8 above]**

### Lockdown Procedures

Lockdown of the school may be appropriate if there is a toxic release or there is a threat from an intruder on the school grounds or within the vicinity of the school. Lockdown may also occur as a result of a serious assault within the Academy campus.

### Examples of such incidents may include:

- A reported incident or civil disturbance in the local community which potentially poses a risk to the academy community;
- A dangerous individual in the locality;
- An intruder on the academy site with the potential to harm students, staff and visitors;
- A warning being received regarding a local risk of air pollution (e.g. smoke plume, gas cloud);
- A major fire in the vicinity of the academy;
- The close proximity of a dangerous dog roaming loose;
- Serious accident on-site requiring good access for emergency services or restricted access for students;
- A serious assault on-site which requires an area of the Academy to be closed, restricting student movements for a period of time.

There is two possible types of "Lockdown"

### Partial Lockdown

Partial lockdown should be seen as a precautionary measure which puts the academy in a state of readiness should a situation escalate, whilst retaining a degree of normality. During a partial lockdown there is no immediate threat to students or staff's safety. It is possible that an incident has occurred on campus (i.e. serious assault) and restricted movement is required while the incident is investigated. A partial lockdown may also be as a result of a reported incident or civil disturbance in the local community with the potential to pose a risk to students, staff and visitors in the academy. It is vital that staff maintain a calm classroom environment during a partial lockdown.

### Alert

- Alert to all staff via the phone tannoy system (pin 500): **Can Patrick Winston please report to reception**
- The alert 'partial lockdown' will be sound **two** times;
- Staff in work areas and offices are to alert teaching staff immediately and move to a secure location. This will be support by the Critical Incident Team.

### Immediate action

In the event of an incident in the local community

- All outdoor activities should continue if safe to do so but staff should be informed of the incident. The Critical Incident Team Leader will be responsible for ensure staff and students outdoors are made aware of the situation;
- If outdoor activities need to cease immediately, students and staff should return indoors to a classroom, PE lessons will return to the Sports Hall
- All students and staff to remain indoors and external doors and windows should locked;
- Learning zone doors should be closed where possible;
- Free movement may be permitted within the building, dependent upon the circumstances. Staff will be advised of the restrictions in place.

Within the first 30 minutes of an incident an incident update will be sent to all staff via email with further instructions for staff and students. Please keep email channels open.

In the event of an incident on campus

- All outdoor activities should continue if safe to do so but staff should be informed of the incident. The Critical Incident Team Leader will be responsible for ensure staff and students outdoors are made aware of the situation;
- If outdoor activities need to cease immediately, students and staff should return indoors to a classroom, PE lessons will return to the Sports Hall if appropriate. In the event of it not being possible for students to return inside, students and staff should move to the Exit towards Thomas a Becket until advised otherwise. When in the Sports Hall Students and staff (in classes) should move to the four corners of the Sports Hall ensuring Fire Exit doors are closed;
- All students and staff to remain indoors and external doors and windows should locked;
- Learning zone doors should be closed where possible;
- Free movement may be permitted within the building, dependent upon the circumstances. Staff will be advised of the restrictions in place;
- If the incident has not been resolved before lesson changeover students will remain in the classroom until directed otherwise if appropriate;
- If a section of the school is closed off for investigation purposes, staff will be informed. This information should then be passed to students to help them navigate the campus during lesson change over.

Within the first 30 minutes of an incident an incident update, if possible, will be sent to all staff via email with further instructions for staff and students. Please keep email channels open.

All situations are different; once all students and staff are safe, the Critical Incident Team with support from SLT will conduct an ongoing assessment based on advice from the Emergency Services. This assessment will then be communicated to staff as soon as possible. In the event of an air pollution issue, air vents and windows should be closed where this is possible, as an additional precaution. If Emergency Services are involved they will advise as to the best course of action in respect of the prevailing threat.

### Full Lockdown

This signifies an immediate threat to the academy and may be an escalation of a partial lockdown (for example when an intruder is within the academy grounds). A “Full Lockdown” of the Academy may be escalated to an emergency evacuation if the situation changes.

#### Alert

- Alert to all staff via the phone tannoy system (pin 500): **Can Patrick Winston please report to reception**
- The alert ‘full lockdown’ will be sound **four** times;
- Staff in work areas and offices are to alert teaching staff immediately and move to a secure location as soon as possible. This will be support by the Critical Incident Team.

#### Immediate action

- If ‘full lockdown’ is initiated during break/lunchtime, all students and staff to report to classrooms. In the case of an intruder this may need to be the nearest room or out of the building. All staff available should assist with supporting students moving to classrooms;
- If ‘Full Lockdown’ is initiated during lesson time, all students to remain in designated classrooms;
- The Critical Incident Team Leader will be responsible for ensure staff and students outdoors are made aware of the situation;

- In the event of a critical incident outdoors, all outdoor activities are to cease immediately with students and staff returning indoors to a classroom, PE lessons will return to the Sports Hall if appropriate. In the event of it not being possible for students to return inside, students and staff should move to the Exit towards Thomas a Becket until advised otherwise. When in the Sports Hall Students and staff (in classes) should move to the four corners of the Sports Hall ensuring Fire Exit doors are closed;
- External doors locked;
- Classroom doors locked, where a member of staff with key is present;
- Windows locked and blinds drawn;
- Students sit quietly out of sight (e.g. under desk or around a corner).
- Register taken - the administrative office will contact each class in turn for an attendance report if necessary after the incident is over.

Staff and students remain in lockdown until it has been lifted by a member of the Critical Incident Team or the Emergency Services. At any point during the lockdown the situation may change and escalate resulting in the need for emergency evacuation procedures to be implemented (see evacuation procedures below). The move to an evacuation will be communicated by the fire alarm being activated. During the lockdown, staff will keep agreed lines of communication open (school email system and school telephones) but not make unnecessary calls to senior management or the administrative office as this could delay more important communication.

## Evacuation Procedures

### No immediate risk or threat to the safety of students and staff

In the event of the following incident types the Academy's Fire Drill procedure (a silent evacuation of the building and assembly on the MUGA) should be followed.

- A school fire
- Laboratory explosion

In this instance the signal to evacuate the building will be given by sounding the fire alarm.

### An immediate threat to the safety of students and staff due to an intruder

In the event of an intruder on-site who poses a threat to the safety of students and staff, if appropriate the Academy should be evacuated following the Academy's Fire Drill procedures. Students and staff will assemble on the MUGA, as per the Academy's fire drill procedures. Registers will be taken in Form Groups. If circumstances dictate that this is unsafe students will proceed to evacuate the site to the recreational play area at Abbeywood Park. The decision to do this will be made by the school Principal or the Critical Incident Team Leader. Students will assemble in Form Groups and registers will be taken before dismissal on the advice of emergency services

## School Closure

- The decision to close the school will only be made in exceptional circumstances and done so by the Principal.

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

- Control Point: Staff Inclusion Office

- Other agencies: Large Meeting Room
- Parents: Restaurant
- Media Briefing Point: Principal's Office
- Staff Welfare Facilities: Administration Corridor / Vice Principal's Office
- Student Welfare Facilities: The Ark/The Annex