

Guidance for Schools and Settings- Responding to Emergencies and Critical Incidents

May 2019

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Introduction

This Emergency / Critical Incidents Framework comes in two parts. The first details how to develop a plan and preventative measures to adopt and implement. The second provides practical information in relation to managing the situation after the incident including the services available from the Educational Psychology Service.

The guidance is also supported by HLT's model School Emergency Management Plan. This can be downloaded from the Services to School website [here](#).

Contents

Part One – Preparing for & Responding to a Critical Incident

1. Context	page 4
2. Principles	page 4
3. Creating Emergency &/or Critical Incident Procedures	page 5
4. Developing Emergency &/or Critical Incident Procedures	page 7
4.1. Partial Emergency & / or Critical Incident	page 7
4.2. Full Emergency &/or Critical Incident	page 7
5. Communication with Parents and Carers	page 8
6. Emergency Services	page 8
7. Documenting Your Plan	page 9
8. Emergency / Critical incident Situations when Away From School/Setting	page 9

Part Two – Managing the Impact of Emergency / Critical Incidents

1. Introduction	page 11
2. The Educational Psychology Service	page 11
3. General Considerations	page 11
4. Suggestions for Teachers Supporting Children Through Difficult Life Events	page 12

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Checklist for Action	page 14
Appendix 2 – London Borough of Hackney Emergency Planning Service	page 18
Appendix 3 – NaCTSO Guidance Note 1/2015 Developing Dynamic Lockdown Procedures	page 20
Appendix 4 – Stay Safe: Firearms & Weapons Attack	page 22
Appendix 5 – Support in Hackney for the Development of Policies, Curricular Approaches and Awareness Training for Staff	page 24
Appendix 6 – Support for Individuals Following Loss and Bereavement	page 25
Appendix 7 – Helplines, Websites and Support Agencies	page 31
Appendix 8 – Samaritans Step by Step Service	page 33

Part One – Preparing for & Responding to a Critical Incident

1. Context

Handling crises is a normal part of school life. Some incidents, however, are of a more critical, complex and potentially overwhelming nature in which staff, children and parents may experience extreme distress that threatens to disrupt, even damage, the life of the school or setting. It is with this in mind that it is important to develop procedures that can mitigate against such risks and offer support after an incident to any individuals or groups involved.

It is strongly recommended that all schools and settings have effective procedures in the unlikely event of an emergency or critical incident and that they are regularly practised and reviewed. HLT has developed a model School Emergency Management Plan which schools may wish to adopt to support processes responding to emergency / critical events.

This guidance is intended to be used both by schools and settings that already have Emergency / Critical Incident plans, to develop and refine their plans as necessary, and by those schools and settings where no such plan currently exists.

Schools in London have for instance faced:

- The murder of a pupil by a stranger;
- The murder of a pupil by a family member;
- Fatal road traffic accidents;
- Death of a member of staff;
- Fatal or serious injuries sustained whilst on an out of school trip;
- Pupil suicide;
- Meningitis death;
- Terrorist attack in the local area;
- Severe fire in the local area.

2. Principles

The following guidance does not attempt to cover all possible events though the following principles underpin the document:

- The welfare and safety of children and staff is of paramount importance;
- Preparedness for a critical incident is necessary;
- Responding to and managing trauma needs a coordinated approach;
- School's and setting's responses sit in a local and national policy context.

This guidance is designed:

- To help schools and other child and young people settings develop plans to respond to a critical incident;
- To provide practical guidance and reference during such an event to signpost schools and other settings to where they might be best supported;
- Identify the support available to schools and settings.

Schools and settings are encouraged to seek advice from the Local Authority if in doubt about any of the issues raised within this guidance. Major civil emergencies, which may affect or have direct impact on a school, for example a terrorist incident, a major chemical spillage, are covered by the [Borough's Major Emergency Plan](#), which is separate from, but complementary to this framework. Notwithstanding this, schools are expected to hold an emergency / critical plan of their own to

ensure systems and processes are in place to respond and manage such borough wide, as well as school based incidents & events, at a local level.

3. Creating Emergency and/or Critical Incident Procedures

All schools and settings must consider the need for robust and tested emergency / critical incident procedures. For the purposes of this document, an emergency and/or critical incident is an event or events, usually sudden, which involve experiencing significant personal distress, to a level which potentially overwhelms normal responses and procedures and which is likely to have emotional and organisational consequences. In this instance, emergency / critical incident procedures should be seen as a sensible and proportionate response to any external or internal incident which has the potential to pose a threat to the safety of children and staff. Procedures should aim to minimise disruption whilst ensuring the safety of all children, staff and visitors.

Critical incident procedures may be activated in response to a number of situations including, but not limited to:

Inside School

- Flood or utility/ies failure – including contractor failure resulting in loss of essential commodities e.g. water, heating;
- Fire or explosion;
- A deliberate act of violence, such as the use of a knife or firearm;
- A pupil or teacher being taken hostage/missing person/absconder;
- Terrorist incident / action – including terrorist attacker(s), bomb threat, receipt of a suspicious package, etc;
- The death, or serious injury, of a pupil, member of staff or other visitor on site through natural causes, suicide or accidents;
- Total or significant IT / Data loss / failure / theft;
- Serious health hazard internally or externally (e.g. Chemical or toxic substance release), also including local risk of air pollution (e.g., smoke plume, gas cloud);
- Disease, epidemics or pandemics resulting in a significant number of staff and / or pupil absence [NB: Central Government would provide guidance on widespread school closure and the Health Protection Agency regarding managing illness];
- Severe weather damage or high risk of severe weather damage requiring school closure;
- A reported incident or civil disturbance in the local community which potentially poses a risk to the school/setting community;
- Significant and/or dangerous damage or destruction to school building(s) – e.g., due to severe weather, serious vandalizing of part of the school or an area of building collapse;
- Incident at a neighbouring school <insert school name> requiring 'mutual' / supporting aid;
- An external request to school to 'hold' pupils beyond the normal end of the school day (e.g., from police in relation to public safety, etc); and
- An intruder on the school/setting site with the potential to pose a risk to children, staff and visitors.

Outside School

- Loss, injury or death of pupil(s) and/or members of staff whilst on school journey, trip or excursions;
- The death or serious injury of a pupil or member of staff through natural causes, accidents or other significant criminal action out of school hours;
- A more widespread disaster in the community impacting on the school – e.g., civil disturbances, terrorism.

There are a number of variables that will dictate exactly how an individual school/setting responds to those situations identified, for example:

- Access to school or setting's bell controls to raise an alarm in an emergency;
- Other means of internal communications - messenger, two-way radios, mobile phone, internal email, texts;
- Site plan including the layout of buildings/rooms and their proximity to one another;
- Age of children;
- Any disabilities of the students involved;
- Geographical location and the presence of secure perimeter fence.
- Existing procedures for communicating with parents and carers
- the need to involve/liaise with outside agencies such as the police, fire service, children's social care
- Access to a safe location away from the school buildings and/or grounds

Nonetheless, many schools/settings have found it helpful to incorporate the following basic principles in their plans:

- In the instance of an evacuation or lockdown, staff are alerted to the activation of the plan through organised communication channels (or in the event of lockdown, by a recognised signal, which should be audible/recognisable throughout the school/setting);
- Evacuation procedures to clear school buildings and / or premises as required and ensure staff and students are taken to a place of safety.
- Lockdown procedures including:
 - to ensure staff and students who are outside of the school/setting buildings are brought inside as quickly as possible, if this is the safest option deemed necessary;
 - Those inside the school/setting remain in their classrooms or designated place until further notice, if this is the safest option deemed necessary;
 - All external doors and, as necessary, windows are locked, if this is the safest option;
 - Depending on the circumstances, internal doors may also need to be locked;
- Once in critical incident mode staff should notify the administrative office immediately of any children not accounted for, and instigate an immediate search for any missing children if it is safe to do so;
- Staff should encourage children to keep calm by remaining calm themselves;
- The school/setting should establish communication with the Emergency Services as soon as possible where this is deemed appropriate;
- If necessary, and safe to do so, parents should be notified as soon as it is practicable to do so via the school/setting's established communications system;
- The school/setting should maintain a separate dedicated line for outgoing calls;
- Children will not be released to parents/carers during a critical incident, unless designated safe to do so.

It is of vital importance that emergency / critical incident procedures are familiar to members of the senior leadership team and all staff. Appointing a Incident Manager should also be considered. To achieve this, a critical incident drill should be undertaken at least once a year, possibly alongside the fire drill. Dependent upon their age, children should also be aware of the plan and regular practices will increase their familiarity. This should include a drill for incidents likely to have a significant emotional impact rather than a physical impact on students' safety. Parents/carers should also be made aware that the school/setting has a critical incident plan. It is not advisable to circulate the detail of the plan as if copies fell into the wrong hands it could render the plan ineffective.

It would also be good practice to:

- Conduct a number of exercises with the senior leadership team to test the procedures against a variety of scenarios;
- Rehearse critical incident arrangements with all staff and children as appropriate;
- Display critical incident drill information alongside information relating to fire drills.

Should a critical incident occur, schools and settings should alert Hackney Learning Trust at the earliest opportunity, so that consideration may be given as to what other support may be necessary to assist the school in managing the situation effectively and proportionately, including the co-ordination of multi-agency post-incident support.

4. Developing emergency and/or critical incident procedures

Emergency / critical incident procedures should be determined by schools and settings on an individual basis as they will be dependent to a large extent on local circumstances such as building design and layout and resources available. An example of an emergency / critical incident procedure might be:

4.1. Partial Emergency and/or Critical incident

This may be as a result of a reported incident or civil disturbance in the local community with the potential to pose a risk to children, staff and visitors in the school/setting. It may also be as a result of a warning being received regarding a serious & significant air pollution risk requiring urgent and immediate action to be taken.

Immediate actions:

- Alert to staff: 'Partial Emergency / Critical Incident';
- All outside activity to cease immediately with children and staff returning indoors. (NB: There will need to be a means of communicating the alert to duty staff at break times);
- All children and staff to remain indoors and external doors and windows should be locked;
- Free movement may be permitted within the building, dependent upon the circumstances.

All situations are different; once all children and staff are safely indoors, senior staff will conduct an ongoing and dynamic risk assessment based on advice from the Emergency Services. This can then be communicated to staff, who can inform children if they are old enough to understand.

'Partial Emergency / Critical Incident' should be seen as a precautionary measure which puts the school/setting in a state of readiness should the situation escalate, whilst retaining a degree of normality.

In the event of an air pollution issue, as an additional precaution air vents can be closed where this is possible. Emergency Services will advise as to the best course of action in respect of the prevailing threat.

4.2. Full Emergency / Critical incident

This signifies an immediate threat or incident of harm affecting the school/setting, staff and children and may be an escalation of a partial critical incident.

Immediate actions may include:

- Alert to staff: 'Full Critical Incident';
- If an evacuation is required, all staff and students to leave the building and, if required, school premises to an agreed place of safety;
- If a lockdown is required:

- If appropriate & safe, all staff and students return to base (classroom, form room or other designated location e.g. sports hall, assembly hall, dining room);
 - Depending on the urgency of the situation, however, it may be more appropriate to follow [run, hide, tell guidance](#) from the National Counter Terrorism Security Office.
 - External doors locked;
 - Internal doors locked, where a member of staff with key is present;
 - Windows locked and blinds drawn;
 - Children sit quietly out of sight;
 - Phones turned to silent / vibrate function turned off.
- Register taken - each class/room to be contacted in turn for an attendance report if this is possible and safe to do so.

Staff and children remain in critical incident until it has been lifted by the appointed senior member of staff or the Emergency Services.

During the emergency / critical incident, staff should keep agreed lines of communication open but not make unnecessary calls to senior management and/or the administrative office as this could delay more important communication.

Examples of discreet communication channels might be:

- Where staff have access to an internal email system then they could access their account and await further instruction. In practical terms, staff would need to be familiar with accessing their account through a variety of means e.g. laptop, smartphone or tablet;
- Where a school/setting uses a particular messaging platform then staff could be placed into a defined user group which could then be used to communicate instructions via text message in an emergency.

5. Communication with Parents and Carers

School/setting emergency / critical incident procedures should be routinely shared with parents/carers, although it is not advisable to share entire emergency / critical incident plans. In the event of an actual emergency / critical incident, it is strongly advised that any incident or development is communicated to parents and carers as soon as is practicable. Parents/carers will obviously be concerned but regular communication of accurate information will help to alleviate undue anxiety.

Parents/carers should be given enough information about what will happen so that they:

- Are reassured that the school/setting understands their concern for their child's welfare, and that it is doing everything possible to ensure their child's safety;
- Must not need to contact the school/setting as this could disrupt the school or setting's ability to contact emergency service providers;
- Must not come to the school/setting as they could interfere with access by emergency service providers and may even put themselves and others in danger;
- Wait for the school/setting to contact them about when it is safe to come and collect their children, and where this will be from.

This part of the plan must reassure parents/carers that the school/setting understands their concern for their children's welfare and that everything will be done to ensure children's safety.

6. Emergency Services

It is important to keep lines of communication open with Emergency Services as they are best placed to offer advice as a situation unfolds. The school/setting site may or may not be cordoned

off by Emergency Services dependent upon the severity of the incident that has triggered the emergency / critical incident. Emergency Services will support the decision of the Headteacher, Principal or Proprietor regarding the timing of communication to parents/carers. In this instance, it may be appropriate for the School's Incident Manager to co-locate with the emergency services

In the event of a prolonged emergency / critical incident or more severe scenario, Hackney Borough Council has the capacity to provide emergency assistance by establishing a Reception Centre for family members outside of the cordoned off area. Please see Appendix 1 for details.

7. Documenting Your Plan

The plan does not need to be a large document as it is something to refer to in an emergency situation.

It should include:

- The people with authority to manage the emergency / critical incident (e.g. Head teacher, Deputy Head teacher, with two others as back-up in case of absence);
- A list of the circumstances where emergency / critical incident will be applied;
- Details of how individuals will contact the administrative office if they see or hear something suspicious;
- Arrangements for how the emergency / critical incident signal will be given;
- Guidance on where people go if they are outside or away from the classroom;
- Details of how a register will be undertaken (and, if required, how & when this may need to be shared with emergency services);
- Information about how the plan will be shared, tested and reviewed;
- Training requirements for staff and pupils (including First Aid and Health and Safety);
- Debriefing arrangements following a emergency / critical incident.

HLT has developed a model School Emergency Plan which you may find useful. This can be found on the Services for Schools website – go to <<insert hyperlink when live>>

8. Emergency / Critical incident Situations when Away From School/Setting

Schools/settings must also consider what would happen if an emergency / critical incident situation should arise when a group is away from school/setting, whether this be on a short visit, day trip or longer trip that involves a party staying away, possibly even in a foreign country.

It will always be necessary to carry out a risk assessment prior to such visits and it is important to consider what would happen if an emergency situation arose that was out of the control of the staff who are supervising the children on the trip.

It will be necessary to give some guidance to children prior to the trip, and this should be reinforced during the trip itself. Parents/carers also need to be provided with information about the procedures that would be followed.

It is almost impossible to predict the circumstances where an emergency situation might arise in a way that specific planning can be undertaken. As a minimum it will be prudent to show children an emergency meeting point if the party gets separated and remind them to follow instructions from the Emergency Services. If the trip involves staying in a hotel or hostel the staff leading the trip should identify areas of the building where they are most likely to be able to protect the safety of the children in their care. Children may be asked to disperse or hide if this will aid their safety.

In order to maintain a proportionate response, schools and settings are advised to continue to revisit their plans but take an all-encompassing risk approach when it comes to reducing the risk of

firearms and other weaponry incidents on educational sites using the STAYSAFE – Run, Hide, Tell advice that is available online via the Met Police website or from NaCTSO.GOV.UK (see Appendix 2)

There is a link to two documents below which some settings might find useful. The first document includes some good general guidance to aid planning such as how people can **Stay Safe**, what they should **See** and Look out for who and how they might **Tell** others of potential dangers and how they should **Act** to keep themselves and others safe.

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/374752/Education_Reviewed.pdf

This second document provides advice on recognising the terrorist threats and summarises the **Run Hide Tell** advice.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/recognising-the-terrorist-threat/recognising-the-terrorist-threat>

Part Two: Managing the Impact of Emergency / Critical Incidents

1. Introduction

Emergency / critical incidents are often sudden unpredicted tragic events, which come out of the blue and have traumatic consequences. They may involve sudden death and serious injury and cause distress and disruption not only to those directly affected, but also to everyone around them. This distress often affects a person's ability to cope, plan and take effective action.

2. The Educational Psychology Service

The [Educational Psychology Service at Hackney Learning Trust](#) has extensive experience working with schools managing emergency / critical incidents. This section of the document outlines the support the EPS team can provide. It also prepares staff for handling emergency / critical incidents, including grief and loss and provides sample documents which are useful when under pressure.

Depending on the levels of training and experience within the school, the EPS can offer three specific types of support in the first days and weeks following an emergency / critical incident:

- Information and advice about action, together with moral support and a trusted sounding board at a difficult time;
- Advice to school staff about possible emotional responses among staff and pupils, and how to manage these;
- Scripts for counselling, relaxation and debriefing sessions for pupils, as appropriate.

It is important to note that the EP service does not provide direct therapeutic or debriefing support to students following emergency / critical incidents, but is able to provide a triage service to other services that do so, as part of the multi-agency co-ordinated response to emergency / critical incidents.

3. General considerations

Schools and settings can play a vital part in helping children managing the effects of emergency / critical incidents. Schools and settings provide a familiar, predictable and supportive environment. They can also provide some relief from the emotional after effects of the incident.

Let the child know that you understand their problem, and want to help, but don't be tempted to treat them differently.

Although it is usually recommended that children return to school as soon as possible, you should liaise with their family about the exact timing and arrangements, because returning to school can be difficult for some children.

Returning to school may be difficult for the child and friends usually rally round and offer support. Some children may experience some or all of the following, to varying degrees. They may:

- Become anxious about being separated from their parents/carers for any reason
- Becoming fearful, clingy and anxious
- Bed wet or thumb suck (or develop another babyish behaviour)
- Develop a fear of the dark
- Engage in naughty and attention-seeking behaviour
- Have difficulties going to sleep or waking up
- Have nightmares or disturbing dreams
- Develop physical symptoms such as headaches and tummy aches

- Find it difficult to understand and want to ask questions
- Not want to go to school
- Find it difficult to concentrate on school work

These are all normal reactions for children and adults may experience similar things.

If a child/persists with some of these symptoms for a long period of time (six months or more), then professional guidance from a psychologist or a child psychiatrist should be sought.

Adults in schools must try to talk about death and other challenging subjects, such as illness and hospitals whenever the opportunity arises - don't wait for a tragedy to happen. Bringing these topics into conversation or the curriculum will help children learn that they can talk to them about any subject.

Adults should try to find support and education to help them understand their own grief and loss. By talking about their feelings and receiving support, they will be able to model a healthy reaction to loss. Children will generally learn how to respond to loss by watching other adults in the family.

Children may feel frightened and insecure because they sense other people's grief and stress and feel powerless to help. They will need additional love, support and structure in their daily routine. References to sources of further support are available in Appendices 5 and 6.

4. Suggestions for teachers supporting children through difficult life events

4.1. Find time to listen

Always take your cue from the child. When they want to talk, try to find the time to listen. If it's not possible straight away, tell the child that you would like to talk, and name a time and place when you can have some quiet time together. Be patient and reassuring. Gently encourage the child to talk about the issues that are worrying them.

Some children may not want to talk. It is still important for them to know that there is someone to talk to when they are ready to. Try to develop an attitude of "I'm interested but it's OK if you don't want to talk!"

4.2. Expect questions and try to answer them honestly

Give the child the facts at a level they understand. Be honest and not just tell them your feelings or what you believe to be the case. Tell them if you don't know the answer - don't just make it up. You can begin by asking 'What do you think?'...and building on their answer. This will aid their understanding. Be prepared to challenge unfounded rumours, gossip or lies.

The child may become intensely curious about death and burial. Try to find out about the family's religious or cultural beliefs so as not to confuse the child, but don't be afraid to say "I don't know". Children may fear or resent a Higher Order that takes to heaven or another place someone they love and need.

4.3. Be alert for changes in behaviour in the first few weeks after an emergency / critical incident

The child may be withdrawn, feel abandoned, helpless, desperate, anxious, apathetic, angry, guilty and/or afraid, have sullen moods and lack concentration. These are common, and are often acted out aggressively because the child may be unable to express their feelings verbally. Try to handle them all patiently and calmly; don't seem surprised, and don't get cross or upset.

4.4. Help the child to recognise and express their feelings

This will help the child avoid developing unhealthy defence mechanisms to cope with difficult emotions.

4.5. Let the child know it's okay to laugh and to cry

Children's initial reactions may range from great distress to what may seem to be unconcern. All of these – and more – are normal and do not mean that the child is uncaring or reacting excessively. Younger children may experience grief by reacting very strongly one minute (e.g. sobbing) and the talking about daily life (e.g. 'What's for tea?') next. It does not mean they care any less about what has happened.

Adults and other children may feel tearful at times. It is okay to lighten the mood with memories of happier times. Acknowledge the child's feelings and thoughts and discuss them. Reassure them that things will get better eventually.

Resist the temptation to make comments such as "I'm sure you don't mean that" if a child believes that they caused their parent's death, or to say to a distressed child that "You'll soon feel better". Children have 'magic thinking' and may believe that their behaviour, or thoughts, can cause or reverse death.

4.6. Close liaison between home and school is particularly important at this time

This will help the child feel more secure and provide extra information on how they are coping.

4.7. Be sensitive to special days

Mother's Day, birthdays, and the anniversary of the event may all revive painful memories. As always, it's best to take your cue from the child.

Appendix 1: Checklist for action

1. Immediate action

1.1. Gather information and keep a written record

- Gather as much factual information as possible using the questions on the Emergency / Critical Incident record form;
- Start a written log;
- See if there are any continuing risks Contact your Chair of Governors.

1.2. Contact appropriate support agencies

Your first point of contact in such situations will be the First Access and Screening Team (FAST) on 0208 356 5500.

Form an in-school planning group of staff to draw up an action plan for the next two to three days

- Decide what information should be shared, and with whom - staff, pupils, parents directly involved, wider community, press. Agree how to do this sensitively, and who should do it
- Share responsibilities; designate substitutes if necessary
- Ensure several staff have access to next-of-kin lists
- Decide who should Liaise with affected families - see below
- Liaise with other agencies and agree a multi-agency plan as needed

1.3. The media

All calls from the media can be passed on to the Communications Team at LBH -The team will help you prepare a press statement, and advise you on all aspects of dealing with media interest.

2. Action within hours

2.1. Initial contact with the family

- Contact the families of those involved
- Look at what support may be achievable for the family

2.2. Keep lines of communication open

- Sort out telephone communication to and from school
- Identify a phone line for outgoing calls and keep records of all calls
- Set up strategies for dealing with enquiries
- Identify Emergency / Critical Incident Lead

2.3. Inform school staff (ideally before pupils hear about it)

- Call an early morning staff meeting and outline the school's basic response
- Consider suggestions and answer questions
- Prepare an information sheet for all school staff
- Inform part-time staff, absent staff, lunchtime supervisors and staff working shifts

2.4. Let the pupils know as soon as possible

A large school assembly for all may not be the best way to do this.

- It is better to let pupils hear about the incident from someone they know while they are in small, familiar groups

- The EPS can help you decide what to say and the best approach to take in different circumstances - see the section called guidance later in this pack.
- In the case of a death of a child, think about telling the deceased pupil's class separately, away from the rest of the school
- You might want to inform all pupils in their class groups. At the same time, you might want to think about calling special assemblies, shortly after the event, where you can review the facts, talk about your personal feelings, outline plans for the school day and dispel any rumours that may have started
- In the case of a death, you might want to offer a short special tribute at this time

2.5. Inform parents and the wider community

- Consider contacting the parents of all pupils in the same class so that they know about the incident before they see their children
- Consider writing to all parents the same day, informing them of the situation
- Contact parents of pupils who may need additional support

3. Short term Action (within 12 hours)

3.1. Keep everybody informed

- Arrange a briefing meeting for staff
- Inform the wider community, including other parents and neighbouring schools
- Develop a plan for handling the media (the Communications and Marketing team at the Trust are available to help you)

Aim to return to normal as soon as possible but be flexible – constantly review how things are going.

3.2. Teaching arrangements

- If a teacher has died, what will happen to their class?
- You may need to bring in a supply teacher for extra support.
- Consider moving ancillary staff in to specific classes to provide additional support at certain times of the day
- Consider changing the times of free periods
- Consider extending the tutor time and modifying the timetable

3.3. Curriculum content

- Identify any inappropriate content in the school curriculum

3.4. Support arrangements

- Contact the EPS for support and advice about other agencies and professionals who may be able to help
- Arrange debriefing for staff and pupils who are directly affected by the incident
- Plan how you will monitor and deal with people's feelings and reactions, and keep an eye on the general atmosphere within the school

3.5. Pupils

- How will you deal with pupils who are too upset to attend lessons? Is there a private space they could use?
- Draw up strategies that will allow pupils to express their feelings about the situation if they wish

3.6. Staff

- Be visible, as a support person, to help pupils or staff experiencing difficulty
- Help staff deal with pupil behaviour
- Have to hand a list of professionals who may be able to help, both in the short and long term
- Arrange some informal mutual support meetings, perhaps in the staffroom at the end of the day, to give staff a chance to share their feelings and reactions

3.7. Yourself

- Supporting staff and pupils, as well as managing the processes, can be very stressful – find time to talk about your own personal feelings with someone you can trust. Some further guidance here?

4. Medium term action (24–72 hours)

4.1. Dealing with the media

LBH Communications Team is available to assist you with the media and advice on communicating with your school or setting community. Helen Clarke is Hackney's LBH Media and Campaigns Officer and can be contacted by email at helen.clarke@hackney.gov.uk or telephone 020 8356 5339. Alternatively, email.press@hackney.gov.uk or 020 8356 3736 (out of hours press office: 07528 969363)

4.2. Return to school for affected pupils and staff

Pupils

- Make sure that a member of staff contacts the children at home or in hospital
- Make sensitive arrangements for their return to school
- Arrange alternative teaching if necessary
- Arrange consultation for staff with the EPS so that they can better support children
- Make sure that everyone has a clear understanding of the purpose of the consultation, and its confidentiality
- Clarify the procedures for referring children for individual help
- Liaise with parents (including sending them bulletins)

Staff

- Arrange support for staff who have been affected by the incident
- Check that monitoring procedures are in place and being followed

4.3. Funerals and memorial services

- Find out what the family plans to do about the funeral, and whether they are happy for someone from the school to attend
- Identify which staff and pupils want to attend, and sort out practicalities, such as staff cover, transport and so on
- Decide whether the school should close or not
- Involve staff and pupils in decisions about flowers and/or a collection – Who decides? Governing Body? Is this necessary here?
- Consider cultural and religious implications
- Consult the dead person's family, and the school community, about plans for a special assembly or memorial service
- Consider an assembly which celebrates a life

4.4. Long term action plan

- Plan the curriculum to work with 'rites of passage' what does this mean? as a matter of course
- Set up strategies to support teachers working with painful emotions and sensitive subjects
- Be aware of multi-cultural and multi-faith issues
- Remember that people will be looking for someone to blame
- Find ways to increase levels of social support for staff and pupils

Appendix 2: [London Borough of Hackney Civil Protection Service](#)

The Council has the same responsibility for dealing with emergencies as organisations such as the police, the fire brigade and the ambulance service. We work closely with other agencies and departments to

- Prepare for emergencies;
- Support the emergency services;
- Support those affected by the incident;
- Provide mutual aid to other Councils;
- Continue to provide normal Council services during times of disruption / emergency;
- Lead the recovery from the incident;
- Maintain our [Emergency Plan](#).

Find out about:

- [Floods and how to be prepared for one;](#)
- [Winter planning;](#)
- [London Fire Brigade's advice on fire safety.](#)

If you need to contact the council in an emergency call 020 8356 2366 or see contact us for specific service telephone numbers.

What constitutes an emergency?

Events or situations which threaten serious damage to human welfare or the environment; or acts of war or terrorism which threaten serious damage to the security of the UK are classed as emergencies.

For example:

- A fire;
- A burst water/gas main;
- Severe weather (heavy rain fall, extreme heat, snow);
- A building collapse;
- An infectious disease outbreak;
- A train crash;
- A plane crash;
- Public disorder;
- Terrorism..

Local risks

Hackney is part of the north central London Sub Regional Resilience Forum (SRRF). Membership of the SRRF includes emergency services, local authorities, government agencies, health, utilities, voluntary organisations, businesses and the military.

Hackney also hosts the local Borough Resilience Forum (BRF) which includes a more localised representation of the above. BRF's identify and assess local risks that could cause an emergency, such as flooding, pandemic flu and utility failures within the borough. Once they have identified a risk, the chance of that risk occurring and its possible consequences are assessed and the risk is given a score. This information is collated to produce the community borough risk register, which is used to monitor and manage risks, and to inform work priorities for emergency planning teams.

Contact Details

Emergency Planning Service:

- Duty Emergency Planning Officer (available 24/7) on 020 8356 2366;
- If unavailable through the Public Space Surveillance Service (formerly CCTV) on 020 8356 2323 (also available 24/7).
- Email: emergency.planning@hackney.gov.uk

Appendix 3: NaCTSO Guidance Note 1/2015 Developing Dynamic Lockdown Procedures

This note provides guidance to develop procedures to dynamically lockdown their sites in response to a fast moving incident such as a firearms or weapons attack, either directly at the site or in the vicinity. Due to the differences between the vast array of sites in the UK it is not possible to give prescriptive advice, however this guidance details planning considerations applicable to most sites.

What is dynamic lockdown?

Dynamic lockdown is the ability to quickly restrict access and egress to a site or building (or part of) through physical measures in response to a threat, either external or internal. The aim of critical incident is to prevent people moving into danger areas and preventing or frustrating the attackers accessing a site (or part of). It is recognised that due to their nature some sites may not be able to physically achieve critical incident.

Why develop dynamic lockdown?

Those seeking to conduct attacks often undertake a level of planning including hostile reconnaissance. All opportunities to detect and deter threats at the attack planning phase should be taken. Presenting a strong security posture through visible and effective activity, for example by staff awareness and reporting processes, efficient use of CCTV, deterrent communications and active security zones.

In preventing an attack has not been possible, the ability to frustrate and delay the attacker(s) during the course of the attack and reduce the number of potential casualties can be greatly increased through dynamic lockdown.

Advance planning of what needs to be done to lockdown a site and recognising the need for flexibility in those plans will save lives.

Planning should consider;

- How to achieve effective full or partial lockdown;
- How to let people know what's happening;
- Training your staff;
- STAY SAFE principles "Stay Safe" is a short film capturing the actions that people should take in the event of a firearms or weapons attack. It contains the main messages of RUN > HIDE > TELL (Annex A).

How to achieve dynamic lockdown

- In your planning you should identify all access and egress points in both public and private areas of the site. Remember, access points may be more than just doors and gates.
- Identify how to quickly and physically secure access/egress points
- Identify how your site can be sectorised to allow specific areas to be locked down
- Staff roles and responsibilities should be included in the plans.
- Staff must be trained to act effectively and made aware of their responsibilities
- Stopping people leaving or entering the site – direct people away from danger
- Ability to disable lifts without returning them to the ground floor should be considered
- Processes need to be flexible enough to cope with and compliment invacuation and evacuation

How to let people know what's happening

Various options exist depending on the nature and occupancy of the site, these include;

- Public Address (PA) system
- Existing internal messaging systems; text, email, staff phones etc.

- “Pop up” on employees computers / internal messaging systems
- Dedicated “Critical incident” alarm tone
- Word of mouth

For multi occupancy sites, methods of communication between all businesses need to be considered. Likewise, working with surrounding businesses will not only benefit situational awareness but build effective lines of communication.

Note: Use of fire alarms should be avoided to reduce incorrect response to an incident.

Training your staff

Due to the fast moving nature of incidents that require lockdown, it is important that all staff are able to act quickly and effectively.

- Train all staff using principles of “Stay Safe” (Annex A)
- Ensure people know what is expected of them, their roles and responsibilities
- Check staff understanding
- Regularly test and exercise plans with staff
- Regularly refresh training For further advice and guidance please visit the NaCTSO website: www.nactso.gov.uk

Appendix 4: Stay Safe: Firearms and weapons attack

'Stay Safe' principles (Run Hide Tell) give some simple actions to consider at an incident and the information that armed officers may need in the event of a firearms and weapons attack. Full guidance is contained on the NaCTSO website:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/recognising-the-terrorist-threat>.

Run

- Escape if you can;
- Consider the safest options;
- Is there a safe route? RUN if not HIDE;
- Can you get there without exposing yourself to greater danger?
- Insist others leave with you;
- Leave belongings behind.

Hide

- If you can't RUN, HIDE;
- Find cover from gunfire;
- If you can see the attacker, they may be able to see you;
- Cover from view does not mean you are safe, bullets go through glass, brick, wood and metal;
- Find cover from gunfire e.g. substantial brickwork / heavy reinforced walls;
- Be aware of your exits;
- Try not to get trapped;
- Be quiet, silence your phone;
- Lock / barricade yourself in;
- Move away from the door.

Tell

- Call 999 - What do the police need to know?
- Location - Where are the suspects?
- Direction - Where did you last see the suspects?
- Descriptions – Describe the attacker, numbers, features, clothing, weapons etc;
- Further information – Casualties, type of injury, building information, entrances, exits, hostages etc;
- Stop other people entering the building if it is safe to do so.

Armed Police Response

- Follow officers' instructions;
- Remain calm; Can you move to a safer area?
- Avoid sudden movements that may be considered a threat;
- Keep your hands in view;

Officers may

- Point guns at you;
- Treat you firmly;

- Question you;
- Be unable to distinguish you from the attacker;
- Officers will evacuate you when it is safe to do so. You must STAY SAFE;
- What are your plans if there were an incident?
- What are the local plans? E.g. personal emergency evacuation plan.

Appendix 5: Support in Hackney for the development of policies, curricular approaches and awareness training for staff

Type of support offered:	Name of organisation	Contact name and tel no.	Details of support offered	Comments
Support for developing a school policy re bereavement and loss	Patient and Family Service @ St Josephs Hospice Winston's Wish	0300 303 0400 (for referrals and 24/7 advice and support) 080 8802 0021	Training and consultation	
Support for developing school policy re Emergency / Critical Incidents	Educational Psychology Service	Principal Educational Psychologist, 020 8820 7519	Guidelines for schools, training and consultation	
Support for whole staff training re bereavement and loss	Patient and Family Service @ St Josephs Hospice	020 8525 6000 (reception)	Scheduled courses	
Curricular approaches to loss/ bereavement	Cross phase SEAL	EPS 020 8820 7519		Based on SEAL staffroom activities. Schools do not have to implement the SEAL DfES materials but will have to cover the elements of SEAL within their PSHE policy.
Suicide Prevention and post-intervention	Samaritans	020 8394 8300	Step by step service and guidance	https://www.samaritans.org/education/step-by-step/resources/respond-to-suspected-suicide-schools
Suicide Prevention and post-intervention	Papyrus	0800 068 4141	Training and guidance	https://www.papyrus-uk.org/#

Appendix 6: Support for individuals following loss and bereavement

Death as part of the curriculum

The patterns for coping with grief and loss begin in early childhood and often continue through to adulthood.

It's important that grief and loss, including death and dying are not seen as challenging subjects, but are part of the curriculum. Children need to understand death. Give them a clear explanation, using the correct terms, such as 'die' and 'dead' instead of 'going away' or 'asleep' as these simply add to their confusion.

Winston's Wish (<https://www.winstonswish.org/supporting-you/support-for-schools/>) have published guidance on how schools can help and support pupils and staff.

Common questions and answers about death and dying

When should you tell children that a person has died?

Children should be told as soon as possible to prevent them finding out from some other, less appropriate, source. Try to use a normal tone of voice and clear direct language.

Avoid speaking in hushed whispers as these may convey spooky or unnatural feelings?

How should you tell them?

Where possible, children should be told by someone close to them, in familiar surroundings where they will feel more secure. Both you and the child may feel uncomfortable and uncertain, so it might help to hold or hug the child to help reduce their fear and insecurity.

What should you tell them?

It is very important to tell the truth as far as you know it. Even 'white lies' may have to be revisited later on, and the truth is the best way to prevent rumours and fantasies building up. This information will stay with the child for a very long time and, if challenged later and found to be incorrect, it may destroy the trust between you and the child.

They may not take it all in at this stage. But they will go over and over the facts later, asking more questions as they gradually take in the truth. Don't worry about having to keep giving the same answers.

How much should you explain?

As mentioned above, children will vary in their ability to take in information. If your own information is limited, tell them what you know and make every effort to find out more.

In the absence of facts our imagination may take over, and children may start to believe that what they were doing might be related to the person's death. These fears may need to be brought out and talked about later.

Local gossip, and even newspapers, may exaggerate the real story. An honest, objective account of the truth is the best way to prevent this.

What if I feel very upset myself and find it difficult to talk?

It is very important to let children know that it is natural and acceptable to be upset and to cry - even for adults. It is better to share feelings, such as crying together, rather than deny them.

Sometimes, however, it may be better to protect a child from witnessing extreme adult grief. If the adult is traumatised with grief, they may need time and space to release their feelings initially.

It is important that adults 'give children permission to grieve' as well as the opportunity and support to do so, without trying to force them to behave in a certain way.

In what ways are teenagers different from other children?

During adolescence, young people have very confusing feelings about themselves and the world about them. Grief tends to heighten these feelings, increase the confusion and may lead to severe depression.

Allowing the teenager to talk about their feelings with a caring, supportive adult (who is there when needed) is better than trying to be 'forcefully helpful'. However, at this time, the individual may lean more towards their friends, and away from their family. Don't feel rejected if they look to friends for support and comfort, just be there for them and tell them so.

Art, music and sport can be good ways of expressing these feelings, and should be encouraged.

How long does it take to come to terms with bereavement?

Some societies (including Victorian England, which had dress and behaviour codes) had a formal period of mourning. This helped the bereaved person, and others, to behave appropriately for the right length of time. There is no prescribed period in our present society (except in some religions such as Judaism) so each individual has to progress at their own pace. This varies enormously from person to person.

There are several phases of grief. The initial stage of disbelief usually passes quickly, but many people stay at this stage for a long time. The feelings of depression have to be passed through, even fleetingly, before the individual can move on and start to look positively at life.

This makes it particularly difficult when several children are going through the grieving process at the same time, such as a class reacting to the death of one of their peers, because they will all be at different stages at the same time. Grief should be allowed to run its natural course.

Are some children more vulnerable than others?

This varies according to the child's age, developmental level and personal circumstances.

Very young children (under 5 years) are beginning to develop their independence from the security of their home, and loss can be particularly damaging to them. They may also show their anxieties in other, indirect, ways such as bed wetting, nightmares or phobias. They should be reassured and comforted.

Can we help by seeing the 'positive side' of the bereavement?

There is a temptation to talk about 'new responsibilities' within a family, or the 'man of the house' or the 'little mother'. This approach may diminish the child's own grief. It might be better to allow the child to regress to more childish behaviour, if only for a little while.

Although it is good to talk positively about the dead person, especially when remembering events that involved the bereaved, these positive aspects are only really appropriate in the later stages of the grieving process, and should be thought through carefully.

How should I support the grieving child?

The child needs to be part of a group and not singled out, so it helps if they are part of a group of grieving children. The children should be expected to carry on with their work, although you might want to let them know that you don't expect the same standards of performance. This way, they won't get upset if they fall below par.

Peer group members can help each other, although you may want to intervene in a helpful way if they seem to be upsetting each other.

Can the school, or a family religion, be helpful?

These can be very helpful, because they provide explanations, support and, above all, structure for the child.

Problems may occur if the child starts to question the religious explanation, especially if the death was unexpected. You may need guidance from a religious adviser at this stage.

What practical things can I do?

There are a number of practical things that children may choose to do. If you are dealing with a class, then an open discussion of possible ideas will make good use of the children's natural creativity. They will probably come up with an idea that 'is right' for them and their friend who has died.

The concept of death in world religions

Visit www.bbc.co.uk/religion to explore a range of the world's beliefs:

- Atheism (Humanism);
- Bahá'í;
- Buddhism (Mahayana, Theravada);
- Candomblé;
- Christianity (Baptist, Catholic, Christadelphians, Church of England, Church of Scotland, Eastern Orthodox, Exclusive Brethren, Methodist, Mormon, Pentecostalism, Quakers, Salvation Army, Seventh-day Adventists);
- Hinduism;
- Islam (Shia, Sunni);
- Jainism;
- Jehovah's Witnesses;
- Judaism (Humanistic, Liberal, Orthodox Judaism, Reconstructionist, Reform);
- Mormonism;
- Paganism;
- Rastafari;
- Santeria;
- Shinto;
- Sikhism;
- Taoism;
- Unitarianism;
- Zoroastrianism.

You can also visit Hackney SACRE portal for teachers, parents and members of the public at www.learninglive.co.uk/teachers/re/index.asp

Children's understanding of death at different ages

Infants

- Concept of death is experienced as 'absence'
- Age 3 – 5 years
- The child sees death as impersonal
- Death has to do with "not being alive"
- Death is a temporary state
- Egocentric beliefs - "Granny died because I didn't visit her"

Age 5 – 9 years

- The child becomes more aware of death
- Child develops a fear of death
- Is particularly vulnerable to being overwhelmed by their feelings

Age 9 onwards

- The understanding that death is irreversible begins to emerge
- Child begins to approach mourning in the way that an adult would

Helping bereaved children in school: Points to remember

- (i) Children act out their feelings through their behaviour;
- (ii) Grief is a normal, healthy response, essential for healing, and is a long-term process. It is painful, but normal;
- (iii) All children respond differently;
- (iv) Work, attention and behaviour may suffer because of their emotional distress;
- (v) The loss of a loved one involves the loss of part of a child's own identity;
- (vi) When supporting a bereaved child, keep in contact with their family;
- (vii) Dealing with a bereaved child will give rise to feelings in you. These are normal and natural. Make sure that you get support for yourself, too.

The stages of grief**Phase 1: Early grief**

- Shock and numbing
- Alarm
- Denial and disbelief

Phase 2: Acute grief

- Yearning and pining
- Searching
- Strong feelings of sadness, anger, guilt or shame
- Disorganisation
- Despair
- Reorganization

Phase 3: Integration of loss and grief

Type of support offered:	Name of organisation	Contact name and tel no.	Details of support offered	Comments
Support for staff who are supporting children in class immediately following an incident	EPS	PEP, 020 8820 7519	On request in the event of a Traumatic Incident	
Support for staff who are supporting	Patient and	020 8525 3134	Training and	

Type of support offered:	Name of organisation	Contact name and tel no.	Details of support offered	Comments
individual or groups of bereaved children outside class eg mentors	Family Service @ St Josephs Hospice	(admin)	consultation	
Support for groups of children in school	Trained staff in schools Published programmes e.g. Seasons for Growth	School based		
1:1 Support for individuals in school <u>outside class</u>	Learning mentors	School based		
	One Therapy	Individual 03332079330	Grief counselling from trained counsellor.	Traded service only
	Patient and Family Service @ St Josephs Hospice	02085256000 (switchboard)	1:1 or group therapy for individuals through play therapy or counselling	Meetings by appointment only.
External support for individuals <u>outside school</u>	First Steps (Tier2)	02085105555	Up to 6 meetings with children and families	Meetings by appointment only.
	Tier 3 Child & Family Consultation Service based at:			
	John Scott H/C, Green Lanes London N4	020 8809 5577	Trained professionals. Help children and families.	Meetings by appointment only.
External support for individuals <u>outside school</u> (continued)	Homerton Row C&YP centre	020 3222 5600		
	Off Centre Unit 7 The Textile Building, 2a Belsham Street, Hackney E9 6NG	020 8986 4016 www.offcentre.org.uk	Will assess within 2 weeks and offer appointment immediately after.	Age group: 13 – 25 Must live/work in Hackney. Can self refer

Type of support offered:	Name of organisation	Contact name and tel no.	Details of support offered	Comments
	First Steps Early Intervention & Community Psychology Service	020 7014 7135	NHS Psychology Service	For children and young people aged 0-18 and their families Can self-refer
	Step Forward 234 Bethnal Green Road, London E2 (Tower Hamlets)	020 7739 3082	Will be seen within 2/3 weeks and then will go on waiting list for 2/3 months	Age group: 11 – 25 Can self-refer

Appendix 7: Helplines, websites and support agencies

Child Death Helpline

T. 0800 282 986

Every evening 7pm– 10pm

Monday – Friday am 10am – 1pm Tuesday and

Wednesday 1pm – 4pm

www.childdeathhelpline.org.uk

ChildLine

T. 0800 1111

Free national helpline for children and young people, 24 hours a day all year round

www.childline.org.uk

Child Bereavement UK

T.020 8519 7025 www.childbereavment.org.uk

The Compassionate Friends

T. 0345 123 2304

Daily from 10am – 4pm and 7pm – 10pm

National, non-profit making self-help support. Offers friendship and understanding to bereaved parents, grandparents and siblings. www.tcf.org.uk

Cruse Bereavement Care

T. 0844 477 9400

Provides a range of free services, including 1:1 support for young people under 18, and DVD on how to support children through bereavement. www.hackneyicare.org.uk

Cruse Bereavement Care Youth Line

Freephone 0808 808 1677 Monday –

Friday 9am – 5pm

www.cruse.org.uk/children A website designed for young people by young people.

Trained young supporters

Winston's Wish

T. 0808 802 0021

Open every day except Sundays.

Support, information and guidance to those caring for a bereaved child or young person; Support for bereaved children and young people. www.winstonswish.org.uk

SIBBS

T. 0345 123 2304

Support for brothers and sisters (siblings).

www.siblings.org.uk

Survivors of Bereavement by Suicide (previously known as SOBS)

Helpline: 0300 111 5065 –9am-

9pm every day www.uk-sobs.org.uk

Support for professionals

Child Bereavement Charity

Bereavement Services T: 01494 568 900

Training Department T: 01494 568 926

Offers training and professional development including Inset days to schools.

www.childbereavement.org.uk

Hackney Bereavement Service

T. 020 7254 9804

This is a local service for adults over the age of 50, funded by Hackney Social Services 133 Stoke Newington High Street, N16. www.hackneybereavement.org

Cruse Bereavement Care

T. 0844 477 9400

Provides a range of free services, including a national helpline and 1:1 support for adults

www.crusebereavementcare.org.uk

www.counselling-directory.org.uk

Provides a comprehensive list of qualified counsellors offering private counselling

Winston's Wish

T. 0808 802 0021

Open every day except Sundays.

Support, information and guidance for professionals; Support for bereaved children and young people.

www.winstonswish.org.uk

Young Minds

<https://youngminds.org.uk>

Hackney Family Action including a Parents Hotline

<https://www.family-action.org.uk>

Appendix 8: Samaritans Step By Step Service

Nobody likes to think about a death in school. Yet suicide is a leading cause of death for young people in the UK and Republic of Ireland. Sadly it is always a possibility that a student, parent or member of staff might choose to take their own life.

However upsetting this must be, schools and colleges play an important role in reducing the likelihood of imitational behaviour and helping recovery by preparing a response thoroughly and responding appropriately to a suspected suicide if the worst should ever happen.

Contact our [Step by Step service](#) to find out more about how we can support you in your response planning.

Samaritans has offered the Step by Step service to schools in the UK since 2010. We are available to offer practical support and advice to schools that have been affected by an attempted or suspected suicide.

Reducing the Risk of Further Suicide

Samaritans offers the Step by Step service in order to support the school community, and reduce the risk of further suicide. Recent research on 'imitational' suicides and suicide 'contagion' suggest that, in young people especially, exposure to suicide can lead to increased risk of suicidal thoughts. A Canadian study found that the suicide of a schoolmate increased the risk of suicidal thoughts or attempts among young people aged 12-17 years (especially 12-13 year olds) for up to two years following the suicide, and had an impact that was even greater than the suicide of a family member.

Our service is designed to lessen the risk of further suicide by assisting school communities to handle the situation sensitively and responsibly, while returning to normal routines as quickly as possible. This guidance forms part of Samaritans' Step by Step service to schools, which offers specially trained volunteers who can assist school leadership teams with their suspected suicide response.

How can Step by Step help?

As described in a recent evaluation of our service, 'Step by Step is there to reassure senior leadership teams that what they are doing is right for the school and advise them on what they feel works best throughout the incredibly difficult first few weeks.'

Get in touch with our Step by Step service (stepbystep@samaritans.org) or Freephone* 0808 168 2528 and we will do all we can to help you deal with a situation you may never have faced before.

We can also assist with raising awareness of emotional health among young people, by [offering talks in schools](#).