

Brookeborough Primary School



Critical Incident Policy

The school will review this policy in March 2025

Signed: A. Young (B.O.G.)

Date: March 2024

Signed: B Ovens (Principal)

Date: March 2024

Introduction

This school is aware that there is always the possibility of a critical incident happening in or around the school. In anticipation of such an event, the following guidance is deemed necessary. The policy is closely linked to the school's existing pastoral documents.

This guidance enables the staff to mobilise their resources promptly and with minimum confusion.

Principles and Vision

- Critical incident management is an integral part of normal school practice.
- Critical Incidents happen and it is therefore important that we have a plan in place to best respond and manage a traumatic situation should it occur.
- We consider a critical incident to be any event which causes trauma to our school community and overwhelms our normal coping mechanisms.

Aims of the Policy

- To create a positive, open, communicative climate where the needs of staff and pupils are met in critical incident situations.
- To respond to a critical incident in an informed manner.
- To recognise which incidents may be critical for the school community.
- To create a safe school environment whereby the physical, social, and emotional health of pupils and staff is prioritised.
- To monitor and review the policy for dealing with emergencies.
- To promote active coping skills within the curriculum; and
- To establish positive working relationships and dialogue with outside agencies thus enabling full and effective collaboration in the event of a critical incident.

What is a Critical Incident?

A critical incident is a single incident or sequence of incidents which: -

- are sudden and unexpected
- contain real or imagined threats to a person
- overwhelm usual coping mechanisms
- cause severe disruption
- are traumatic to anyone

A 'Critical incident' can occur in relation to:

The Whole School

e.g.

- Fire
- Explosion
- Shooting
- Environmental disaster
- Car accident/vehicle intrusion in playground etc.

An Individual Pupil/Member of Staff

e.g.

- Death of a pupil (at home or at school)
- Death of a member of staff (at home or at school)
- Personal attack on pupil or staff member
- Accusation of serious criminal activity levelled against staff/pupil

- Onset of a highly contagious illness

Roles and Responsibilities

- The School's Critical Incident team is made up of the Principal (Mr Young), Senior Teacher (Mrs Gould), and Clerical officer (Mrs Bennett).
- The Principal will be the first point of contact, responsible for dealing with all parties. The Principal will ensure that all relevant personnel are informed of the event as soon as possible after it happens. The Principal will also act as media spokesperson, liaising with media and emergency services if needed.
- The Senior Teacher (Mrs Gould) may deputise for the Principal in the running of routine tasks and assist in the duties listed above.
- The Education Authority 'Western Region' Critical Incident Response Team would be contacted for advice.
- The Chairperson of the Board of Governors (Mr Ben Ovens) will ensure that all governors are kept fully informed.
- The class teacher(s) and support staff will liaise with the team and follow the guidelines.
- The school's secretary (Mrs Bennett) will oversee all the administration needs.

Steps to be taken in the event of a Critical Incident

No two incidents are alike. Always assess needs first.
Use the guidelines flexibly and in relation to the information available

Step 1

Assess the situation, gather factual information and take appropriate action

- Maintain structures and routines where possible
- Initiate agreed school evacuation procedures, arrange for first aid if necessary
- Notify the emergency services/other relevant authorities
- Establish a 'information' centre, identify who is in charge and set regular briefing times
- Liaise with Chairperson Board of Governors/Education Authority Critical Incident Response Team
- Arrange for support of Critical Incident Response Team
- Create a calm, purposeful environment



Step 2

Co-ordinate school's response, meet with staff

- Liaise and delegate, discuss intervention plan, agree how and what pupils will be told (prepare statement)
- Collect, record, verify and update details (time, place, those involved etc)
- Continue to liaise with Chairperson of Board of Governors/Education Authority 'Western Region' Critical Incident Response Team
- Set up a recovery room in the school (provide fluids, tissues, comfortable chairs, support personnel)



Step 3

Organise contact with pupils and parents. Information to anyone outside school should only be issued from the Critical Incident Team (Prepared Statement)

- Give the facts of the critical incident, keeping in mind legal implications and respecting aspects of privacy
- Inform parents by 'phone or in person' if their child is involved, as soon as the initial information is confirmed
- Continue to liaise with Chairperson of Board of Governors/Educational Authority 'Western Region' Critical Incident Response Team
- Ensure a correct and consistent message is given
- Provide sources of support for pupils and families and encourage communication



Step 4

Restore the school to regular routine as soon as practicable

- Plan visits to injured and bereaved, ensuring a senior member of staff remains on site
- Continue to liaise with Chairperson of BOG/Education Authority 'Western Region' Critical Incident Response Team
- Plan rituals and assemblies
- Monitor pupils and staff



Step 5

Obtain updated factual information

- Continue to inform staff, students and parents
- Principal consults with the families affected to determine their wishes concerning public announcements and information for school staff and students
- Continue to liaise with Chairperson of BOG/Educational Authority 'Western Region' Critical Incident Response Team



Step 6

Continue to monitor well-being of students and staff

- Organise assistance, such as transport home, for staff or students who are distressed. Try to ensure that they are not alone on the evening after such an incident
- Identify at risk pupils, staff, arrange for follow-up support, involvement with other professionals, referrals as necessary
- Assess the need for debriefing of staff and pupils with expert help
- Continue to liaise with Chairperson of BOG/Education Authority 'Western Region' Critical Incident Response Team

Monitoring and Record Keeping

- An up to date 'Telephone Tree' to ensure all staff are kept informed.
- Pupil Contacts detail are kept in the school office and individual classrooms.
- Critical Incident Support Personnel contact list.
- Anniversaries are also noted to ensure they are dealt sensitively within school.
- The class teacher will also closely monitor any child/children who have been directly/involved and, report immediately to the Critical Incident Team. If behavioural changes cause concern it may be agreed to seek external support.
- The team will continue to closely monitor the situation.

Staff Development and Resourcing

- The Principal will avail of any training on Critical Incident.
- The training will be disseminated with all members of staff.
- The school will ensure the continuous professional development of staff in this area.

Response, Evaluation and Review

- The staff will be made aware of this policy at the beginning of each academic year.
- The school will review this policy every three years.

Critical Incident Support Personnel			
Organisation	Name	Telephone	Fax/Email
Principal	Mr A Young	07939 148564	ayoung762@c2kni.net
Senior Teacher	Mrs L Gould	07799 078105	Lgould318@c2ni.net
PSNI (public Protection Unit)		084560080000	
Police, Fire, Ambulance		101	
South West Acute Hospital		028 66382000	
Doctors' Surgery			
Social Services	Duty Officer	02866384000	
Education Authority 'Western Region' Designated Child Protection Officer	Marion McBride Martin McQuade Godfrey Young	028 82411480	
Western Health & S Services Londonderry		028 71314090	
Chairperson of Board of Governors	Mr B Ovens	07867 787907	benovens@hotmail.com
Education Authority 'Western Region' Tel: Numbers	Omagh Enniskillen	028 82411411 028 66343900	
Education Authority 'Western Region' Response Help Line	For children & young people's services	028 82411287	
Education Authority 'Western Region' Health & Safety Officer	Owen Doody	028 82411377	owen_doody@welbni.org
Education Authority 'Western Region' Transport Section	David Spence	028 8241263	david_spence@welbni.org
Education Authority 'Western Region' Maintenance Manager	Eugene Hillick Mark McAloon (E'kn)	028 82411391 028 66343900	mark.mcAloon@eani.org.uk
Education Authority 'Western Region' Communications Officer	Angela Devine	028 82411412	angela_devine@welbni.org
Education Authority 'Western Region' Staff Welfare Manager	Aoise Darragh	028 37512575 -	(Southern Board contact)
	Julie Ferry	028 82411278	(Human Resources)
Education Authority 'Western Region' Pupil Personal Development Services Team Assistant Advisory Officer	Shelia Gamble	028 71861116	North West Teachers' Centre
	Ann Hart-Henderson	028 82411215/1287	

Educational Psychologist	Mrs Helen Hannigan	028 82411454	
Education Welfare Officer, Enniskillen	Arlene Wright	028 66343900	
Local church or clergy	Rev Rowe Pastor N Johnston Pastor Dowds	028 8953 1210 07858 266640 07769 728115	

TELEPHONE TREE

