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St. Benedict's C of E VA

Junior School

Critical Incident Plan

Date policy last reviewed: 15th July 2026

Signed by:

PDRanger	Headteacher	Date:	15th July 2026
JBoughen-Hunt	Co-Chair of governors	Date:	15th July 2026

Contents:

Statement of intent

1. Legal framework
2. Definitions
3. Roles and responsibilities
4. Critical incident management team
5. Protective security and preparedness
6. Initial action
7. Emergency procedures
8. Emergencies during educational visits
9. Internal communications
10. After a critical incident
11. Post-incident support
12. Media relations
13. Handling complaints
14. Monitoring and review

Appendices

A. Initial Action Form

Statement of intent

St. Benedict's C of E VA Junior School recognises that whilst the safety of pupils, staff members and visitors on the school premises is paramount, it is not always under our control.

In an emergency, staff members will endeavour to take all reasonable actions in order to ensure the safety of all those on site.

The procedures in this policy aim to minimise disruption to the learning environment whilst ensuring the safety of all pupils, staff members and visitors, by responding to critical incidents as quickly and efficiently as possible.

Legal framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992
- The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
- Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974
- The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005
- Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Act 2025
- DfE 'Emergency planning and response for education, childcare and children's social care settings'
- DfE 'School and college security'
- DfE 'How Martyn's Law will affect education settings'

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies and documents:

- Health and Safety Policy
- Invacuation, Lockdown and Evacuation Policy
- Bomb Threat Policy
- Adverse Weather Policy
- Educational Visits and School Trips Policy
- Bereavement Policy
- First Aid Policy
- Complaints Procedures Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP)

1. Definitions

For the purpose of this policy, a "**critical incident**" is an emergency which affects pupils, staff, visitors or property and requires immediate responsive action which is beyond that reasonable expected from the school's own management team.

Critical incidents include, but are not limited to, the following:

- The death of a pupil, staff member or governor

- A serious incident involving a pupil or staff member on, or off, the school premises
- An incident of serious violent crime
- A violent intrusion onto the premises, e.g. a bomb alert
- Extensive damage to school property
- A fire, flood or explosion
- The effects of disasters in the wider community
- Incidents whilst on educational visits
- Epidemics
- Exposure to hazardous substances near, or on, the school premises

2. Roles and responsibilities

The headteacher is responsible for:

- The overall implementation of this policy and the Business Continuity Plan and ensuring all members of staff are aware of their responsibilities.
- Appointing designated staff members to the critical incident management team.
- Working alongside the critical incident management team to ensure that critical incidents are managed effectively.
- Ensuring that an appropriate ratio of first aiders to pupils is sustained at all times.
- Ensuring that an effective, critical incident management plan is in place.
- Ensuring that all staff members are aware of the school's critical incident management plan and the associated procedures.
- Reviewing the critical incident management plan at regular intervals, ensuring that it is kept up-to-date with developments at the school, such as changes to evacuation procedures.
- Ensuring that vital information is not lost in the event of a fire, flood or explosion, by keeping a copy of up-to-date pupil and personnel records off the school premises.
- Liaising with the press, or appointing a designated member of staff to do so.
- Reviewing allocations of responsibilities in light of staff absence.
- Compiling an emergency contact list and ensuring that all members of staff hold a copy of this.
- Informing parents and the school community about the critical incident.
- Maintaining the welfare of all staff, pupils and visitors.

- Ensuring the school has proportionate emergency preparedness and protective security arrangements in place.
- Ensuring the school meets any applicable duties under Martyn's Law, including appropriate training and preparedness.
- Ensuring arrangements are reviewed and improved based on incidents, near misses and drills.

All staff members are responsible for:

- Acting in accordance with this policy at all times.
- Effectively implementing the critical incident management plan, when necessary.
- Maintaining up-to-date records of critical incidents at the school.
- Maintaining their own records of events, as well as keeping copies of notes made by other colleagues.
- Ensuring that they effectively understand the school's critical incident management plan.
- Understanding how to effectively carry out the school's emergency evacuation procedures.
- Understanding their role in the execution of the school's emergency plans, including evacuation procedures and the critical incident management plan.
- Ensuring that pupils are aware of the school's emergency evacuation procedures.
- Ensuring that their own contact details are kept up-to-date on school records.
- Reporting and recording minor and critical incidents.

3. Critical incident management team

The headteacher will appoint five members of staff to form the school's critical incident management team. This team will be responsible for:

- Ensuring that parents are kept informed about the situation.
- Deciding when and how to re-open the school.
- Organising and providing support for staff, pupils and others who have been directly affected.
- Providing support for the families of those hurt or bereaved.
- Ensuring the school effectively cooperates and liaises with the relevant bodies during investigations into critical incidents.
- Dealing with continued interest from the media.
- Ensuring the appropriate attendance of school members at funerals.
- Organising memorial services, including the sending of flowers.

In the event of a critical incident, the critical incident management team will work alongside the headteacher in order to effectively fulfil their role, as outlined above.

Where possible, **the School Office** will be allocated to the critical incident management team and any necessary equipment and information will be stored here.

With prior agreement, **St. Benedict's Church or St. John's Infant School** will be used as a reserve off-site location for the critical incident management team when the on-site location is not usable.

The team will collate and retain any records regarding the planning of, and response to, critical incidents, including written records and any recordings made via CCTV.

The team will ensure that each member of staff involved in dealing with a critical incident has recorded all decisions that were made, any communication that was received and all tasks that were carried out.

The team will coordinate decision-making, actions, communications, liaison with emergency services, and recovery planning.

4. Protective security and preparedness

The school recognises that incidents may include deliberate threats, including security incidents and terrorism-related risk.

The school will take proportionate protective security measures to reduce the likelihood and impact of such incidents, including:

- Appropriate site access controls, visitor arrangements and supervision of entry points.
- Staff vigilance and clear reporting routes for suspicious behaviour or items.
- Maintaining secure boundaries, doors, gates and controlled movement around site.
- Clear procedures for invacuation, lockdown and evacuation, in accordance with the Invacuation, Lockdown and Evacuation Policy.
- Ensuring preparedness arrangements are reviewed following any incident, exercise, or changes to risk.

The school will ensure arrangements support compliance with the Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Act 2025, also known as Martyn's Law, including proportionate training and preparedness measures.

To ensure preparedness, the school will:

- Maintain appropriate training and awareness.
- Run periodic drills, including:
    - Fire evacuation.
    - Lockdown and invacuation.
    - Utilities failure response.

- IT outage continuity arrangements.

- Record drill outcomes, debrief actions, and update arrangements accordingly.

Training and exercise frequency will be proportionate to the school's risk profile and operational needs.

5. Initial action

Immediate action will be taken in order to safeguard pupils and staff, using the relevant emergency procedure signal to alert staff members.

The alarm will be raised by the first adult at the scene of the incident.

Members of the critical incident management team will ascertain the details of the incident.

If the incident involves a hostile act or suspected terrorism, police instructions will be followed and normal operations will not resume until authorised. The critical incident management team will ascertain whether immediate invacuation or evacuation is required.

All initial information regarding the incident will be logged using the Initial Action Form.

First aid will be administered by the first trained first aider at the scene of the incident.

All first aid and medical treatment will be administered and recorded in line with the school's First Aid Policy.

The emergency services will be contacted and the following information will be given:

- The emergency services required
- Exact location of incident
- Number of casualties
- Number of injuries
- Location and phone number of where the call is being made from
- Any hazards which the emergency services may encounter on site

Where possible, the school will remain open and normal routine will be maintained.

6. Emergency procedures

The school will prepare for emergencies on an ongoing basis which will include the following:

- Risk assessment
- Planning
- Training
- Exercises

- Reviewing

The school will consult members of staff, management boards and governors to gain their involvement and support for the emergency planning process.

All staff members and pupils will be aware of the school's emergency procedures, including those outlined in the school's Invacuation, Lockdown and Evacuation Policy.

The school's designated emergency assembly points will be clearly indicated and known by all staff members and pupils.

The school will carry out a practice drill of the school's evacuation procedure at least **once a term**, to ensure that pupils and staff members fully understand what is involved in the procedure, and that it is implemented effectively.

In the event of an evacuation, staff members and pupils will be alerted by **three sharp rings of the school bell**.

In the event of an external hazard, staff members will be signalled of the need for shelter by **the continuous sounding of the school bell,** indicating to staff that the school's invacuation procedure should be followed.

In the event of an intruder, staff members will be signalled to commence the lockdown procedure by **the continuous sounding of the school bell**.

All staff members will be aware of the evacuation routes and assembly points in the case of a bomb threat, as outlined in the school's Bomb Threat Policy.

In the event of severe weather, the procedures outlined in the school's Adverse Weather Policy will be followed.

All staff members will be aware of the school's designated first aiders and the locations of first aid boxes within the school.

In the event that first aid or medical treatment is necessary, the procedures outlined in the school's First Aid Policy will be followed.

Staff members will be aware of any Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEPs) in place.

All staff members will receive training regarding the school's emergency evacuation procedures, and will be aware of:

- The appropriate route to take.
- What assembly point to use in the event of different scenarios.
- Security arrangements that are in place, such as the locking of the school gates.
- Access arrangements for the emergency services.

During significant or complex incidents, the school may seek support from the DfE, in line with DfE emergency planning and response guidance.

The school will also liaise with:

- Police, fire and rescue, and ambulance services as required.

- The LA.
- Multi-agency partners as required, including safeguarding partners.

7. Emergencies during educational visits

All staff members will act in accordance with the Educational Visits and School Trips Policy, following the outlined procedures in the event of an emergency.

Critical incidents that occur on school trips will be managed in the same way as those that occur on the school premises.

The trip leader will be responsible for maintaining written records of any critical incidents that occur whilst on a trip, as well as the action which was taken and by whom.

The trip leader will be responsible for reporting the critical incident to the headteacher immediately.

Any critical incident that occurs on a school trip will be communicated to all staff members, ensuring that they are aware of any pupils who may suffer from shock.

8. Internal communications

To aid communication within the school community, the school will collate an emergency contacts information sheet, copies of which will be **kept in the school office**. This will include the following information:

- Pupils' emergency contact details
- Staff members' emergency contact details
- Contact details of members of the governing board
- Emergency contact details for the LA
- Phone numbers for relevant travel companies
- Phone numbers for regular supply staff
- Pupil and staff movement data, including class itinerary

The headteacher will ensure that this information is reviewed on a regular basis and is updated to reflect changes in staffing details.

The school's internal communication systems will be used to alert staff members to a critical incident in the first instance, without alarming pupils unnecessarily.

Staff members, pupils and parents will be informed of critical incidents in the most sensitive way possible.

The parents of pupils who are directly involved in the incident will be contacted immediately using the emergency contact details provided to the school.

Pupils will be informed of a critical incident in groups as small as practicable.

Parents of pupils not directly involved in the incident will be contacted quickly and efficiently, via Class Dojo, as soon as is reasonably practicable.

Members of the school's governing board will be informed about the critical incident as soon as possible, and will be briefed about speaking to the press.

During an emergency, staff members will use mobile phones to stay in contact with one another and communicate key messages.

Staff briefings will be conducted following the occurrence of a critical incident, in order to further investigate the event and provide staff members with any updates.

Weekly staff meetings will provide an opportunity for staff members to raise any concerns about the school, including those in relation to emergency procedures and critical incidents.

9. After a critical incident

Following the occurrence of a critical incident, the school's short-term aims will include the following:

- Contacting those directly involved
- Inform the governing board and the LA
- Appropriately debriefing the school community
- Attempting to maintain normal school routines
- Making appropriate plans for attendance at funerals and memorials
- Monitoring the wellbeing of staff and pupils, particularly those directly involved in the incident
- Expressing sympathy to the families of those involved
- Identifying vulnerable staff and pupils, ensuring they are aware of the support available to them

In the medium term, the school's aims will include the following:

- Making arrangements for pupils involved to return to school
- Arranging alternative teaching, where necessary
- Providing support to staff members and pupils affected
- Arranging consultations with educational psychologists, where necessary
- Clarifying support arrangements and referring pupils for individual help, if appropriate
- Keeping parents updated and informed

In the longer term, the school's aim will include the following:

- Introducing support systems to continuously monitor vulnerable pupils and staff members

- Discussing how to mark anniversaries
- Ensuring all staff members, including new staff, are aware of pupils affected by the incident
- Acting sensitively to pupils' needs
- Ensuring pupils and staff members know how to obtain further help, including via external support services

10.Post-incident support

Staff members will strive to create a welcoming atmosphere in which pupils can openly discuss life events, including when critical incidents occur.

Following a critical incident, staff members will consult with the parents of pupils involved regarding how best to support the pupil, ensuring that their needs are taken into account.

Counselling will be offered to pupils and staff who were involved in, or witnessed, a critical incident.

Topics including bereavement, stress and safety will be covered as part of the curriculum.

Pupils and staff will be provided with safe areas where they can take a timeout if necessary.

Absences will be authorised by the class teacher for pupils attending events following the incident, including funerals and counselling sessions.

Strategies will be implemented for managing any distress that could be caused by ongoing police enquiries, legal proceedings or media attention.

The critical incident management team will lead debriefing meetings for staff members, pupils and parents, as well as for the wider community where appropriate.

The need for individual or group support will be assessed by class teachers in the period following a critical incident.

The school will ensure the demands on pupils and staff, e.g. deadlines for coursework or additional duties, are appropriate or deferred/cancelled if necessary.

The school will consider alternative arrangements in line with the relevant guidance from the awarding bodies, STA or DfE should a pupil miss a statutory examination or assessment.

Arrangements will be made for a member of staff to visit those affected, whether at home or at hospital – consent will be sought from parents before visits take place.

Where necessary, the school will liaise with parents regarding a phased return to school for pupils involved in a critical incident.

Information regarding the support being accessed by staff members and pupils will be treated as personal data and processed in line with the school's Data Protection Policy, transferring information to external agencies where necessary.

Following and emergency situation, the school will work collaboratively with pupils, staff and parents who are anxious to reassure them and to respond to concerns.

The school will provide remote education to enable pupils to keep pace with their education when in-person attendance in school is not possible due to a critical incident or emergency. Remote education will be delivered in line with the school's Remote Education Policy and the school will take steps to ensure all pupils can access it and receive quality support.

More support following a critical incident can be accessed by contacting **contact details of support available**.

11. Media relations

All communication between the school and the media will be conducted in accordance with the school's Media Relations Policy.

Where possible, press interest will be managed by the LA's press office.

All information given to the media is done so through a single reliable source.

All statements will be agreed by the headteacher and critical incident management team before going to the press.

Pupils will not be named during communication with the press unless parental consent has been sought.

Personal information regarding staff members, pupils and visitors will be kept confidential and treated in accordance with the school's Data Protection Policy.

Details of the critical incident which may be harmful to investigations into the incident or which reveal personal information will be treated as confidential.

Staff members will not talk off the record to the media and will refer all enquiries to the headteacher, critical incident management team or designated staff member.

The school will strive to liaise and co-operate with the media by answering any queries, as appropriate.

All statements given to the press will be factual.

The school will aim to reassure the public and demonstrate control of the situation, as well as counter any dangerous rumours or gossip.

Child protection and safeguarding measures will be taken when reporting about pupils.

Parental permission will be sought prior to any press interviews with pupils.

Times of press releases will be pre-agreed in order to avoid continuous pressure.

Where appropriate, a pre-prepared statement containing basic information about the school and the school's procedures will be used.

The critical incident management team will ensure that any media access to the site, staff and pupils is controlled.

12. Handling complaints

St. Benedict's C of E VA Junior School recognises that the occurrence of a critical incident is a sensitive subject.

Complaints or concerns regarding the school's critical incident arrangements should be made in accordance with the school's Complaints Procedure Policy.

The school will continuously work to address and resolve concerns, ensuring that critical incidents are dealt with in line with the law, as well as in a sensitive and supportive manner.

13. Monitoring and review

This policy will be reviewed every two years by the headteacher and critical incident management team, with any changes made to the policy being communicated to all teaching staff and the governing board.

The next scheduled review date for this policy is **September 2028**.

Appendix A:

Initial Action Form

In the event of a critical incident, this form should be completed by whoever received the alert in order to gather as much information as possible.

Name of the person informing about the incident	
Emergency procedure carried out	
Alert raised by	
Details of the incident	
Number of people involved	
Details of staff members at the scene	
People who have been informed	
Exact location of the incident	
Number of casualties and injuries	

Details of any casualties and injuries	
Action taken so far	
Assistance needed	
Form completed by	
Job role	