



Pontypridd High School

Managing Critical Incidents and Lockdown Policy

*'Learning and achieving together'
'Dysgu a chyflawni gyda'n gilydd'*

Managing Critical Incidents and Lockdown Policy

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Member of staff responsible:	Headteacher
Committee Responsible:	Premises and Health and Safety

Signed :  Headteacher

Signed :  Chairperson of the Governing Body

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Section 1 : What is a 'Critical Incident' ?

A Critical Incident is defined as an emergency affecting pupils, personnel, or property, requiring immediate responsive action beyond that which could be reasonably expected from the school's own management team during the day to day running of the school.

It may involve:

- the death of a child, staff member or governor
- a serious accident involving children and/or school personnel on or off the premises
- Loss of water or other utilities
- significant damage to property (for example, fire, accidental damage)
- the effects of a disaster in the local / wider community
- incidents on educational visits
- public health incidents (for example, a significant infectious disease incident)
- severe weather (for example, extreme heat, flooding, storms or snow)
- the release of hazardous substances near or on the school site
- IT Systems being compromised as a result of a cyber-attack or significant information security breach
- a violent intrusion onto school premises (eg an armed intruder, a bomb alert or anti-social behaviour) which requires the school to go into Lockdown.

Everyone in a local school community is likely to be affected in large or small measure by any one or combination of the above incidents. Thinking through what you might need to do in such circumstances and having helpful information in an accessible place could make all the difference in successfully managing the situation. Focussed on the Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people remains of paramount importance.

Critical planning principles

The principles below apply to managing a wide range of incidents:

- Design the plan to suit your establishment
- It should be simple and straightforward to implement.
- It should be known by all those having identified responsibilities within it.
- It should be regularly reviewed, and critical information updated.
- It should be held in a duplicate copy off-site or otherwise accessible in the event of an emergency out of hours or one which incapacitates the school premises.

Critical incident planning

All schools should have critical incident / emergency plans in place. While it is not possible to plan for every critical incident, plans should be generic enough to cover a range of potential incidents, which may occur during or outside normal working hours, including weekends and holidays.

A good plan should cover:

- roles and responsibilities
- when and how to seek advice should it be needed
- details on the types of steps that might be taken in the event of a critical incident / emergency and what actions should be taken to enact them quickly
- how to ensure every student receives the quantity and quality of education and care to which they are normally entitled, including through remote means where appropriate
- support for the well-being of staff and students
- who should be informed (for example, the local authority)
- how changes will be communicated to emergency services, students, parents, carers and staff, with any timescales of returning to usual if possible
- how to respond if advice is not accepted

Our school plan gives consideration for WG guidance (Appendix 1) and RCT documentation.

It is important to involve staff in the planning process, to ensure that they are aware of and support the plan and are able to implement it in the event of an emergency. Schools should identify staff that are prepared to take on key roles in an emergency and should nominate one member of staff to take responsibility for updating and reviewing the plan once it is in place. This would normally be the head teacher or similarly senior member of staff.

The school has considered the various roles and responsibilities of staff and formed a Critical Incident management Team (CIMT).

Section 2 : PHS Critical Incident Management Team (CIMT)

Staff Name	School Role	CIMT Role	
Huw Cripps	Headteacher	A	CIMT leader
Kayleigh Oliver	Deputy Headteacher	B	CIMT leader (in absence of HT) Lines of Communication ALN link
Rhys Ivins	Assistant Headteacher	C	Assistant CIMT STEM block leader– liaise with CIMT and Site Manager
Claire Cook	Finance and Resources Manager	D	Link to LA and Emergency services Link to all Support staff to include canteen and cleaning services
Chris Evans	Site Manager	E	All security of buildings External areas with site team Contact with utility contractors
Nicki Pickens	Administrative lead	F	Lead on school context and all contact details Governing Body messaging Parent and carer messaging Critical Incident log
Owain Cooke	IT Network Manager	G	IT network provision CCTV
Tom Longden	Leader of Standards and school governor	H	Upper Block leader – liaise with CIMT and Site Manager Consortium post-16
Rebecca Enos	Leader of Learning and Teaching	I	Management of the incident in relation to classroom teaching during and after the incident EVOLVE emergency contact and school trips
Catherine Lee	Leader of Student wellbeing	J	Management of the incident in relation to all student wellbeing during and after the incident
Katie Pritchard	Leader of Alternative Curriculum	K	Management of the incident in relation to all AC students during and after the incident
Claire Finney	ALNCo	L	Management of the incident in relation to all ALN students during and after the incident
Irfan Ally	Senior Safeguarding Officer School Governor (Support staff)	M	Management of the incident in relation to all CP and safeguarding concerns during and after the incident
Heather Young	Exams officer	N	Management of the incident in relation to any examinations and related contingency plans
Abbie John	YEPS	O	Management of the incident in relation to all YEPS engagement and activities

Section 3 : Pontypridd High School Critical Incident Management Plan

Task	Whose Responsibility	When
Issues requiring preparation for any Critical Incident		
Form the Critical Incident Management Team (CIMT)	A / B	Prior to Critical Incident
Confirm all 'school context' information	A / F	Prior to Critical Incident
Agree all lines of communication	B	Prior to Critical Incident
Issues requiring an immediate response to the critical incident		
Ensure the safety of everyone on the school site On first receiving notification of the incident, the head teacher or designated senior staff member will need to make an immediate assessment. The following initial protocol should come into action:	A / B / C / E	Immediate
Gather information	A / B / C	Immediate
Contact necessary emergency support agencies	D	Immediate
Alert Headteacher; Headteacher to alert the LA.	B / D	Immediate
Activate the Critical Incident Management Team.	A	Immediate
Establish a base from which the CIMT can operate	A / B	Immediate
Start the Incident Log (Appendix 4)	F	Immediate
Carry out quick appreciation of immediate response required.	CIMT	Immediate
Contact families whose relatives (children and adults) are or may be involved	A / C	Immediate
Prepare general information for all students, staff, parents / carers and the media	B / F / I / K	Within first hour
Call a staff meeting to give information.	B / C	Within hours if practicable
Inform students in a sensitive way – small groups if appropriate.	B / C / J	Within hours if practicable
Arrange a debriefing meeting for staff involved in incident.	A / B	Before leaving school
Arrange a debriefing for pupils involved in the incident.	A / B / J	Before leaving school
Provide information for the media		
Issues that will need to be resolved as soon as possible		
'Stand-down' of critical incident	A / B	On advice of emergency services

Facilitate support for 'vulnerable' / all those directly involved in the incident	I / J / K / L / M	Within days
Provide a focus for expression of sympathy and grief if necessary	B / D	Within days
Make a provision for ongoing information	B / C / H / F	Within days
Acknowledge the consequences of the event on the school community. Provide opportunities for students and staff to express personal reactions	CIMT	Within days
Further considerations	CIMT	Within days
Issues that will need to be managed after the incident has passed		
Re-establishing normal routines	CIMT	As soon as possible
Decide/agree a range of response and support measures. These have potential to run for many weeks/months.	CIMT	As soon as possible
Reflect, review and evaluate response to incident	CIMT	As soon as possible
Complete a Critical Incident Evaluation report that includes feedback from all involved	A / B	Next Few Weeks

Section 4 : Lockdown procedures

What is meant by 'Lockdown' ?

Lockdown is the ability to quickly restrict access and egress to a school site or building (or part of) through physical measures in response to a threat, either external or internal.

The aim is to either prevent students, staff or visitors from moving into areas of danger or preventing/frustrating an attacker from accessing a site (or part of). Due to their nature, some school sites may not be able to physically achieve lockdown.

Lockdown 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 staff and pupils.

Examples of situations that may trigger a full or partial lockdown include:

- A reported incident/civil disturbance in the local community
- An intruder on the school site
- An intruder in the school building
- A warning being received regarding a risk locally, of air pollution (smoke plume, gas cloud etc.) or chemical, biological or radiological contaminants.
- A major fire in the vicinity of the school.
- Extreme weather conditions e.g. Met Office Red "Risk to Life" warning issued
- Instruction issued by the police or other emergency services

In addition schools should read and consider the Stay Safe principles published by the National Counter Terrorism Security Office (NaCTSO) that details the actions that should take in the event of a fire arms or weapons attack (Appendix 8)

This school plan will include procedures that can be followed in the following situations:

- Partial Lockdown
- Full Lockdown
- Sheltering spaces
- Weapon or Firearm attack
- Suspect Post or Parcels
- Suspicious Items
- Suspicious Vehicles
- Communication and Training
- Integrated security

Effective security plans are simple, clear and flexible, but must be compatible with any existing plans i.e. fire safety strategies.

Everyone must be clear about what they need to do in a particular incident.

General principles of our Lockdown plan and procedures

Our plan and procedures follows the general principles below:

- A senior member of staff is nominated as Lockdown Manager (LM) (plus deputies in their absence) to initiate, manage and conclude the lockdown.
- Assistant Lockdown Managers (ALM) will be appointed to supervise in specific areas of the school e.g. Heads of Faculty / Leaders of wellbeing
- A recognised signal, audible throughout the school is used to alert staff to the activation of the plan. This signal should only be used for this purpose.
- The creation of an action plan to be implemented in the event of a partial or full lockdown
- The use of the fire alarm should be avoided to prevent an incorrect response to an incident.
- Students / staff who are outside of the school buildings should be brought inside as quickly as possible.
- Those inside the school should remain in their classrooms or proceed directly to the nearest classroom.
- All external doors and, as necessary, windows are locked (depending on the circumstances, internal classroom doors may also need to be locked).
- Blinds closed and windows on internal doors covered.
- Once in lockdown mode, staff should notify the LM immediately of any students not accounted for and any additional students / staff in their classroom via the agreed communication channel.
- The school should establish communication with the Emergency Services as soon as possible
- Senior RCT Officers should be notified as soon as practical via Department of Director of Education and Children Services
- If it is necessary to evacuate the building, the fire alarm should sound.
- The school should arrange suitable alternative accommodation for students and staff in the event of the school being evacuated.
- Ensure procedures are in place for members of staff who do not have a regular office or classroom.
- Ensure catering, cleaning, breakfast club staff are included in the school lockdown plan.
- Establish an official lockdown termination announcement/signal so that all staff know that it is authentic, that is only used for this purpose.
- Specific arrangements should be made for students / staff with different needs (i.e. hearing/visual impairment or mobility needs).
- Areas in the school that cannot be effectively locked down should be identified and the lockdown procedures should include instructions on removing staff and pupils from these areas to an alternative place of safety (i.e. toilets/outbuildings).
- Geographical location –when considering likely response time of emergency services

Section 5 : PHS Lockdown plan and procedures

These procedures will provide our school with the ability to quickly restrict access and egress to the site or buildings through physical measures in response to a threat.

The aim of the lockdown procedure is to prevent people moving into the dangerous areas of the school or preventing/frustrating the attackers from accessing the site (or part of it). The initiating threat can be either internal or external to the school.

There are three probable threat scenarios that will require our school to go into lockdown:

- Threat from outside the school
- Threat inside the school
- Threat in the immediate vicinity of the school

A flow chart to outline the PHS lockdown plan is included as Appendix 11.

5.1 : Lockdown leadership and management

The Lockdown Manager is the Headteacher and in absence of Headteacher the Deputy Headteacher

The Assistant Lockdown Managers are:

- Assistant Headteacher
- Emerging Leaders
- Finance and resources manager
- Site manager

5.2 : 'Partial lockdown' plans and procedures

This may be as a result of

- a reported incident / civil disturbance in the local community with the potential to pose a risk to staff and students in the school.
- It may also be as a result of a warning being received regarding the risk of air pollution
- may also be a precautionary measure that puts the school in a state of readiness (whilst retaining a degree of normality) should the situation escalate.

Immediate action

How will the school notify staff that a lockdown is occurring?

- The lockdown alarm will sound which is 3 blasts of the school lesson changeover bell
- An alert will be sent to all staff by internal email
- Internal email and text message will be sent to all staff

- Heads of Faculty, Finance and Resources Manager, Administration Lead Officer, Heads of Wellbeing, ALENCo, Site manager, will communicate to all staff in their specified area.
- Two way radio communication exists between Site staff and Senior Leadership Team.
- Where appropriate staff will communicate verbally within their specified area.

How will the school inform the Emergency Services that a lockdown is occurring?

The Deputy Headteacher and / or Assistant Headteacher will contact 999 and pass on the relevant information:

- The name of our school and address
- nature of the emergency impacting on our school
- Contact details (name and phone number)
- More specific details as requested

How will the school inform the LA's Senior Management Team in Education & Children Services that a lockdown is occurring?

The LM will contact the Director of Education at RCT LA

Securing the school site

All outside activity must cease immediately on sound of the alarm (3 times in short succession) and staff and students return to buildings.

Access and exit points secured by Site management and leadership team

- Main Gate
- Upper block main entrance – reception and main foyer
- Upper block entrance – into Bytezone through doors next to Attendance office
- Upper block entrance – into Bytezone area through doors from basketball court
- Upper block entrance – into Bytezone area through doors by Café
- Lower block entrance – main doors into foyer
- Lower block entrance – rear doors at end of Technology suite of rooms
- Sports Hall – main entrance to foyer
- Canteen – main entrance from delivery bay

Notification by email to all staff that buildings have been secured

Message example – ‘ Upper Block secure : Lockdown in place

Communication by internal telephone contact

Once all buildings have been secured, the following must be obeyed by all persons inside buildings:

- All staff and students remain in the buildings and external doors and windows locked.
- Lockdown
- All staff and students move immediately to nearest safe room with as many people as possible.
- Lock and barricade door. Consider covering windows with blinds
- Turn off lights or maintain minimal lighting.
- Move away from windows and doors
- Turn mobile phones to silent
- Keep calm and quiet.
- Stay in room until all clear signalled by agreed method.
- Free movement may be permitted within the building dependent upon circumstances. This will be confirmed by the LM
- In the event of an air pollution issue, air vents, fans, heating and air conditioning systems should be closed or turned off.
- Use anything to hand to seal up all the cracks around doors and any vents into the room – you aim to minimise possible ingress of pollutants.

During the Lockdown period

Staff and students should remain in the school buildings and all doors leading outside should be locked and windows secured. No one should be allowed to enter or leave the building; however teaching and work can continue as usual.

The LM will make an informed decision as to whether students should remain in classrooms or be allowed to travel around the school.

Following guidance / directive from Emergency Services, the LM who will advise on the best course of action in respect of the prevailing threat. Students must not be released to parents / carers during a lockdown unless authorised by LM or emergency services.

Once all staff and pupils are safely inside, the LM and senior staff will conduct an ongoing and dynamic risk assessment based on advice from the Emergency Services.

Staff and students should remain in partial lockdown until it has been lifted by the LM / ALM or the emergency services.

If at any point during the lockdown there is a requirement to evacuate the school, this will be activated by the fire alarm. This will be 'one continuous alarm'.

5.3 : Full Lockdown plans and procedures

This signifies an immediate threat to the school or may be an escalation of a partial lockdown.

The aim of a full lockdown is for all students, staff and visitors to be located in a place of safety and the school and its rooms to appear empty.

In the event of a firearms or weapons attack, the Stay Safe guidance at Appendix 12 should be followed.

Immediate action

- The school is alerted to the activation of the plan by 'three sounds of the alarm'
- The LM will notify the Emergency services
- The LM will contact Senior RCT Officers
- All outside activity will stop immediately, students and staff returning to buildings.
- All staff will move students promptly to classrooms
- Support staff (administrative, catering, cleaners) will move promptly to their work areas
- External doors will be locked and classroom doors also locked or barricaded with available classroom / office furniture if doors cannot be locked.
- Windows should be locked and blinds drawn so an intruder cannot see in.
- Staff should instruct students to sit quietly out of sight and where possible in a location that would protect them from gunfire (Consider locations behind substantial brickwork or heavy reinforced walls).
- Lights, smartboards and computer monitors should be turned off.
- Mobile phones turned off or onto silent mode so they cannot give away any individual position.
- As soon as possible a register will be taken of all students / staff in each classroom / office.
- Those present and absent communicated to the Deputy Headteacher office

Once activated the LM will instruct staff to await further instructions from the Emergency Services who will advise on the best course of action in respect of the prevailing threat.

Staff and students should remain in lockdown until it has been lifted by the school's LM / ALM or the emergency services. **Students must not be released to parents / carers unless authorised by the Lockdown Manager (LM) or emergency services.**

If at any point during the lockdown there is a requirement to evacuate the school, this should be activated by one sound of the fire alarm.

5.4 : Guidance for Communication during a lockdown

Internal Communication

During the lockdown, staff will keep agreed lines of communication open, but should not make unnecessary calls to the school reception / switchboard as this could delay more important communication.

Staff should use more discreet communication channels such as:

- school email account through PC, laptop, phone and await further instruction.
- using text messages as appropriate
- using text messaging
- staff avoiding the use of the internal telephone system as this should be kept clear for communication with emergency services

Communication with media outlets

During the lockdown, only the LM should communicate details of the threat to the emergency services and the Local Authority. This will avoid duplication and contradictory information.

Communication with the Local Authority

The school working in partnership with the LA and Media team will provide parents and carers, the press and others with timely and accurate information until the lockdown and subsequent debrief is completed.

Communication with parents and carers

Communication with parents and carers will provide factual information to reassure them about their child's welfare and that everything will be done to ensure their children's safety. The school will consider producing a pre-recorded voice message to inform callers that the school is in lockdown and request that parents and carers do not come to the school as students will not be released until the emergency services have declared the lockdown over. This message should also contain the details of alternative numbers parents, carers and others should call for information and updates. This will most likely be a number linked to the LA.

Communication with social media

Consideration will be given as to whether other means of communication including social media are appropriate at this time. The school will place information on the school website as appropriate and able to do so.

Communication with Emergency Services

Lines of communication with Emergency Services will be open in order to receive the best advice as a situation unfolds. Such services may or may not be on the school site at different points in the lockdown situation. It is recognised that the school site may or may not be cordoned off by Emergency Services depending on the severity of the incident that has triggered the lockdown.

In the event of a prolonged lockdown or more severe scenario, the school will work with emergency services, the LA and voluntary sector organisations to co-ordinate

practical and emotional support to those affected by any emergency. This response will be co-ordinated via RCT Officers.

The school will consider a meeting space outside of the school for family and friends friend's if the school site is cordoned off.

5.5 : Lockdown management for Suspect / Suspicious devices

a). Suspect Post or Parcels

If a suspect package / envelope is discovered then staff should proceed as follows:

- do not open the envelope or package
- leave it and evacuate the room and keep others from entering
- notify a member of the Senior Leadership Team who will then contact the police

Packages that are opened and found to contain suspicious material should be contained by staff as follows:

- close off the room (doors and windows), do not allow anyone other than emergency services personnel to enter
- do not clean up suspicious material
- do not touch your eyes, nose or any part of your body
- wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water
- if clothing is contaminated do not brush of
- if possible, close down the buildings heating / air conditioning / ventilation system
- make a list of all people who have had actual contact with the powder (for investigation authorities)
- notify a member of the Senior Leadership Team

b). Suspicious Item

If a suspicious item has been discovered, that is one which is out of place, a bag, a back pack or suitcase in an unusual place, then staff should seek to identify the owner of the unattended item. If no owner is identified, then the **HOT** principles should be applied.

Hidden – i.e. placed where not readily observed or noticed as unusual

Obviously – suspicious by its physical appearance

Typical – not typical of what you would expect to find in that environment

These items may have external wiring, visible batteries, switches, timers, circuit boards, secured by plastic adhesive tape, annotations on it, modified wooden or plastic boxes, contain powders or putty like substance, carefully wrapped plastic bags.

If deemed suspicious, staff should contact a member of the Senior Leadership Team who will then call the emergency services and ensure all staff and students are moved away from the immediate vicinity. This should be at least 1000m away from the item.

c). Bomb threat

- The initial plan in relation to a bomb threat is for all staff to move to the fire assembly point on the Tennis Courts to the rear of the Upper Block
- This assembly point could be changed to other named locations depending on the nature of the threat. Fire Marshals will direct students and staff to the correct location if it is different.
- The Site management Team will ensure all gates are unlocked to make movement of students, staff and vehicles easier, in particular emergency vehicles.

d). Suspicious Vehicles

Staff should report to a member of the LT any vehicle that has:

- either entered the school grounds / parked near the school and deemed to be suspicious
- parked in a location but looks out of place or seems to have been at the location for a long time.

The school will initially try to identify the owner or driver of the vehicle and if this cannot be achieved then they will call the emergency services and provide the police with all available details.

If the situation is judged to be a 'critical' one with regard to a suspicious vehicle(s), an exclusion zone will be established. This zone should be 200m minimum for a car and for a van it should be a minimum of 400m.

5.6 : Training

Due to the fast moving nature of incidents that could trigger a lockdown, it is important that staff are able to act quickly and decisively to protect themselves, students and visitors.

All staff are fully aware and trained in the implementation of this lockdown plan and comply with all security arrangements. As appropriate for their age and cognitive ability, students will be made aware of the plan.

Parents and carers will be informed that the school has a lockdown plan and that it will be regularly tested. However, for obvious reasons it is not advisable to share the contents of the plan.

At least once during each school year (September to July) the school will:

- Conduct table top exercises with the School's Senior Management Team to test the procedures
- Practice lockdown arrangements with all staff and students against various scenarios

- Review the accuracy of information that informs people of these lockdown arrangements

5.7 : Post Incident

The LM will arrange a debrief for staff, students, parents / carers, LA Officers and others as soon after the incident as is reasonable. The aim of the debrief is to measure the effectiveness of the way the lockdown was initiated and carried out. It will identify any weaknesses or gaps in the effectiveness of the school's planning and operation and also what worked well.

These should be recorded, and the school's procedures amended as appropriate.

5.8 : Monitoring

It is recognised that no amount of school planning guidance can cover every possible scenario. However, with effective planning and communication everyone will be prepared as best as can be expected should a lockdown situation occur. The more planning, preparation and practice that has taken place, the greater the chance there will be less panic and confusion, enabling staff to protect the children in their care to the best of their abilities.

Appendix 1 : Welsh Government : Emergency planning and response guidance for schools (December, 2022)

Overview

Every emergency is different. However, in all cases, educational and well-being impacts should be considered when taking any emergency and risk management actions.

The extent of any disruption to education should be kept to a minimum, including maximising the number of students in face-to-face provision, in order to avoid longer term impacts. Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children remains of paramount importance.

Schools are required to communicate details of temporary local school closures or incidents to their local authority director of education. Local authorities are responsible for informing the Welsh Government of any temporary local closures.

Emergency planning principles

All schools should have emergency plans in place detailing actions to be taken in the event of an emergency. The aim of an emergency plan is to help setting leaders and staff respond effectively to an emergency at the setting, or on a visit or outing, while continuing to prioritise and maximise face-to-face learning, development and care, where possible. While it is not possible to plan for every emergency, emergency plans should be generic enough to cover a range of potential incidents, which may occur during or outside normal working hours, including weekends and holidays.

These incidents include:

- public health incidents (for example, a significant infectious disease incident)
- severe weather (for example, extreme heat, flooding, storms or snow)
- serious injury to a child, learner, student or member of staff (for example, transport accident)
- significant damage to property (for example, fire, accidental damage)
- criminal activity (for example, bomb threat, anti-social or threatening attack, intruder, cyber security attack)
- the effects of a disaster in the local community
- loss of water or utilities

A good plan should cover:

- roles and responsibilities
- when and how to seek advice should it be needed
- details on the types of steps that might be taken in the event of an emergency and what actions should be taken to enact them quickly
- how to ensure every child, learner or student receives the quantity and quality of education and care to which they are normally entitled, including through remote means where appropriate

- support for the well-being of staff, children, learners and students
- who should be informed (for example, the local authority, insurers, landlords, CIW)
- how changes will be communicated to children, learners, students, parents, carers and staff, with any timescales of returning to usual if possible
- how to respond if advice is not accepted

The Critical Incident / Emergency planning process

The planning process should consider different critical incidents / emergencies such as:

a). Significant public health incidents

A single suspected outbreak or incident of infectious disease will not normally constitute an emergency. Most infectious diseases in education can be managed by following Public Health Wales' **Infection Prevention & Control: Guidance for Childcare and Educational Settings**. Additional information can also be found in NHS Wales' **The Communicable Disease Outbreak Plan for Wales**.

In large-scale public health incidents where decisions about actions to take in education settings are made at a national level, the Welsh Government will work with NHS Wales, Public Health Wales, the Chief Medical Officer, the Chief Scientific Officer and many other Government departments, as well as local authorities and their public health directors to provide the best possible advice and support to schools.

b). Severe weather

During severe weather conditions (for example, flooding, storms, snow or heatwave), the Welsh Government's default position is that schools should be kept open for as many children, learners and students as possible. However, it might be necessary to close temporarily due to inaccessibility or risk of injury. '**Opening schools in extreme bad weather**' gives headteachers practical advice about what to consider if faced with having to decide whether to keep a school open in periods of extreme bad weather. It includes generic risk assessment material which can be adapted to suit every school's circumstances.

Where schools are temporarily closed during severe weather, you should consider providing remote education for the duration of the closure in line with learning continuity guidance. Providing remote education does not change the need to remain open or to reopen as soon as possible provided that it is safe to do so.

If flooding or severe weather has significantly impacted the setting and additional support is required, the local authority will be able to provide assistance to get the setting reopened as quickly and safely as possible. It is important to reopen as soon as possible provided it is safe to do so.

c). Security-related incidents in schools

Responsibility for the health and safety of learners lies with the governing body of the school, either as the employer of staff or because it controls the premises (or both).

Learners are protected by the duties imposed under the Health and Safety Act because they are affected by an employer's undertaking or are using school premises. The legislation requires employers to assess and manage risk and is usually enforced by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) in respect of schools.

Schools and local authorities have a statutory duty to ensure effective safeguarding of their learners, which includes online safety. Local authorities should consider cyber security, alongside their safeguarding obligations, as part of the Education Act 1996 and the UK Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015. Schools and local authorities should have appropriate cyber policies and incident management plans in place, developed alongside their safeguarding and security policies. Any **cyber security incidents** should be managed in accordance with the latest **advice and guidance** from the National Cyber Security Centre.

Plan to Prepare: Prepare to Protect also provides support to evaluate and manage risk posed by terrorism.

Prioritising places

If, in exceptional circumstances, there is a need to temporarily prioritise who attends within the school due to high levels of workforce absence (for example, where a setting is unable to operate at full capacity), priority should be given to vulnerable children and young people (see 'Annex A: Vulnerable children and young people') and children of critical workers (see 'Annex B: Critical workers'). Remaining spaces can be filled by children outside of these priority groups.

Exceptional circumstances may include:

- a local authority or Government enforced closure in the local or national interest – this does not include bank holidays, but could include widespread illness within the school community resulting in a full closure or safe staffing levels unable to be achieved
- short-term building closure because of safety issues (for example, heating failure, issues with power supply, minor fire or flood)
- long-term building closure because of major safety issues (for example, structure of the building, major fire or flood)

Recording attendance during an emergency

Schools should keep a record of attendance and families should notify their school if their child is unable to attend and explain the reason for this to enable the school to record attendance correctly.

Attendance guidance is available on the Welsh Government's website and '**Guidance on school attendance codes**' sets out the list of attendance codes for use in all schools in Wales.

Vulnerable children and young people

For children and young people who require additional support (for example, learners with special educational needs (SEN), additional learning needs (ALN) or disabilities), schools should continue to work with the local authority, as well as with parents and carers, to decide how best to continue supporting these children to stay healthy.

In all circumstances, schools and local authorities should work with the family to reassure the family of the safety measures in place with a view to supporting their return to school. In all circumstances, it is vital the school continues to engage regularly with the learner remotely.

Safeguarding

Every local authority in Wales must have a single point of contact for those working with children to raise concerns about a child at risk. Everyone working in a school should be familiar with the local authority contact and the details of the designated safeguarding person (DSP) within their setting to raise such a concern.

Every school must ensure that there is a safeguarding policy that clearly sets out the contact details for the local authority first point of contact. This policy should be readily available to all staff and is effective practice for all education settings.

Well-being and support

The Welsh Government has published **statutory guidance** for maintained education providers on supporting the mental health and well-being needs of learners, students and staff.

There is also additional support to accompany and support learners, students and staff to implement the whole-school approach framework:

- Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) in-reach support via health boards provides supervision and guidance to school staff on issues that learners and students present
- additional counselling provision is available for children and young people, as well as staff
- training for school staff to utilise interventions to support children and young people
- additional funding for schools to access therapeutic interventions
- online resources for learners, students and staff hosted on Hwb
- **young person's mental health toolkit**

- guidance for professionals and schools on **responding to issues of self-harm and thoughts of suicide in young people**
- CALL 24-hour telephone and text message **helpline**

Examination and assessment disruption

Should there be a substantial period of national disruption to face-to-face teaching and learning, or a public health situation that prevents the running of the full examination series, the Welsh Government will work with Qualifications Wales and WJEC to plan for scenarios where it is not possible to rely on a full examination series to award grades.

An **Exam System Contingency Plan** is available to deal with any major disruption that may affect examination candidates and should there be a need to implement alternative assessment arrangements.

In the event of significant disruption, further advice and support will also be available from the **WJEC** and **Qualifications Wales**.

Additional learning needs (ALN)

Statutory guidance on '**Supporting learners with healthcare needs**' requires local authorities and schools in Wales to have a healthcare needs policy in place which should seek to ensure that learners with any medical condition are properly supported. Schools should continue to consult parents and carers about specific support needs and use their discretion flexibly in agreeing the way forward for specific learners.

We would encourage a practical and flexible approach to ensure individual needs are met. This should be considered as part of any risk assessment. For example, timetabling and scheduling one-to-one support over a longer cycle, in order to maintain overall levels of support while minimising close interactions between individuals, may be appropriate. While schools are not advised to maintain contact groups, we acknowledge that some schools may wish to tailor provision for some learners with ALN as a result of specific health needs identified as part of the risk assessment process.

Learning continuity

During periods of disruption, it is critical that the learning and well-being of all children in our schools in Wales is maintained. In order to ensure that learning continuity is planned for, and that the impact of any disruption to the learning of children and young people is mitigated, all schools in Wales should set out their contingencies for learning continuity. This is included as Appendix

Significant public health incidents

A single suspected outbreak or incident of infectious disease will not normally constitute an emergency.

In Wales, registered medical practitioners have a statutory duty to notify their local authority or Public Health Wales teams of suspected cases of certain (notifiable) infectious diseases. Schools will be contacted if there are actions required within the school as part of public health management.

However, schools should have an emergency plan in place to cover significant public health incidents. The plan should include a range of steps that might be taken in the event of a significant public health incident, such as:

- when it would be appropriate to seek specialist advice from public health advisors and the local authority health protection team in line with the Public Health Wales' **Infection Prevention & Control: Guidance for Childcare and Educational Settings**
- the use of Public Health Wales' **checklist of measures to use during an outbreak**
- the procedures that staff should follow in recording an outbreak and notifying relevant bodies such as CIW

In large-scale public health incidents where decisions about actions to take in childcare settings are made at a national level, the Welsh Government will work with NHS Wales, Public Health Wales, the Chief Medical Officer, the Chief Scientific Officer and many other Government departments, as well as local authorities and their public health directors to provide the best possible advice and support to childcare settings.

Supporting your workforce and students through an emergency

Employers have a **general legal responsibility** to maintain the health and safety and welfare of workers, and others attending their premises.

Workplace risk assessments should also consider risks to staff in the school with due regard to vulnerable members of staff as well as new or expectant mothers. The defined vulnerable groups are:

i). vulnerable children and young people

A wide definition of vulnerable and vulnerability includes: disadvantaged learners was adopted during the COVID-19 emergency response. It includes, but is not limited to, learners who are in one or more of the following groups:

- learners with special educational needs (SEN) or additional learning needs (ALN)
- learners from minority ethnic groups who have English or Welsh as an additional language (EAL/WAL)
- care-experienced children, including looked after children

- learners educated other than at school (EOTAS)
- children of refugees and asylum seekers
- Gypsy, Roma and Traveller children
- learners eligible for free school meals (eFSM)
- young carers
- children at risk of harm, abuse or neglect

This list is not exhaustive and not all learners from these groups will face barriers to learning or be vulnerable to underachieving. Learners from these groups may face a range of barriers to achieving their potential and will, therefore, require different solutions and support targeted towards meeting each of their individual needs. In addition, learners may belong to several of the above groups at the same time, depending on their individual circumstances.

Learners not in these groups may be considered vulnerable or disadvantaged, including specifically as a result of COVID-19. For example, some learners who would not have been considered vulnerable or disadvantaged pre-COVID-19 may require additional support when they return to school because of their experience during lockdowns.

Learners educated through the medium of Welsh from homes where Welsh is not spoken may also require additional support, especially where they also face other barriers to learning. This may also be the case for those learners where English or Welsh is not their first language.

ii). Critical workers

Schools should seek to maximise the number of learners who are in face-to-face provision during an emergency. If the impact of an emergency means that not everyone can attend face-to-face provision, parents and carers should be informed as part of emergency communications of the impact. Communications should set out the groups that are prioritised for face-to-face provision and should invite parents and carers to notify the setting if they meet one of the critical worker categories.

Parents and carers whose work is critical to an emergency response include those who work in health and social care and in other key sectors outlined in the following sections. If exceptional circumstances mean that attendance is temporarily limited, children with at least one parent or carer who is a critical worker can go to their setting if required, but parents and carers should keep their children at home if they can. Critical workers relate to:

iii). Health and social care

This includes, but is not limited to:

- doctors
- nurses
- midwives
- paramedics
- social workers
- care workers
- other frontline health and social care staff, including volunteers

- support and specialist staff required to maintain the UK's health and social care sector
- those working as part of the health and social care supply chain, including producers and distributors of medicines and medical and personal protective equipment

iv). Education and childcare

This includes:

- childcare
- support and teaching staff
- social workers
- specialist education professionals who must remain active during an emergency response to deliver this approach

v). Key public services

This includes:

- those essential to the running of the justice system
- religious staff
- charities and workers delivering key frontline services
- those responsible for the management of the deceased
- journalists and broadcasters who are providing public service broadcasting

vi). Local and national government

This only includes those administrative occupations essential to the effective delivery of:

- an emergency response
- essential public services, such as the payment of benefits including in government agencies and arm's length bodies (ALB)

vii). Food and other necessary goods

This includes those involved in food:

- production
- processing
- distribution
- sale and delivery
- those essential to the provision of other key goods (for example, hygienic and veterinary medicines)

viii). Public safety and national security

This includes:

- police and support staff
- Ministry of Defence civilians
- contractor and armed forces personnel (those critical to the delivery of key defence and national security outputs and essential to an emergency response)
- fire and rescue service employees (including support staff)
- National Crime Agency staff
- those maintaining border security, prison and probation staff and other national security roles, including those overseas

ix). Transport

This includes:

- those who will keep the air, water, road and rail passenger and freight transport modes operating during an emergency response
- those working on transport systems through which supply chains pass

x). Utilities, communication and financial services

This includes:

- staff needed for essential financial services provision (including but not limited to workers in banks, building societies and financial market infrastructure)
- the oil, gas, electricity and water sectors (including sewerage)
- information technology and data infrastructure sector and primary industry supplies to continue during an emergency response
- key staff working in the civil nuclear, chemicals, telecommunications (including but not limited to network operations, field engineering, call centre staff, IT and data infrastructure, 999 and 111 critical services)
- postal services and delivery
- payments providers
- waste disposal sectors

Appendix 2 : What to include in a Critical Incident plan

This Pontypridd High School policy deals with Critical Incident Management in the following phases:

- a). Preparedness
- b). Dealing with critical incidents

A : Preparedness

Identify a Critical Incident Management Team (CIMT)

It is important that individuals understand their role within the Critical Incident Management Plan. There are a number of specific responsibilities, which need to be identified and assigned to individuals. Individual responsibilities include:

- A person to lead the Critical Incident Management Team and liaise with the Local Authority Critical Incident Team. This could be the head teacher but should be someone at a senior level within the school.
- The physical and emotional welfare of pupils and staff.
- Communications with pupils, parents, governors, Local Authority, and external media.
- Media management – this can be greatly supported by the LA's media team.
- Resources.

This team will be expected to take a lead in an emergency. The structure of this team should be as close to the normal management structure as possible. Confusion can arise during a crisis when new structures are put in place outside the normal recognised systems of management. Within this team specific roles need to be allocated. The team may, however, consist of non-teaching staff (administrative, estate/site managers) as well as governors if it is felt appropriate and where individuals have specific skills and experience which will support the situation.

Remember, when identifying a CIMT, the school should take into consideration that the Headteacher may not always be present and available. Members of the team need to be kept fully aware of who the other team members are and how to contact them – reserves should also be considered. In preparing an emergency plan, it may be useful for the identified team to brainstorm different scenarios and circumstances that will inform the plan to enable as many different eventualities as possible to be planned for.

Ensure that the Critical Incident Management Team is known to all staff and Governors

Communicating details about the Critical Incident

There is great value in establishing a communication system that informs everyone about the incident and resulting actions / expectations.

This will include a designated person on the CIMT informing staff, governors and parents, carers, staff, governing body to contact an agreed number of colleagues with the key facts of the situations.

The key thing is that everyone is made aware what system is being used and how it will be managed in the event of an incident and that this is documented in the school's plan.

It is the responsibility of the Communications' lead officer of the CIMT to ensure details are accurate and available for:

- Students, staff emergency contacts (this would require periodic updating as rolls change over the course of the school year)
- LA emergency contact numbers
- Governors' contact details
- Phone numbers for bus/coach companies
- Emergency supply/support details, eg regular supply teachers, other relief staff, telephone numbers of other local schools
- Pupil/staff movement data, eg timetables, morning/afternoon registration data, etc

Communicating specific details about the critical incident

It is important to establish mechanisms for informing staff and, where necessary, students and parents / carers. This could be through morning briefings, or a dedicated messaging system. It is also important to debrief all staff involved at the end of each working day/shift. Ensure that information is recorded and shared. Particular issues you will wish to consider are:

- How members of staff can be alerted in the first instance without alarming pupils and parents/carers unnecessarily.
- ID for Headteacher/Senior Management Team - visitors to site may not be familiar with all senior staff or the layout of the building.
- The level of confidentiality that will need to be maintained by staff to ensure that correct and consistent messaging is released from the school.

Communications with local media

- A positive relationship will be helpful in the event of bad news since your contacts will then know that you will share information when you have it and be direct in the messages you need to get across.
- If a phone call is received from the media, or they arrive at school, seek advice and help from the RCT Media and Marketing team. If necessary, you will be allocated a member of the Media Team who will be a key member of the RCT Critical Incident Team in support of the school.

Gathering information

Establish a mechanism for communicating to/alerting CIMT and key personnel (including all staff, students).

- Contact lists/cascade systems
- Contact/rendezvous points
- Emergency assembly areas
- Include out of hours numbers in your system
- A resource kit should be prepared in advance and maintained in a “grab pack” for immediate use e.g. copy of plans, site plans, contact lists (staff, governors, pupils), logs, emergency contact card, stationery etc.

Ensure all communication systems and procedures are in place, known to key staff and kept up to date. They should be included in the off-site copy of the emergency plan.

Remember, some incidents may run for days so plan for standby and roster arrangements. Carry out a simulation exercise to explore how a critical incident may unravel. Identify as part of the SDP any additional needs for training. **Revise plan as necessary**

Information and Supporting evidence

Up-to-date records of personnel/pupils/students and the premises will be essential in hard copy and electronic form. A second copy of these and the school’s Critical Incident Management Plan should always be kept securely and stored appropriately off the premises by the Headteacher and/or Deputy Headteacher in order that vital information is not lost in the event of an incident that renders the school premises inaccessible, such as a fire. It is particularly important for this list to be kept off the premises with any other important telephone numbers added in case a critical incident occurs out of school hours. This list should be updated periodically.

Record all actions taken using a Critical Incident Log, since information may be required a long way into the future should there be a legal case to pursue. Maintain your own records of events as well as keeping file copies of other service notes of the progress of action. Immediate witness accounts should be kept securely for police evidence, if required.

B. Dealing with Critical Incidents / Emergencies

Contact the Local Authority

In the event of an emergency affecting the school, the Headteacher or designated person should, at the earliest possible opportunity email the dedicated email contact in the LA.

The Local Authority will be in a position to provide the school with a range of assistance through mobilising key service and support functions. Upon being notified of an incident via the emergency email trigger, the following actions will be undertaken by the RCT Critical Incident Team, under the direction of the **Lead Officer**, who will be a senior officer from within the Education and Children’s

Services Department and who will be appointed by the Director of Education and Children's Services:

The school will receive an immediate response from a senior officer from the LA who will discuss the incident and if necessary, immediately initiate the RCT Critical Incident Protocol.

This will include the 'appointment' of a RCT Lead Officer who will work with the CIMT . This will most likely include all or some of the following actions

- Decide on necessary composition of CCC CIT. To include at the outset Principal ESA, Senior Health and Safety Officer, representative from Media Team, other senior officers as deemed necessary by the nature of the incident. Other members added as necessary. This could take place over subsequent days and weeks.
- Liaise with and provide updates to Marketing and Media
- Contact Legal Services for advice
- Liaise with Emergency Services if necessary (could be via school HT)
- Contact appropriate Chair of Governors
- Liaise with other services e.g. gas services, electricity services, water, CCC Property Services
- Provide regular updates to the Chief Executive, Councillors, legal representatives, press office and family members etc, in collaboration with the school.
- Lead officer or a senior officer appointed by the Lead officer will become part of the school's CIMT and co-ordinate the Council's support for the school throughout the period of the incident.

Base for the critical incident management team

It will be important to identify a base from which the Critical Incident Management Team could operate. Whilst many schools will not have space to dedicate to the establishment of an emergency base, it would be valuable to identify the place in school which would be used for this purpose, if required, and ensure that all key equipment and information sources are there. This may be the Headteacher's office, but it would be helpful to identify, if possible, a second location on site if the first location is not usable for any reason.

Schools should also consider having a reserve off-site location as the base for the team. This may be a neighbouring school or council premises or facilities such as the village hall, which could be used with prior agreement. Whilst such a location is not essential, it is desirable and may be particularly helpful in the case of a major incident on the school site itself. The LA's Critical Incident Team will be able to arrange temporary Council accommodation, if needed, during an emergency.

Critical incident record keeping

Any emergency affecting a school may afterwards become the subject of a detailed inquiry. It is vital that accurate and contemporaneous written records are kept, and that no piece of information about either the planning or the response to the incident

is lost. Records may also be in the form of a recording made via a CCTV camera, a telephone or on an answer machine. The records should be retained after the incident for future reference.

Each member of staff involved in dealing with the emergency should log decisions made, telephone calls made and received and tasks carried out. In an emergency, things happen very quickly, and it is unlikely that you will remember all the people you have spoken to and actions you have taken unless you write everything down. It is good practice to identify a member of staff to act as the Single Point of Contact (SPOC) and another as the 'Incident recorder' whose role it is to complete and maintain the Critical Incident Log (Appendix x). The SPOC and the 'IR' could be the same person, depending on the complexity of the emergency.

How to write the log:

- Note all relevant facts in chronological order
- Stick to the FACTS - do not include any assumptions (if you are noting down assumptions to show your reasoning for making a decision, make this clear)
- If you make a mistake, cross it out with a single line so that what is underneath is still visible, and initial it
- Do not leave blank spaces - or if you do, rule them out with a line
- Do not overwrite – if you make a mistake, cross it out, initial it and start again
- Do not leave large blank spaces between words or between entries
- Do not use correction fluid
- Unused space after the end of a series of entries should be ruled through, then signed in full, dated and timed
- Avoid approximations and abbreviations

Emergencies during educational visits

The following documentation is required for all visits to be approved by senior leaders. This should be completed on **EVOLVE** On-Line Visit Form for category 2 and 3 visits (final approval by SVS Visit Advisor):

- A visit itinerary/programme
- Appropriate Risk Assessments
- Supervising Adults
- Emergency contact details

On the visit, the visit leader should:

- carry a visit leader emergency action card.
- should take charge of an incident until relieved by the emergency services or by a senior member of staff. In the event that the visit leader is incapacitated, all members of the visit leadership team should have the competence to take charge and to initiate the establishment emergency plan.
- The designated emergency contact will carry an emergency contact action card.

- The designated emergency contact (a member of the senior leadership team) will provide an emergency contact for the group (this needs to be available after hours for evening activities and 24 hours for residential visits).

The school contact must have, readily available, written or online accessible details of the visit, including a list of all involved, contact arrangements with the group, and day and night contact details for parents and staff next-of-kin. On residential or after-hours visits, the emergency contact should have access to this information at home.

Make sure that arrangements will work after hours, at weekends and during the school holidays if visits are taking place at these times.

Post critical incident care and support

a). For Staff

Anxiety and the urgent pressure of events may induce stress amongst staff. The Critical Incident Management Team needs to think about how to support individuals in the aftermath of the events. The RCT Educational and Child Psychology Service (ECPS) can provide advice and support to school's senior leadership teams to mitigate the emotional and psychological impact of critical incidents on staff (performance and) wellbeing. This can also include supporting the Headteacher to lead the school's recovery. Where necessary as dictated by the nature of the incident, the RCT Critical Incident Team will always include representation from the ECPS and key professionals will be made available to the school.

b). For students

Those more likely to be affected are those whose lives were most at risk during the incident; those who were close to anyone whose life is lost during the incident, those who witnessed tragic or frightening events or their immediate aftermath; and those who have themselves experienced traumatic events in the past or whose support networks are less robust. Children's Services can assist through the ECPS which provides Critical Incident support. If the nature of the critical incident requires it, a senior member of the ECP team will be allocated to the RCT Critical Incident Team and work alongside the school to provide whatever support is deemed necessary.

c). For parents / carers and visitors

When parents/carers hear of a problem, they will naturally come to the school for information. You may need to identify a space where parents/carers can be seen in groups or on an individual basis where concerning or tragic news can be shared in a considerate way. A staff member or trusted adult from the school community may need to be on hand to receive visitors and deal sensitively with their enquiries. This can be more difficult in situations where the police limit the information that can be shared; advice can be obtained from the Media Team and the Education and Child Psychology Service can help devise simple scripts to provide information that can be shared. It can be very difficult to contain events which are often shared quickly through social media. It will be important to have a clear communication route to share accurate and appropriate information as advised by other specialist services.

It will also be important for all staff to be aware of the need to resist commenting in such forums.

Critical incident ‘Stand-down’

The CIMT, supported by the RCT Critical Incident Team may need to continue to function for some time after the incident in order to consider a number of issues.

These may be:

- When and how to re-open the school.
- How to deal with continued interest from the media.
- The provision of information to parents/carers and the public.
- Support for the families of those hurt or bereaved.
- Attendance at funerals.
- The organisation of memorial services.
- Particular thought needs to be given to the sending of cards and flowers.
- Investigations are likely to be undertaken by various bodies such as the police and insurance companies.

Critical incident recovery planning

When the emergency services have left the school, or in the case of an incident on a school trip, when pupils and staff have returned home and media interest has subsided, the school can begin the recovery process.

The head teacher should continue to work with the Local Authority to develop a recovery plan for the school. A range of support will continue to be available from the Local Authority including the ECPS. This will include a post-incident evaluation carried out jointly by the school and Local Authority’s Critical Incident Team to identify learning that can be carried forward in any future incidents involving other schools.

There could be formal inquiries or even police investigations into the incident, which may continue for some time, and require the cooperation and support of school staff, pupils, and parents/carers.

Appendix 3 : Critical Incident Planning Checklist

The following checklist can be used in preparing a Critical Incident or Emergency Plan.

Suggested coding:

A - In place

B - Still needs to be done

C - Not relevant

The following documents and information should be available in school and off-site. Where possible a hard copy should be available as well as electronic.

Up-to-date information about:	Code A,B,C
Student, staff, Governor emergency contact details	
LA emergency contact numbers	
Bus/Coach lists (in event of school trips/visits). School Transport will maintain student lists of school contract transport and will make these available if directed by the Lead Officer.	
Emergency supply/support list	
Information sheet providing key basic details about the school (for emergency services, media, etc)	
Up-to-date site plan (including critical locations, e.g. chemical storage, key salvage priorities, gas, electric and water mains control positions, IT infrastructure hubs.)	
Student / staff movement data (timetables/registration – who is where and when).	
People, groups, or organisations who visit or use the school and would need to be informed.	
People and groups used by the school e.g. suppliers and contractors.	
Location of keys to school car / minibus, school safe etc.	
Copy of Asbestos log.	
Back-up computer disks/hard drives for all accounts. These should be stored remotely in any case unless the school has cloud back-up.	
Details of names, location, significant medical information, and contact details relating to all pupils and staff off-site on educational visits at any time.	
List of qualified first aiders	
Lockdown protocol	

A plan for communication:

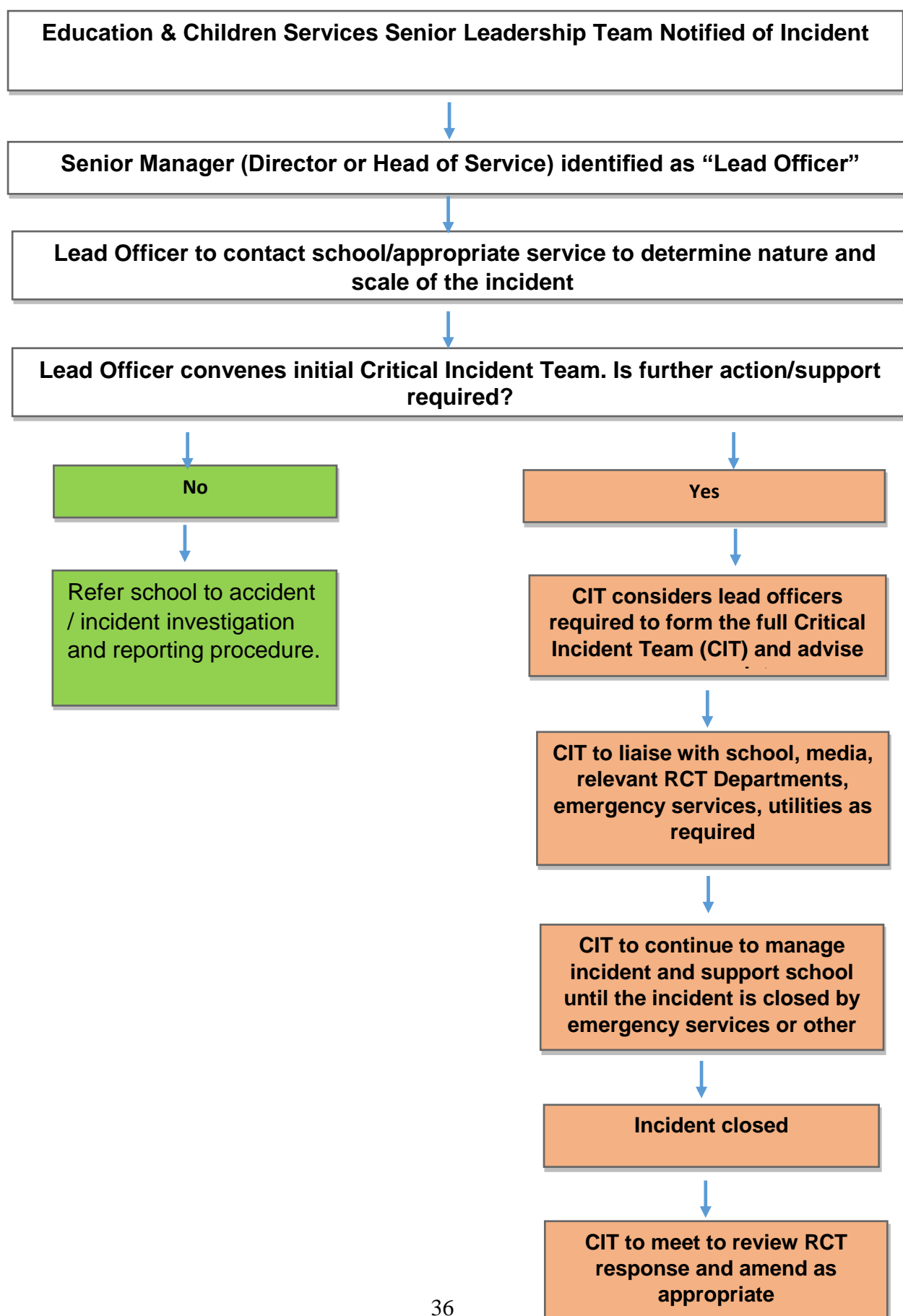
Evacuation procedures – visible and practised	
RCT media – what support is required?	
Telephone lines – private, mobile, emergency access, social media use.	
Small room / quiet area for Police statements, counselling, or interviews.	
Alternative location for school co-ordination.	

Management support:

Access to qualified first-aiders	
Screening of entrances/exits – siting of school/emergency office? Closure of blinds/curtains on the ground floor to protect from media interest	
Instant assemblies to release teaching staff	

Other required documents/information:

Appendix 4 : RCT Critical Incident Protocol



Appendix 5 : RCT Officer contact directory

A quick guide to the telephone numbers you may find of use:

Reporting closures, general information and advice etc. – 07769 164734

Education Maintenance Unit 'helpline' - 01443 281155

Catering, Ty Trevithick 'helpline' - 01443 281141

Integrated Transport Unit, Sardis House, Pontypridd - 01443 494871 / 72 / 73

Out Of Hours Call Centre - 01443 425011

Water, Welsh Water Dwr Cymru - 0800 052 0130

Gas, National Emergency Gas Service - 0800 111 999

Electricity, Western Power - 0800 052 0400

You should also refer to the guidance provided in the document which has also been attached, entitled School Closures and Severe Weather Guidance for Schools.

Appendix 6 : Critical Incident Log

Pontypridd High School Critical Incident Log	
Staff Lead	
Staff incident recorder	
Details of CIMT meeting	
Staff present	
Date and location	
Name of the person informing of the incident	
What kind of incident is it, eg death of child/fire/etc	
What immediate/potential hazards are presented?	
Access to site?	
Who else has been informed (eg. emergency services, LA, Governors, etc)	
Exact location of the incident	
Details of any casualties – physical or wellbeing	
Any action taken so far by CIMT or otherwise	

Name/contact details of Single Point of Contact (SPOC) at the scene Name of CIT SPOC (if different)	
Which/how many emergency responders are required or already attending?	
Is there a need for immediate media response? What has happened? What is happening now? What is being done about it? So what? What might the implications and wider impacts be? What might happen in the future as a consequence of the incident?	
Does school have staff/leadership capacity to manage response? Additional personnel support required at scene?	
What immediate assistance is needed from school and RCT ? To include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The school head teacher or other senior staff member - School designated Education Support Adviser - Legal Services representative 	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Health and Safety Adviser - Senior Property Services officer - Senior Education and Child Psychologist - Senior Safeguarding Officer - Senior Social/Children's Services officer - Senior Catering Manager - Senior Leisure Services Manager - Cleaning Services Manager - School Transport Manager - Senior Business Partner (HR) - Executive Board Member - Any other relevant officer as deemed necessary 	
Date/time of next CIMT Meeting	

Appendix 7 : Critical incident : Immediate response checklist

Issues requiring immediate response by the school – <i>the ‘Golden Hour’</i>			
Action Point	Guidance Note	Action by	Done or N/A
Gather information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete Incident Log (Appendix 3) • What happened/where/when? • Call the emergency services if necessary • How many involved; who are they? • Name and contact numbers of adults at location of incident. • Details and location of injured (severity, name of injured and supervising adult(s) name(s)/contact number). • Details and location of non-injured names, and supervising adult(s) names(s)/contact number. • Has anyone else been informed e.g. emergency services (what were they told?) • Inform RCT Critical Incident Team 		
Convene school Critical Incident Management Team (CIMT) for briefing.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify who is to be the school's lead officer and 'Incident recorder'. • Decide which key individuals need to be involved. Assign tasks and ensure each individual knows what is expected and logs their action on a central log of events record sheet. • Consider whether you may need to close the school but where possible avoid closing and maintain normal routines. • Identify a member of CIMT as the person to co-ordinate information (SPOC). • Liaise with RCT Lead Officer on any short term physical support that may be required from CCC services. These could be: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Health and Safety - Media and communications - Property Services - Cleaning - Transport, although there may be others. 		

<p>Ensure that the school site is made safe for staff, pupils and visitors.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secure the immediate safety of pupils and staff - this may include evacuation or keeping pupils and staff inside the building (sheltering) or implementing the school's Lockdown Protocol. • Establish the location of all pupils, staff, and visitors using timetables, registers, and the visitor's book, and make a list of those unaccounted for. • Liaise with and provide access for emergency services as necessary. • Safely evacuate school building or parts thereof as necessary. Consider relocation to other premises or part of school. If partial evacuation, consider where staff or pupils are to be accommodated or whether they need to go home in the first instance. Ensure that parents/carers do not take pupils away without being directed to do so. • If a decision is taken to close the school, liaise with the Lead Officer who will contact the School Transport division and arrange for pupils to be collected. • Open/close parts of school as required, and arrange to turn off water, gas, and electricity supplies if necessary. • Establish safe access and egress points to school building and key areas. • Liaise with Property Services and Health and Safety support provided by RCT as necessary. • Ensure that the Asbestos Log is available if required. • Ensure access to/availability of Fire/Intruder alarm system controls, location of hazardous substances/chemical stores. • Ensure security of school premises. • Consider a staff rota and ensure that staff take regular rest periods. • Make arrangements for reuniting pupils with their parents/carers 		
<p>Establish a base for CIMT to operate and agree on</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CIMT to agree a statement for all incoming calls, which can be managed by properly briefed staff or via informative answer phone messages where not all school lines can be operated 		

communication protocol.	<p>personally (e.g. after school hours). Support for this can be obtained from the Council's Media and Marketing Team who will be represented on the RCT Critical Incident Team.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CIMT to brief personnel having direct links with public/media (factual brief statements only). (Discourage any speculative discussion; refer all press enquiries to the RCT Media and Marketing Team in the case of a serious incident). • Agree with the RCT Media Team officer on a press release. • Ensure dedicated telephone line(s) or mobile phones for outgoing and incoming calls are available. • Ensure school reception is adequately staffed to deal with queries and calls from parents. • Action the 'telephone cascade' for staff and governors (where appropriate) to keep information flow fast and accurate. • Instruct staff not to speak directly to the media but refer all enquiries to the Headteacher or other person designated as being responsible for contact with the media. Staff should not share or respond to any information relating to the incident on social media. 		
Contact families whose relatives (children and adults) are or may be involved	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Should be done quickly and with great sensitivity, preferably by a CIMT member – but remember it is the responsibility of the police liaison officer to inform next of kin in the event of a death. In event of a major incident the police may give advice regarding naming badly injured people or fatalities. • Consistency of information is essential, therefore use CIMT agreed statement and most up-to-date information from your contact adult on site. • Immediately inform parents/carers of any injured pupils of what has happened and where their son/daughter is, recording what their plans are, eg to travel to their son/daughter, any assistance they need and any means of communications with them (eg mobile phone number). 		

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If the incident is related to a school visit, parents should first hear of the incident from the school (or from the visit leader), not from hearsay or from the media. This may be difficult as students on the visit will have mobile phones and social media access. Information given must be limited until the facts are clear and all involved parents/next of kin are informed. Inform parents/carers of any other pupils on the visit but not directly involved in the incident. • Try not to leave messages or use extended chains of communication. • Establish a reception base for concerned relatives coming to the school. • Ensure this is staffed by people who can comfort and inform relatives. Maintain direct contact with this base. 		
Prepare general information for all parents/ staff/ governors.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If you have concerns about issues of legal liability or the likelihood of police action, any further information should be checked and agreed with the RCT Lead Officer and Media Team who may need to consult with relevant agencies, before letters/emails are issued to the wider school community. • Information should be simple, factual, express sympathy, concern, and should indicate when further information may be provided. Sample template letter is provided in Appendix 3. • Ensure CIMT have a schedule to brief staff on a regular basis. • Ensure all staff (teaching and non-teaching) and governors are discouraged from speaking to the media. This responsibility should be referred to a named person in the team and/or the Media Team. 		
Briefing pupils	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Usually, best managed in class or smaller groups by adults best known to the pupils. The agreed statement can then be delivered in a way which is appropriate to the group. • A large gathering can generate hysteria, which can become a management problem in itself. 		
Briefing Media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A member of the RCT Media Team will have been assigned to the CIT and, under the direction of the Lead Officer will be able to liaise 		

	<p>swiftly to direct press/media interest away from the school and CIMT, to enable it to focus on internal response and support for the school community.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A member of the school CIMT should be identified to keep the Media representative well briefed at all times and especially as the situation evolves. • In developing your Emergency Plan, you may wish to invite a member of the Media Team into school to support any training sessions for CIMT members and provide coaching in dealing with the media. Once the initial response to the incident has been made, there is often a demand for a media statement direct from the school and the team can assist with relevant training and preparation. 		
B: Issues that will need to be resolved as soon as possible			
Ensure continuing support for needs of pupils, staff and relatives of those involved in the incident is planned.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A member of CIMT should be identified as having responsibility for ensuring continuing support. • The RCT Lead Officer will have mobilised support from a range of agencies able to offer support and counselling to those immediately affected. These could include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Educational Psychologists - Experienced counsellors - Social/Children's Services personnel - Safeguarding professionals • You will need to discuss likely continuing needs with relevant professional staff. Local religious communities may be able to contribute or take a lead in providing a longer-term focus for support. 		
Provide a focus for expression of sympathy and grief, if necessary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You may wish to place a table in the school foyer or a vase of flowers, with a book for tributes/condolences. Sufficient space for items of remembrance may be helpful – the public and the school community may wish to place flowers or other tributes which can block fire exits or emergency service access points if not managed. 		

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It may be more appropriate to negotiate a location away from school, eg church or public building. 		
Provision of ongoing information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In your statements to the press and letters/emails/social media statements to the wider school community, you should indicate when you expect to be able to give more information. Try to honour this even if the update is very limited. You will create tension or possibly aggravate recipients of your information if your timescales are not adhered to. Clear all statements with the your link Media Officer and the Police if necessary. 		
Acknowledge the consequences of the event on the school's community, their reactions, and feelings. Provide opportunities for pupils and staff to express personal reactions (immediate and continuing need).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The incident may cause stress throughout the school. Acknowledge openly that the incident may affect people (children and adults) emotionally in different ways and at different times. Recognise that the behaviour, engagement and performance of children and adults may change. Recognise that not all staff will feel able to support others. Be aware of staff who are taking the brunt of supporting others, and ensure that they, too, receive support. Pupils should be encouraged to talk about their feelings in class, smaller groups, or individually, with active listening, ideally in their preferred language. Some pupils may show signs of needing support beyond the staff's competence or confidence. Extended counselling should be identified (with parental permission). Staff closely affected by the event should have opportunities for debriefing and counselling if they require it. Staff responsible for managing the critical incident should be offered supervision and relief. Some adults and children may need therapeutic help for an extended period after the event. 		

Further ongoing considerations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The CIMT may need to consider: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Attendance at a funeral. (It will not normally be appropriate to close the school – check with Chair of Governors and Director). - Visit(s) of staff/children to hospital. - Expressions of sympathy and support to families affected. - An assembly or service to mark the event. - A memorial in the school or school grounds. It is advisable to consider this carefully and ensure full consultation with all parties. 		
Re-establishing normal routines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Normal routines should be established as soon as possible as these provide security and stability at a time of stress and/or emotional upheaval. • Bear in mind the need to create time and space for thinking and grieving about the event. • Pupils should be encouraged to resume normal attendance. • Children who cannot attend school due to injury or distress may need other ways of maintaining contact with the school and school personnel. • Consider how/when personal effects of deceased pupils should be removed. 		
Stand down of critical incident	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The decision to stand down will be made by the head teacher in consultation with the RCT Critical Incident Team's Lead officer. Consideration will be given to the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Assessment of risk / development of situation. - When services return to essential levels. - When services return to previous (normal) levels. 		
Debrief	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Debriefing is an important part of the incident management process. All staff involved in responding to an incident will be debriefed after a disruption. This will normally be arranged by the head teacher in collaboration with the RCT Lead Officer. The following principles should be discussed and noted: 		

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The process should be open and honest and is particularly important when it comes to disseminating lessons learned. - Highlight what went well. - Discuss areas for improvement. - Discuss lessons identified. - Agree any changes to the Critical Incident Plan. - Update the school's Critical Incident Plan. 		
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Appendix 8 : Critical Incident witness evidence statement

Pontypridd High School Witness statement of incident	
Your name	
Are you a member of staff / student or visitor	
Date	
Time on site / incident	
Time left site / incident	
What you witnessed	
Actions you took	
Further comments	
Advice for completion <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Note all relevant facts in chronological order Stick to the FACTS - do not include any assumptions (if you are noting down assumptions to show your reasoning for making a decision, make this clear) If you make a mistake, cross it out with a single line so that what is underneath is still visible, and initial it Do not leave blank spaces - or if you do, rule them out with a line Do not overwrite – if you make a mistake, cross it out, initial it and start again Do not leave large blank spaces between words or between entries Do not use correction fluid Unused space after the end of a series of entries should be ruled through, then signed in full, dated and timed Avoid approximations and abbreviations 	

Appendix 9 : Sample Letter information for Parents and Carers

Date ?

Dear Parent/Carer

You may have heard?

It is with great sadness and regret that I have to inform you
(Known facts of the incident)

As a school community, we are all deeply affected by this tragedy/

I am sure that you will wish to join me and my staff in offering our condolences and sympathy to those affected/to *(refer to individuals/families affected only where it is appropriate to release this information)*

I have now spoken to all pupils and staff in school about what has happened, and you will need to be aware of the following arrangements that we have now made:

Details about:

- school closure
- changes to timings of school day
- transport
- Premises management alterations
- lunchtime arrangements
- changes to staffing
- arrangements for specific classes/year groups
- counselling

(if appropriate, advice about media contacts)

I think it is very important that we all take the time to talk with and reassure children about what has happened. This is likely to be a very difficult time for us as a school community and we will all need to support each other.

We appreciate the expressions of concern we have received. However, it would be helpful if parents and carers did not telephone the school during this time so we can keep phones and staff free to manage the situation.

Yours.....

Xxx

Headteacher

Appendix 10 : Critical Incident - Maintaining learning continuity

As part of our commitment to providing learning continuity for all students and staff, we shall consider different criteria and circumstances.

Learner access

Criteria	For consideration	Specific School actions
All learners know how to log in, access, complete, upload and log out of schools virtual learning system (for example, Class Charts, Microsoft Teams).	All learners provided with a log in and access to the school's preferred virtual learning platform Learning design or activities provide regular opportunities for learners to use and become familiar with the virtual learning platform	Inform staff who will provide instructions for all students Use of IT lessons in Years 7 and 8 and form tutor time for all cohorts and 'new starters'
Learner equipment All learners have access to ICT hardware and an internet connection.	Audit school community periodically. Monitor learner engagement with digital home learning. Engage with the local authority to create solutions for those learners who are digitally excluded.	Ensure parents and carers are informed and audit carried out of connectivity Use of grant funding to provide IT equipment Monitor through Class Charts feedback process
Regular curriculum content Schools' normal curriculum offer, teaching and learning design should provide regular opportunities for learners to be both taught and apply new digital skills in a range of areas of learning and experience. This should happen both in and beyond the school building.	Long- and medium-term planning identifies opportunities for blended or digital skills to be taught in lessons. School teaching and learning policy reflects the importance of blended approaches to learning.	This is delivered through the focus on skills in Years 7 and 8, in particular digital competency Use of Discover More to enhance skills and opportunities to engage with e-portfolios
High skilled workforce All members of the workforce have	Audit of staff skills periodically.	Professional learning calendar is used to identify

opportunities for high-quality professional learning to develop their own personal digital skills.	Engagement at regional level to access quality professional learning.	and deliver opportunities to share good practice and develop new skills. Links to staff performance management
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What about student absence ?

Our learning continuity plan will also consider how we will support students who are absent under the circumstances and conditions below:

Individual	Groups / Cohorts	Whole School
<p>Sickness beyond 1 week</p> <p>Medical reasons resulting in absence from school (for example, hospital stay or recovery period)</p> <p>School or public transport issues beyond 2 days</p> <p>Bereavement or compassionate leave</p>	<p>Illness of a group or cohort beyond 3 days</p> <p>School or public transport issues beyond 2 days</p> <p>Unexpected critical staffing levels resulting in partial school closure (for example, high levels of staff illness or severe weather disruption)</p> <p>Isolated building issues (for example, part of the building unusable so full capacity on site not possible)</p>	<p>Illness of significant number of learners resulting in full school closure</p> <p>Community illness and instruction to close whole school</p> <p>Unexpected critical staffing levels resulting in whole school closure (for example, high levels of staff illness or severe weather disruption)</p> <p>Significant school or public transport issues beyond 2 days</p> <p>Poor weather resulting in more than 3 days of school closure</p>

Student absence and learning continuity checklist

We will give consideration for :	Area	School specific notes (if appropriate)
Our preferred virtual learning platform that is appropriate for the age of the learner	Student	
How learners are taught to log in and access the school's preferred virtual learning platform with increasing independence?	Student	

How learners access, use and save on the school's preferred learning platform?	Student	As above and through application of skills in other areas of the curriculum such as Technology and Science
How individual learners' or families' access to ICT equipment?	Student	
How we check individual learners' or families' access to connectivity?	Family	
How to identify vulnerable learners and develop strategies to manage contact with these learners in the event of absence or closure?	Student	
How we will provide continuity of learning to learners who do not have access to ICT equipment and/or connectivity? Also how we will disseminate and collect this work?	Student	
How our curriculum provides appropriate opportunities for learners to access and learn through the preferred virtual learning platform, both in and beyond school, on a regular basis?	Curriculum	
how our vision and strategy for effective teaching and learning includes opportunities for learners to learn through blended strategies?	Curriculum	
How suitably staff are trained and confident to effectively use the preferred virtual learning platform in their daily routines?	All staff	
How we provide regular, high-quality professional learning to enable our staff to deliver high-quality learning experiences both in and beyond the school?	All staff	
How we check individual staff access to ICT equipment and connectivity?	All staff	
How we manage staff workload and strategies to support this?	All staff	

Staff-related absence (unplanned)

Our learning continuity plan will address how we will manage staff absence that is unplanned under the circumstances shown below:

Individual	Group	Whole School
Illness	Illness of groups of staff, Public transport issues	Community illness across nearly all staff

Bereavement or compassionate leave		Severe weather disruption
Public transport issues		

Staff-related absence learning continuity checklist

The school should give consideration for..	Area	School specific notes (if appropriate)
How we develop and sharing a supply cover policy or strategy that is understood by all stakeholders?	All staff	
How we develop a relationship with a preferred supply agency to provide cover for staff absence?	All staff	
How we develop relationships with other agencies to provide additional cover if needed?	All staff	
How we develop a well-understood process for staff to report personal illness early to allow appropriate cover to be arranged?	All staff	
How we develop a pre-arranged strategy to provide short-term internal cover in emergency and 'unforeseeable absence' in line with the requirements as set out in the School Teachers' Pay and Conditions (Wales) Document 2021?	All staff	
How we develop a system to monitor and support staff well-being during periods of high staffing absence?	All staff	
How we adhere to the local authority's attendance and well-being policy to reduce staff absence? Also, how we engage with the policy and, where needed, other agencies to ensure a safe and timely return to work for absent staff?	All staff	
How our professional learning offer provides staff with the relevant professional learning and skills to deliver virtual learning at a comparable quality to face-to-face learning?	All staff	
How we will provide additional planning and preparation time for staff to reflect the additional pressures of delivering virtual learning content?	All staff	

How we will communicate with parents, carers and families that sets out expectations for virtual learning, learning time and protected time for staff to plan and monitor?	All staff	
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Other system-related issues

Our learning continuity plan will address how we will manage disruption that is caused by other system-related issues as shown in the table below:

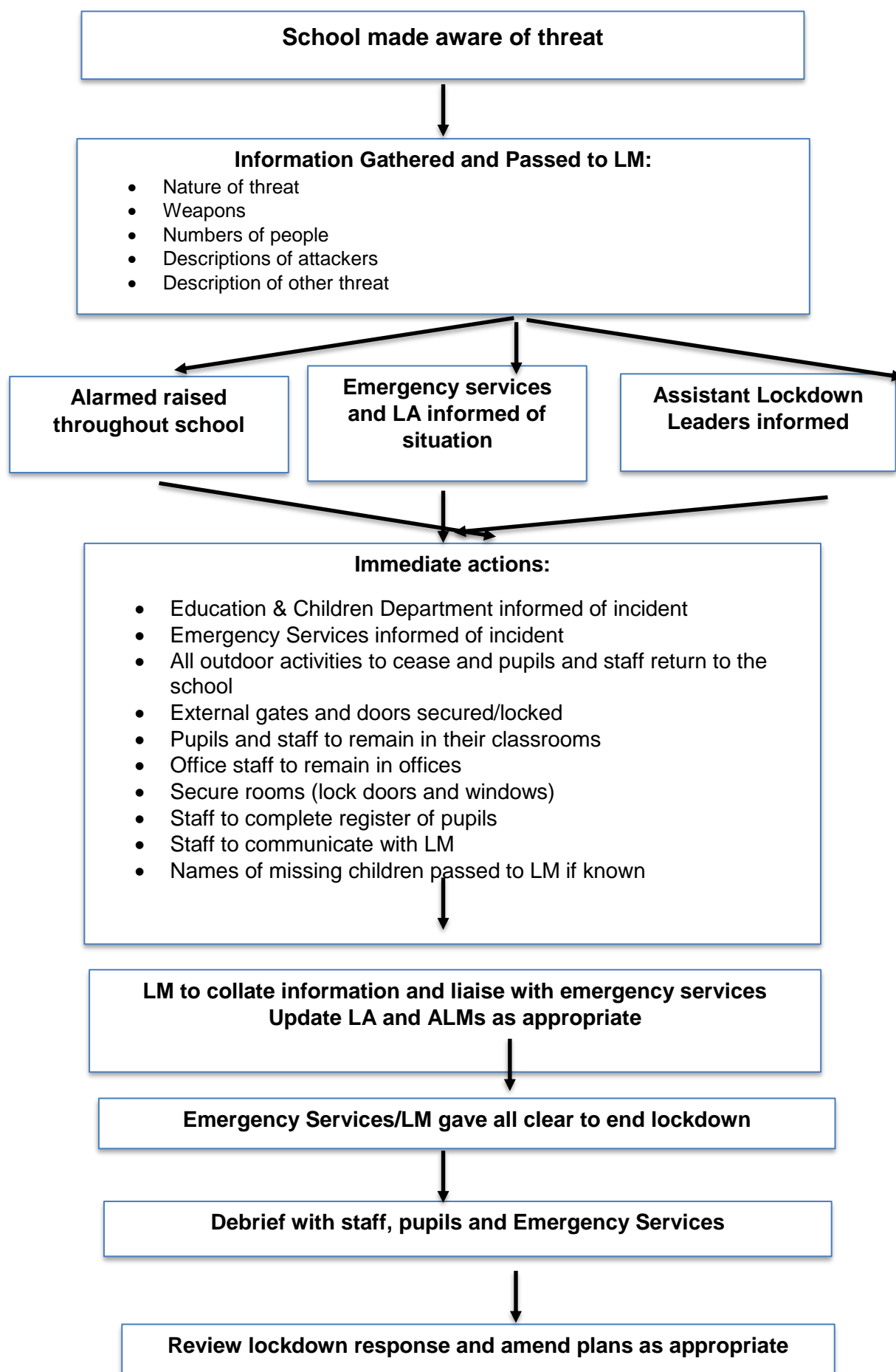
Groups	Whole School
Fire, flood or other damage in one part of the school resulting in a reduced capacity onsite (for example, within a block of classrooms)	Fire, flood or other damage to most of the school building resulting in its full closure. Management information system and other online system outages

Other system-related issues and learning continuity checklist

The school should consideration for...	Area	School specific notes (if appropriate)
How we monitor health and safety, including the condition of our school, and ensuring that statutory checks are completed and update date?	All staff	
Who to contact in the local authority in the event of an emergency or routine works? Is this understood by all key stakeholders?	Headteacher Site Manager	
How staff can complete routine safety checks (for example, ensuring plugs are turned off at the end of the day in their classrooms)?	All staff	
How we check our school site security on a daily basis (for example, ensuring plugs are switched off, taps are turned off, etc.)?	Site manager	
How the condition of our school buildings is widely reported to governors? Who is our named governor for health and safety?	Headteacher Site Manager	
How to access support from governors during an emergency to ensure the local authority resolves the issue as quickly as possible?	Headteacher	
What other appropriate buildings and spaces are available in the local area	Headteacher	

which could be used to educate groups of learners?		
How our school deals with a management information system (MIS) outage? In the event of a MIS outage how would the school: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • register learners • access learners' emergency contact details • access staff emergency contact details? 	Headteacher Network Manager Administratio n Officer	
How our school handles an outage of an online payment and management system for school lunches (for example, using a paper-based system, a reduced menu system, asking families to provide packed lunches for the period)?	Headteacher Finance and resources Manager	
How our school manages an outage of an online safeguarding management system? Is there an agreed plan in place in the event of an outage to safeguarding learners?	Headteacher Deputy Headteacher Senior Safeguarding Officer	
How our school communicates with parents, carers and families in the event of a technology system outage? Are there protocols in place to provide emergency communications?	Headteacher	

Appendix 11 : PHS Lockdown Flow Chart



Appendix 12 - NaCTSO 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.

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