Critical Incident Policy

St Agnes C of E Primary School

Approved by:	Mrs Sue Gittins
Last reviewed on:	September 2026
Next review due by:	September 2027

Our Vision and Mission Statement

'Learning together in God's Love'

St Agnes is an inclusive Christian family, we want our children to:

- Learn together with respect, patience and kindness
- **Treat each other as they would like to be treated (Matthew 7v12)**
- Flourish in education and friendships
- **Live life in all its fullness (John 10v10)**
- Be proud of themselves and others
- Ensure everyone is treated equally

Through the range of experiences we offer to all our pupils we encourage an understanding of the meaning and importance of faith and promote all the Christian Values. We particularly focus on Responsibility, Creativity, Forgiveness, Perseverance, Hope, Thankfulness and Friendship. These Christian values form the basis of our vision and are embedded throughout our school life and underpin all our teaching.
St Agnes is a small school that supports our community by providing an education of the highest quality within the context of Christian belief and practice. We work closely with our families to ensure they are fully supported and cared for

We expect everyone at St Agnes C of E Voluntary Aided Primary School to follow 'The Great Expectations' –

Be Safe
Be in the right place at the right time
Do your best
Handle your emotions
Use appropriate language
Cooperate
Respect everyone and everything

Aims
The aim of this policy is to lessen and manage the effect of a critical incident on the staff, students and parents at St Agnes Primary School. It is anticipated that by adopting the procedures outlined in this policy it will be possible to provide a more secure environment for everyone associated with the School. Every reasonable step will be taken to:

- Prevent or minimise the loss of life and injury to pupils and staff;
- Alert relevant parties, eg. the emergency services, the local authority, parents/carers and school governors;
- Take control at the scene until the emergency services arrive;
- Minimise disruption to the normal daily routine of staff and pupils;
- Support staff, pupils and parents in the aftermath of an incident;
- Ensure effective working with the media.

What is a critical incident?
A critical incident is one which arises suddenly. Critical incidents may occur in school or out of school, but both types will have a major impact on staff and students. An incident might be designated as critical where the result is likely to be serious disruption to the running of the School, or where there is likely to be significant public and/or media attention on the School.
The school recognises that there cannot be a separate written plan to cover every possible emergency. Core staff training includes regular discussions of the steps to be taken in the more common emergencies, including a deliberate act of violence, fire, the destruction or serious vandalism of part of the school or public health threats (eg. meningitis).

Where the crisis is related to people, such as in the event of a death or serious injury, the assumption is that the School is likely to take the lead, with the support of the LA, as necessary.

Examples of in-school critical incidents

- A serious accident to a child or adult
- The death of a student or member of staff
- A traffic accident involving a student or staff member
- Violence or assault within school
- A school fire or explosion
- Destruction of part of the school building
- Abduction of a student
- A student or students absconding
- A global pandemic such as COVID
- An illness such as meningitis within the school or the local community
- Severe weather requiring closure of the school
- Bomb threat
- Terrorist alert
- Aeroplane crashing on or near the site
- A wagon crashing into the school playground
- A cyber attack

Examples of out-of-school critical incidents

- An accident to a student or staff member while out of school on a visit or swimming.
- Death or injuries on a school journey
- Tragedies involving children from many schools, eg. The Manchester Bomb
- Civil disturbances

In the event of a crisis like this there can be three aspects to deal with at once:

- the critical incident itself

- the impact on your school as a community
- the public impact of the incident, including how it is reported in the media

Practice within school
Individual class teachers have an important role to play in managing critical incidents and may well be the best people to deal with the students in their classes. In times of crises, teachers must react as they feel is appropriate and there can be no easy formula for dealing with critical incidents. However, by ensuring good communication within School, a crisis may be managed more effectively.
We recognise that planning is essential if emergencies are to be managed effectively. We cannot plan in detail for every possible scenario, but our generic plan ensures that those involved in the initial stages have a firm basis from which to develop their response.

Critical Incidents Team
A central component of this policy is the identification of the composition, roles and responsibilities of the Critical Incidents Team.
The role of the team is to review and direct the handling of the incident and the response and recovery process in order to:

- ensure the safety and security of students, staff, other users of the premises and visitors;
- minimize the loss to the School in physical, human and financial terms;
- manage an incident to minimize disruption to regular operations;
- liaise with appropriate agencies, including the Media.

The Critical Incidents Team will comprise the following personnel:

- Headteacher
- Chair of Governors
- School Business Manager
- School Premises Manager
- Health and Safety/Premises Governor

The Critical Incidents Team will, dependent upon the nature of the incident itself, be concerned with any of the following issues:

- adequate assessment of hazards and situations which may require emergency action;
- analysis of requirements to address these hazards; establishment of liaison with all relevant emergency services; development of an effective management plan;
- dissemination of planned procedures;
- dissemination of information to:

- all staff

- parents

- pupils

- communications to:

- Chair of Governors and Governing Body
- LA
- Media

- organisation of practice drills to test the plan;
- annual review of this Policy
- assisting the Headteacher with all aspects of the implementation of the plan;

Procedures during an incident

1. The Headteacher must be informed of any critical incident as soon as possible.
2. As soon as an incident is confirmed, the Critical Incidents Team will meet to decide strategies.
3. Arrange for staff directly involved to meet with the enforcement agencies (Police, HSE and /or Environmental Health). Emergency Manager to be present and meeting to decide what information will be released to the media, parents and governors.
4. Call a meeting for staff:
- to give facts about the incident
- to outline what support is available to staff
- to plan with staff how and what they can tell other people and pupils about the incident
- to prepare a statement for them to use.
5. Arrange for Support Agencies to come into school to support those colleagues directly involved.
6. Ensure that pupils not involved in the incident are informed, in small groups.
7. Make appropriate arrangements for Emergency Agencies to interview staff/pupils. Ensure that pupils are accompanied by a parent or senior member of staff.

ACTION PLAN

Major incidents require the following procedures:-
1. Assess the situation –
2. Notify Headteacher.
3. Convene the Critical Incidents Team.
4. Inform immediately the Chair of Governors
5. Collect, record and convey as much accurate information as possible.
6. Identify two telephonists to staff:
- school phone for incoming calls
- mobile phone for outgoing information/staff use
7. Quiet room, if appropriate, to be used for enquiries
8. Use the up to date list of students' next of kin (record files) and contact parents of affected children.
9. Record all actions
10. Headteacher, alone, to act as 'press officer'. Do not speak to the press or media.
11. Refusal of access to press/television on school premises.

ACTION PLAN TIMING

Action	**Timescale**
Obtain factual information at the start	Within hours
Senior Staff meeting with support personnel	Within hours
Advise Director of Education	Within hours
Convene the Critical Incidents Team	Within hours
Contact families	Immediately
Call a staff meeting to give information	Same day if possible
Inform students in small groups	Same day if possible
Arrange a debriefing meeting for staff involved	Same day if possible
Arrange a debriefing for students directly involved	Same day if possible
Identify high risk students and staff	Following day
Promote discussion in classes	Following days and weeks
Identify the need for group or individual treatment	Over days and weeks
Organise counselling	As required
Mark anniversary (discreetly)	Annually

INCLEMENT AND SEVERE WEATHER RESULTING IN CLOSURE OF THE SCHOOL/BEFORE SCHOOL OPENS

In the event of severe weather requiring closure of the school, the Headteacher will contact the Chair of Governors as a first point of call to assess the weather conditions locally. In the event of school closure parents and staff will be informed by text as soon as possible. Oldham Council will be notified as soon as possible.

DURING SCHOOL HOURS

In the event of severe weather requiring closure of the school whilst students and staff are on the premises, the Headteacher will assess the local and surrounding area weather conditions.

The Headteacher will contact the Chair of Governors to consent to the closure of the school.

The office manager will contact the parents via text message. Once the safety of the students has been secured, the staff who have longer commuting distances will be given the opportunity to leave, ensuring all children have appropriate supervision.

IN THE EVENT OF A MAJOR EMERGENCY/FIRE ON OR AROUND THE SCHOOL SITE THE FOLLOWING ACTIONS SHOULD BE TAKEN:

1. The Most Senior Member of Staff will take over as the Emergency Manager. When the school is not occupied, this may be carried out by a member of the Governing Body.
2. An assessment of the situation should be quickly made
3. Contact Emergency Services.
4. Give Emergency First Aid (See list of trained people in the School Office).
5. If appropriate, evacuate the building as if there was a FIRE using the continuous fire bell. Procedures and evacuation routes are displayed in each room within the school.
6. The children should be kept together in class groups in the normal assembly point for fire practice. Nobody should re-enter the building for any reason.
7. If the normal assembly points are deemed dangerous then the children should be taken to the nearest safe point in the school grounds.
8. In the event of the whole area becoming unsafe (eg. A wagon crashing on the site) then instructions will be given by the Headteacher where to evacuate the site. The children should then be taken as safely as possible to Stamford House situated at the bottom of Knolls Lane or Knolls farm situated to the left of school.
9. No child should leave the care of the teacher or appointed adult in charge of the class except in the company of a parent.
10. Where possible the parents will be contacted by the Office Manager and advised of the best course of action.
11. The LA, Chair of Governors and members of the Governing Body also need to be contacted as soon as possible.
12. In the event of a Fire or major disaster the school takes the following measure to ensure appropriate business continuity:

- All ICT systems are backed up daily and a back up is kept off school premises.
- Contents and premises insurance is in place with the LA.
- In the case of a major incident the Diocese and LA would be contacted immediately to plan for continuity if the school was unusable.

BOMB THREAT MANAGEMENT

STAFF

Staff have responsibility:

- To know what to do in the event of a bomb threat and take appropriate action.
- To know what to do if a suspicious package/letter is discovered and take appropriate action.

PROCEDURE INSTRUCTIONS

1. INSTRUCTIONS TO STAFF IN THE EVENT OF A BOMB THREAT ALERT

These instructions set out the procedure to be adopted in the event of a bomb threat becoming apparent in any of the School buildings or properties.

All actions resulting from a bomb threat will be co-ordinated by the Headteacher

2. DEALING WITH TELEPHONE WARNINGS

Terrorists, militants, extremists (eg. Animal Rights etc) frequently, but not always, give telephone warnings of bomb explosions. So, unfortunately, do hoaxers whose threats are empty. A warning may be received that any part of the premises are at risk. In such cases we will have to decide how to respond. In particular we will have to decide whether to evacuate the premises. In all cases, whether or not the person receiving the call considers the threat to be credible, they should:

- Telephone the Police immediately
- Search the premises
- Consider whether to evacuate the premises

IN ALL CASES IT IS IMPORTANT TO TELEPHONE THE POLICE IMMEDIATELY WITH DETAILS OF THE CALL.

Responding to warning calls often involves making difficult decisions. What is often overlooked, however, is how important and yet how difficult it is to obtain the maximum amount of useful information from the call. The following advice is designed to help in this.

- Keep calm
- Try to obtain as much information as possible from the call
- Make a note of the details on the caller display or use the ‘1471’ facility, if available

REPORT THE CALL TO THE HEADTEACHER

Obtaining information

The caller may ring off immediately after giving the message, but, whoever takes the call should, nevertheless, try to get a response to the questions on ***Appendix A*** and write down the answers.

In all cases where a bomb threat is received, the Headteacher should immediately inform the Police and advise them of what action is being taken.

APPENDIX A

ACTION TO BE TAKEN ON RECEIPT OF A BOMB THREAT

RECORD THE EXACT WORDING OF THREAT

ASK THESE QUESTIONS

a. Where is the bomb right now?

b. When is it going to explode?

c. What does it look like?

d. What kind of bomb is it?

e. What will cause it to explode?

f. Did you place the bomb?

g. Why?

h. What is your name?

i. What is your address?

j. What is your telephone number?

RECORD TIME CALL COMPLETED

WHERE AUTOMATIC NUMBER REVEAL EQUIPMENT IS AVAILABLE, RECORD NUMBER SHOWN – USE THE '1471' FACILITY IF AVAILABLE

INFORM THE SENIOR MANAGER/NOMINATED DEPUTY

Name and telephone number of person informed

_____

CONTACT THE POLICE BY USING THE EMERGENCY TELEPHONE NUMBER 999

Time informed _____

THIS PART SHOULD BE COMPLETED ONCE THE CALLER HAS HUNG UP AND POLICE/SENIOR MANAGEMENT/NOMINATED DEPUTY HAVE BEEN INFORMED

Time and date of call

_____

Number at which call is received (that is your extension number)

_____

_

ABOUT THE CALLER

Sex of caller? – Male/Female?

Nationality?

Age?

_____

THREAT LANGUAGE (circle)

Well-spoken Irrational Taped Foul

Incoherent Message read by threat-maker

CALLER'S VOICE (circle)

Calm Crying Clear throat Angry Nasal Slurred

Excited Stutter Disguised Slow Lisp Accent

Laughter Hoarse

If the voice sounded familiar, who did it sound like?

_____

What accent?

_____

BACKGROUND SOUNDS (circle)

Street noise House noise Animal noises Crockery Motor Clear Voices
Static PA System Music Factory Machinery Office Machinery
Others (specify) _____

LOCKDOWN PROCEDURE

What is a lockdown?

A lockdown is implemented when there is a serious security risk of the premises due to, for example, near-by chemical spillage, proximity of dangerous dogs, attempted access by unauthorised persons intent in causing harm/damage.

Reasons for a lockdown to be initiated:

- An out of control student who is a threat to the safety of our students, staff, or himself/herself;
- Someone who has a gun or weapon;
- An intruder
- Hazardous chemical outside the building;
- A weather related event

How will I know a lockdown is occurring?

You will be notified by the sound the bell – 3 bells 3 times.

1. If you hear the "Bell" alarms:
    - If you are inside stay in classrooms.
    - Business Manager to ring the police immediately.
    - Lock all external and internal doors.
    - Lower or close any blinds
    - Place students against the wall, so that the intruder cannot see them looking in the door. Look for the a possible 'safe corner'
    - Turn out the lights and computer monitors
    - Keep students quiet.

Note: All staff members should locate and hold on to their class register prior to turning out the lights. This will aid in accounting for all students should an evacuation be necessary.

- Physical education classes being held in the hall should remain in the hall.
- If students and teachers are outside they should move inside as quickly and safely as possible.
- If teachers and students are in the toilets, they should move to a cubicle, lock it and stand on the toilet.
- Anyone in the hallway should move to the closest classroom immediately.
- Kitchen staff should stay in the area they are in, secure the doors and turn out the lights.

2. The Headteacher will signal all personnel if the lockdown has been lifted by ringing the school bell.

3. If an evacuation occurs all persons/classrooms will be directed by a Police Officer or Headteacher to a suitable safe location. Once evacuated from the building, teachers should take the register to account for all students present in class.

4. Parents will be contacted as soon as it is safe to do so and we have had permission from the Police.

DO NOT ATTEMPT TO MOVE UNTIL YOU HAVE HEARD THE SIGNAL THAT THE LOCKDOWN HAS BEEN LIFTED (BY RINGING OF THE SCHOOL BELL).

UNACCEPTABLE PARENTAL BEHAVIOUR WHILE ON THE SCHOOL SITE
The following course of action will be used, when appropriate, in order to deal constructively with these instances:
1. Two verbal warnings

followed by
2. A written warning

followed by
3. Collection of the child from the Reception area

followed by
4. Hand-over of the child at the school gate

If a parent displays violent behaviour, appropriate additional strategies will be put in place in order to leave the school building and the police will be contacted immediately.

Controlling Access To School Premises 2018 States That:

'Schools can bar someone if they feel that their aggressive, abusive or insulting behaviour or language is a risk to staff, pupils or other members of the school community. It is enough if staff or pupils feel threatened.'

The school should tell an individual that they've been barred or they intend to bar them, in writing. Letters should usually be signed by the headteacher, though in some cases the local authority, academy trust or proprietor may wish to write instead. The individual must be allowed to present their side. A school can either:

- *bar them temporarily, until the individual has had the opportunity to formally present their side*
- *tell them they intend to bar them and invite them to present their side by a set deadline*

After the individual's side has been heard, the school can decide whether to continue with barring them. The decision should be reviewed within a reasonable time, decided by the school.

Section 547 of the Education Act 1996 makes it a criminal offence for a person who is on school premises without legal permission to cause or permit a nuisance or disturbance. Trespassing itself does not constitute a criminal offence.

To have committed a criminal offence, an abusive individual must have been barred from the premises or have exceeded their 'implied licence', then also have caused a nuisance or disturbance.

If a school has reasonable grounds to suspect that someone has committed an offence, then they can be removed from the school by a police officer or a person authorised by the appropriate authority such as the Executive Headteacher, Head of School or the Governing Body.

Data Protection Statement

The procedures and practice created by this policy have been reviewed in the light of our Data Protection Policy.

All data will be handled in accordance with the school's Data Protection Policy.

Data Audit For This Policy					
What ?	**Probable Content**	**Why ?**	**Who ?**	**Where ?**	**When ?**
Registration / Admissions Data	Name D.O.B. Address Telephone Medical Issues Parental Details	Well-Being of Your Child Communication	All Staff (Where Necessary)	Initially Completed On Paper Then Entered Onto School's Information Management System Paper Version is Shredded	Held On File Throughout Child's Time At School Computer Retains Copy of Records in 'Archive'

As such, our assessment is that this policy:

Has Few / No Data Compliance Requirements	**Has A Moderate Level of Data Compliance Requirements**	**Has a High Level Of Data Compliance Requirements**
	✓	