

Eastwood Park Academy Trust

EPAT

Believe Succeed Together

Critical Incident Policy

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1.0 Definition

A critical incident can be defined as a 'sudden, unexpected and tragic event or sequence of events which causes trauma and confusion within a school community and which overwhelms its normal coping mechanism'.

A critical incident is likely to involve death or serious injury to one or more members of the school community and, or, their families either at school, journeying to or from school, participating in a school related activity, at home or in some other context. e.g.

- The death of a pupil or member of staff through natural causes.
- An accident involving a student or member of staff.
- A deliberate act of violence such as knifing or the use of a firearm.
- A school fire, flood or an explosion in a laboratory.
- Deaths or injuries through accidents.
- Suicide.
- Civil disturbance.

2.0 Aims of Critical Incident Policy

- To maintain a duty of care.
- To minimise educational and administrative disruption within the Trust.
- To enable normal working to be resumed in the shortest possible time.

3.0 Objectives of Critical Incident Policy

- To ensure that swift and appropriate action is taken in the case of the Trust being made aware that a critical incident has occurred.
- To ensure that the welfare of pupils and staff is paramount.
- To ensure that the Trust responds in a sensitive, consistent and effective manner which reduces confusion, panic and extreme emotion.
- To have in place a Critical Incident Management Team (CIMT).
- To have in place a Critical Incident Management Plan (CIMP).
- To maintain normality, as far as possible, in parts of the Trust which are not affected and to restore normality as soon as possible to the parts which are affected.
- To offer sensitive, non-intrusive support in the short and medium term to all those affected directly or indirectly by the incident.

4.0 Critical Incident Management Team (CIMT)

The Critical Incident Management Team (CIMT) is the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) in the constituent academy and the CEO.

5.0 Managing a Critical Incident

- The Principal will inform the CEO, who, in turn, will inform the Chair of the Trust.
- The Principal, after consulting with the CEO, will take charge of the academy's response.
- In the case of the Principal being unavailable, the Critical Incident Management Team (CIMT) will take charge, led by the Vice Principal.
- The Principal's office will be the central liaison point.
- The CIMT will assess immediate practical needs.
- The CIMT will contact next of kin of those directly involved, if required.
- A short simple statement of facts will be prepared by the Principal.
- All contacts from the media will be dealt with by the Principal, in consultation with the CEO.
- Secretarial staff taking incoming calls will use a statement agreed by the Principal and CEO.
- When necessary, all members of staff will be informed and will be guided in relation to informing pupils.
- The CIMT will determine the involvement of parents, if appropriate.
- Short- and long-term support will be offered to those affected.

6.0 Record Keeping

All team members will keep written records of phone calls, letters, meetings, interventions etc.

7.0 Confidentiality

The Trust is conscious of its responsibility to protect the privacy and good name of people involved in any incident and will be sensitive to the consequences of any public statements.