

DOCUMENT CONTROL	
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LOXFORD SCHOOL TRUST DISASTER RECOVERY and MANAGEMENT of CRISIS

This policy should be considered and adhered to in conjunction with the School Risk Assessment Policy. It is especially concerned with crisis affecting the physical well-being of personnel and/or the everyday functionality of the Trust Schools.

1. What crisis could the school face?

- Death of a student or member of staff
- Violence or assault in the school causing actual bodily harm
- Destruction, fire, flood or vandalism of part of the school
- A student or member of staff being taken hostage
- Road, sea or air traffic accident involving students
- Natural disaster in the community
- Death or injuries on school journeys
- Civil disturbances or terrorism
- Community based crime or crisis impacting on the students or staff.
- Fraud

2. What strategies are there for dealing with a crisis?

By definition, it is impossible to plan precisely for the unexpected, when there may be any number of possibilities requiring any number of responses. The following strategies are designed to be adapted to individual situations and secure discovery recovery.

3. What can be done in advance to minimise the effects of a crisis?

The School Police Liaison Officer, is an integral part of the School Crisis Strategy. The officer communicates effectively with his own colleagues, but also SLT, including direct access to the Headteacher on all potential and actual crisis.

It must be noted that any statutory change will supersede any areas of this document.

The Extended Schools Team should be fully briefed by the appropriate Deputy Headteacher regarding effective community liaison, securing accurate information into and out of the school with the local community.

Important records and, where possible, teaching materials, will be duplicated and held securely off the premises. As a feature of Disaster Recovery, it is particularly important that all ICT-based systems are properly backed up on a regular basis and that copies are stored off site, in line with current good practice. e.g the timetable.

Data of staff is protected.

Financial systems are secure with external audit systems that ensure that funds are used in conjunction with EFA policy.

Every member of staff will have a copy of the fire evacuation procedure. This will be rehearsed annually, with feedback on how procedures can be improved.

The Director of Finance and Operations and Caretaking staff will ensure all services are maintained regularly, e.g. electrical, gas, portable electrical appliances, fire appliances etc.

The Headteacher and Director of Finance and Operations will maintain a list of contact telephone numbers to deal with any crisis related to the buildings.

The Office Manager will ensure that visitors to the school must check-in on arrival and check-out on departure and wear a visitor tag for identification.

The Director of Finance and Operations will secure and maintain appropriate insurances for persons, property and liabilities in line with statutory guidance and risk assessment.

Staff and students must check-in and out if arriving or departing at an unscheduled time.

When students are off-site for more than one day a list of students' next-of-kin and where to make contact with them will be held with a named member of staff not on the trip. The office will be informed of all such visits and hold a register of those actually on the trip.

As a feature of risk assessment by the Facilities Manager (Health and Safety Lead), it will be ensured that any centre visited by the school for the purpose of any potentially hazardous activity .e.g outdoor pursuits, has a health and safety policy which covers the needs and requirements of the school.

The Director of Finance and Operations will ensure that staff are eligible to drive the minibus. It is the responsibility of all staff to ensure that all passengers wear seatbelts on any journey and report any potential or actual safety issues through the standard Health and Safety reporting procedure for accidents outlined in the schools Health and Safety Policy for immediate investigation.

4. In the event of a crisis

It is the primary responsibility of all colleagues to inform a member of SLT of any crisis, defined in this policy. The first member of the Senior Staff informed of the crisis will contact the rest of the SLT. The Headteacher will notify appropriate governors.

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Evacuation

In case of evacuation for the Loxford School Site, students and staff will be evacuated to Barking Abbey School.

A Disaster Recovery Team will be established, who will work after the initial impact of a crisis to an agreed framework to investigate the impact the event has had on:

- Employees, students and other personnel (morale)
- Buildings (functionality and safety)
- ICT (e.g. recovery of information)
- Financial issues (e.g. insurance)
- The wider community (e.g. re-organisation of lettings, public confidence)

The Recovery Team, consisting of the Headteacher, Deputy Headteachers and Director of Finance and Operations will, with appropriate support staff, co-ordinate the following tasks:

Ensure that a member of staff:

- Informs parents of the students involved.
- Deals with issues relating to parents and students directly affected.
- Is at site of crisis.
- Is in attendance at the school as point of contact with crisis site.
- Acts as contact for media
- Informs staff and students of the situation.
- Ensures that the school continues to run smoothly.
- Organises a team of fully briefed support staff for switchboard and community liaison.
- Informs school governors, the LA if appropriate, and the DfE
- Organises specialist services if necessary.
- Informs parents of all students if necessary.
- Organises and co-ordinates a clear-up operation if the crisis occurs at school.
- Liaises effectively with the police, ideally through the School Police Liaison Officer if available
- Makes any necessary contact with Insurers

5. What will happen during a crisis?

The first member of the Senior Staff who is aware of the crisis will contact the rest of the Senior Management Team.

The team will have a number of tasks to which to attend:

- Initiate emergency procedures relative to the activity.
- Either attend site of crisis or effect contact with the party leader on a trip to ensure as much accurate information is obtained as soon as possible.
- The Team will be especially sensitive to the needs of those parents and students directly affected.
- Attend school to act as point of contact with the crisis site.

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- Prepare a press release and the Director of HR is the contact for the media. It is essential that messages to the media are consistent and alleviate fears and alarms caused by the spread of misinformation.
- Inform all staff of the extent of the situation.
- Inform students not involved in the crisis and reassure them.
- Inform parents of the students involved.
- Ensure the school continues to run smoothly.
- Organise a team of fully briefed support staff to manage the school switchboard. Notes on conversations will be kept.
- Inform the school governors and insurers and involve them where necessary.
- Secure active involvement of the School Police Liaison Officer if appropriate.
- Organise the involvement of specialist services where necessary, e.g. counselling services, etc.
- Where necessary inform parents of all students at the school and advise them that their child may be upset, even if not directly involved.
- Organise, if necessary, a clear-up operation at the school to ensure all hazards are removed.
- Organise and co-ordinate, where necessary, the provision of temporary accommodation at the school to allow the continuation of a full curriculum.
- The Headteacher and Chair of Governors will have the authority to make additional expenditure during the initial recovery period, without it going through the usual channels.
- The school will only be closed as a last resort. If it is closed, the Headteacher will make arrangements for the normal timetable to be resumed as quickly as possible, and communicate all arrangements to staff, parents and students.

6. What will happen after the crisis?

The Deputy Headteacher will work closely with ATLs to ensure that the tutor-based programme sensitively explores issues connected with death, bereavement or tragedy, encouraging students to feel they can talk openly and that confidentiality will be respected where necessary.

Support with coping with death, disaster or tragedy will be provided by the school where possible. Psychologists, therapists, psychiatrists, social workers, local religious/community leaders, voluntary agencies, may be invited into school to help students, staff and parents recover from and cope with the crisis if deemed necessary. The qualifications of outside agencies will be vetted and their work closely monitored.

Staff will be made aware of the effects of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and how to handle the symptoms when displayed by other staff, students and parents.

Arrangements for members of the school to visit the injured in hospital/attend funerals/organise a memorial/special assembly will be made.

Strategies for easing students' re-entry into school after long-term absence will be used.

A longer-term information sheet for parents will be compiled.

Records will be kept on a disaster and support given to those involved for as long as necessary, in order to maintain provision in the longer term.

Decisions on how to mark the anniversaries of tragedies will be made and will take account of the wishes and feelings of the parents of students involved.

The school will take the differing backgrounds of students into account and consider the different cultural and religious attitudes to disability, disasters, death, bereavement, mourning and funerals.

The school, both in its record-keeping and through general vigilance, will be aware when members of the school are involved in legal processes.