



*"Middlethorpe: Making
Extraordinary People"*

Critical Incident Policy

2024-2026

Critical Incident Policy

This policy is an important document and all staff should be aware of and be familiar with its content. Naturally, no academy wishes to be involved in a critical incident of any kind especially one that involves injury to adults or children. However, in the event that such a situation arises in the academy, on a trip or that damage to the building occurs - staff need to be aware of the contingency plan for Middlethorpe Primary Academy.

What is a Critical Incident?

A major incident may be defined as:

- An accident leading to a fatality
- Severe injury or severe stress
- Circumstances in which a person or persons might be at serious risk of illness
- Circumstances in which any part, or whole of the school is unable to function as normal due to external influences and
- Any situation in which the national press or media might be involved

As such, major incidents include:

- Death of a pupil or member of staff
- Death or serious injury on a school trip
- Epidemic in school or community
- Fire
- Bomb threat
- A disaster in the community (including need for community shelter in school)
- A civil disturbance or terrorist requiring 'lockdown'
- Violent incident in school
- A hostage taking

In the event of such an incident the priorities of those adults in charge of the school or trip at the time must be able to:

- Save life
- Minimise personal injury
- Safeguard the interests of pupils, students and staff
- Minimise loss and to return to normal working quickly

Critical Response Planning Team

In the event of an incident it will be necessary to name a planning team to guide operations and carry out specific tasks. At Middlethorpe Primary Academy, in the immediate aftermath of an incident, this team would consist of all/any of the following:

1. Executive Principal
2. Head of School
4. School Business Manager
5. Safe guarding lead
7. ELT Representative
8. LA Representative
9. Emergency (LA) Planning Officer
10. Member of the police/fire service if appropriate

This team should meet as soon as is safe to do so following the incident.

No adult should speak to the press/media under any circumstances without the express permission of the adult in charge of the school at the time e.g. The Executive Principal/Head of School.

A clear and concise record of actions taken along with times MUST be kept by those involved (**Appendix 1- Log Sheet**).

Although mobile phones can be a good method of communication, in some situations they are NOT secure and should NOT be used to relay information about casualties.

A telephone cascade system will be put in place to alert parents if necessary.

Media requests for information should be directed to the Enquire Learning Trust. One person only should be nominated to talk to the media – preferably an ELT representative.

Important Contacts

- Academy: 01472698185
- Enquire Learning Trust: 01924792960
- Clee Academy: 01472 582310
- Anglian Water, 08457 919155, @AnglianWater
- BBC Radio Humberside, Tune in to 95.9FM or 1485AM, @RadioHumberside
- East Midlands Travel Line (North and North East Lincolnshire), @TravelineEM
- Environment Agency, 0845 988 1188 (Floodline), @EnvAgency
- Fire & Rescue (Non Emergency), (01482) 565333, @humbersidefire
- Gas (24 Hour emergency service and gas escape), 0800 111 999, @nationalgriduk
- Highways England, @HighwaysEngland
- Maritime & Coastguard Agency, (01262) 672317, @coastguardNE
- Met Office, 0370 900 0100, @metoffice
- National Rail Enquiries, 08457 48 49 50, @nationalrailenq
- NHS Choices (24 hour confidential health advice and information), 111, @NHSChoices
- Northern Power Grid (24 hour emergency service), 0800 375675, @Northpowergrid
- Police (Non Emergency), 101, @Humberbeat

1. What to do in the event of a critical incident

Incident	Actions to be taken	Staff roles
Serious injury to staff and/ or pupils	• Inform – send red triangle/ another person to get immediate help, call for an ambulance and contact parents/ next of kin • Save – administer first aid, establish a contact point with the emergency services, travel with casualties to hospital and complete accident forms • Care - keep a record of witnesses, keep others informed of situation, arrange for non-casualties to move to a different location if necessary and care for relatives arriving at school • Assist – assist carer and first aider when necessary Following the event • Record the incident in First Aid Log • RIDDOR if required • Evaluate response to the critical incident following the event • Offer counselling should any staff, children or parents require	• Executive Principal, Head of School or senior staff member informed immediately • Four person team – inform, save, care and assist to be established immediately
Death of a pupil or member of staff	• Critical response planning team meet as soon as possible following incident • Plan made to ensure emotional well-being of staff, pupils and parents. Plan for informing staff and children. Plan for media involvement.	Executive Principal, Head of School/ Critical incident team

	Organise/ plan for any counselling following the event	
Death or serious injury on a school trip	- Inform – Get help! Once help has arrived, contact emergency services and the academy. Staff at the academy will contact parents/ next of kin - Save – administer first aid, establish a contact point with the emergency services, travel with casualties to hospital and complete accident forms - Care - keep a record of witnesses, keep others informed of situation, arrange for non-casualties to move to a different location if necessary and care for relatives arriving at school - Assist – assist carer and first aider when necessary Following the event - Record the incident in First Aid Log - RIDDOR if required - Evaluate response to the critical incident following the event - Offer counselling should any staff, children or parents require	Trip leader – to be recorded on evolve risk assessment
Epidemic in school or community	- If the epidemic is a reportable illness inform school nurse - Take advice from health/ school nurse on how to manage the epidemic - If the academy needs to be closed, the decision should be made by the Principal in consultation with members of the critical incident team. This should be done by telephone where possible to ensure that the epidemic is managed	Executive Principal, Head of School/ Critical incident team
Fire	- In the event of a fire, sound the alarm - Follow Fire Evacuation Policy	Executive Principal, Head of School and fire wardens
Bomb threat	- In the event of a bomb threat, record all information given - Contact emergency services - As many members of the critical incident team as possible to convene and make a plan - Evacuate if emergency services advise to do so. In the event of evacuation for bomb scare, all staff and children must go to Cleve Academy to be registered.	Executive Principal, Head of School / class teachers and Critical incident team See appendix 2 – Bomb threat checklist
A disaster in the community (including need for community shelter in school)	- Critical response planning team meet as soon as possible following incident - Plan made to ensure emotional well-being of staff, pupils and parents. - Plan for informing staff and children. Plan for media involvement. - Should school become refuge point, ensure safety of all children. Parents of children to go to designated classrooms of youngest child. Any community members without children at school to take refuge in the hall. - Organise/ plan for any counselling following the event	Executive Principal, Head of School / Critical incident team
A civil disturbance or terrorist requiring 'lockdown'	This will ensure that pupils, staff and visitors are safe in situations where there is a hazard in the school grounds or outside the school in the near vicinity. A lockdown is implemented when there are serious security risks for the premises due to, for example, - A reported incident/civil disturbance in the local community (with the potential to pose a risk to staff and pupils in the school); - An intruder on the school site (with the potential to pose a risk to staff and pupils); - A warning being received regarding a risk locally, of air pollution (smoke plume, gas cloud etc);	Staff Roles: 1. School administrator to ensure that their office is locked and police called if necessary. 2. Executive Principal, Head of School or site supervisors lock

	• A major fire in the vicinity of the school; • The close proximity of a dangerous dog roaming loose. Notification and procedures for Lockdown Staff will be notified that lock down procedures are to take place immediately on hearing the air horn blown continuously. Procedures: Follow the CLOSE procedure: • Close all windows and doors • Lock up • Out of sight and minimise movement • Stay silent and avoid drawing attention • Endure. Be aware you may be in lock down for some time See lockdown checklist (Appendix 3) The above signal will activate a process of children being ushered into the school building as quickly as possible and the locking of the school's classrooms offices, connecting doors and all outside doors/ shutters where it is possible to remain safe. At the given signal, the children remain in the room they are in and the staff will ensure the windows and doors are closed/locked and screened where possible and children are positioned away from possible sightlines from external windows/doors. Lights, Smart boards and computer monitors to be turned off. Mobile phones are put on silent mode. Children or staff not in class for any reason will proceed to the nearest occupied classroom and remain with that class and class teacher e.g. children using toilets when lockdown procedure is engaged. If practicable staff should notify the front pastoral/ reception by phone that they have entered lock down and identify those children not accounted for. NO ONE SHOULD MOVE ABOUT THE SCHOOL • Staff to support children in keeping calm and quiet. • Staff to remain in lock down positions until informed by key staff e.g. Senior Management Team, Chair of Governors or Office Staff in person that there is an all clear. • As soon as possible after the lock down teachers return to their classrooms and conduct a register and notify the reception immediately of any pupils not accounted for. Communication with parents • If necessary parents will be notified as soon as it is practical to do so via the school's established communication network – text • Parents will be told: '..the school is in a full lockdown situation. During this period the switchboard and entrances will be un-manned, external doors locked and nobody allowed in or out...' • Depending on the type and severity of the incident, parents may be asked NOT to collect their children from school as it may put them and their child at risk. • Pupils will not be released to parents during a lock down. • Parents will be asked not to call school as this may tie up emergency lines.	the school's front doors and entrances. 3. Individual teachers/ TAs lock/close classroom door(s) and windows. Nearest adult to check exit doors. See Appendix 3 – Lockdown Checklist
--	--	---

	• If the end of the day is extended due to the lock down, parents will be notified and will receive information about the time and place pupils can be picked up from office staff or emergency services. • A letter to parents will be sent home on the nearest possible day following any serious incident to inform parents of context of lockdown and to encourage parents to reinforce with their children the importance of following procedures in these very rare circumstances. Lock down drills Lock down practices will take place at least once a year to ensure everyone knows exactly what to do in such a situation. Monitoring of practices will take place and staff debriefed for positive reinforcement or to identify required improvements.	
--	--	--

Post incident care and support

- Post-incident care is aimed at helping individuals to understand their feelings following an emergency and to identify sources of future support. The overall aim of the support is to help people in a way that will reduce the possibility of them developing post-traumatic stress disorder.
- It is worth giving some thought to how the topics of loss, bereavement, risks/safety and change are covered in the curriculum. Schools where these topics are discussed openly, and treated as normal life events, are likely to find it easier to cope when a difficult or tragic incident occurs.
- Remember to consult with parents following an incident. It is important to communicate with parents of pupils who have been involved, and ensure that their needs and wishes are taken into account.
- The Education Psychology Services will provide appropriate care and support to those affected by a major incident in the school community. Dependent on the scale and nature of the incident the Crisis Support Team could be deployed to support the work of the Education Psychology Services.

Evaluation and review

Following any critical incident, there should be an evaluation of the implementation of the policy. This policy and the procedures will be reviewed annually as a part of the School's Health and Safety cycle.

Appendix 1: Log Sheet

Incident:	
Location of incident:	

[illegible]

Appendix 2: Bomb threat checklist

Action to be taken	✓ when complete Notes
Stay calm	
For threats made by telephone	
Make a note of: - the exact time of the call - the caller's sex and approximate age - any accent the person has, or any distinguishing feature about their voice eg speech impediment, state of drunkenness etc - any distinguishable background noise	
When they have finished the message, try to ask as many of the following questions as you can, being cautious to avoid provoking the caller: - Where is the bomb? - What time is it due to go off? - What kind of bomb is it? - What does it look like? - What will cause it to explode? - Why are you doing this?	
Dial 1471 - you may get the details of where the phone call was made from, especially in the case of a hoax caller	
For threats made by email or text	
- Do not reply to, forward or delete the message - Note the sender's email address or username/user ID for social media applications - Preserve all web log files for your organisation to help the police investigation (as a guide, 7 days prior to the threat message and 48 hours after)	
Then for all threats	
Report the call/ email to the police and the Principal/nominated deputy immediately. In the extremely unlikely event that there was a codeword with the message, and the location of the bomb was given as a location other than the school, follow the same procedure - report the call immediately to the police, and then notify the Principal	

Appendix 3: Procedures for handling bomb threats

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/bomb-threats-guidance/procedures-for-handling-bomb-threats>

1. Introduction

The vast majority of bomb threats are hoaxes designed to cause alarm and disruption. As well as the rare instances of valid bomb threats, terrorists may also make hoax bomb threat calls to intimidate the public, businesses and communities, to draw attention to their cause and to mislead police. While many bomb threats involve a person-to-person phone call, an increasing number are sent electronically using email or social media applications.

No matter how ridiculous or implausible the threat may seem, all such communications are a crime and should be reported to the police by dialling 999

It is important that potential recipients - either victims or third-parties used to pass the message - have plans that include how the information is recorded, acted upon and passed to police.

1.1 The bomb threat message

Bomb threats containing accurate and precise information, and received well in advance of an actual attack, are rare occurrences. Precise motives for hoaxing are difficult to determine but may include revenge, extortion, a desire to impress, or a combination of these and other less understandable motives. The vast majority of cases are hoaxes and the intent is social engineering, to cause disruption, fear and/or inconvenience the victim.

1.2 Communication of the threat

A bomb threat can be communicated in a number of different ways. The threat is likely to be made in person over the telephone; however, it may also be a recorded message, communicated in written form, delivered face-to-face or, increasingly, sent by email or social media (e.g. Twitter or Instagram, etc.). A threat may be communicated via a third-party, i.e. a person or organisation unrelated to the intended victim and identified only to pass the message.

1.3 Immediate steps if you receive a bomb threat communication

Any member of staff with a direct telephone line, mobile phone, computer or tablet etc., could conceivably receive a bomb threat. Such staff should, therefore, understand the actions required of them as the potential first response to a threat message.

If you receive a telephone threat you should:

- stay calm and listen carefully
- have immediate access to a checklist on key information that should be recorded (see bomb threat checklist - attached)
- if practical, keep the caller talking and alert a colleague to dial 999
- if displayed on your phone, note the number of the caller, otherwise, dial 1471 to obtain the number once the call has ended
- if the threat is a recorded message write down as much detail as possible
- If the threat is received via text message do not reply to, forward or delete the message. Note the number of the sender and follow police advice
- know who to contact in your organisation upon receipt of the threat, e.g. building security/senior manager. They will need to make an assessment of the threat
- If the threat is delivered face-to-face:
 - try to remember as many distinguishing characteristics of the threat-maker as possible
- If discovered in a written note, letter or as graffiti:
 - treat as police evidence and stop other people touching the item
- If the threat is received via email or social media application:
 - do not reply to, forward or delete the message
 - note the sender's email address or username/user ID for social media applications
- preserve all web log files for your organisation to help the police investigation (as a guide, 7 days prior to the threat message and 48 hours after)

- REMEMBER Dial 999 and follow police advice. Seek advice from the venue security/operations manager as soon as possible

1.4 Assessing the credibility of bomb threats

Evaluating the credibility of a threat is a critical task, particularly if the attack being threatened is imminent. This is a tactic used to place additional pressure on decision makers. Police will assess the threat at the earliest opportunity. When specific intelligence is known to police, advice will be issued accordingly; however, in the absence of detailed information, it will be necessary to consider a number of factors:-

- is the threat part of a series? If so, what has happened elsewhere or previously?
- can the location of the claimed bomb(s) be known with precision? If so, is a bomb visible at the location identified?
- considering the hoaxer's desire to influence behaviour, is there any reason to believe their words?
- if the threat is imprecise, could an external evacuation inadvertently move people closer to the hazard?
- is a suspicious device visible?

1.5 Actions to consider

Responsibility for the initial decision making remains with the management of the location being threatened. Do not delay your decision making process waiting for the arrival of police. Police will assess the credibility of the threat at the earliest opportunity. All bomb threats should be reported to the police and their subsequent advice followed accordingly. It is essential that appropriate plans exist, they should be event and location specific. Venue options to manage the risk include:-

External evacuation

Leaving the venue will be appropriate when directed by police and/or it is reasonable to assume the threat is credible, and when evacuation will move people towards a safer location.

It is important to appoint people, familiar with evacuation points and assembly (rendezvous) points, to act as marshals and assist with this procedure. At least two assembly points should be identified in opposing directions, and at least 500 metres from the suspicious item, incident or location. Where possible the assembly point should not be a car park. You may wish to seek specialist advice, which can help to identify suitable assembly points and alternative options as part of your planning. It is essential that evacuation plans exist; they should be event and location specific. Evacuation procedures should also put adequate steps in place to ensure no one else enters the area once an evacuation has been initiated.

The police will establish cordons depending upon the size of an identified suspect device. Always follow police directions and avoid assembly close to a police cordon.

Internal or inwards evacuation ('invacuation')

There are occasions when it is safer to remain inside. Staying in your venue and moving people away from external windows/walls is relevant when it is known that a bomb is not within or immediately adjacent to your building.

If the suspect device is outside your venue, people may be exposed to greater danger if the evacuation route inadvertently takes them past the device. A safer alternative may be the use of internal protected spaces. This type of inwards evacuation needs significant pre-planning and may benefit from expert advice to help identify an internal safe area within your building. These locations should be in your plans.

If the location of the device threatened is unknown, evacuation represents a credible and justifiable course of action.

Decision not to evacuate or inwardly evacuate

This will be reasonable and proportionate if, after an evaluation by the relevant manager(s), the threat is deemed implausible (e.g. a deliberate hoax). In such circumstances police may provide additional advice and guidance relating

to other risk management options. It may be considered desirable to ask staff familiar with the venue to check their immediate surroundings to identify anything out of place, see search considerations below.

Checking your venue for suspicious items - Search considerations

Regular searches of your establishment, proportionate to the risks faced, will enhance a good security culture and reduce the risk of a suspicious item being placed or remaining unnoticed for long periods. Additionally, if you receive a bomb threat and depending upon how credible it is, you may decide to conduct a 'search' for suspicious items. To that end:

- ensure plans are in place to carry out an effective search in response to a bomb threat
- identify who in your venue will coordinate and take responsibility for conducting searches
- initiate a search by messaging over a public address system (coded messages avoid unnecessary disruption and alarm), by text message, personal radio or by telephone cascade
- divide your venue into areas of a manageable size for 1 or 2 searchers. Ideally staff should follow a search plan and search in pairs to ensure nothing is missed
- ensure those conducting searches are familiar with their areas of responsibility. Those who regularly work in an area are best placed to spot unusual or suspicious items
- focus on areas that are open to the public; enclosed areas (e.g. cloakrooms, stairs, corridors, lifts etc.) evacuation routes and assembly points, car parks, other external areas such as goods or loading bays
- develop appropriate techniques for staff to be able to routinely search public areas without alarming any visitors or customers present
- under no circumstances should any suspicious item be touched or moved in any way. Immediately start evacuation and dial 999
- ensure all visitors know who to report a suspicious item to and have the confidence to report suspicious behaviour

Remember: it is vital that regular drills are carried out to ensure all are familiar with bomb threat procedures, routes and rendezvous points. Disabled staff should have personal evacuation plans and be individually briefed on their evacuation procedures. Similarly all visitors should be briefed on evacuation procedures and quickly identified and assisted in the event of a threat.

Familiarising through testing and exercising will increase the likelihood of an effective response to an evacuation and aid the decision making process when not to evacuate/invacuate.

1.6 Media and communication

Avoid revealing details about specific incidents to the media or through social media without prior consultation with police. Do not provide details of the threat, the decision making process relating to evacuation (internal or external) or why a decision not to evacuate was taken.

Releasing details of the circumstances may:

- be an objective of the hoaxer and provide them with a perceived credibility
- cause unnecessary alarm to others
- be used by those planning to target other venues
- elicit copycat incidents
- adversely affect the subsequent police investigation

For further information visit www.nactso.gov.uk or www.cpni.gov.uk

Appendix 4: Lockdown Checklist

Nominated person Responsibility	Executive Principal, Head of School
Initial contact with the emergency services	Executive Principal, Head of School
Nominated person to ensure doors are locked	• Front entrance: office staff • Nursery exits: Kirsty Dodsworth • Reception exits: Elle Colgan • Yr 1 door: Kate Whittaker • Yr 2 door: Suzanne Holt/Lesley Bebbington • Yr 3/4 door: Sue Storr • Yr 5/6 door: Jodie Watson/Ben Cadman • Staff room and Busy Bees: Nina McCulloch
Liaison with parents	School Business Manager or designated member of the office staff
Pupil control	Kelly Robinson
Signals	An air horn will be blown continuously for 30 seconds
Important numbers	• Academy: 01472698185 • Enquire Learning Trust: 01924792960 • Clee Academy: 01472 582310 • Anglian Water, 08457 919155, @AnglianWater • BBC Radio Humberside, Tune in to 95.9FM or 1485AM, @RadioHumberside • East Midlands Travel Line (North and North East Lincolnshire), @TravelineEM • Environment Agency, 0845 988 1188 (Floodline), @EnvAgency • Fire & Rescue (Non Emergency), (01482) 565333, @humbersidefire • Gas (24 Hour emergency service and gas escape), 0800 111 999, @nationalgriduk • Highways England, @HighwaysEngland • Maritime & Coastguard Agency, (01262) 672317, @coastguardNE • Met Office, 0370 900 0100, @metoffice • National Rail Enquiries, 08457 48 49 50, @nationalrailenq • NHS Choices (24 hour confidential health advice and information), 111, @NHSChoices • Northern Power Grid (24 hour emergency service), 0800 375675, @Northpowergrid • Police (Non Emergency), 101, @Humberbeat
Checklist	
1	Air horn blown continuously
2	All pupils inside?
3	Entrance points secure? • Front entrance: office staff • Nursery exits: Kirsty Dodsworth • Reception exits: Elle Colgan • Yr 1 door: Kate Whittaker • Yr 2 door: Suzanne Holt/Lesley Bebbington • Yr 3/4 door: Sue Storr • Yr 5/6 door: Jodie Watson/Ben Cadman • Staff room and Busy Bees: Nina McCulloch
4	Emergency services contacted by Executive Principal, Head of School
5	Staff members take action to increase protection from further danger; • Block access points. • Sit on the floor, under tables or against the wall. • Keep out of sight and draw curtains to avoid detection. • Put mobile phones on silent

	• Turn off lights and computers. • Stay away from windows and doors. • Ensure that all pupils and staff are aware of an exit point in case an intruder manages to gain access or the room becomes unsafe.
6	• Pupil and staff register completed • Missing children and staff accounted for
7	Remain inside the classroom until the all clear signal has been given or unless told to evacuate by the emergency services. All clear signal when staff hear 'all clear' on internal walkie talkie system.