



Critical Incident Policy

Approved by:

Date: **October 2025**

Print: R.Lonsdale

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Ratified by Governors:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S. Bisset (c/s)', is written over a light grey rectangular background.

Date: **October 2025**

Print: **S. Bisset**

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Introduction

As part of our Safeguarding and Health & Safety arrangements in school, all staff and children need to be aware that in certain rare circumstances, we may need to follow a 'critical incident or lockdown' procedure to ensure that all children, staff and visitors are safe and secure. These circumstances are most likely to relate to an event or hazard which is taking place outside the school building, posing a risk or threat to the school community, and warranting a 'critical incident or lockdown' procedure. This procedure will be implemented where there may be a serious or potentially serious risk to the school community such as:

- Serious weather conditions
- A dangerous animal (e.g. dog, swarm of insects etc) on site
- An intruder on site
- A major fire or chemical spillage in the vicinity

In addition to our normal site security arrangements, in such circumstances it may be necessary to implement a PARTIAL or FULL LOCKDOWN.

The need to initiate such procedures and the chances of such incidents occurring will be minimised by the vigilant and consistent implementation of our day-to-day site security procedures by all staff.

Partial lockdown

- This may be because of a reported incident to the site or an occurrence that is happening within the site's premises.
- Civil disturbance in the local community with the potential to pose a risk to staff and children in the site.
- It may also be a result of a warning being received from a recognised emergency service regarding the risk of air pollution etc.

Full lockdown

- Full lockdown signifies an immediate threat to the site and may be an escalation of a partial lockdown or a spontaneous event in or near to the premises.

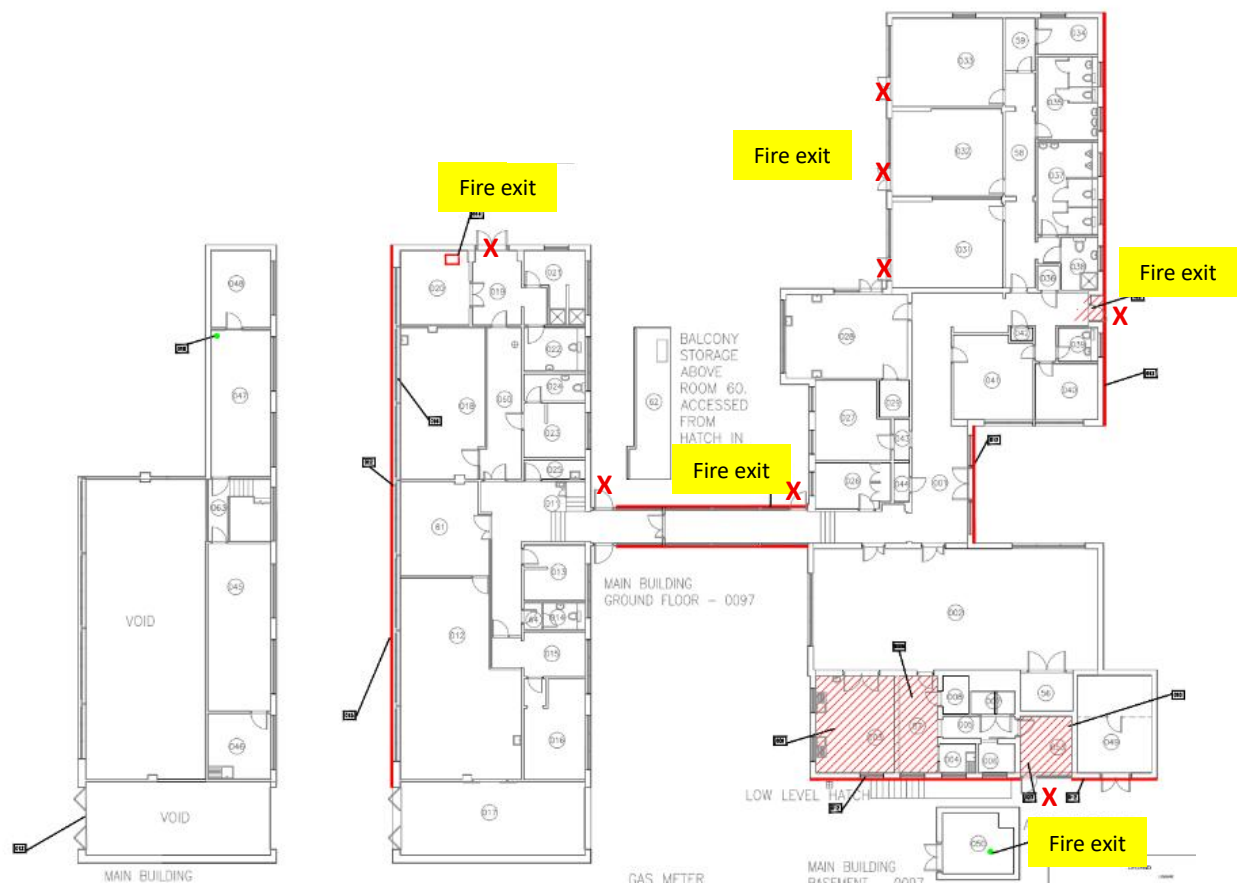
Procedures

Responsibilities

The Head of School, Andrew Haughey, will take overall responsibility for managing any critical incident or lockdown procedure. In his absence, members of the Senior Leadership Team – Rebecca Lonsdale and Emma Marsden – will assume this role. They will coordinate communication with staff and external agencies such as emergency services.

Staff will be notified of a lockdown verbally through lockdown specific words. All staff must be familiar with this policy and understand the importance of calm, clear communication and supervision of pupils during any such event.

School floor plan



Initial notification

PARTIAL LOCKDOWN – ‘Code Purple’

A Partial Lockdown is activated when there is a potential threat outside the building (e.g., nearby incident, stray animal).

During a Code Purple:

- All pupils and staff remain inside the building.
- External doors and windows are secured.
- Outdoor activities are stopped and everyone returns indoors calmly.
- Normal internal activities may continue unless advised otherwise.
- All pupils and staff are located through radio communication
- Await further instruction from SLT.

Once all pupils, staff and visitors are safe, the senior staff will conduct an ongoing risk assessment and inform all supervising staff of the next steps by direct contact.

Staff await further instructions.

If required, Emergency Services will be contacted.

FULL LOCKDOWN – ‘CLOSE Procedure’

A Full Lockdown is initiated when there is a direct threat inside or very near the school premises. The CLOSE acronym outlines immediate actions:

C – Close all windows and doors and secure them.

L – Lock up the room and stay out of sight.

O – Out of sight and minimise movement.

S – Stay silent and avoid drawing attention.

E – Endure. Be prepared to stay in place until given the all-clear.

During a Full Lockdown:

- Windows secured and blinds drawn
- Internal classroom doors possible closed and if needed barricaded / locked
- Lights, screens, and equipment are turned off.
- All external building doors are made secure
- Staff ensure pupils are safe, calm, and out of sight.
- Emergency services are contacted
- Class registers and staff list are checked, if possible, office updated and missing children or staff reported
- No one leaves the building unless directed by emergency services.
- Staff await further instruction, which will be delivered in person or via staff email as appropriate
- If possible, staff keep personal phones, to receive internal communications
- Communication with parents or media is handled by the Head of School.

Intruder or live threat in the building – CODE BLUE

If an intruder is identified within the school, a Code Blue will be announced. Staff will initiate immediate lockdown or evacuation, depending on the nature of the threat. Safety and calm leadership are paramount. All communication will take place through radio.

If a dangerous intruder has entered the building, and an immediate evacuation is required, staff will activate the fire alarm using the nearest call point.

In this situation, the aim will be to ensure children and staff are safe to leave the building as quickly and calmly as possible, mustering to the back of the site and close to the main site exit. As with all live situations, an alternative procedure may need to be followed, and in this situation, school leaders may be advised by emergency services. With a Code Blue Evacuation, children and staff will be directed to the nearest fire exit and external muster point to the back of school, before awaiting further instruction.

If a Code Blue CLOSE procedure is necessary – moving the children and staff to the nearest internally secured space because evacuation is not a viable option. Staff should then undertake the **FULL LOCKDOWN CLOSE PROCEDURE**, locking both classroom doors and remaining vigilant for further

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- E – Endure. Be prepared to stay in place until given the all-clear.

Communication between parents and the school site

Site lockdown procedure and arrangements for communicating with parents will be shared via the school's website. Should a lockdown occur developments should be communicated with parents/carers as soon as possible under agreement with the emergency services and the headteacher. Parents will naturally be concerned, anxious and all accurate information releases will assist to alleviate undue anxiety.

Parents and carers should be given enough information to enable them to understand the potential outcomes and when possible, time frames so they can;

- Be reassured that the site and emergency services understand their concern for their child's welfare and everything possible is being completed to ensure their safety.
- Parents and carers must be made aware to refrain from directly calling the schools office.
- Parents and carers must refrain from coming straight to school as they may interfere with the emergency services access and may put others in danger.
- Parents and carers must wait patiently until a safe and satisfactory outcome has been achieved and agreed by all parties, where a designated safe area will be identified for the safe handing over of their children.

During the initial "breaking news" of the incident it is vital that all parents are reassured regarding the welfare and safety to their children is paramount and that the matter is being dealt with by the

emergency services and NYC jointly to resolve the matter as soon as possible with little impact to the children and the wider community. However it must also be stressed that at this time “the site is in a full lockdown procedure, the office will be unmanned, external doors will be locked and no person allowed in or out of the school until further notice”

Lockdown practice and simulation

Craven PRS will conduct at least one partial lockdown drill per term. Each practice will occur at a different time of day to ensure preparedness. Records of drills will be kept in the school’s Health and Safety file. A Full Lockdown scenario will be simulated at least once a year.

Bomb threat and critical evacuation procedures

If a bomb threat is received by phone, the recipient must keep the caller on the line, remain calm, and record as much information as possible using the Bomb Threat Checklist (Appendix 1). The Head of School or SLT must be informed immediately. Emergency services will be contacted via 999.

If evacuation is required, this will be decided by the Head of School in consultation with emergency services. Staff and pupils will proceed to the designated assembly point, unless directed otherwise for safety reasons.

Threat received by telephone

- Keep calm
- Keep the caller talking
- Never hang up on the caller
- Do not investigate the location of the device yourself

Notify the Headteacher or the senior person in charge immediately by doing the following

Indicate that you have received a bomb threat and give:

- Your name
- Outline brief details of what has been said.
- Keep your telephone line clear and await further instructions; you may be telephoned for further clarification.

Threat received by email

Immediately notify the Headteacher/senior person in charge outlining details of the bomb threat.

The email containing the threat should not be forwarded or deleted.

The Information should be copied using "Print Screen" or the "Snipping Tool" and forwarded in a new email to the Headteacher/senior person in charge.

Notify the police using the emergency telephone number.

Bomb threat alarm

On notification from the Headteacher or the senior person in charge, if they suspect it is a real threat, the caretaker (or admin staff member) in charge will activate the fire alarm using the nearest control panel. **The school is trained to respond with a full evacuation on hearing this alarm.**

Suspicious packages or postal items

Staff handling mail must remain vigilant for unusual or suspicious items. Indicators may include

excessive weight, strange odours, protruding wires, or foreign postmarks. Any suspicious item should be isolated, and the Head of School notified immediately. Do not attempt to open or move the item.

Staff members should consider:

Is the package hidden or does it appear to be simply left behind as lost property?

Is it clearly suspicious e.g. visible batteries, wire, tape etc?

Whether or not it is typical of the environment in which it is found (e.g. a carrier bag left in the entrance hall).

Whether there has been a specific threat to the school or to the local authority (LA) or community.

Staff procedures for handling post

Generally, the school community is considered a relatively low-risk target for suspicious postal items. We may at times receive advice from the police if the level of threat has increased.

Staff members whose job it is to routinely handle post should be alert to possible risks and should ensure they are familiar with the possible indicators of a suspicious package such as a letter bomb. Line managers must ensure that these staff members are aware of updates to specific guidance and procedures and should ensure that:

- The office that receives mail has ready access to hand-washing facilities, including soap and detergent.
- Members of the office staff are aware of usual patterns of deliveries and types of item
- Members of the office and caretaking are briefed of any unusual deliveries.

Letter bombs

'Letter bombs' may be explosive or incendiary; or chemical, biological or radiological (CBR). If we receive a suspicious delivery, it is unlikely we will know which type it is, so procedures have to take into account all eventualities.

If any member of the team finds a piece of mail they believe to be suspicious they should:

Report immediately to Headteacher/senior person in charge

Notify the police using the emergency telephone number.

Isolate the suspicious package away from public areas.

If possible, photograph the package.

We advise all staff when routinely handling mail to:

Open post with letter openers or other implements

Open packages with the minimum movement

Not to blow into envelopes or shake out the contents.

Keep their hands away from their noses and mouths while opening mail.

Always wash their hands after opening mail

Members of staff are aware that, should packages suspected of containing biological, chemical, or radiological material ever be received, they should ideally be placed in a double sealed bag.

School Emergency Response Plan

Procedures to be followed in the event of an evacuation of the building, or an intruder entering the premises.

- Fire alarm: follow fire evacuation procedure, i.e. leave the building by the nearest exit and assemble at assembly point in the playground.
- All staff to be aware of code for side gate – Code displayed in staff workroom
- Evacuation away from the building: the assembly point is The Skipton Hotel, Keighley Road, Skipton. Office manager to collect pupils' register clip board, pupil register and staff/visitor evacuation list.
- Intruder on the premises: staff and pupils to remain in the location they are in or, if in the vicinity of the intruder, to enter the nearest room with a maglock covered door. Blinds to be closed, if safe to do so, lights switched off, stay low and away from doors and windows and ensure maglock is on.

Radio's: to be used sparingly to avoid confusion and talking over each other.

- During fire evacuation: confirm areas which have been swept to clear the building and to communicate with staff at the front of the building. Radio 'all persons clear' Once registers checked.
- To initiate evacuation procedure to be further away from the building: "Code: Skipton Hotel".

Emergency services

It is vital that the communication lines remain open to the emergency services at all times, they are best placed to offer advice as the situation develops. A decision may be taken to cordon off the premises partially, or as a whole, by the emergency services. This will be dependent on the severity of the incident that has led to a lockdown procedure taking effect. The emergency services will support the headteacher and NYC in the decision making processes and the timing of communication to parents, carers, the press etc..

Should a prolonged lockdown procedure occur, the NYC and its partners have the capacity to provide humanitarian assistance by establishing a reception centre for family and friends outside of the cordoned area and other pre-determined facilities.

Post-Lockdown

Further assistance will be provided by NYC and its partners in dealing with the effects of the incident to all persons involved.

Appendix 1

BOMB THREAT CHECKLIST

1. Remain calm and talk to the caller
2. Don't hang up
3. Keep the caller talking for as long as possible
4. Note the caller's number if displayed on your phone
5. If you are able to, record the call

Actions on Call:

Caller's Number

Time of call

Date of call

Call reported to

Time

Date of report

Information on caller if given (e.g. sex, age, race)

Length of call

Write down the exact wording of the threat:

Threat language

- Irrational
- Well Spoken

- A message read by threat maker
- Incoherent
- Taped message
- Abusive/foul
- Other

Caller's Voice

- Calm
- Angry
- Excited
- Slow
- Rapid
- Soft
- Loud
- Laughing
- Crying
- Normal
- Distinct
- Slurred
- Raspy

- Intoxicated
- Stuttering
- Lisp
- Cracking Voice
- Deep
- Ragged
- Clearing throat
- Disguised
- Accent
- Deep breathing
- Familiar – if so, who does it sound like?

Background**Noises:**

- Street noise
- Crockery
- Voices
- PA system
- Music
- Motor noises
- Public phone
- Factory machinery
- Animal noises
- Clear
- Static
- House noises

- Office machinery
- Local call
- Aircraft

Report Immediately to the headteacher. Do not speak with anyone else. Call 999 and await further instruction.

Appendix 2 Email threat checklist

ACTIONS TO BE TAKEN ON RECEIPT OF A BOMB THREAT SENT VIA EMAIL OR SOCIAL MEDIA

1. **DO NOT** reply to, forward or delete the message.
2. Keep the message and if possible print it out and give it to the police.
3. If sent via email note the address.
4. If sent via social media what application has been used and what is the username/ID?
5. Dial 999 and follow Police guidance
6. Preserve all web log files for your organisations to help the police investigation (as a guide, 7 days prior to the threat message and 48 hours after).

| Signature | Print name | Date |
|-----------|------------|------|
| | | |

SAVE AND PRINT – HAND COPY TO POLICE AND SECURITY/CO-ORDINATING MANAGER

Retention period: 7 years
MP925/10

| | |
|---|--|
| If the threat is delivered face-to-face : | try to retain 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 |

Appendix 3

NYC Critical Incident Support

Sometimes schools are faced with having to deal with devastating events which occur on or near the school premises and which involve or are witnessed by pupils or staff. Such events, often occurring outside our normal life experiences are referred to as "critical incidents".

So what is a critical incident?

A critical incident can be defined as an event that is outside the range of everyday events, for example, the unexpected death of a child/young person or a member of staff. A near-death experience, serious accident or sad event for pupils or staff could also fall into this definition. Such incidents are likely to leave staff and pupils shocked, distressed and traumatised. It is helpful in these instances to be prepared with an effective response protocol and to be aware of the Local Authority support which is available and how to access such assistance.

The Role of the Children and Young People's Service

Remember, if an emergency does occur, you are not alone. Staff within the Children and Young People's Service and elsewhere in the County Council have a lot of experience in managing emergencies and providing support. We have on-call arrangements, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, to help you should you need it.

What do we do?

Our role is to support the Headteacher and staff of any North Yorkshire school or setting in the event of a critical incident, when invited to do so by the Headteacher/Manager.

What kind of help can we give?

We will try to:

- help school/setting staff deal with the initial shock of crisis situations
- support Senior Management Team with the re-establishment of normal routines
- help identify vulnerable individuals - staff and pupils
- provide information about other support services and suggest appropriate resources
- provide time-limited support to the organisation or to individuals within it
- provide information on loss and bereavement that is appropriate to age and stage of development

How can you contact us?

In the event of a crisis or emergency situation being reported to the Corporate Director - Children and Young People's Service, support from the Incident Support Team will be offered if it is felt that this is required. In the first instance:

Telephone 01609 532234

What happens next?

Support Coordinators from the Education Psychology Service may speak to you in the first instance. They are available on the telephone to discuss relevant issues with Headteachers/Managers. The roles and responsibilities of the team and of the school/setting will be discussed with you prior to any involvement. If required, they will then contact other members of the Team who will offer support as required.

Who are the other members of the team?

Other members of the Team include Educational Psychologists, Early Help workers and other colleagues with a background in support and counselling. Help is also available from colleagues in the CYPS Health and Safety Risk Management Service and other parts of the County Council such as the Communications Unit, Emergency Planning and the Major Incident Response Team.

What action should I take in the event of a critical incident in school?

Step 1 - assess the situation.

Step 2 - ensure that staff and pupils are not in imminent danger.

Step 3 - call for support:

- **Dial 999, if appropriate**
- During office hours call the NYC Children and Young People's Service on: **01609 532234** to inform them of the situation and request help, if required. You can leave a voicemail message if the line is engaged and a colleague will return your call as soon as possible.

Out of office hours

- call the NYC Emergency Planning Unit on the **Confidential number (which can be found in the secure area of this website)**. Inform them of the situation and request help, if required. They will contact the on-call Assistant Director from the Children and Young People's Service

These numbers should only be used in an emergency. Do not give them to the press, parents or members of the public.

Step 4 - Ensure that you

- Log all communications and actions.
- Assemble the School Emergency Management Team from pre-identified staff (see Part 1) and relieve them of their normal duties.
- Refer to the list of emergency contact numbers in appendix 20 of the School Emergency Response Guide for additional support, if required.
- Where possible, avoid closing the school and try to maintain normal routines.