

## **Emergency Procedure / Critical Incident Plan – BLC International**

Most incidents are covered in other policy documents.

However, should there be a major incident that does not already have a procedure for dealing with it, the following should be adopted but will depend on the nature and circumstances of the incident.

### **1 Accident involving students whilst on a school trip (including a road accident)**

#### **Immediate action (by staff on the trip)**

- Remove students from danger if possible/appropriate.
- Contact emergency services.
- Inform school office and ensure accurate information is given.

#### **Immediate action (by BLC International office):**

- The school office will inform the Centre Director immediately.
- The Centre Director will assume responsibility for co-ordinating/contacting all relevant parties as necessary and will appoint a member of the team to be the 'incident co-ordinator' at the school who may be designated to carry out some of these responsibilities.
- The school office will ask one of Activity Leaders on the trip to be 'point of contact' and ensure that all details received are checked - confirming which students are involved in the incident, which police station/hospital is dealing with the incident/accident and clearly repeating the ID number, first name and surname of children whose parents need to be contacted.
- School office and 'point of contact' will agree on how children can be brought home as soon as possible based on the circumstances – including any advice from the emergency services.
- Staff (on the trip) NOT to contact anyone by phone/text or social media unless asked to do so. This is to avoid incorrect information be passed on to parents before the school has made contact, or alerts about the incident/accident to spread on social media.

#### **Action as soon as possible:**

- The school office is responsible for contacting families / agencies / homestay providers of those involved.
- If the school office cannot get through, a message should be left to ring the school, no other information should be left.
- Where possible use the school mobile to make outgoing calls to leave the landline free for incoming calls. If necessary, the Centre Director can provide other mobile/landline facilities.
- If there is death or serious injury the police will coordinate contact procedures (possibly with a member of staff).
- Only factual information should be given to those contacted.
- The school office will make a careful note of those who still need to be informed. If additional support is required another, fully briefed, member of staff should be enlisted to help.
- When involved parties ring back, it is imperative that staff are sure that they are speaking to the correct person (ask for student's date of birth BEFORE discussing any information).
- If anyone not directly involved in the incident wants information (ie the media) then the response must be 'no comment at this time'.

- The Centre Director will draft a statement based on facts that are known. Only known facts should be given, the school cannot speculate on the causes and consequences.
- Once ALL parents who need to be contacted have been directly spoken to by the school, the Centre Director will inform others by email, using the information given in the statement.
- Press or media will not be allowed onto school premises.
- A statement will only be released to the press or media through the school office (with permission of the Centre Director and in consultation with the emergency services if appropriate).
- If necessary, the school will provide an assembly point. Staff who have been fully briefed may be asked to come into the school to provide refreshments and further support.
- Over the days that follow, it may be considered appropriate to:
  - Allow students time to talk about the incident (may be necessary to hold a debriefing meeting led by an experienced outside professional).
  - Identify high risk students and members of staff.
  - Express sympathy (staff may wish to visit those who may be in hospital or bereaved)
  - Monitor the effects on all involved.
  - Organise further counselling if necessary.

## **2 An incident on the school premises during school hours which may give rise to injury by remaining inside the building**

- Examples - The threat of an explosion, bomb alert, earth tremor, etc.
- The Centre Director will be informed immediately, or the Centre Director's Appointed Person (AP)
- The Centre Director/AP assess the situation. The fire drill/evacuation procedure will be followed if injury is considered likely to result if students and staff were to stay inside or within the vicinity of the buildings.

## **3 An incident or threat of injury which could be heightened by remaining outside the building (including 'lock down' procedure).**

- Examples - Alert raised in the area due to escape of chemical gasses, escape or sighting of a dangerous animal, sighting of person in the vicinity of the school carrying or suspected of carrying a weapon, threat of terrorist attack, etc
- The Centre Director/AP will be informed immediately.
- The Centre Director/AP will evaluate the situation. If it is considered the incident raises a real and possible threat to the safety of the students and/or staff, then they will operate the following 'lock down' procedure:

### **Lock down procedure**

- The Centre Director/AP will raise the alarm by shouting 'LOCK DOWN', making sure that all students / staff on the school site have heard the alarm call.
- Staff will immediately gather their students as quickly as possible and return to their classroom. The teacher responsible for each class will ensure they have accounted for all the students in their class.
- The teacher will ensure all windows are shut and all access doors are locked or bolted.

- Where possible students and staff should gather away from windows and ensure any blinds are lowered. If possible, a member of staff should get their mobile phone – but not if this means leaving the children or leaving the safety of the building.
- Staff should remain with their students and await the ‘all clear’ from the Centre Director/AP or follow any further verbal instructions from the emergency services.
- Whilst the ‘lock down’ alert is being given the school office will immediately ring 999 and alert the emergency services. The school office will ensure that registers are available should they be needed and that the Centre Director (and others on-site) who have not been included in the classroom lockdowns will be given access to the office. The door should be locked, and vigilance kept helping minimise the danger from the threat.
- The Centre Director/AP will liaise with the emergency services to decide on what action to take next.

**On conclusion of the incident:**

- If the incident is concluded as a ‘false alarm’ - the school’s normal timetable will resume. The School Office will circulate an email to let them know that a ‘lock-down’ procedure was carried out at the school and there should be no cause for concern.

**4 Disaster in the Community**

- Examples -Fire, explosion, major road accident, civil disturbance, terrorism, not directly involving the school site or students/staff at the school.
- If the incident happens within the proximity of the school, it may be necessary to remove students/staff from any danger (use evacuation/lock-down procedures)
- Depending on the circumstances, it may be necessary to contact the emergency services.
- If the incident happens outside of the immediate vicinity of the school accurate information should be obtained.
- If appropriate Inform students of the incident. This should be told simply and without fabrication.
- Keep in-coming phone line clear so that emergency services can provide updates.
- If it is necessary to keep students behind after school, students will stay with their class teacher and parents informed accordingly. Emergency services will advise.
- Attempt to stick to normal school routines as soon as possible.
- Over the days that follow it may be considered appropriate to:
  - Allow students time to talk about the incident (may be necessary to hold a debriefing meeting led by an experienced outside professional);
  - Identify high risk students and members of staff;
  - Express sympathy (staff may wish to visit those who may be in hospital or bereaved);
  - Monitor the effects on all involved
  - Organise further counselling if necessary.

**5. Emergency plan during a virus-related emergency**

- During the emergency the school will remain open unless a decision is made to close (see below).

**The school will:**

- continue operating as normally as possible.
- take hygiene measures to reduce risk of infection (ie hand washing, disposal of tissues, etc)
- Ensure that staff showing signs of infection go home.
- Ensure that students showing signs of infection are isolated and arrangements made for them to be collected by parents or homestay providers and taken home.
- Provide any information requested by Health Authority/Local Authority.

**Parents / Homestay Providers will:**

- Keep students at home if the student or another member of their family or household feels unwell with virus symptoms or has a raised temperature.
- Make sure that any student who has been unwell is fully recovered before they return to school.
- Agree to immediately collect their student from school if requested by the school and ensure that the school has up-to-date emergency contact details.

**The school will close in the following circumstances:**

- If there is advice from Central Government via the local authority that all settings/schools in an area should close
- If there is advice from the Health Authority that an emergency closure of the school is necessary.
- If there is an insufficient number of staff available for the school to remain open.
- If there are no members of the management team available to open the school and allow it to operate as normally as possible; The decision to close the school will be taken by the Centre Director in response to the above conditions.

**If the school closes:**

- Staff should remain at home. Staff may be asked to carry out non-contact work at home.
- A daily updated message will be placed on the telephone to advise parents, homestay providers and agencies of the latest information regarding the closure and the likely re-opening day.
- The period of closure will be kept to the minimum possible time.
- No refund of fees will be made during a period of emergency closure of the school.
- Up to date information will be available on the school website.
- All will be notified of the school's re-opening via email and a recorded message on the school's answerphone - parents are responsible for keeping in daily contact through the school website and checking for email updates.