

# NORTH BIRMINGHAM ACADEMY

## CRISIS POLICY

This policy for [ ] Academy has been adapted from the LA 's Crisis guidelines.

Potential crises include:

- fatality of pupil or staff member
- violence or assault in Academy
- destruction or vandalism of part of building
- pupil or staff member taken hostage
- road, sea or traffic accident involving pupils
- fire or explosion within the building
- involvement of pupils in a disaster in the community
- fatal accident or injuries on Academy journeys or trips
- civil disturbance in the local community
- terrorist incidents

In the event of something like this, there can be three crises to deal with at once:

- the problem itself
- it's impact on the Academy as a community
- the public impact of the event, including how it is reported in the local and national press

An emergency occurs when an individual doubts their capacity to cope with a situation and decides that advice and help is required. This document is NOT intended to cover emergencies the Academy can manage from its own resources, but those where:

- an event threatens the safety of children in the Academy, or;
- a crisis might affect the public reputation of the Academy, and the Principal considers that the Academy will benefit from receiving direct support from the Local Authority.

### Support for an Academy crisis

In the event of a crisis where you want support from the Local Authority ring the 24-hour Crisis Line [ ]

This line should not be given to the press, parents or public wanting information.

What you can expect:

When you ring the Crisis Line brief details will be taken from you to ensure the most appropriate rapid response. The Director will appoint a Crisis Manager, send a Rapid Response Team to the Academy, and convene a Crisis Management Team (including the Principal or Deputy Principal). The Rapid Response Team includes the Press Officer,

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Manager of Specialist Learning Support Services, the Manager of Education Social Work Service and other support staff including Behaviour Support Service. Their role is to liaise closely with the Principal to provide immediate on-site support:-

- helping to handle the press
- helping to inform and/or support parents, pupils and staff
- providing any other practical help required by the Principal
- maintaining close communication with the LA

The Crisis Manager will take overall control of handling LA support for the crisis. He/she will report to the Crisis Management Team immediately information is available and as necessary to make key decisions such as additional staff and/or resources required at the scene:-

- handling of press relations, media interviews, etc.
- ensuring adequate liaison with emergency services, Council Members, Governors, and other Council Departments as appropriate.

### **Support Available**

To summarise, the LA will respond by providing any of the following as required by your Academy:

- administrative back-up to support you at your Academy
- additional communications
- press and media support
- counselling support
- premises and building support

### **PROCEDURE FOR A SERIOUS EMERGENCY AFFECTING YOUR ACADEMY**

This plan aims to cover:

- an event which threatens the safety of children who are members of your Academy; and
- where the Principal considers that the Academy will benefit from receiving direct support from the LA.

### **Responsibilities and organisation**

The Principal:

The Principal or the Deputy in her absence will take charge of the incident on behalf of the Academy.

Senior Management of the Academy - Special Crisis Team:

The senior leadership of the Academy will assist the Principal in managing the incident. These teachers will be relieved of their normal duties by the teaching assistants.

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## **ALERT AND CALL OUT**

The person who first identifies the threat or crisis should contact the Principal immediately.

### **The Principal**

On being alerted, the Principal should:

- make an assessment of the situation
- refer to the list of contact numbers in Appendix 1.
- where necessary, contact the emergency services (Police, Fire, Ambulance)
- if appropriate, alert the LA for information purposes and put it on stand-by
- call together the Academy Senior Leadership Team
- if necessary, call out support from the LA by requesting immediate assistance

### **Action - key tasks**

The Principal

After calling out the emergency services/or the LA, the Principal will:  
Immediately:-

- ensure that accurate factual information is available for those arriving at the scene
- call together, as appropriate the Senior Leadership Team, brief them and allocate responsibility
- ensure that extra support is provided for the Academy office and ensure that a telephone line is available solely for outgoing calls and if necessary, arrange with the LA to obtain additional communications equipment
- liaise with the emergency services
- inform the Chair of Governors

In the short term:-

- arrange with the support of the LA:
  - to inform parents
  - to handle media enquiries
  - arrange briefings for:
    - staff
    - pupils in small groups
  - as far as possible, stick to a normal routine in the Academy, but also arrange, with the support of the LA:
    - for pupils to be reunited with their families
    - debrief for staff and pupils as soon as appropriate
    - plans for attendance at any funerals

In the longer term:-

- help pupils and staff to come back into Academy
- promote discussion in classes

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## **The Academy Senior Leadership Team - Special Crisis Team**

The Principal will:

- call together the Senior Leadership Team at a specified place and time via the walkie talkies
- teaching assistants to take over their classroom duties

The Principal will allocate the following tasks among the Team (in co-operation as necessary with emergency services and the LA):

### **Communications and Records**

- set up and operate a telephone line for out-going calls only, if necessary obtain additional telephone line/mobile telephones from LA
- contact parents - those whose children are involved and others whose children may be upset
- maintain a record system of enquiries and pupils' families contacted Information and Briefings
- compile an accurate situation report of what has happened, keep it up to date and forestall rumours within the Academy by circulating information as appropriate
- carry out briefings for the staff and for pupils

### **Liaison with Incoming Helpers and Visitors**

- co-operate with the emergency services and with the LA 's Rapid Response Team when they arrive at the Academy
- receive Governors, members of the LA and other VIPs who come to the Academy

### **Press and Media Liaison**

- deal with the press and media - in particular facilitate the work of the LA's Press Officer who will come into Academy to help
- identify, if necessary, a separate room for press work

### **Welfare Support**

- receive and co-operate with the LA's Social Work Service who will come to the Academy to help with pupils, staff and parents - provide a room for counselling if necessary
- be aware of relevant multi-cultural and multi-faith issues, in particular funeral customs, and other relevant arrangements

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### **The Rapid Response Team**

On arrival at the Academy, the members of the Rapid Response Team:

- make an immediate assessment of what assistance they should provide
- offer support where it is needed
- brief the Crisis Manager at Municipal Buildings

### **The Crisis Manager:-**

- goes to the Academy affected by the crisis
- offers support to the Principal
- directs the Rapid Response Team
- calls for additional emergency support from other Corporate Departments of the Council, as required

### **STAND-DOWN AND RECOVERY**

When the emergency services have left the Academy and when the media have also gone, the Academy will begin to return to normal.

The Principal will call together the Senior Leadership Team and review - probably in consultation with the Crisis Manager - what continuing action needs to be taken. In particular, the following actions should be considered:

- hold debrief meetings for staff and pupils
- identify high risk pupils and staff
- promote discussion in classes
- identify the need for individual or group treatment and make arrangements as required

### **POST CRISIS SUPPORT**

#### **Critical Incident Stress De-briefing**

Events over several years have highlighted the need for professional support to help Academy staff deal with the aftermath of a traumatic incident. Whilst such events are thankfully rare, it was felt that such a contingency needed to be included. This section deals with the availability of post crisis support.

This support takes the form of Critical Incident Stress De-briefing following a traumatic incident, such as those described in the Introduction. It is aimed at helping individuals to talk about the incident, to give vent to their feelings within a secure framework and to identify sources of future support. The overall aim of the support is to help individuals in a way that will reduce the possibility of the development of posttraumatic stress disorder.

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### **Post traumatic stress disorder**

Children's reactions to loss and bereavement are complex. If they have witnessed or been part of a traumatic event then the emotional and behavioural consequences following such a traumatic event have been described as 'Post Traumatic Stress Disorder' (P.T.S.D.):-

- persistent re-experiencing of the event
- 'survivor' guilt
- persistent avoidance of stimuli associated with the trauma, e.g. the giving up of previous pastimes

### **What [ ] Academy can do to help**

Details of the actions to be taken are described in the booklet 'Wise Before the Event'. In addition, we will consider enlisting the support of outside professionals and the following information will be useful.

### **What the LA can do to help**

Individuals from the Educational Psychology Service and the Education Welfare Service are available to offer:

- consultation to Academy staff to support them in their direct dealings with the situation
- following the immediate need to deal with practicalities and to reinstate a routine, staff may need to talk about the potential needs of the children, or indeed their own.
- direct support following a traumatic event that has affected a group/groups of children and staff within a Academy.

This support offers children structured opportunities over a specified timescale to talk about the incident in a supportive atmosphere, receive feedback and validation of their own feelings and help to come to terms with these.

Contact point: [ ]  
Telephone [ ]

### **Use of local radio and television in emergencies**

From time to time it is important to pass to the public and to parents and children, information of an emergency nature. This may refer to such matters as unexpected Academy closure following fire damage, extreme weather damage, or heating plant failure. In view of the fact that such a service has also been the subject of hoax calls, the radio stations will only accept such messages if the caller identifies himself/herself, gives the name of the Academy and also uses the agreed code-word "BLACKBOARD".

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## APPENDIX 1

### CONTACT NUMBERS

Emergency Services (Police, Fire and Ambulance)

999

Education, Leisure and Cultural Services Department:

[

]

Crisis Line:

[

]

Emergency Department

[

]

Hospital:

[

]

[Type text]

## APPENDIX 2

### Action to be taken on receipt of a bomb threat:-

- Switch on Tape Recorder or Answering Machine (if connected)
- Tell the Caller which Town/District you are answering from
- Record the exact wording of the threat
- Ask these questions:

1. Where is the bomb now?
2. When is it going to explode?
3. What does the bomb look like?
4. What kind of bomb is it?
5. What will cause it to explode?
6. Did you place the bomb?
7. Why?
8. Who do you represent?

- Record the time the call ended
- Where the telephone is equipped with a "Last Number Displayed" facility record the callers telephone number
- Inform the head teacher
- Contact the Police using the Emergency Telephone Number
- Record time informed
- Record the following information once the caller has hung up and the Principal and police have been informed:
  - Time informed
  - Length of call
  - Number at which the call was received

Approved by NBA Governors on: .....

Date of Next Review:.....

Lead Manager: .....

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