



Coleg Llanymddyfri
Llandovery College

Critical Incident Management Policy

April 2018

Objective

The objective of this policy is to assist staff to make effective decisions in the best interest of College pupils, staff and property in extreme circumstances and where necessary to retain or regain control of procedures

Definition of disasters

A disaster will be an event that leads to a major interruption in the normal running of the College. Disasters are extreme circumstances affecting either humans or the physical assets of the College. In some cases disaster will affect both.

Examples

Human	Physical
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Death of a pupil or pupils on or off campus during term time• Death of a member or members of staff on or off campus during term time• Serious injury to pupil, pupils, staff or visitors• National or local disaster causing emotional upset or anxiety• Epidemic• Public scandal caused by pupil or pupils• Public scandal caused by member of members of staff• Other severe damage to the reputation or image of the College• Serious breach of security or attack	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Fire• Serious theft• Flood• Storm damage• Extensive power failure• Serious vandalism• Terrorist attack

Chain of command

The Warden is to be informed of any disaster at any time. The Warden will be responsible for the management of disaster recovery and support unless he delegates authority. Should the Warden be unavailable or involved in the disaster, the decision-making will devolve to any one of the following combinations:

Deputy Warden, Operations Manager, Senior Master
Deputy Warden, Finance Director, Deputy Head (Prep)

Disaster support resources

The following must be available to key personnel and be kept up to date: All staff names, addresses and telephone numbers (land lines and mobiles)

All pupils' names and addresses
Details of next of kin for all pupils and staff
Labels of all staff and pupil addresses
Contact details for all College Governors
Contact details for professional associations such as SHA and teaching unions
Contact details for firms supplying appropriate legal advice
Contact details of College insurance company
Contact details for all emergency services
Contact details for all agencies in support of emergency services
Contact details of counselling services
Media contacts
Details of location of members of SLT during all school holidays
Map of College: divided into zones

Procedure

On report of disaster:

1. Evacuate zones
2. Inform Warden or delegated authority
3. Refer to disaster plan
4. Staff to contact emergency services
5. Attend to injuries
6. Assist emergency services

Communication

The Warden/Deputy Warden will set up an incident management area (main Reception or office area) with dedicated telephone lines, using mobile phones if necessary.

Consideration will be given to establishing separate lines for:

- School
- Press
- Personal Callers

All callers will be given an agreed factual statement from the designated person in charge along with reassurance of action being taken at the incident site.

Pupil and parent data is held on the College database and in paper format in the office area. It is unlikely that an incident would destroy the network and this system.

Communication during an incident may include:

- recording/logging incoming information
- dissemination of incoming information
- contacting parents
- contacting staff
- contacting Governing Body
- liaison with media
- liaison with emergency services

- liaison with other agencies (e.g. social services)

Information on the incident

One of the team will obtain and collate all information about what has happened, such as:

- what has happened
- where and when
- name and contact number of an adult at the incident site
- extent of injuries, numbers and names
- location of injured, name and number of adults present
- location of uninjured, names and number of adults present
- help is required from the College (cash, legal, recovery, language, contacting third parties, extra staff)
- who has been informed
- what has been said
- media involvement

Evacuation

In the event of a boarding House evacuation the person in charge will direct pupils and staff to one of the following areas:

- Performing Arts Centre or Sports Centre
- Other boarding House accommodation with full facilities

Emergency services

The person in charge will ensure that a member of staff meets the emergency services. Once they have arrived it should be acknowledged that ultimately the police can take control; in practice there is likely to be a partnership. The emergency services may need an incident room.

Casualties

Where there are casualties on the campus the Medical Centre or the College database will provide an up-to-date list of disabilities and medical problems. The list might be copied for the ambulance incident manager.

In an emergency and on the advice of a qualified medical practitioner, if parents cannot be contacted quickly, a senior member of staff may need to give medical consent in *loco parentis*. Permission for blood transfusions should not be given to those whose parents have refused permission for such to be given.

Families

Contact will be done quickly and sensitively. If a parent cannot be contacted by telephone it may be necessary to use another parent or guardian to relay information. Any message should relay known information and assurances of appropriate action being taken.

If provision needs to be made for parents to come into the College, the Library would be suitable as a reception centre.

If parents arrive at the College it will need to be decided whether pupils can be allowed home. Pupils affected in some way by the incident should be accompanied home, unless collected by parents or guardians. Staff should be considered for briefing and counselling.

Information from the School

a) Briefing staff and pupils

When an incident occurs in the holiday, consideration will be given to informing staff (including support staff) by letter before their return. For all incidents it will need to be decided which pupils are to be briefed on the incident and by whom. During term time, briefings will be carried out by members of the senior leadership team, with the Warden/Deputy Warden possibly briefing personally particular groups of pupils or particular years.

The first briefing will be given on the day of the incident where possible to quash any rumours or untruths. Where briefings of pupils take place concerning traumatic incidents, staff will be provided with written briefing notes.

Briefings of pupils and staff may contain the following elements:

- factual account of the problem
- details of any arrangements necessary as a result of the problem
- details of help that is available
- information on coping with the press

Pupils should be advised not to talk to the press unless arrangements have been made for them to do so by a member of the senior leadership team. Subsequently briefings may be undertaken on a daily basis on being told what, if anything, is to be communicated to pupils in the way of further briefing. Consideration will be given to providing staff with written briefing notes. Subsequent briefings might advise staff and pupils of sources of available help, e.g. counselling.

b) Provide statement for staff

A formal statement will be prepared. The information in this statement is unlikely to remain confidential and will give necessary facts, an expression of sympathy/concern and details of changes to College procedures if any. A schedule for updating of information will be arranged. Staff will be cautioned about talking to the media or responding to questions from the media.

c) Statement for other parents

A formal statement will be prepared. The information in this statement is unlikely to remain confidential and will give necessary facts, an expression of sympathy/concern and details of changes to College procedures if any. It could be by letter, leaflet or parental meeting. This information is likely to be accessible to the media.

Statement for pupils

This will be done via Houses with particular care taken to protect and support both children close to someone involved with the incident and staff unable to handle the emotions or distress confidently.

d) Sources of help

Staff, pupils and parents may need help in coping with problems. Consideration will be given to contacting the College Counsellor and/or College Chaplain. Outside professional agencies may need to be involved.

Media

Only the Warden or designated person should formally speak to the press. Consideration will be given to briefing the press on a daily basis and to giving them a room in the College. All Reception/administration staff who may be the first contact on dealing with the media need to be briefed on the appropriate responses to questions; this includes always being calm and polite; recording all the details and taking a contact number; reassuring them they will be

contacted and if possible giving a time frame as to when that will be and by whom.

Preparations for a media briefing may include:

- copies background information on the school
- refreshments and a room for press
- an agreed text for release to the media and/or as a script

Advice for talking to the media:

- Be available (especially at night and weekends); reporters work to very tight deadlines
- Decide what is important (say less, better) and prepare a sound bite
- Tell the story quickly, accurately and get key messages across
- Avoid jargon
- Ensure everybody involved has the same story
- Consider the needs of the audience
- Listen to what the reporter knows. Deadlines are tight and although you cannot ask for unlimited time to mull it over you can ask for a few minutes (15 maximum) to research and ring back. It is important to keep this promise
- Present the College's side of the story, even if it is to say this is a very isolated incident
- Before the interview, be clear about the areas you will not discuss, for example confidential information involving child protection
- Respond to 'what and when' questions but beware of 'why and how' questions
- If possible choose your own time to report to the media
- Do not speculate, bluff, mislead or lie. Remember that reporters have access to extensive archive material
- Do not make promises you cannot keep and do not make excuses or blame others
- Do not respond to blind quotes (e.g. "one of your staff tells me....do you agree?") or allow words to be put into your mouth (e.g. "would you agree that...?").
- Do not say "*no comment*": explain why you cannot comment or use "*we are investigating the situation.*"
- Invite reporters inside the College: exterior shots of the College with a reporter outside can give a strong impression the College has something to hide
- Do not ignore the press: deal with it
- On TV dress the part
- On TV and radio it is important that you know who is asking you for comment, who else is taking part and the likely areas of questioning (you will not be given a list of questions)

In times of crisis dealing effectively with the media can prove to be an important damage limitation exercise.

After the incident

Consideration will be given to setting up meetings of pupils and parents seriously affected by traumatic incidents to talk things through and to help one another. The senior leadership team will decide who is to lead such a group. Leaders and groups will need to be assisted by educational psychologists.

Consideration will be given to having staff visit the homes of pupils seriously affected by the incident. This will normally be Housemaster, tutor or designated liaison staff, to pupil or parent

but each visit must be sanctioned by the Warden.

Decisions should be made on whether the incident is to be discussed in The College in a controlled way. If it is, it will be decided how this is to take place. Advice may be sought from an educational psychologist on setting up discussions.

Ideas for handling reactions of pupils, staff and parents may include:

- Informing all staff and giving guidance on how to support and talk to children
- Outlining measures within the college to provide further help for distressed children
- Providing information to families on the kinds of help and support available to them and their children
- Resisting expectations of immediate counselling
- Structuring debriefing for children and staff involved
- Providing opportunities for those involved to discuss in private
- Attempting to ensure continuity and normality to help minimise the effect on others while encouraging pupils to talk about their feelings. Be prepared to listen

Recognition of formal and informal rituals:

- arrangements to express sympathy to the families directly affected by the incident
- injured children can be visited in hospital
- encourage children to send cards and letters
- plan to attend funerals if welcome
- Consider school closure
- discuss desirability of holding special assemblies and memorial services
- plan anniversaries

Close contact with parents should be maintained to ensure their wishes are always taken into account.

Where deaths have occurred the Warden will consider the lessons and activities being adjusted on the day of funerals as a mark of respect. Consideration will be given to one member of the senior leadership team being present at each funeral to represent the College. Decisions will be taken as to whether staff and pupils are to be given time off College to attend funerals, and if so who. Floral tributes or donations to charities will be considered.

It should be recognised that the burden of support may fall on a few members of staff who may in turn need support themselves.

The incident may also act as a trigger for children who are emotionally vulnerable even if they were not directly involved. This may result in difficulties in behaviour and relationships.

For those pupils who have been affected by the incident, examination boards, potential universities and employers may need to be informed.