



Waterfield School

**Emergency Planning
Policy**

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Definition of an emergency

Emergencies are likely to fall into six main categories: -

- offsite without injury
- offsite with injury
- onsite with injury
- onsite requiring evacuation
- onsite school closure out of school hours
- communicable diseases

This policy aims to set out clear procedures for handling each of the above incidents as well as general procedures for managing the media, keeping all parties fully informed, setting up an incident centre etc. It also contains a list of appropriate contacts with details of how and when to use them.

Each of the above categories is explored in more detail over the following pages, and possible scenarios for each heading are given. However, it should be remembered that not all incidents can be anticipated exactly, and therefore this document should be used as guidance only, and adapted as necessary.

The West Sussex publication Critical incidents – Guidance for schools forms a basis for much of this policy and is regularly referred to throughout. This guidance is attached to the policy as an appendix.

The policy aims to present each section as a self contained unit. This results in some repetition of information, but makes it easier to use as a referral document and guidelines during any emergency that may occur.

All major accidents and incidents must be reported to the Health and Safety Group at WSCC using form HSW3. Copies can be obtained from central supplies at County Hall.

The Health and Safety Group must be immediately contacted by telephone if there is an accident of any kind that results in

- a fatality
- an injury requiring resuscitation
- an amputation
- loss of hearing or sight (temporary or permanent)
- electric shock or burns
- exposure to asbestos particles

Responses

Offsite without injury

This is likely to occur during a school trip and will encompass scenarios such as breakdown of transport or failure of transport to arrive.

- Member of staff in charge should contact school as soon as they are aware of any delay.
- If children are on coach they should ensure that transport is parked safely, either off road or suitably coned off. If this is not the case member of staff in charge should contact the police, giving details of situation and request that road is made safe for coach and other traffic.
- If transport is not available member of staff in charge should seek to find local "place of safety" for the children, preferably with shelter. School should be informed of new location of children, with landline telephone number if available.
- Member of staff in charge off site should attempt to ascertain estimated time of arrival back at school, and be clear about method of transport/ who is organising it (coach company are responsible).
- Headteacher/senior member of staff should be informed immediately. As soon as it is clear that the children's return will be delayed beyond the end of the school day, all parents should be informed, stressing that all children and adults are safe. They should be informed that they would receive another call when we have an estimated time of arrival back at school.
- The method of returning the children to school should be confirmed.
- The headteacher/senior member of staff at school should stay on site until the children return, and supervise hand over to parents.
- The Chair of governors should be informed.

Off site with injury

This is likely to occur when a child/children or an adult/adults are injured during a school trip. The number of people injured and the severity of the injuries will have great bearing on the response.

- Minor injuries should be dealt with by first-aider accompanying trip.
- For more serious injuries, or those injuries that the first-aider does not feel confident in dealing with, an ambulance should be called immediately, and the school informed of the incident.
- In the case of injury to a child/children at least one member of staff (not teacher in charge) should accompany the injured to hospital. In this case the member of staff in charge should be aware of the reduced adult/child ratio and the subsequent safety implication. If necessary, they should request that members of staff from school should join the off site party.
- An injured adult should ideally be accompanied to hospital, but the member of staff in charge should consider the health and safety of pupils in this further reduction in adult numbers. Again, adults can be requested from school. If the injured member is the teacher in charge, another member of teaching staff should immediately be designated in charge. If they are unsure of their role they should immediately request that a senior teacher be sent from school to take charge.
- The member of staff in charge at school should inform the parent(s)/contact(s) of the injured parties as soon as possible, giving details of the injury and the hospital to which they have been taken.
- Serious injuries, or an incident resulting in several injuries should be handle in accordance with the West Sussex Critical Incidents – Guidance for Schools Sections A/B/C (see Appendix 1). Particular attention should be paid to gathering information, assessing continuing risk, contacting the Education Department and Chair of Governors, briefing staff at school, managing the media and setting up telephone communications. Other local schools should be informed, as families are likely to cross over. All this information is clearly set out in the above guidance.
- If the headteacher is off site as a critical incident begins to unfold, the teacher in charge should contact her immediately and request her return. The headteacher should not then leave

the site until the immediate incident is over, all children and adults have been accounted for and have been sent to hospital or home, and plans have been made for the follow up to the incident see West Sussex Critical Incidents – Guidance for Schools Sections D/E (see Appendix 1).

- It is essential that a member of the Senior Management Team (with another member of staff if necessary) is sent to the site of a Critical Incident.
- It should be remembered that the school is likely to be receiving many incoming calls, thus blocking lines for external calls or emergency incoming calls. Choose a mobile phone for outgoing calls, and set another mobile, or the fax line, aside for emergency incoming calls. Only give this number to the Education Department, colleagues who will have information to report, and the emergency services.
- The Education Authority should be approached for a press release. If the headteacher or Chair of Governors is unavailable, a member of the Senior Management Team may release that statement to the press. In the absence of an Education Authority statement, only the headteacher or Chair of Governors should speak to the press.
- Depending on the nature of the event the police may be involved in the co-ordination of the incident. If this is the case, the member of staff must remember to keep them informed as changes occur.

On site with injury

This is likely to occur when a child/children or an adult/adults are injured during school hours within the school grounds, although we must be aware that the school runs after hours clubs and therefore incidents are also possible at these times. The school is not responsible for injuries that occur at clubs not run by the school, although members of staff on site should offer support as appropriate. As previously, the number of people injured and the severity of the injuries will have great bearing on the response.

- All injuries to children should be recorded and parents should be informed of all head injuries. If the injury happens within school hours a first aider should see the injury. In all instances an Accident Report Form should be filled in. All head injuries should be reported to headteacher/teacher in charge.
- If there is any doubt as to the nature of the injury, or the first aider/teacher in charge perceives it to be serious, an ambulance should be called immediately giving clear directions as to location of school, and details of injury. A member of staff should be dispatched to front of school to guide ambulance to correct location on site. Access gates should be opened in advance if appropriate. (See Appendix 2).
- Parents should be contacted and given details of injury. They should be invited to come to school to accompany their child to hospital. If this is not possible a member of staff known to the child must accompany them to hospital. This member of staff should keep the school informed as to which hospital they are going to, so that the information can be passed to the parent.
- As previously, serious injuries, or an incident resulting in several injuries should be handle in accordance with the West Sussex Critical Incidents – Guidance for Schools – Sections A/B/C (see Appendix 1). Particular attention should be paid to gathering information, assessing continuing risk, contacting the Education Department and the Chair of Governors, briefing staff at school, managing the media and setting up telephone communications. Other local schools should be informed, as families are likely to cross over. All this information is clearly set out in the above guidance.
- If an injury is caused by a child or a parent the teacher in charge will need to decide if it is the result of an accident or an assault. The police should be informed of all incidents of assault.
- If the headteacher is off site as a critical incident begins to unfold, the teacher in charge should contact her immediately

and request her return. The headteacher should not then leave the site until the immediate incident is over, all children and adults have been accounted for and have been sent to hospital or home, and plans have been made for the follow up to the incident see West Sussex Critical Incidents – Guidance for Schools Sections D/E (see Appendix 1).

- It should be remembered that the school is likely to be receiving many incoming calls, thus blocking lines for external calls or emergency incoming calls. Choose a mobile phone for outgoing calls, and set another mobile, or the fax line, aside for emergency incoming calls. Only give this number to the Education Department, colleagues who will have information to report, and the emergency services.

- The Education Authority should be approached for a press release. If the headteacher or Chair of Governors is unavailable, a member of the Senior Management Team may release that statement to the press. In the absence of an Education Authority statement, only the headteacher or Chair of Governors should speak to the press.

On site requiring evacuation

This is likely to occur in the event of fire, gas leak, extreme weather conditions or bomb scare/reality.

On any occasion when the school needs to be evacuated there should be a register check. Any discrepancies should be reported immediately to the teacher in charge who will organise a search for any missing pupils.

Any emergency of this nature that occurs at lunchtime should be evacuated in the same way. Lunchtime staff should undertake a headcount as soon as the children are out of the building, and report their class number to the teacher in charge who will bring registers. All teachers on site should support lunchtime staff by returning to their classes.

Teaching Assistants should check toilets and cloakrooms during an evacuation. These staff are not on site at lunchtime, and it is therefore the responsibility of the lunchtime staff who have already handed their children over to a teacher to check toilets and cloakrooms.

All staff who leave the school premises at lunchtime should report their departure and return to the school secretary.

Fire

- In the event of fire the school should be evacuated using the rehearsed fire evacuation procedures (see Appendix 3).
- The emergency services should be called immediately giving clear directions as to location of school, and details of any injury.
- A member of staff should be dispatched to front of school to guide emergency services to correct location on site.
- Access gates should be opened in advance.
- The Education Authority and Chair of governors should be informed once the school has been made safe.

Gas

- If the school becomes aware of a gas leak Transco Emergency Line should be called immediately.
- Do not switch any lights on or off, open all doors and windows and isolate supply by switching off gas in outside cupboard. Transco will go through these procedures with person making telephone call.

- If the severity of the leak requires the school to be evacuated, the headteacher/teacher in charge should make the decision and teachers should be requested to take their classes to the front of the school for a register call.
- If the leak continues to be a cause for concern Bewbush First and Middle Schools should be informed and a request made to use their hall facilities. The Community Centre should also be contacted and asked to make space available.
- The police should also be informed. Children should then be walked to these places of safety. Children's contact details should accompany them, along with at least one mobile telephone to each school. A member of staff should be made responsible for co-ordinating the task of informing parents and requesting that they pick up their child from the appropriate site.
- A senior member of staff should remain on/near the Waterfield site to co-ordinate Transco/emergency services.
- The Education Authority and Chair of governors should be informed.

Extreme weather conditions

- All children affected should be escorted to part of school site unaffected by the conditions and headteacher/teacher in charge should decide whether some/all children would need to be sent home.
- If sanitation is affected, then school will need to be closed and parents should be contacted to pick up their children.
- A report should be issued to local radio stations to help the school inform parents.
- Depending on the severity of the situation, the teacher in charge may choose to use a cascade system to inform all parents quickly.
- The teacher in charge will need to decide whether or not to inform the emergency services.
- All school closures should be reported to the LEA.

Bomb scare

- In the event of a bomb scare the office administrator should contact the emergency services, clearly stating the nature of the scare and how we became alerted (eg phone call / suspect package).
- If warning is given by telephone, person taking call should dial 1471 immediately afterwards. (See Appendix 4 for record of information)
- An air horn is kept in the cupboard in the headteacher's office. This will be sounded within the main school building and in the playground. All adults should lead children to the front of the school.
- The headteacher/teacher in charge should organise staff (volunteers only) to search the premises (remembering that staff will also be needed to supervise the children). The whole of the floor area, including furniture and fixing right up to ceiling height should be checked, as well as the whole of the school grounds, including the carpark. If enough staff are not available for the search, the headteacher/teacher in charge should inform the police that we have insufficient staff to carry out the search effectively.
- If a suspicious package is found, it should not be touched. The police should be informed immediately – they will then take control.
- The headteacher/teacher in charge should then make the decision, in consultation with bomb squad/police whether to hold the children at the front of the school, or follow procedure above for using other schools as places of safety.
- The procedure for informing parents should be as above, and as before, a senior member of staff should remain at Waterfield until instructed to leave by bomb squad/police.
- The Education Authority and Chair of governors should be informed.
- If a time has been given for an explosion, but nothing happens, the headteacher/teacher in charge must wait at least one hour before considering whether it is safe for people to return to the building.
- The Education Authority should be approached for a press release. If the headteacher or Chair of Governors is unavailable, a member of the Senior Management Team may release that statement to the press. In the absence of an

Education Authority statement, only the headteacher or Chair of Governors should speak to the press.

Explosion

- If there is an explosion on the school site the school should be evacuated in the same way as fire procedures dictate (see Appendix 3).
- The eventual gathering place will depend on the site of the explosion, but teachers should be prepared to lead their classes to the front of school unless otherwise directed.
- Emergency services should be called in the usual way.
- The teacher in charge should gather information regarding any missing persons and immediately pass to emergency services, with information as to part of school site they were most likely to have been in.
- The headteacher/teacher in charge should then make the decision, in consultation with bomb squad/police whether to hold the children in the gathering place, or follow procedure above for using other schools as places of safety. The procedure for informing parents should be as above, and as before, a senior member of staff should remain at Waterfield until instructed to leave by bomb squad/police/fire services.
- An explosion should be seen as a critical incident and procedures should be followed as laid down in West Sussex Critical Incidents – Guidance for Schools – Sections A/B/C (see Appendix 1). Particular attention should be paid to gathering information, assessing continuing risk, contacting the Education Department, briefing staff at school, managing the media and setting up telephone communications.
- Other local schools should be informed, as families are likely to cross over, and chair of Governors should be contacted. All this information is clearly set out in the above guidance.
- If the headteacher is off site as a critical incident begins to unfold, the teacher in charge should contact her immediately and request her return. The headteacher should not then leave the site until the immediate incident is over, all children and adults have been accounted for and have been sent to hospital or home, and plans have been made for the follow up to the incident see West Sussex Critical Incidents – Guidance for Schools Sections D/E (see Appendix 1).

- It should be remembered that the school is likely to be receiving many incoming calls, thus blocking lines for external calls or emergency incoming calls. Choose a mobile phone for outgoing calls, and set another mobile, or the fax line, aside for emergency incoming calls. Only give this number to the Education Department, colleagues who will have information to report, and the emergency services. If the school is evacuated, similar systems will need to be set up in whatever building (probably Bewbush First, Bewbush Middle or Community Centre) is used as the communications centre.
- The Education Authority should be approached for a press release. If the headteacher or Chair of Governors is unavailable, a member of the Senior Management Team may release that statement to the press. In the absence of an Education Authority statement, only the headteacher or Chair of Governors should speak to the press.

Onsite school closure out of school hours

This is likely to occur if there has been a central heating failure in winter, extreme vandalism or an emergency related to gas or electricity that cannot be made safe before the start of the school day. It is likely that the caretaker will be the first to be aware of such an incident.

- As soon as it becomes clear to the caretaker that the school will not be safe to open as usual, the headteacher/teacher in charge must be informed, and a statement agreed to be broadcast on Radio Mercury and Southern Counties Radio (numbers in Appendix 10). It is the responsibility of the caretaker to telephone through the agreed statement to the radio stations.
- The headteacher will then contact the deputy head or another member of the Senior Management Team and decide which staff members will be needed on site. It is the responsibility of the deputy/senior teacher to contact all staff who are not required to attend.
- The headteacher and deputy should then ensure that they are on site early enough to put signs up around the school boundary explaining the closure, and then be available to any parents who approach the school site.
- If the school site is deemed to be unsafe, police should be called and a request made for their help in guiding parents and pupils away.
- The headteacher/senior teacher should inform the Education Authority and Chair of Governors of the closure.

Communicable diseases

This is likely to be a cause for concern when a pupil or staff member contracts, or has been in contact with, a life threatening or permanently debilitating communicable disease such as meningitis.

- If a child becomes ill at school, and the staff suspects meningitis, call for an ambulance immediately to take the child to the nearest accident and emergency department. A member of staff should go with the child, and insist on seeing medical staff as soon as they arrive to tell them that meningitis is suspected. (See Appendix 5).
- Headteacher/teacher in charge should inform Public Health and school nurse and doctor and contact Education Authority and Chair of Governors.
- Other local schools should be informed.
- If a case is identified there will be a need to inform parents quickly about what they should do to protect their children. (See model letter – Appendix 6) However, do not tell parents about a suspected case of meningitis until the Consultant in Communicable Disease Control (CCDC) has confirmed it. A useful source of information is the National Meningitis Trust. It has a 24-hour helpline on 0845 6000 800 and a website www.meningitis-trust.org.uk. The National Meningitis Trust produce a leaflet that can be given to concerned parents, and you can get them from the Health and Safety Group and the West Sussex Health Authority. The [leaflet](#) is also on the health and safety CD-ROM located in the headteacher's office.
- When a doctor diagnoses meningitis and septicaemia, he or she must report it to the public health authorities. The CCDC will tell the LEA about the diagnosis, decide on precautionary measures and give the school and the LEA advice on what to do.
- A staff meeting should be set up and all staff contacted and invited to attend. Arrangements for passing information to those that cannot attend should be set out.
- All peripatetic staff and supply staff should be informed.
- A parents' meeting should be set up in the hall and information leaflets pertinent to the disease gathered from the health professionals. A representative from Public Health (or if unavailable, another health professional) should attend the meeting to answer parents' medical questions.

- All members of the local community who use the school buildings (eg dance classes, church group etc) should be informed.
- A comprehensive communication system should be set up, ensuring that all parents are aware of the issue.
- All staff should be made aware, even if they are not working at the time. The headteacher/teacher in charge should delegate the responsibility of contacting staff. The person responsible should use a mobile 'phone if possible.
- The Education Authority and Public Health should be approached for a press release. If the headteacher or Chair of Governors is unavailable, a member of the Senior Management Team may release that statement to the press. In the absence of an Education Authority statement, only the headteacher or Chair of Governors should speak to the press.
- The Senior Management Team should formulate a plan of action for the following few days, keeping the school open if possible, and keeping all parties informed- Ref: West Sussex Critical Incidents – Guidance for Schools Sections D/E (see Appendix 1).
- The senior Management Team should not leave the school site until all parents, staff and press have vacated the premises, and the above plan has been formulated.

Individual Pupil Medical Emergency

At any one time, Waterfield School will have many children on role with a range of medical needs. These will range from conditions such as asthma, to more unusual and acute conditions.

Whilst all these conditions are generally well managed, thus allowing the child to function well in the mainstream setting, we must be aware of the possibility of relapse and/or failure of medication.

If at any time, in or out of school, a child with a medical condition becomes unwell and does not respond to administration of approved medication (eg asthma inhaler) an ambulance must be called immediately. They should be given clear directions as to location of the child (eg school or off site address), and full details of the condition and the symptoms. A member of staff should be dispatched to guide ambulance to correct location on site. On school site the access gates should be opened in advance if appropriate. (See Appendix 2).

After calling the ambulance, parents should be contacted and given details of condition. They should be invited to come to the location and accompany their child to hospital. If this is not possible a member of staff known to the child must accompany them to hospital. This member of staff should keep the school informed as to which hospital they are going to, so that the information can be passed to the parent.

An ambulance should never wait for a parent, and a child should never go to hospital unaccompanied.

All children with medical conditions have medical forms filled in that are stored in the school office. These detail the condition and the medication.

All children with a medical condition must be detailed on the risk assessment form in preparation for any trip (see Appendix 9).

Losing a child (on or off site)

The immediate concern is to find the child as soon as possible, and therefore all available resources (adults) should be sent immediately to search the local area. This should be a priority on or off site. However, any off site search should take account of the fact that sufficient adults (and a teacher deemed to be in charge) must stay with the remaining group to ensure that they are kept safe.

If after ten minutes of beginning the search the child has not been found, the teacher in charge should contact the police giving name and description of child (including clothing) and exact details of where they were last seen and at what time.

If the incident happens off site then the school should be contacted immediately following the call to the police. The school and the teacher in charge of the trip will then liaise to decide on whether to return other children to school, or for the whole party to wait for a police search.

The teacher in charge of the school site should contact the parents and the LEA to inform them of the incident.

The Chair of Governors should also be informed.

If the child is not found, the press may become aware and ask for a statement. If the headteacher or Chair of Governors is unavailable, a member of the Senior Management Team may release an LEA statement to the press. In the absence of an Education Authority statement, only the headteacher or Chair of Governors should speak to the press.

If children return to school without news of their missing classmate, waiting parents must be made aware of the incident before they take their children home. The teacher in charge should gather them in the hall and update them on the situation.

Issues to consider in emergency planning

1. Has a considered response been agreed?
See Emergency Response Form – Appendix 7.
2. In the case of major emergencies, has the Education Authority cascade system been triggered? See Appendix 8.
3. Are parents of injured children to be informed in the same group as other parents? Are there any bereaved families? Have plans been made to accommodate them separately?
4. Is there sufficient distance between the communications centre (probably the main office area) and the area allocated to the press?
5. Has an appropriate system of information management been set up to include the gathering and logging of information with a record of events and time/date of action taken and to be taken?

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