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1. 20.03.19	ALET Director of Operations/Policy Committee	New Policy
2. 25.06.20	Head of Governance/Policy Committee/CEO	Review

Crisis Management Policy

Our vision at Activate Learning Education Trust is “transform lives through learning’ by igniting confidence, expanding opportunities, energising the community and generating prosperity. Through our Learning Philosophy and core values of empowerment, enterprise, connectedness and transformation, we will provide our students and staff with a safe and supportive environment in which to thrive

Our Learning Philosophy is rooted in the dynamics between the brain, motivation and our emotions.

Policy Statement

It is Activate Learning Education Trust’s (ALET’s) intent to lessen the effect of a critical incident or crisis on staff, students, visitors and parents.

Principles

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following documents.

- Business Continuity Plan
- Local School Emergency Evacuation Procedures
- Local School Emergency Lockdown Procedures

This policy will indicate the actions to be taken in the event of a major incident so that everything possible is done to:

- Save life
- Prevent injury
- Minimise loss.

Individual class teachers, support staff and tutors have an important role to play in managing critical incidents and may be the best people to deal with the students in their classes.

The Activate Learning Education Trust will involve specialist agencies, where need dictates, to support staff or students who require further assistance to deal with incident.

By outlining appropriate actions to be taken in the event of a critical incident, the Activate Learning Education Trust aims to reduce the effect.

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1. Aims

- To prevent or minimise the loss of life or injury to all students, staff and visitors of ALET schools.
- To inform all required emergency services and relevant organisations.
- To respond to the incident until emergency services arrive thus minimising stress and discomfort.
- To fully support pupils and staff and the ALET wide community following the incident, allowing them to return to a learning provision as soon as possible.

By following local procedures, it will be possible for each ALET school to provide a more secure environment for everyone associated with the school.

2. Legislation and statutory requirements

This policy and corresponding procedures in schools are designed in accordance with DfE guidelines.

3. Definitions

- 3.1.** A **critical incident** is one which arises suddenly, either on- or off-site, and where the result is likely to seriously disrupt the running of the school, or where there is a threat to the safety of staff, students or others, or where there is likely to be significant public and or media attention on the school.
- 3.2.** A **crisis** is an event, or events, usually sudden and which involve a person experiencing significant personal distress to a level which potentially overwhelms normal responses and procedures, which is likely to have emotional and organisational consequences. The Activate Learning Education Trust aims to manage a crisis well by being prepared.

This document contains planned and staged responses to follow in the case of a crisis.

4. Examples

There can, of course, be no rigid formula for responding to such incidents, but broadly speaking, it is assumed that where damage to people or premises is the case, the Chief Executive Officer ALET and the affected Headteacher/Principal will take the leading role in managing the crisis, in collaboration with the other ALET/School staff, Governors and other agencies.

4.1. Examples of on-site critical incidents:

- A serious accident to a student or adult
- The death of a student or member of staff through natural causes
- A traffic accident involving a member of the school
- Violence or assault within the school
- A fire or explosion on site
- Destruction of a part of the building or part of the building becoming unsafe as a result of fire, flood or other incident
- Abduction of a student
- A student absconding
- A major incident within the community served by the school
- An outbreak of an illness such as meningitis
- A major failure of the schools systems, e.g. power, or communications

4.2. Examples of off-site critical incidents:

- Death of a student or member of staff through natural causes
- An accident to a student or adult while out of school on a visit or activity
- Death or injuries on school journeys or excursions
- A more widespread disaster in the community
- Civil disturbances, including extreme violence or terrorism

This policy does not form part of any employee's contract of employment and is entirely non contractual. It may be amended, withdrawn, suspended or departed from at the discretion of the Trust.

5. Responsibilities

This applies to all staff, students and visitors of the school.

The implementation of this policy will be monitored by the Leadership Group, Local Governing Committee, the Activate Learning Education Trust and remain under constant review by the Policy Committee and CEO Office.

5.1. The Critical Incidents Team

The Critical Incidents Team will comprise all or some of the following personnel:

- Chief Executive of the Activate Learning Education Trust
- Headteacher/Principal of the school
- Chair of Governors and any relevant/available Governors as required
- Members of the Senior Leadership Team
- Designated Child Protection and Safeguarding Officer
- Health & Safety Representative
- Buildings Manager
- Members of the wider School's team as required.

The school may choose to modify this according to their local circumstances.

The role of the team is to direct and review the handling of the critical incident and the response and recovery process to:

- Ensure the safety and security of staff, students, other users of the premises and visitors
- Minimise the loss to the school in physical, human and financial terms
- Manage an incident to minimise disruption to regular operations
- Liaise with appropriate agencies, including the media

6. Procedures

6.1. Notification

When a critical incident occurs, the Critical Incidents team will, dependent upon the nature of the incident itself, be concerned with any of the following issues:

- Adequate assessment of risks, hazards and situations which may require emergency action
- Analysis of requirements to address these hazards, including liaison with relevant emergency services and development of an effective management plan
- Whether the schools can adequately cope with the incident alone or should involve other agencies to secure the safest and most effective response
- Effective and efficient deployment of staff
- Provision of a safe, quiet area for students and adults
- A safe relocation site if necessary
- Dissemination of planned procedures to relevant stakeholders/personnel

The person receiving the notification that a critical incident has occurred should obtain and record as much relevant information as possible, including:

- What has happened
- Whether or not the emergency services have been informed/are attending
- The precise location, and any access problems if not on site
- Details of any casualties
- Details of any actions taken so far
- Name (and contact details if not on site) of responsible person at the scene
- Assessment of what assistance is required

The member of staff receiving the alert should notify the relevant emergency services if necessary and the Headteacher/Principal immediately.

Dedicated staff members are nominated at each school to follow local procedures and prompts to aid in the successful management of this policy. Example information is prompts for recording information, relevant contacts and tasks.

6.2. Critical Incidents Team

The Headteacher/Principal will inform the Chief Executive and convene the Critical Incidents Team (outlined in 5.1 above) as soon as possible.

- Clear leadership is essential to ensuring a co-ordinated response. The Headteacher/Principal will lead the school's response in consultation with the Chief Executive and the chair of governors.
- Relevant members of the Critical Incidents Team will convene to decide strategies, be allocated individual responsibilities, and collect, record and convey information
- The rest of the staff will be informed as soon as is practicable
- Students will be given information simply and sensitively
- Prepare and sent out a briefing for parents and/or update the School/Trust website with relevant details
- The school will endeavour to keep to the normal routine as far as possible
- Once the immediate emergency is under control, a longer term plan should be drawn up, dealing with these possibilities:
- On-going or subsequent disruption to the normal operation and routine of the school

- Staff tiredness or exhaustion
- Shock, distress or psychological disturbance of staff and/or students
- Demands from the media
- Impact on the school's image and public relations

6.3. Initial Actions

The Headteacher/Principal or nominated representative of the Critical Incidents team should:

- Open and continue to maintain a personal log of all factual information received, actions taken, and the time of those events. Make every attempt to clarify exactly what has happened and establish who needs to be contacted and informed of the incident.
- During term time, unless there is overwhelming pressure, avoid closing the school and endeavour to maintain normal routines and timetables.
- If outside term time or school hours, arrange for the Facilities Manager to open certain parts of the building as appropriate and to be available (and responsive) to requests and for immediate administrative support.
- Consideration should also be afforded to dress code, in case of being unavoidably drawn into a TV interview. If the crisis does attract media attention, try to postpone comment until there has been enough time to consider possible statements
- Establish arrangements to manage visitors and for their presence on site to be recorded.
- Make arrangements for all staff to be called into the school if necessary and be briefed at an early stage.
- To arrange for all students to be told in simple terms at an early stage, ideally in small groups by form tutors.
- Establish strategies to support staff and students through the incident.

6.4. Communication

- The following procedures should be followed in communicating about the incident:
- The Headteacher/Principal, Chief Executive, Chair of Governors and Chair of the Activate Learning Education Trust must be informed as soon as possible
- Prepare brief up to date statements for staff answering telephone calls or liaising with visitors [in doing so liaise with legal advisers/insurance as appropriate to ensure no admission of liability is provided which may be detrimental to the Trust.] Ensure that the Trust/school websites are updated.
- Two telephonists will be identified to use the school phone (for incoming calls) and a mobile phone (for outgoing information/staff use)
- The office area will be used for enquiries
- Parents of affected students will be contacted as necessary and arrangements made to bring them to the school if appropriate

The Chief Executive Officer or the Headteacher/Principal will be the designated 'press officer'. All enquiries made to other members of staff should be redirected.

There will be no access to the school site to press/TV reporters without the explicit consent of the Chief Executive Officer.

It is especially important that the names of those who may have been involved in the incident are **not** released or confirmed to anyone **before** those identities are **formally** agreed and parents/carers informed.

6.5. Follow up actions

Once the emergency is over all staff should be debriefed. Care should be taken to ensure they are fully informed of the causes, nature, and impact of the incident.

Key members of staff involved in responding to the incident should be individually debriefed to collect information that can be analysed to provide lessons for future prevention or management of such incidents.

Arrangements should be made to make contact with any students or members of staff at home or in hospital. Sensitive and individual arrangements may need to be made for a phased return to the school.

The effects of some incidents can continue for some time.

Thought should be given to:

- Informal monitoring of staff and students
- Clarification of procedures for referring people for individual help and support
- Ways in which new staff may be made aware of which students were affected and how
- The way that legal processes, enquiries and news stories may resurrect interest and cause temporary upset within the school.

A report should be prepared for the Local Governing Committee and the Activate Learning Education Trust

7. Related Documents

ALET Schools will hold a local critical incidents plans and evacuation procedures according to guidance set out in this policy.

8. Policy Review

This policy will be monitored as part of the Policy Committee's annual review cycle.