

Bede Community Primary School



Everybody Learns - Everybody Cares

Major Incidents Policy & Business Continuity Plan

Date: October 2026
Due for Review: October 2027

Policy Statement

Bede Community Primary School is totally committed to ensuring that, in the event of a major incident, the school will provide a high level of care and education for its population. The Director of Children and Schools will be informed immediately if this plan comes into effect. The Head Teacher and Governing Body are responsible for annually reviewing the plan and identifying areas of weakness.

Definition

A major incident may be defined as a physical incident or psychological trauma that has a severe immediate impact and likely long-term effect on pupils, staff, governors or parents. It may involve significant threat, damage or injury to property and/or individuals.

Aims and Objectives

- To minimise educational and administrative disruption within school
- To maintain a duty of care
- To enable normal working to be resumed in the shortest possible time
- To ensure control is established at a senior level within school at the critical early stages of a major incident situation
- To provide the Director of Children and Schools with a detailed list of actions to cover the initial period following a major incident, up to and until the repaired or rebuilt premises are re-occupied.

Preamble

It is impossible to predict when a major incident may occur or what form it may take, but the following may be considered as examples:

- Fire or flood to buildings and contents
- Death, accident or assault to members of staff or pupils
- Natural major incident within the local community
- Terrorism
- Missing Person(s) /abductions

The Major Incident Policy and Plan cannot cover every aspect of recovery from a major incident. Occurrences may arise which cannot be foreseen or considered. The major incident may occur during the school day, during the evening, during the school holidays or on a school trip. Dealing with a 'low incidence, high consequence' emergency will always be a challenge, and the amount of preparation which is reasonable should always be balanced against an assessment of risk.

It is important that the incident policy is easily understood and swings into action immediately. The following must be remembered in relation to the incident policy:

- That it is followed as closely as possible;
- That designated personnel understand their tasks and are competent to carry them out;
- That other people do not take unilateral actions;
- That consideration and sensitivity is shown by all;
- That pupils, staff and parents are protected from press intrusion;
- That normal business be resumed as soon as possible;
- There is a realisation that total recovery may take a long time.

The Major Incident Recovery Team (MIRT):

The Major Incident Recovery Team (MIRT) has responsibility for ensuring that procedures are properly addressed at times of high emotion and that if the Headteacher is the subject of the incident then the response mechanism should proceed effectively. If the incident involves legal action, a precise response to the incident should be known and is able to be verified by more than one person.

Name	Position in School	Role during incident
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Mr Nick Anderson	Headteacher	• Leader of plan (MIP Leader) • Designate roles and responsibilities • Liaise with emergency services • Co-ordinates from school/alternative premises • Informs LA of incident • Informs Chair of Governors
Mrs Beverley McCallion	Deputy Headteacher	• Assist leader • Adopt leader role if Headteacher not available
Mrs Katy Anderson	School Business Manager	• Assist leader • Remain at school/ alternative premises • Inform parents /relatives • Liaise with emergency services • Contact relevant outside agencies
Mr Mick McKeough	Caretaker	• Assist leader • Remain at school/ alternative premises • Liaise with emergency services

All members of the major incident recovery team must:

- have a copy of the Major Incident and Business Continuity Plan at home and at school
- be aware of the roles of each part of the plan to enable the school to react swiftly and accordingly
- have contact numbers of each other for 24 hour contact
- in the event of a school trip /visit, have access to a list of names for staff and pupils.
- be aware of the location of the Grab Pack – which includes the Major Incident Kit.

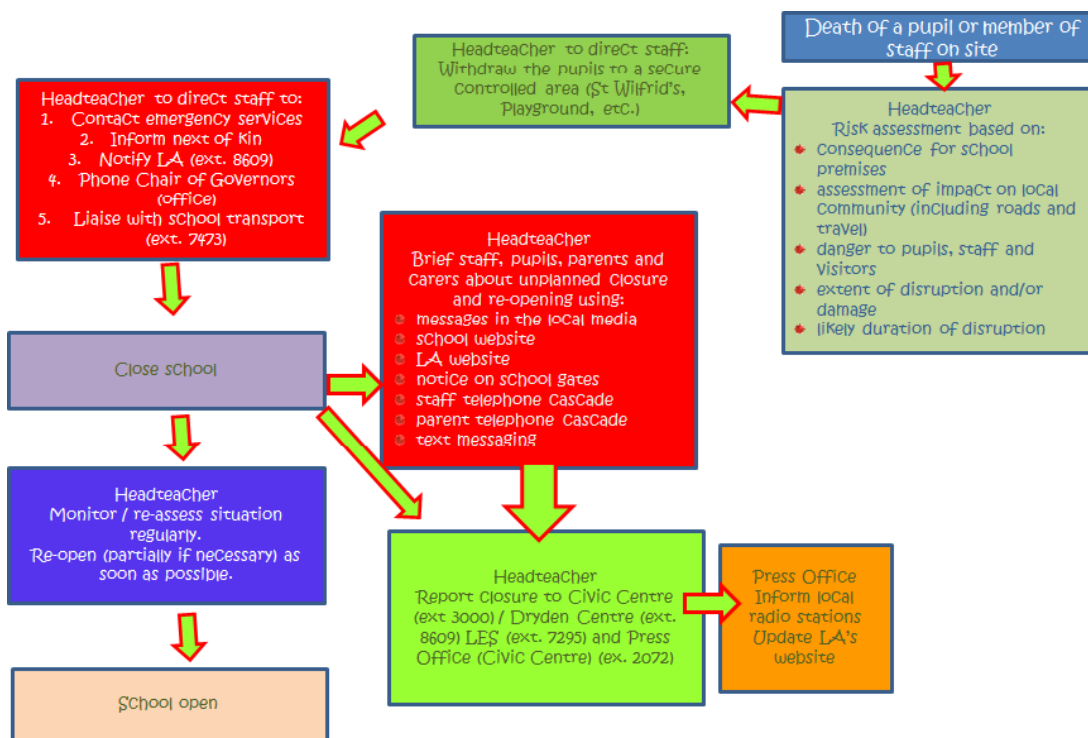
IMMEDIATE INCIDENT CHECKLIST – PEOPLE RELATED

Major incident involving people

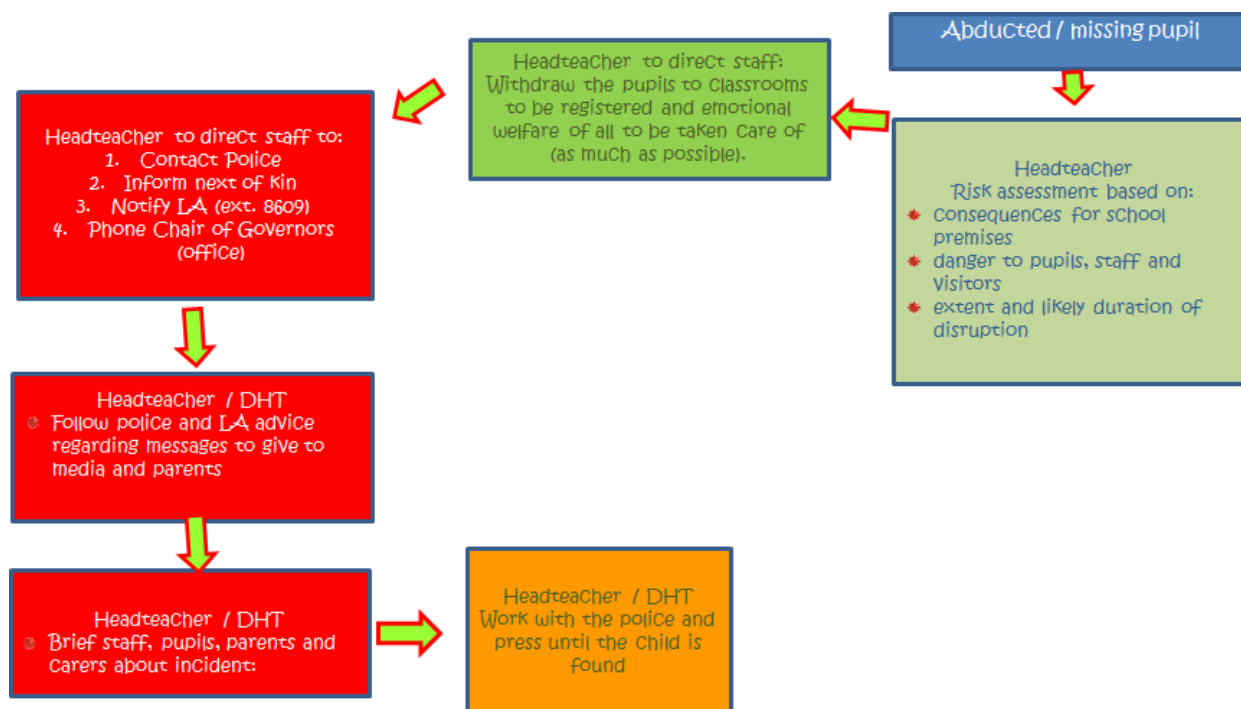
• Death of a pupil or member of staff
• Abducted /missing pupil
• Assault causing serious injury
• Transport incident involving school visit /journey
• Communicable Disease
• Food poisoning

Death of a pupil or member of staff on site	
Action	Action Taken (✓)
Withdraw the pupils to a secure controlled area	
Secure site i.e. electricity, gas, water etc if due to an accident	
Contact emergency services	
Inform next of kin	
Notify LA	
Inform Chair of Governors	

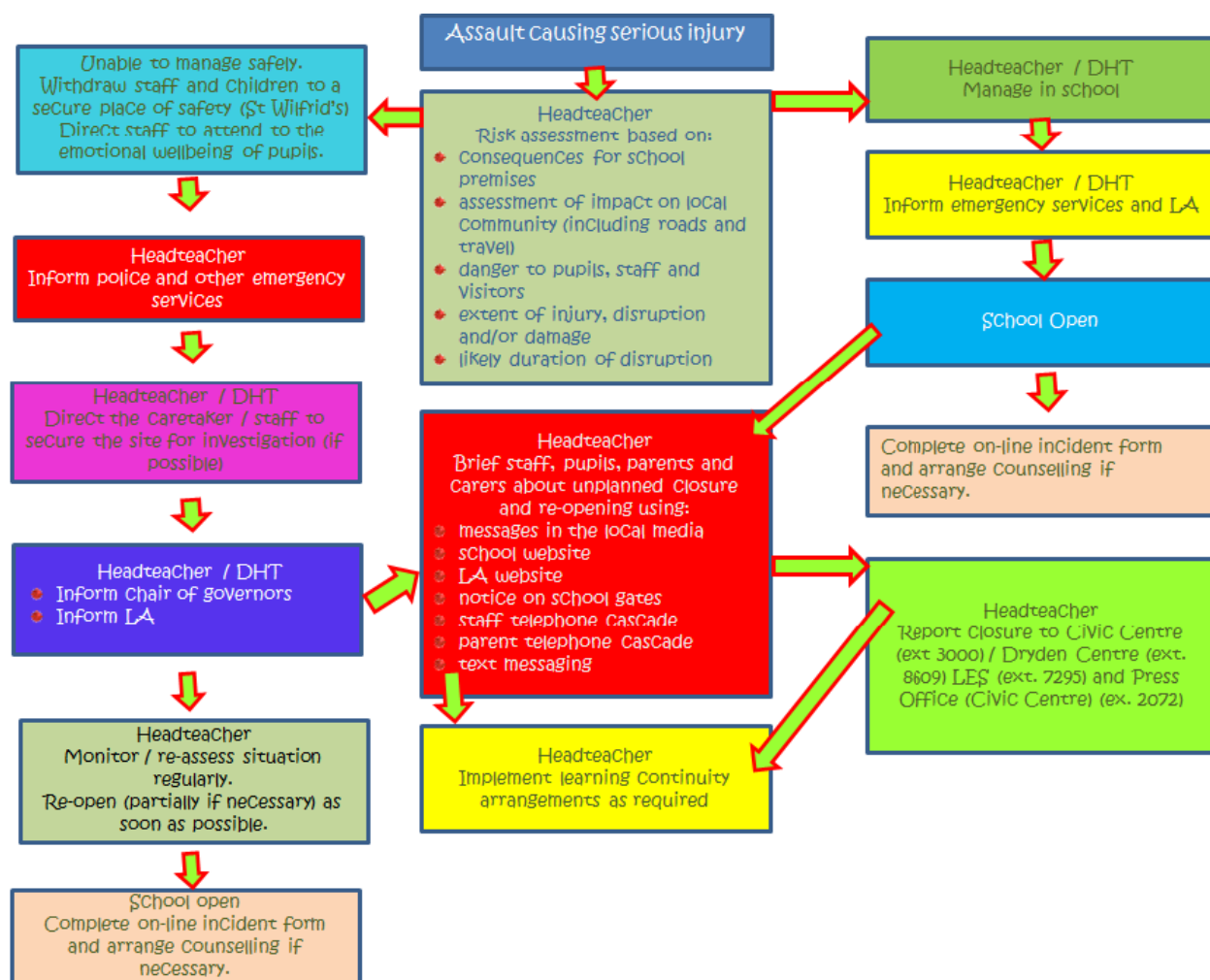
Ensure safety /welfare of other pupils and staff	
Complete accident book	
Investigate circumstances	



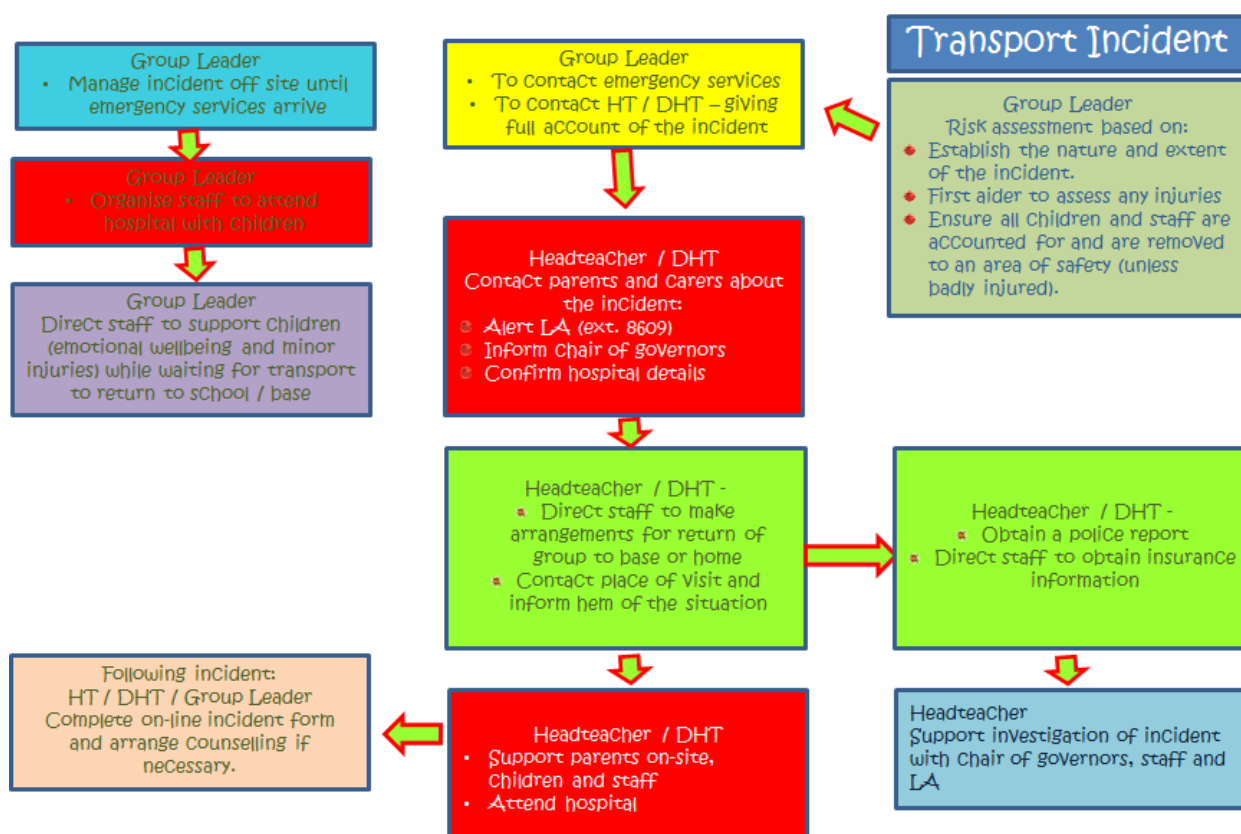
Abducted /missing pupil	
Action	Action Taken (✓)
Inform MIP leader	
Inform police	
Notify next of kin	
Notify LA	
Attend to emotional welfare of pupils and staff	
Notify Chair of Governors	
Update school registration details	



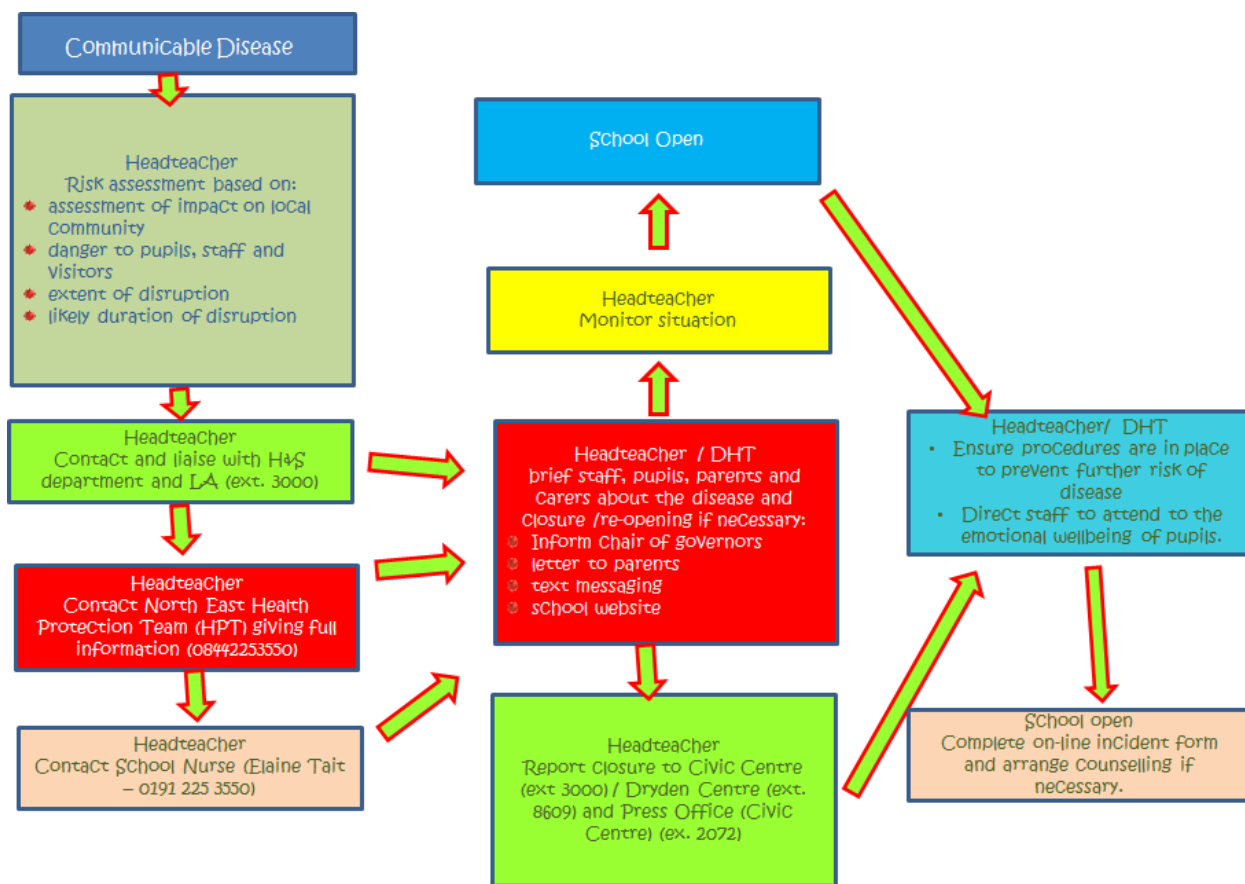
Assault causing serious injury	
Action	Action Taken (✓)
Administer first aid and contact emergency services	
Secure site for investigation	
Inform MIP leader	
Inform next of kin	
Inform Director of Children and Schools	
Inform Chair of Governors	
Complete online incident form and submit to LA	
Ensure safety /welfare of pupils and staff	



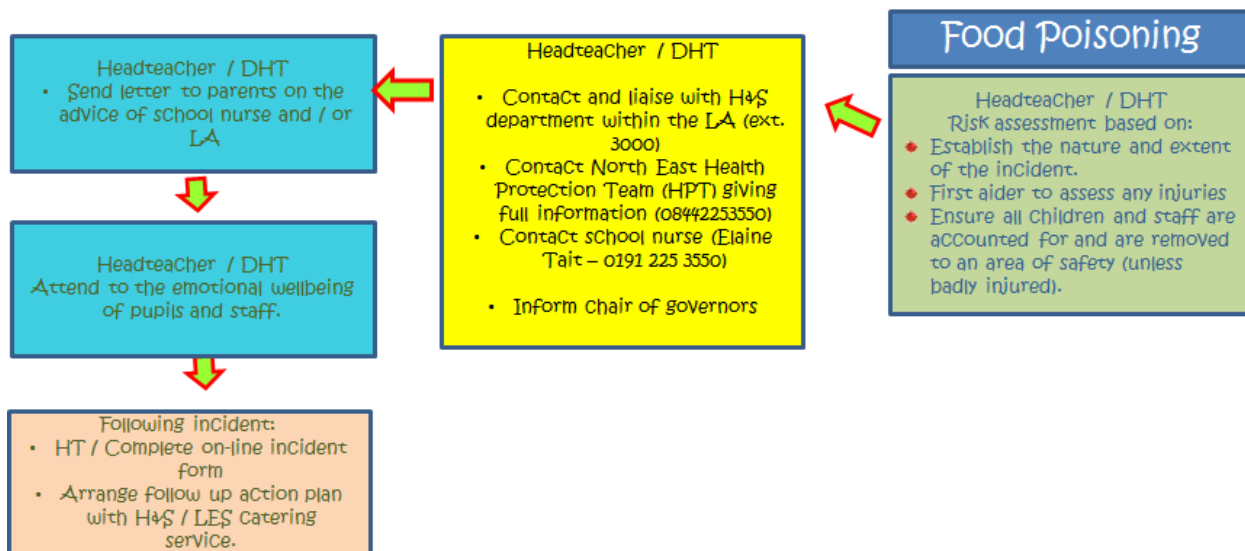
Transport incident involving school visit /journey	
Action	Action Taken (✓)
Establish the nature and extent of the incident	
If an injury – assess injury (preferably by first aider)	
Contact emergency services	
Ensure all other members of the group are accounted for	
Ensure all other members are safe from danger and looked after	
Inform MIP leader – giving full information of incident	
MIP leader to oversee situation from school	
Confirm hospital details	
If serious incident inform LA	
Inform Chair of Governors	
Make arrangements for return of group to base or home	
Contact place of visit and inform them of the situation	
Obtain a police report	
Obtain insurance information	



Communicable Disease - only classed as an outbreak if more than one case	
Action	Action Taken (✓)
Inform MIP leader	
Contact and liaise with Health & Safety Department within LA	
Contact North East Health Protection Team (HPT) giving full information	
Contact School Nurse	
Inform Chair of Governors	
School nurse and /or LA to advise re: letters to parents	
Attend to emotional welfare of pupils and staff	



Food Poisoning	
Action	Action Taken (✓)
Inform MIP leader	
Identify who is affected and assess severity of the illness	
Continue observation of casualty or casualties	
Administer first aid as required	
Contact next of kin and advise hospital details	
Contact North East Health Protection Team (HPT) giving full information	
If serious outbreak inform LA	
Inform Chair of Governors	
Exclude affected people from school where necessary	
Identify cause of illness to avoid a reoccurrence	



IMMEDIATE INCIDENT CHECKLIST – PROPERTY RELATED

Major incident related to property

• Widespread structural damage
• Major fire
• Terrorist incident

Widespread structural damage	
Action	Action Taken (✓)
Evacuate the premises	
Take a roll call	
Call emergency services	
Ensure MIP leader is informed	
Decide whether to keep pupils in school or send home	
Provide information to parents via phone /letter	
Inform LA	
Inform Chair of Governors	

Ensure no unauthorised persons gain access to the site	
Contact the LES Premises Section for a structural Surveyor to assess damage/repairs	
Strictly control access to the damaged building	

Major fire	
Action	Action Taken (✓)
Ensure safety of pupils, staff and visitors by following schools evacuation procedures – Option to move to the Secondary Evacuation Point	
Ensure MIP is informed	
Ensure safety and security of premises	
Staff/pupils must not be allowed to re-enter the building until emergency services allow them to do so	
Advise the LA /Insurance Department	
Contact the LES Premises Section for a structural Surveyor to assess damage/repairs	
Close the school if necessary and liaise with Transport to ensure children are transported home safely	
Advise the Chair of Governors	

Terrorist incident	
Action	Action Taken (✓)
For bomb scares and gas leaks implement standard fire evacuation procedures – Option to move to the Secondary Evacuation Point	
Inform everyone that MOBILE PHONES MUST NOT BE USED	
Establish a safety point at a fair distance away from the school	
Ensure MIP is informed	
Inform LA	
Inform Chair of Governors	

ONGOING ACTION FOLLOWING A PROPERTY RELATED INCIDENT

- Ensure safety of pupils and staff
- Ensure all parents, staff and governors are informed of and are aware of incident.
- Evaluate damage to building and likely disruption to the education process.
- Ensure safe removal of hazardous materials and debris.
- Identify welfare support of pupils and staff.
- Review health & safety and security /fire prevention on site
- Review the accommodation and catering.
- Maintain communications with outside bodies.
- Be involved in rebuilding and /or occupation of temporary premises.
- Formalise the revised transport arrangements.
- Prepare inventory to furnish alternative accommodation.
- Inform other users of the premises.
- Provide written information regarding the incident.
- Hold a fire drill as soon as possible if new exit routes and assembly points are necessary.
- Walk through the building to check fire escape requirements.
- Reallocate parking space and pupil areas.
- Hold briefing meetings with staff.
- Ensure all utilities have been checked and are functioning correctly.
- Exercise caution before using electrical equipment.
- MIRT to maintain a brief Diary /Log of events and action taken.

MAJOR INCIDENT CRISIS KIT

There needs to be a maintainable and accessible emergency kit for schools suddenly thrown into a crisis. A balance needs to be established between including everything anyone thinks of and the work and sustainable motivation needed to ensure the material is kept up-to-date. Each member of the MIRT will be aware of the location of the Emergency Kit in school. Each member of the MIRT should retain a copy of this policy at home. Pupil information will be accessible, if necessary, through the LA from information in SIMS. The kit will be scheduled for regular attention to ensure up-to-date information is held.

The kit contains the following elements:

- Emergency Services (other than 999),
- Director of Learning and Schools contact information,
- Communicable Diseases contact information,
- A list of pupils names, addresses and contact information,
- Known pupil medical information,
- A list of staff names, addresses and contact information,
- External services, e.g. swimming baths, contractors etc
- Floor plan showing evacuation routes
- Information regarding sighting of utilities, including how to turn off gas, water and electricity.
- Contact information for all utilities.
- Contact information for Chair of Governing Body
- Closest location for a helicopter landing
- Details about agreed meeting points for emergency authority response.

Emergency Services

If it is not deemed an emergency and you are not required to dial 999, then please phone the following telephone number to contact Northumbria Police: **101 and explain the nature of the problem.**

Contact Details Regarding Personnel:

Headteacher – Mr N Anderson
 Deputy Headteacher – Mrs B McCallion
 School Business Manager – Mrs K Anderson
 Caretaker – Mr M McKeough

Chair of Governing Body: Mr R Foster

Learning and Children Contact Information:

Director, Learning and Schools, Suzanne Dunn	(0191) 4334893
Main Switchboard – Civic Centre	(0191) 4333000
Pupil Transport Department – Ms M Diston	(0191) 4337473
Health & Safety Department – Mrs Sarah Shanley	(0191) 4332463

Property & Design	(0191) 4332761
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Communicable Diseases Contact Information:

North East Health Protection Team (HPT)	(0191) 269 7714
School Nurse – Anne Rayner	(0191) 2832473

External Services Contact Information:

Police	999 or 101
Main LA Switchboard:	(0191) 4333000
Council Buildings Department: After 8pm	(0191) 4770844
Amulet Security	(0191) 4889585
Status Security (Security and door Access)	(0191) 4555353
School meals – Mr Michael Lamb	(0191) 4335513

Child Protection	(0191) 4338595
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Social Services (Central Duty team):	(0191) 4332653
Queen Elizabeth Hospital	(0191) 4820000
Newcastle General Hospital	(0191) 2738811
RVI	(0191) 2325131
Freeman Hospital	(0191) 2843111
Public Relations Office - Sam Reed	(0191) 4332914
Gateshead Leisure Centre	(0191) 4335733

Information Regarding Utilities

Gas:	0800 111999	The gas meter is situated in a small brick bunker in the car park. Keys are held in the school office.
Electricity:	0800 668877	The electric meter is situated in the Meter cupboard by Reception. Electricity can be switched off with the MAINS OFF switch in the Meter cupboard by reception.
Water:	0845 171100	The water meter is situated in a small brick bunker in the car park. The water can be turned off by lifting the manhole cover directly outside the entrance to the school.

Telephones: OneComm (0191) 4614200

Helicopter Landing Information:

Should the need arise for a landing area; the school field has space enough to facilitate this.

Emergency Authority Response Meeting Points:

Response meetings should be held, in the first instance, in the school yard. The MIRT leader will co-ordinate from there.

Grab Pack (with Major Incident Crisis Kit)

Critical Incident and Business Continuity Plan

Site Plan

Torch

Pens

Paper

Print out from Arbor with pupil names and telephone numbers.

Governor list of names and numbers

List of staff details

Key for gate

Keeping the School Open

The aim is to keep the school open to pupils (under a regime of reduced hours as necessary) or to re-open at the earliest opportunity. The Head Teacher is responsible for the decision to close to pupils.

Short Term Denial of Access

Where there is an immediate threat to health and safety, the school may be closed and staff instructed to remain at home until buildings are available for use. This will require special contact arrangements to be implemented to ensure return to work at the earliest opportunity.

Long Term Denial of Access

Co-ordination of response: The Head Teacher will convene a group to address two key objectives:

- Arranging temporary accommodation to ensure extended learning continuity (an alternative school site with appropriate transport arrangements or enhanced portable accommodation on-site).
- Managing the re-build and reconstruction of the damaged site.

Site Management: The caretaker will support the Head Teacher as required, including arranging security patrols and monitoring obvious changes in structural integrity.

Re-occupation of School Site/Buildings: No pupils, school staff or visitors shall re-enter the school site/buildings until the Head Teacher has confirmed it is safe to do so. This will be determined in conjunction with appropriate representatives responsible for Facilities Management and Health and Safety.

Alternative Accommodation

Should it be necessary to provide alternative accommodation, this will be done where at all possible within the school. If this is not possible the school will endeavour to make alternative arrangements. The Head Teacher will be responsible for assessing the amount and type of accommodation required, and the equipment needs. The senior administration clerk and caretaker will be responsible for any special storage and transport arrangements required under COSHH.

The Head Teacher will liaise with the LA regarding provision of accommodation.

Options may include rooms being made available at other school sites where teaching and learning can continue for small groups of children with the appropriate staff for the needs of the children. Alternatively, the provision of alternative accommodation as a whole may need to be arranged if the school buildings are to be inaccessible for some considerable time.

Emphasis will be given to arrangements for resuming 'normalised' learning at the earliest opportunity. The preference will usually be for a solution that maintains the school as a single entity on a self-contained site.

Transport: The distance from the school to the temporary location will be significant in determining the nature and cost of emergency transport arrangements.

Consideration will also need to be given to the location of pupils in relation to the new premises as the children come from a wide range of localities and communities and it is important to maintain regular communication with the Transport section of pupil and parent services.

Renovation or Reconstruction: Gateshead Council will oversee all aspects of building and infrastructure renovation or re-construction in conjunction with the appropriate stakeholders and construction partner(s).

Office Rescheduling and ICT Back-up

It may become necessary to re-site the school office. It is assumed that staff will require access to a telephone, photocopier, fax, computer and printer. All computer files on the Admin and Curriculum servers are backed up remotely by ICT services at the Civic Centre.

Temporary Staff

If temporary staff are required then the School Business Manager will make these arrangements in liaison with members of the SLT.

Investigation

The MIRT will supervise the investigation following an incident. They will be guided in their investigations by the requirements of the insurers in terms of investigation procedure and, if necessary, the police. If a criminal act is suspected, or if there has been any loss of life, or if any outside agency is involved, the school solicitors should be contacted via the senior administration clerk immediately and before witness statements are taken.

Snow

Travel conditions may prevent some teaching and support staff from being at school when pupils arrive. The Head Teacher will consider the health and safety implications and decide whether there is a need to close to pupils or not. This decision may be aided by considering the home locations and potential travel times of:

- Staff
- Pupils

An equivalent rationale may need to be applied at the end of the day, when the needs of staff with longer distances to travel need to be considered.

It is recognised that additional burdens will fall upon members of staff living in closest proximity to the school, but it may be necessary to allow certain members of staff to reach work later than normal and/or leave earlier to travel home safely.

Staff: The Head Teacher should consider the health and safety of staff, particularly where travelling conditions have deteriorated. It may be necessary to allow staff with the furthest distance to travel home, to leave early to make their journeys in the most favourable conditions.

Pupils: The Head Teacher should consider the health and safety of pupils, particularly where travelling conditions have deteriorated, as most pupils are transported to school by taxi. The taxi companies should liaise with school with their own risk assessment of travelling in the weather conditions. It may be necessary to allow pupils to leave early if a particular contractor deems the conditions becoming unfavourable.

Whatever the reason for the Major Incident Plan being actioned, the aim is to keep the school open to pupils (under a regime of reduced hours as necessary) or to re-open at the earliest opportunity. The Head Teacher retains responsibility for the decision to close to pupils.

Communication Issues: School will liaise with Pupil and Parent Services and the Director of Children's Services, to ensure that all stakeholders are informed as to how the school will be supported in maintaining 'normalised' learning during **long-term** restoration of premises.

Regular communications will be needed with Pupil and Parent Services with regards to the Special Educational Needs of our children and how to meet the legal requirements of our statemented pupils.

Stakeholders (including parents/carers, pupils, staff and Governing Body) should receive regular updates outlining the immediate response and **short-term** disruption to the School. These will be communicated on the school Website: www.bedecps.co.uk

And www.gateshead.gov.uk (School Closures Information) and by emails to parents.