



Villa Real School
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Managing Critical Incidents Policy 2025

Responsibility: Jill Bowe

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Date to be reviewed: February 2027

MANAGING CRITICAL INCIDENTS

A critical incident may involve a number of issues including death of a pupil/student, death of a member of staff, a child going missing off site or a serious incident or accident happening on site. Critical incidents may also pertain to issues with premises, e.g. being targeted by known individuals, a flood, premises damage etc. This list is not exhaustive but the guidance note is here to support Villa Real in the management of such incident.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The key to successful leadership and management is to prepare for how critical incidents will be managed. Staff, parents/carers and pupils/students need to feel secure and in 'safe hands' and this needs to be led and directed from senior leadership.

MANAGING A CRITICAL INCIDENT

When there is any critical incident, it is important not to panic. Senior leaders need to remain in charge and initially seek out all of the facts to formulate the information which can be shared. This may mean liaising with the police or social care, or parents/carers or family members of the person who may have been harmed or died. It is necessary to establish the minimum facts and fully confirm what can be shared. In the event of a critical incident, advice can be sought from the Local Authority via Ian Shanks and Janet Crawford.

The next step is to brief the senior leadership team (SLT) of the information to ensure that there is full agreement and understanding on how to manage the incident. This includes the full facts and the language to be used in a consistent manner with staff, pupils/students and parents/carers. In situations like this scripts are often helpful for staff so that the message shared is consistent amongst all.

Following the briefing with the SLT, a staff meeting will be required to inform all staff of the incident and how it will be managed. Again scripts on language to be used may be helpful for all staff.

Pupils/students and parents/carers will also need to be informed using the agreed facts and language. It is necessary, particularly in sharing with pupils/students that staff monitor vulnerable pupils/students and ensure any additional support is provided. It is helpful when such an incident has occurred that regular routines are kept to as much as possible to ensure normality for all pupils/students.

If parents/carers are informed via letter, only factual information will be shared with the same consistency of language. Parents/carers and pupils/students should be offered contact details of who to get in touch with if there are any further questions or issues e.g. distress to a particular child or family. Parents/carers and pupils/students need to be reminded of being

respectful as well as confidential for example not sharing information on social networks.

FOLLOW UP

If there is going to be any follow up to the incident e.g. press interest, or media attention then staff, parents/carers and pupils/students should be prepared and the 'status quo' of keeping to the facts about the incident will be necessary (see Guidance Note on Managing the Media).

If there is going to be any intervention provided to staff and pupils/students then this information should be shared with staff, pupils/students and parents/carers also e.g. Educational Psychology or individual services provided to support those in need e.g. counselling.