

Critical incident guide

A critical incident may be defined as an incident or situation involving trauma, fatality or serious injury to an individual or serious damage to property.

By its very nature such an incident is sudden, unpredictable and outside the range of normal human experience. Such events are normally very distressing to pupils and school staff.

Infrequently, a serious crisis may affect your school. It can happen on the premises or may involve pupils and / or staff when they are away. Sometimes, an incident affecting the wider community may have a significant effect on your school.

Examples of some of the critical incidents that have occurred in Ealing over the last few years include:

- A stabbing of a pupil
- Deaths of pupils as a result of long-term illness
- The sudden, unexpected death of a pupil or a member of staff
- The death of parents of school age children
- A serious, accidental injury of a pupil on school premises during the school day.

Ealing critical incident guide

The critical incident guide assists headteachers and school staff to deal effectively with critical incidents. Hard copies of the revised guide are available in schools and the electronic copy is available for you to download per section below:

For further information contact [Steve Dunham](#).

[Critical incident guide foreward and contents](#) Foreword, editorial comments and contents.

[Section one: Introduction](#) Defines what a critical incident is and explains how this manual will help you to deal effectively with such incidents.

[Section two: Who to contact](#) Notification of critical incident and key contacts, incident report form and action notification.

[Section three: Rapid checklist](#) Critical incident rapid checklist for headteachers.

[Section four: Crisis management](#) Explains the three key stages of what to do should an incident occur.

[Section five: Ealing children's services support](#) Flow chart of the response process.

[Section six: Media](#) How to deal with the media and the support available from Ealing Council's communication unit officers.

[Section seven: Educational psychology service](#) Explains the role of educational psychology service and how they can help during a critical incident.

[Section eight: Loss and bereavement](#) Guidance on how to manage loss or bereavement within the school community.

[Section nine: Funeral rites across different cultures](#) Brief guidance on responses to death and the rituals according to the tenets of some of the major religions of the world.

[Section ten: After the event](#) Guidance on what to do in school after the event.

[Section eleven: School trips](#) Guidance in relation to critical incidents occurring on a school trip.

[Section twelve: Troublemakers on site](#) Guidance on how to deal with trespassers, nuisances, harassment and threatening or abusive behaviour.

[Section thirteen: School safe procedure](#) What to do if a pupil, parent or member of staff reports a potentially dangerous incident, either on the way to or from school or during the school day.

[Section fourteen: School emergency plan](#) Template for school emergency management plan and template for school emergency management plan.

[Section fifteen: Administration of medicines and drugs](#) Guidelines and code of practice on the administration of medicines and drugs given in schools.

[Appendix 1: Case scenarios](#) (pdf) Examples of incidents: walk-through of an exemplar case.

[Appendix 2: Assisting statutory investigations](#) (pdf) A critical incident such as a sudden death of a pupil or member of staff can trigger an investigation that may involve a number of statutory agencies.

[Appendix 3: Ealing school's lockdown procedures](#) (pdf) Guidance on the two main lockdown situations and examples of a school lockdown policy.

[Appendix 4: Resource list](#) (pdf) A list of books for young people on death and bereavement.

[Appendix 5: Useful organisations](#) (pdf) A list of organisations to help children manage loss and bereavement.

[Appendix 6: Ealing schools behaviour code](#) Ealing children's services expectations of members of the public, including parents and visitors to schools.

Contact details

Stephen Dunham
Schools property Ealing
Tel: 020 8825 7418
Mobile: 07940 546263
Email: dunhams@ealing.gov.uk

Was this page useful?

- [Yes](#)

- Neutral
- No

Last updated: 08 May 2025
