

Children, schools and families

Planning for emergencies

Advice from CSF to schools, centres and services on coping with emergencies and who to contact

Updated: November 2013

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FOREWORD

All schools, centres and CSF must be prepared to handle emergencies. Heads, managers and governors need to assure themselves that their schools, centres and services have thought about and planned their responses to serious incidents. An emergency plan is there to help you respond quickly in a crisis.

The advice in this revised booklet draws upon past incidents in Camden, as well as lessons learned from emergencies elsewhere, including those with tragic outcomes and issues such as bereavement and media interest. Schools, centres and services will need to agree their particular procedures in the light of their own special circumstances but these guidelines provide a framework.

This booklet covers:

- Identifying potential emergencies and preparing to handle them
- Main contacts, roles and responsibilities
- Emergency action and medical advice
- Advice on psychosocial support
- Working with the media
- IT continuity
- CSF contacts list for incidents
- School / centres contact list
- Useful resources.

This booklet offers a starting point. CSF and the Council's corporate health and safety service are keen to support schools, centres and services in developing plans which suit particular needs. A great deal of the information and advice set out in this booklet is self-evident but it needs to be said and appropriate responses need to be planned.

Each school/centre is required to:

- Review these guidelines in the context of their existing procedures
- Complete the form at No. 11 and circulate the completed plan to all school staff
- Ensure the completed plan is stored on and off site in both printed and electronic formats
- Maintain and operate the emergency in response to emergencies that may effect the school
- Update the document each year, particularly to check staff contact details
- Ensure that school governors and persons within the school who have specific roles in the school emergency plan are provided with copies of the document, and that they are ready and capable of assuming those roles if an emergency situation develops
- Develop a programme of assessing the plan's effectiveness and reviewing the emergency arrangements (e.g. learning from previous incidents or tests such as fire drills).

Richard Lewin

CSF Assistant Director (strategy, performance and information)

November 2013

**EMERGENCY TOWN HALL OUT OF HOURS SERVICE
020 7974 4444 and ask for the duty emergency planning officer**

1. PREPARING TO HANDLE EMERGENCIES

Despite every effort to avoid critical incidents, headteachers, centre managers and service heads must consider what could go wrong, prepare plans to deal with the situation and rehearse them. It is almost impossible to predict the exact form or effect of an emergency. Establishments should therefore prepare broadly applicable emergency arrangements rather than a series of different plans which can, because of the inclusion of too much detail, inhibit creative planning and action at the time.

For each potential emergency situation the school/centres/service should consider:

- **the scope of the threat**
- **its possible effects**
- **the methods to be used.**

The plans need to be flexible and resilient so that unexpected and unusual events can be met.

The headteacher, centre manager or service head should take responsibility for drawing up a response plan and staff should be allocated key tasks. All staff should be aware of the emergency plan and know what they are expected to do. Governors need to be aware of the plan and to have confidence in it.

There are various ways for schools, centres and services to make plans for dealing with emergencies. There is clearly much to be gained from those who have worked on plans already and schools, centres and services are encouraged to share their plans with each other.

2. WHAT IS A SCHOOL EMERGENCY?

Emergencies in schools and centres are those which occur unexpectedly and have a major impact on the life of an establishment. They can include:

- the death of a pupil or a member of staff (see 4.1, 4.2)
- a serious accident in a school/centre or on an educational trip (see 4.3)
- a serious illness or a communicable disease, e.g. meningitis (see 4.3)
- a violent intrusion onto school/centre premises (see 4.4)
- a serious and immediate physical threat to students and/or staff (see 4.4)
- fire, flood or explosion (see 4.5, 4.7, 4.8)
- a bomb threat (see 4.6)
- major structural damage (see 4.9)
- release of hazardous substances near or on the school/centre site (see 4.10)
- health hazard (see 4.10)
- hostage-taking or abduction (see 4.11)
- emergency school/centre closure (see 4.12)
- salvage (4.13).

**All of these have actually occurred in schools and centres.
Each has a different impact on the establishment and community.**

Each may involve:

- a long-term impact on individuals
- psychological distress
- financial issues
- insurance concerns
- media interest.

Headteachers, service managers and governors will be able to add to this list.

3. MAIN CONTACTS

CSF and the Council have systems and procedures in place to ensure that informed guidance and advice are readily available. The support includes counselling, handling the media, dealing with property-related matters and having access, outside office hours, to senior officers.

4. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The roles of the emergency services in an incident are as follows:

CSF Emergency Response Team

CSF Emergency Response Team works to support schools and other educational services in preparing for, dealing with and assisting with the after-effects of an emergency situation. The team consists of:

Name	Role	Mobile
Richard Lewin - AD	Chair	020 7974 4527 07944 593 850
Ila Modi – safeguarding / children in need	Service Mgr	020 7974 1502 07789 948 842
Sarah Bourne – Head Property & Contracts or Paul Hampson - P&C technical officer	Service Mgr	07904 281 335 07903 273 544
Hilary Simpson	ICT business partner	020 7974 4237 07775 542 464
Philip McCorkell - CSF communications	Communications	020 7974 6649 07790 517 537
Trevor King / Emergency Planning Officers	EPOs	020 7974 3495 Mob: 07786 197 735
Michael Shew (AD) / Jean Lang (primary)	AD / Service Mgrs (achievement / school improvement)	020 7974 1534 / 7306 07811 942080 07920 254 295
Anthony Keen Integrated Early years service	Deputy Service Mgr	020 7974 4371 Mob: 07974 245 184
Carole Smith Security	Reception/security	0207 974 5209 07770 220 629
Hilary Forbes SEN and Ed Psychology	Acting head of service	020 7974 6500
Claudia Noël-Michael SEN and Ed Psychology	Critical incident response co-ordinator	020 7974 6500 07787 845 276
Sophie Massicott	Property	020 7974 3005 07908 708 729
Eugene Griffin Integrated Youth Support	Acting head of service	020 7974 6762 07940 952 285
Ed Magee Welfare, inclusion and support in education	Acting head of service	020 7974 1653 07833 406 200

The team meets to plan for and rehearse situations that may arise. Not all emergencies can be foreseen or predicted but account needs to be made of all credible emergencies that can arise. The team encourages and supports schools in making plans for and preparing for emergencies. CSF and the Council also advise and provide some training for heads, relevant school staff and governors.

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A full list of contact details is contained in the Emergency Contact List held by the Assistant Director for Strategy and Resources.

If the Assistant Director for Strategy and Resources (Lead Officer) is unavailable for any period of time then an alternative contact will have been nominated and details circulated to the Emergency Response Team and to Melissa Brackley - Borough Emergency Planning & Business Continuity Manager.

Metropolitan Police

- Saving life
- Protection of property
- Co-ordination of response
- Investigation of incident
- Protection / preservation of scene
- Identification of victims
- Casualty information
- Family liaison.

London Fire Brigade

- Saving life
- Protection of property
- Control and extinguish fire
- Safety of all response personnel
- Protection of environment
- Managing chemical incidents/spillages
- Mass decontamination
- Search and rescue, including in collapsed buildings.

London Ambulance Service

- Saving life
- Treatment and care of the injured
- Triage (dealing with casualties at the scene)
- Liaison with hospitals
- Transportation of casualties
- NHS focal point.

The role of Camden Council and CSF is as follows:

Children, Schools and Families (CSF) directorate

- Guidance for schools on emergency planning
- Link between the school and other council and health services
- Assisting with communication and dissemination of information to staff, pupils, parents / guardians and media
- Approval of offsite and hazardous activities
- Support to schools during an incident, including on site
- Communication with all relevant areas of the Council
- Emergency accommodation for schools where required

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- Provide additional teaching resources and staffing where required
- Educational psychology and Child and Adolescent Mental Health (CAMHS) services to provide counselling and support.

Within the other departments of Camden Council

- Council Emergency Planning Team liaison in an incident
- High level liaison with the emergency services and utilities
- Home to school transport assistance
- Communications team - handling the media
- Rest / Reception Centres for evacuees or survivors
- Property Services (building surveyors and engineers)
- Liaison with BT and other telecommunications providers
- Provision of administrative support staff
- Insurance team.

The role of the school

- To look after and protect students and staff from harm
- To create, adopt, maintain and operate a school emergency plan
- To keep the plan up-to-date
- To ensure that the relevant people in the school are informed and are ready and capable of assuming their assigned roles in an emergency.
- To test the school emergency plan
- To provide the Council with a copy of the plan
- To manage the initial response to the incident, including establishing an Emergency Response Team (ERT) where required
- To notify the Council where support is required in an incident
- To work with the Council and the emergency services to manage the emergency
- To support students, staff and parents throughout
- Maintain communications with all stakeholders throughout the incident including school governors
- To bring about a swift return to normal life
- To provide follow up support and care for staff and students affected by the incident.

5. EMERGENCY ACTION

Immediate Action

Incidents may be brought to the school's attention by

- Staff/ pupils
- Emergency services
- Council
- Parents / guardians
- Media.

The staff member witnessing or first discovering the incident will be responsible for initiating the immediate response to the incident. This may entail:

- Summoning help / calling the emergency services (dial 999).
- Take charge at the scene until further support arrives.
- Securing the immediate welfare of pupils and staff e.g. through shelter or evacuation.
- Alerting the headteacher, deputy or most senior member of staff present in their absence.
- Collating relevant information such as the location and time of the incident, numbers and details of those involved, summary of events, etc and at the earliest opportunity making a written record of these points.

In this section of the booklet we have set out possible emergency situations and ways of handling them. The advice is very general and in many cases very obvious - but it needs to be stated. Schools/centres/services need to explore each of the situations and apply local knowledge and experience in devising their plans.

Incident Logging

Everyone involved in responding to the emergency should start and maintain a written log of their actions as soon as possible. A suggested form for this purpose is included in **Appendix 1**. This should include any information and messages received, the source and the time and date. This is extremely important and will enable your school to provide detailed information should it be required at a later stage or if an inquiry or investigation takes place.

Death of student or staff member on site or in the school's care
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Contact ambulance service via 999 immediately, requesting that the police also attend.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Make safe the hazard (where applicable), so others are not harmed.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Do not move a body until the ambulance arrives. Evacuate all pupils and all but necessary staff from area.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Contact Camden Council / CSF emergency response team for assistance.

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Notification to parents or next of kin should be planned with health workers and police, and should normally be in person.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact critical incident response team at Camden educational psychology service – 020 7974 6500 or 07787 845 276.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inform Health and Safety Executive (by phone 0845 300 9923) within 10 days where appropriate and report the incident to Camden Reportline on 020 7974 6655 option 2.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preserve any evidence of the cause of the incident
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inform chair of governors

Death of student or staff member away from the school

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact Camden CSF emergency response team for assistance
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact critical incident response team at Camden educational psychology service – 020 7974 6500 or 07787 845 276.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan how notification will be given through school – e.g. emergency staff briefing followed by class briefings
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If the death implies a health risk to others (e.g. infectious disease), obtain professional advice (from Camden CSF and Camden PCT), brief staff, parents and students as appropriate and cooperate with health workers.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inform the Health and Safety Executive (by phone 0845 300 9923) within 10 days where appropriate and report the incident to Camden Reportline on 020 7974 6655 option 2.

Bereavement – ongoing issues

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where the deceased is a member of staff the school will liaise with HR in respect of pension entitlements for the family of the deceased. The HR team will also deal with the necessary correspondence with the family.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where the deceased is a member of staff the school may also need to make arrangements for other staff to cover classes and arranging for temporary or supply teachers.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school should establish a line of communication with the family of the deceased, and agree with the family what information can be released about how the person died and what happened. The school should respect the family's wishes about attendance at the funeral and any memorial activities the school is planning.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teaching staff will be notified straight away. They may also need to be briefed about what the school is doing, take time to prepare themselves to

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<p>handle questions from pupils and parents, and to monitor pupils for any signs of emotional trauma. Arrangements will also be made to notify ancillary staff such as nursery, admin, catering and cleaning staff etc at the appropriate time.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff may themselves be affected by the bereavement, and the headteacher will talk to them collectively and individually over the coming days/weeks/months, monitor them, and ensure they receive the necessary support if they are unable to cope, e.g. bereavement counsellors, obtainable via the Council’s human resources team.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is important for the school to carefully manage the way the news is given to pupils. Time will be taken to plan how to break the news to pupils, what to say, and who will say it. Pupils will need to be told what has happened and how everyone is feeling about it. It may also be appropriate to tell them why it happened, and younger pupils may need to be re-assured that it will not happen again, and it will not happen to them. It may be important for pupils, and especially younger pupils, to then be with the teachers and staff who they are familiar with so that they can feel safe to talk and share about how they feel about what has happened. This follow-up time is important to enable teachers to provide reassurance, answer individual questions and provide guidance to the class group about how they should be feeling, that it is alright to feel sad, or not to feel sad, and how to respond to what has happened. <p>Pupils may also need some practical way to focus how they feel about what has happened, and the school can provide ways to do this, e.g. writing cards, making floral tributes, planting a tree of remembrance, a plaque, a book of condolence, a book of remembrance, a special assembly, a memorial service etc. An appropriate quiet area could be set-aside in the school for pupils to come to talk to staff about what has happened. The school will take advice from the council’s psychology service and or CAMHS attached or linked to the school when planning how to handle the pupils in this situation.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The headteacher may need to write a letter to parents to inform them about what has happened and concerning any arrangements that have been made. If the deceased is a member of staff, parents may need to know what arrangements the school is making to provide staff to cover their classes. A follow up letter may be required to notify parents about subsequent events and arrangements e.g. special assembly, memorial service etc.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In cases of bereavement many people feel the need to express their feelings about what has happened, by sending cards, flowers, money or other items to the school, unless they are specifically told not to. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cards could be put on a special pin board/display, forwarded to the family of the bereaved or included in a book of condolence or a book of remembrance. They should not just be thrown away. • The school may need to designate a suitable place for people to put

flowers where they are visible and can be perused. Remember flowers will quickly perish without water, and even with water flowers may wilt and become unattractive in time. But disposal of flowers may also be a contentious issue, and they will not be just thrown away. The school may need to adopt a policy for this e.g. the flowers to be used at the funeral, or taken to the cemetery, or another appropriate location at an appropriate time. The small cards sent with the flowers may also contain written messages, and these could be forwarded to the family of the bereaved or included in a book of condolence or a book of remembrance.

- Items such as toys or photographs could also be forwarded to the family of the bereaved or included in a book of condolence or a book of remembrance.
- Books of condolence or remembrance could be forwarded to the bereaved family at an appropriate time.

N.B. the family of the bereaved may not want to be bombarded with cards, flowers or other items, so the school will need to ask first before forwarding these to the family.

A clear written record of money received and donors will be maintained by the school, and the money will be used for the purpose for which it was given. Money given for the family of the deceased will be passed on to them or donated to a charity instead if they prefer, and the school should respect their wishes. In the case of multiple bereavements the school will carefully consider a policy on how such money will be distributed. The school should take specialist advice if it is considering setting up charitable trusts.

- Where individual pupils or staff appear to be more seriously affected, bereavement counselling assistance can be obtained from the occupational health for staff, and the education psychology service and CAMHS for pupils as required.

Serious accident or illness at school/centre or on an educational journey

- Call ambulance or other emergency services on 999.
- Meet ambulance at entrance.
- Detail adult to accompany casualty.
- Contact parents/carers immediately.
- If parents unavailable, be prepared to act 'in loco parentis' including giving permission to operate.

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Notify the headteacher, deputy or most senior member of staff present in their absence.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inform CSF emergency response team, H & S adviser and chair of governors.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete accident report (legal requirement for accidents) in line with current procedures.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inform Health and Safety Executive (by phone 0845 300 9923) within 10 days where appropriate and report the incident to Camden Reportline on 020 7974 6655 option 2.

Assaults on staff or pupils/students by members of the public

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If the victim (s) requires medical attention, request a first-aid trained member of staff to see to the injury and call an ambulance if required.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take necessary measures to make pupil/student/member of staff safe.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Try to identify assailant (do not detain by force).
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact police at once on 999.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Obtain the names of any witnesses.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Record details.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact Governors and Camden CSF health and safety adviser.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any witnesses should prepare factual witness statements. Ideally all statements should be prepared on the day of the incident.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete accident report in line with current procedures.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inform Health and Safety Executive (by phone 0845 300 9923) within 10 days where appropriate and report the incident to Camden Reportline on 020 7974 6655 option 2.

Fire in school/centre

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sound fire alarm.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Call fire brigade risk.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evacuate building(s) in line with evacuation policy. - DO NOT STOP TO COLLECT PERSONAL BELONGINGS AND DO NOT USE ANY LIFTS

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check that building is empty, excluding staff/pupils in a designated place of safety.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undertake a roll call to ensure that everyone is accounted for.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meet fire brigade and inform them of who is in the building and where, location of fire.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inform CSF Emergency Response Team
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not re-enter the building without clearance from fire brigade.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report to the Camden Reportline on 020 7974 6655 option 2.

Bomb threat or suspect package

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If you receive a bomb threat or warning by telephone • Keep calm and attempt to write down what is being said by the caller. • Try to keep the caller on the phone and ask questions such as; “When will it go off?”, “Where is it?”, “What does it look like”. The words used by the caller can often indicate how familiar he or she is with your premises, thereby giving some indication as to whether the threat is genuine or otherwise. • Where possible note any accent or background noise. • Once the caller has hung up notify the head teacher immediately.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If you receive a bomb threat or warning by post: • Keep physical handling of the letter to a minimum • Notify the head teacher immediately
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact the police.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It may be appropriate for staff to check areas of the building for suspect packages to ascertain whether: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - There are any suspicious objects, i.e. items you would not normally expect to see in that location - There are major items that cannot be accounted for, e.g. items which you would normally expect to be in position but are missing - Anything is out of place - There is anything unusual, i.e. was a window or door left open that would not normally be open? Has anything been disturbed or items removed?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not touch or remove any suspicious object.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seek police advice as to whether the school should be evacuated – this decision is ultimately the responsibility the school.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact CSF Emergency Response Team
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evacuate the premises if it is necessary to do so using the fire alarm procedure and take a register of persons at the designated assembly point.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In the event of long term evacuation, proceed to the agreed alternative site e.g. other school, park.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact parents where possible. Notices to be attached to all entrances / exits to the school with details of the alternative site and contact telephone numbers.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Government has produced some added guidance on dealing with bomb warnings or threats which you may find useful. Some higher education institutions (universities) have received threats via email - all of them hoaxes. The National Counter Terrorism Security office has guidance (mainly for Higher Education establishments: visit http://www.nactso.gov.uk/AreaOfRisks/Education.aspx), some of which you may find useful.

Explosion

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evacuate the building(s) as necessary - DO NOT STOP TO COLLECT PERSONAL BELONGINGS AND DO NOT USE ANY LIFTS.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inform emergency services including Electricity/Gas Board as appropriate.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check whether building is empty.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inform CSF Emergency Response Team.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not re-enter the building without clearance from emergency services.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report it to the Camden Reportline on 020 7974 6655 option 2.

Hazardous substances

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make safe (where applicable) the hazard so others are not harmed.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact CSF Emergency Response Team for assistance
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If necessary, evacuate the building/buildings
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check that the building is empty, if appropriate.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inform emergency services
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not re-enter the building without clearance from emergency services.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report it to the Camden Reportline on 020 7974 6655 option 2.

Missing or lost pupils / Hostage-taking or abduction
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact police at once on 999.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact CSF assistant director / member of Emergency Response Team on 020 7974 4221 / 1534 / 4055.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collect and retain witnesses.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Record details.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact parents/carers/next of kin.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inform chair of governors or other (if applicable).
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact CSF communications / press office - 020 7974 6649 / 4590 / 3543.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undertake specific Safeguarding Risk Assessment and action undertaken where safeguarding applies. Refer to the Managing Serious Incident document.

Emergency school/centre closure (this can arise in relation to the above incidents)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schools should not assume closure is the only option. Advice should be sought and discussed in all cases before the decision to close is taken
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact CSF Emergency Response Team – property and contracts, Sarah Bourne, on 020 7974 4271 / 4549 and / or school improvement service, Michael Shew or Jean Lang - 020 7974 1534 / 7306.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss possible closure with those listed below in the following order <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Property and contracts • School improvement • Health and safety • Assistant director.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inform / notify relevant officers including press office and communications with action being taken and anticipated duration of closure if known.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information to be put on school's website regarding closure, re-opening and who parents should contact for more information.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider which other local services in the school need to be informed, e.g. play centres and school meals service.

Lockdown / stay put in the school if there is an incident in the area
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take advice from the emergency services. • Contact Camden CSF emergency Response Team for advice/assistance.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Class teacher / teams to contact parents of pupils in their class to notify them of the situation.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure any pupils on medication take required doses. If any pupils require urgent medication and do not have them, inform the emergency services
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If the situation extends past a meal time, staff should access provisions from the school kitchen to feed pupils and themselves.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If it becomes necessary to stay overnight – liaise with the emergency services regarding bedding / blankets.

Salvage
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Before undertaking any salvage operation, seek advice from the CSF Emergency Response Team – salvage can itself be hazardous.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prioritise items for salvage by value to the school, not necessarily just by monetary value. Ensure that items that cannot easily be replaced are salvaged first.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DO NOT attempt any salvage operation that could place lives in danger, or health at risk

6. MEDICAL ADVICE

We have highlighted some of the most commonly sought areas of advice.

Meningitis: Recognising the signs and symptoms

- severe headache
- fever
- vomiting
- drowsiness
- discomfort from bright light
- neck stiffness
- rash of small red-purple spots or bruises.

If you suspect a case, get qualified medical help immediately and inform the CSF Emergency Response team.

For more information contact the National Meningitis Trust 24-hour helpline on 0800 028 1828.

Asthma attacks

These are common so we have set out the response needed in detail.

- Stay calm.
- Reassure the asthma sufferer and others present.
- Listen carefully to the asthmatic person and act on their needs.
- Sit the sufferer down, leaning them slightly forward and resting on a support.
- Ensure a good supply of fresh air.
- Stop other people crowding around.
- Send someone to fetch another member of staff if necessary (trained first aider).
- If the sufferer has an inhaler, help them find it and let them use it in the normal way, helping them if needed.
- The sufferer will normally take one puff, wait about half a minute to get their breath back and allow the canister to recharge, before taking a second inhalation. More doses may be taken if there is no effect.
- If the sufferer takes their medication with a spacer or nebuliser, ensure this is brought to where they are and used in the normal way, as shown in the training session.
- While the person with asthma is having an attack, or recovering from one, they should not be left alone but closely supervised by a trained first aider.
- If adequate recovery from a severe asthma attack does not take place within 5 to 10 minutes of the reliever being used, or if the sufferer is becoming exhausted or losing consciousness, or if for any other reason the condition of the person gives cause for concern, then an ambulance should be called immediately by phoning 999. The site's statutory first aider should be there and parents or carers informed.

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- If they become unconscious, place them in the recovery position and continue to monitor their condition very closely and record breathing and pulse rates every 10 minutes
- If they stop breathing then the normal resuscitation procedure should be used
- If an ambulance is called, all relevant information on the sufferer and the attack should be given to the crew.

Epileptic seizures

Epilepsy is the second most common neurological disorder after migraine, affecting one in 130 people in the UK. There are many different types of seizures. However, it is the convulsive seizure that is the most alarming.

Classroom first aid for a convulsive seizure:

- Protect the child from injury by removing any sharp, hard or hot objects or electrical appliances nearby (only move the child if necessary).
- Cushion the head with something soft, e.g. a folded jacket, but do not try to restrain movement.
- **Do not put** anything at all between the teeth or in the mouth.
- **Do not give** anything to drink until the seizure is over.
- Loosen tight clothing around the neck but remember to do this with care as it may frighten a semi-conscious child.
- Do not call for an ambulance unless the seizure lasts more than a few minutes – see emergency care section – **but do call a trained first aider.**
- As soon as possible, turn the child onto their side in the semi-prone (recovery /unconscious position), to aid breathing. Wipe away saliva from around the mouth.
- **Be reassuring** during the confused period which often follows this type of seizure. The child may need to rest quietly or sleep for a while, preferably somewhere private.
- If there has been incontinence, cover the child with a blanket to prevent embarrassment. Arrange to keep spare clothes at school if this is a regular occurrence.
- It is not usually necessary to send a child home after a seizure, but each child is different so parents should always be notified by telephone.

Although the average convulsive seizure is not a medical emergency there are exceptions of which staff should be aware. **Unless a doctor can attend straightaway, call an ambulance if...**

- a seizure shows no sign of stopping after a few minutes (maximum 5 minutes)
- injuries have occurred during the seizure, e.g. cut that needs stitching
- Three seizures take place in the space of half an hour without the child properly regaining consciousness in between
- It is the first seizure, the cause of which is uncertain and needs investigation.

Advice can be sought from the school nurse/doctor or for more information call the British Epilepsy Association freephone helpline on 0808 800 5050.

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Tuberculosis: Recognising the symptoms

Tuberculosis (TB) is an infectious disease that usually affects the lungs, but can affect any part of the body. It is caused by tuber bacillus or "*Mycobacterium tuberculosis*". The bacillus can survive in the body for many years in a dormant or inactive state whereby people are infected but show no signs of TB disease. When the bacillus is awake and dividing people are said to have "active TB".

Symptoms are:

- Persistent cough
- Weight loss
- Fever
- Heavy night sweats
- Tiredness
- Coughing-up blood.

Who catches TB?

You have to be in close and lengthy contact with someone who has the infection in their lungs or throat. Whilst anyone can catch TB some people are more at risk. These include people who:

- Live in the same household as, or been in close and lengthy contact with someone with infectious TB
- Living in unhealthy or overcrowded conditions, including those who are homeless or sleeping rough
- Have lived, worked or stayed for a long time in a country with a high rate of TB
- May have been exposed to TB in their youth when TB was more common in this country
- Are children of parents whose country of origin has a high rate of TB
- Have been in prison, addicted to drugs or misuse alcohol
- Are unable to fight off infection due to illness (such as HIV), treatment or poor diet
- Young children and very elderly.

What to do if you suspect or have been informed of a case of TB.

- Advise the parent/guardian/ carer of the child or member of staff to visit their GP immediately
- Inform the CSF Emergency Response team.

For more information contact the [Health Protection Agency](#) on 020 8200 4400 or 020 8200 6868 or [NHS Direct](#) on 111.

7. PSYCHOSOCIAL SUPPORT

A serious event, such as the death of a child or a member of staff, affects the whole school/centre community. Students and staff including those not directly affected, may need support. In the immediate aftermath people might feel:

- stunned, dazed or numb
- cut off from what is going on around you
- unable to accept what has happened
- that it hasn't really happened.

Usually, these feelings fade and others may take their place, which might include:

- tears and sadness
- fear and anxiety
- numbness or dreaminess
- unpleasant memories about the event
- problems with your concentration
- difficulties with your memory
- difficulties with sleeping, nightmares and tiredness
- feeling less confident or, sometimes, helpless
- reduced energy
- feeling angry or irritable
- reduced appetite
- guilt about the incident
- headaches and other aches and pains
- feelings of reluctance to discuss the event or you wish to talk about it all the time
- wanting to avoid people, places or activities that remind you of the event (and this might include travelling on public transport)
- elation about surviving.

Children and young people are as likely to be affected as adults and they may have similar experiences. Often, they become unsettled and more aggressive or fearful and it is usual for them to be more clingy and demanding. Also, they may 're-play' the event in their games. These reactions are understandable and, usually, reduce gradually over time.

The following is a brief list of ways in which we can help children and adolescents cope in a healthy manner during times of major stress:

- Get the children back into a normal routine as soon as possible.
- Listen carefully to what the child has to say. Show interest, concern and sincerity.
- Be patient and honest. Children often have difficulty expressing themselves verbally so let them express themselves in their own way (as long as it is not dangerous).
- Provide opportunities in which the child or adolescent has control. Let them make some decisions.
- Facilitate age and developmentally appropriate discussion among children about the event, loss or tragedy.

- Allow the children to tell and retell their stories, including the painful details that you would rather avoid.
- Provide children an opportunity to “say goodbye” and to resolve their feelings about the loss.
- Provide for non-trauma related activities. Have fun.
- Encourage and utilise help from support groups.

If your school needs support with managing the aftermath of an emergency, CSF can arrange support and counselling with local health, CAMHS and other services.

CONTACT

**Hilary Forbes on 020 7974 6500 or Claudia Noël-Michael,
critical incident response co-ordinator, at Camden
educational psychology service on 07787 845 276.**

or

**EMERGENCY OUT OF HOURS SERVICE
020 7974 4444**

8. WORKING WITH THE MEDIA

In the case of a major disaster, the media can swamp the area. In fact, any significant incident involving a school will attract the media's attention.

The media should have a **single point of contact** so reporters know who to approach for information and to keep disruption at the school or centre to a minimum.

In situations where the emergency services are involved, the police will normally take the lead on dealing with the media services. However, reporters will still want information, views, comments from the school, centre or service.

The most important point to remember is that the media will not go away if you ignore them. In fact, they will be a bigger problem as they will seek out information themselves and will distract or disrupt your staff.

In such situations, the Council provides full support. The press office and communications team operates a 24 hours a day, seven days a week emergency service and will deal with any enquiries from the media.

<p style="text-align: center;">CONTACT PRESS OFFICER – 020 7974 4590 / 3543 or OUT OF HOURS DUTY PRESS OFFICER – 07901 554 530</p>

Eight-point guide to handling the media:

1. Co-operation is the key - avoid the media at your peril - they will cause more trouble if you do
2. Be prepared - but be flexible. Have a plan and put it into effect swiftly
3. Nominate a contact officer to liaise with the media – this could be the police or a Council press officer
4. In the case of a major incident, a central media point may be set up with phone lines and a designated email address
5. Provide regular briefings, backed up by statements - accentuate the positive, provide salient details, have a clear line and be consistent
6. Develop a fact file (reporters will be pushing for information on the school, numbers of pupils, exact location, names of those caught up in the emergency)
7. Be prepared to use the media to send a message to parents – via the Council's press office or other central contact if possible
8. Take advantage of the expertise of the Council's press office.

9. IT CONTINUITY

It is important that should a disaster occur that the school/centre/service should be able to continue to function, albeit in a limited capacity, and provide all the necessary statutory services. This will mean that the information that the school works with to enable day to day running will need to be replicated in a form that can be quickly provided. This could be either in electronic format (backup tapes) or a paper copy of essential data.

The following activities should be undertaken at regular intervals:

Business Continuity

- Identify the importance of all IT systems.
- Work with IT suppliers to discover the recovery times for each system.
- Put in places procedures to cover loss of service.

Backup procedure

- Decide which information will need to be regularly backed up.
- Produce regular (nightly) backups of software
- Additional ad hoc backups to be performed as required and stored in the standard way
- Keep the backup tapes offsite
- Verify the restore process periodically.

Virus checks

- Ensure an up to date virus checker is installed on every essential system.
- Do not allow any disks coming from an outside source to be used unless virus checked.
- The system administrator must be informed immediately if a virus is found.

Financial software

- Produce all reports that would normally be produced at the end of a quarter
- Print detailed cost centre reports
- Backup data file(s) before and after carrying out period end.

Budgeting

- Staff salary details should be kept up to date throughout the coming financial year on a regular basis.
- Backup data file(s).

Administration manager

- Print student index cards (these should normally be produced at regular intervals during the year to ensure contact details are available in the event of system failure).

10. CSF CONTACT LIST FOR SPECIFIC INCIDENTS

Abandoned children	Family services and social work	020 7974 6600 020 7974 4444
Accidents, children	Health and safety service	020 7974 4524 07753 957 922 (m)
Accidents on journeys	Health and safety service	020 7974 4524 07753 957 922 (m)
Accidents, staff	H&S service Camden HR	020 7974 4524 07753 957 922 (m) 020 7974 6655
Allegations against staff	Bodil Mlynarska Camden HR	020 7974 6999 020 7974 6655
Assaults on staff	H&S service	020 7974 4524 07753 957 922 (m)
Assaults on students in/out of school	H&S service	020 7974 4524 07753 957 922 (m)
Boiler failure	Property and contracts service	020 7974 4599
Bomb threat	H&S service Duty Emergency Planning Officer	020 7974 4524 07753 957 922 (m) 020 7974 4444
Burglary (security of building following intruders)	Property and contracts service	020 7974 4547
Bullying / behaviour support service (BSS)	Head of PLSS Head of BSS	020 7974 8023 020 7974 7314
Child protection	Bodil Mlynarska	020 7974 6999
Contractors - accidents	Property and contracts service Health and safety service	020 7974 4547 020 7974 4524 07753 957 922 (m)
Death of staff - in accident / other than accident	H&S service Camden HR	020 7974 4524 07753 957 922 (m) 020 7974 6655
Death of student - in accident / other than accident	Health and safety service	020 7974 4524 07753 957 922 (m)

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Drugs – administration of medicine	Health and safety service Camden school nurses	020 7974 4524 07753 957 922 (m) 020 3317 2298
Drug misuse	Substance misuse team	020 7974 3163 / 3197
Electric shock	H&S service	020 7974 4524 07753 957 922 (m)
Fire - evacuation procedures & fire fighting	H&S service	020 7974 4524 07753 957 922 (m)
Fire - continuation of education	Property and contracts service	020 7974 4547
Flood - continuation of education	Property and contracts service	020 7974 4547
Gas leak - continuation of education	Property and contracts service	020 7974 4599
Health & Safety - staff & students	H&S service	020 7974 4524 07753 957 922 (m)
IT Emergency	Head of IT service	020 7974 4237
Spillage - chemical	Duty environmental health officer	020 7974 4444
Spillage - body fluids	Duty environmental health officer	020 7974 4444
Trauma / counselling	Education psychology service Head of educational psychology - liaison with CAMHS	020 7974 6500 07787 845 276 (m)

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11. SCHOOL / CENTRE CONTACT LIST

Important contacts in addition to those already listed (**to be completed by school**)

CONTACT	NAME	TELEPHONE
Ambulance		999
Fire Brigade		999
Police		999
Chair of Governing Body		
Camden (Out of Hours) Customer Services Centre		020 7974 4444
Council Emergency Planning Manager	Melissa Brackley	020 7974 5643
School / Centre or Service Area agreed for Evacuation		
School Doctor/ Community Medical Officer		
Health & Safety Advisers	Annette Taylor	020 7974 4524 07753 957 922 (m)
CSF Press Officer / Communications		020 7974 4590 / 3543 / 6649
School Nurse		
School's Educational psychologist		
Occupational Health Nurse		
Local Hospital A&E Department		
Education Welfare Officer		0207 974 7152
Family Services and Social Work – North (Crowndale Centre)	Duty Social Worker	020 7974 6600
Safeguarding & Social Care Duty & Assessment – South	Duty Social Worker	020 7974 4094
Emergency Duty & Assessment Team – Out of hours		020 7974 4444
Other Voluntary Agencies		
Local Religious Leaders / Diocese		
Health Protection Unit		020 8200 4400 / 6868

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12. USEFUL RESOURCES

Schools and centres may find the following useful in drawing up response plans:

National Recovery Guidance – Damaged Schools

http://www.ukresilience.gov.uk/response/recovery_guidance/infrastructure_issues/schools.aspx

Health Protection Agency - www.hpa.org.uk

National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence guidance

<http://www.nice.org.uk/guidance>

Camden Incident Log

Name:	Date: (when Log Started)
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TIME	PERSON TO/FROM & METHOD OF COMMS	MESSAGE DETAILS/ INSTRUCTIONS GIVEN/ ACTIONS/DECISIONS