

# Children, Young People, Education and Skills (CYPES)

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Title: Guidance to Critical Incident Management for Schools and Educational Services

Author: Associate Director for Innovation, Transformation & Business Support, CYPES

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## Foreword from the Director General for CYPES

Critical incidents are, by their very nature, rare events, but when they occur it is essential that there is an appropriate response. This may prove difficult not only because of the stress and anxiety caused by the incident but also because experience in handling such situations may be limited.

It is not surprising that feedback from those who have dealt with incidents confirms that responses are much better when there was a clearly planned procedure in place which was understood and followed by all concerned.

This documentation brings together guidelines and procedures for the Service to help you in preparing your plans and procedures which take account of your particular circumstances.

## Revision History

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1.2	20 April 2009	Business Change Manager	Updated contact details Action points from the desk-top exercise (17/10/08)	SMT 11/11/08
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1.9	September 2018		Updated contact details, inclusion of new Ministerial Team contacts. Amendment to Note 1 and updates to Appendix C to include JESIP principles. Amendments to SECTION 10 following Project Argus training held in March 2018 and inclusion of Appendix K (example lockdown procedure). Change of department number to CYPES	SMT – 19 <sup>th</sup> June 2018
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2.01	August 2023	Governance and Risk	Updated layout, included additional section for training young people.	
2.02	Feb 2024	Governance and Risk	Updated contacts	

## AIDE MEMOIRE FOR ALL STAFF

### Shared Situational Awareness

<b>M</b>	<b>MAJOR INCIDENT</b>	Has a major incident or standby been declared? (Yes / No - if no, then complete ETHANE message)
<b>E</b>	<b>EXACT LOCATION</b>	What is the exact location or geographical area of the incident?
<b>T</b>	<b>TYPE OF INCIDENT</b>	What kind of incident is it?
<b>H</b>	<b>HAZARDS</b>	What hazards or potential hazards can be identified?
<b>A</b>	<b>ACCESS</b>	What are the best routes for access and egress?
<b>N</b>	<b>NUMBER OF CASUALTIES</b>	How many casualties are there, and what condition are they in?
<b>E</b>	<b>EMERGENCY SERVICES</b>	Which and how many, emergency responder assets/personnel are required or are already on-scene?



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V3.0

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## INTRODUCTION

Handling and managing incidents are a normal part of life. Some incidents, however, are of a more critical and overwhelming character in which staff, pupils and parents/carers may experience acute, even prolonged, distress.

In the past you may have faced traumatic events such as:

- the serious injury or death of a member of the school community.
- the serious injury to pupils on school trips.
- a fire in a school; and
- a community disaster (e.g., gas leak, pollution incident, etc.).

This guidance adheres to the recommendations of the National Institute of Clinical Excellence regarding critical incident support, and it also draws on the experience from Local Authorities (LAs). It uses the experience of schools that have been through a critical incident. It is not intended to be prescriptive or attempt to cover all possible events. A major fire at a weekend or a serious accident on a school trip or major community violence will require different types and scales of response and will involve different agencies.

This guidance is designed to:

- help you develop plans to respond to a critical incident; and
- offer a framework in which to operate, rather than a 'must do' list.

The Department for Children, Young People, Education and Skills (CYPES) will provide you with support in any significant incident. You are not expected to cope alone with incidents involving for example, loss of life or anything that attracts intensive media interest. If concerned, contact the Department.

The work of the Educational Psychology Service and other support agencies/networks will be of benefit, particularly in relation to bereavement and emotional support both during and after an event. Contact the Head of Inclusion, or any member of the Service.

Whilst reference is made to schools throughout this guidance it is relevant to all members of staff responsible for planning and managing Critical Incidents.

CYPES is involved with other Agencies in developing and coordinating Emergency Planning in Jersey.

## SECTION 1 - IMMEDIATE ACTION

Co-ordinated support is available at three levels from CYPES:

- **Level 1** – Director General / Group Directors / Departmental Critical Incident Coordinator
- **Level 2 & 3** - Departmental Critical Incident Coordinator

(See SECTION 7 for classification of Levels)

## **ACTION WITHIN HOURS**

<b>1. Gather information about what has happened</b>	See note 1
<b>2. Assess continuing risk</b>	See note 2
<b>3. Convene and brief the 'CYPES Critical Incident Management Team' and the 'School Critical Incident Management Team'.</b>	See note 3
<b>4. Set the strategic priorities for the Critical Incident Management Team</b>	See note 4
<b>5. Plan to deal with the media</b>	See note 5
<b>6. Contact families/carers whose children are involved</b>	See note 6
<b>7. Make arrangements for informing other parents/carers</b>	See note 7
<b>8. Inform teaching and support staff</b>	See note 8
<b>9. Inform pupils</b>	See note 9
<b>10. Encourage people involved to talk</b>	See note 10

## **NEXT ACTIONS**

11. Develop a plan for managing the feelings and reactions of people (see section 8)
12. Possible further information to parents/carers not directly involved
13. Maintain contact with emergency services, professional agencies and other groups involved.

A school's contingency plan will need to be flexible and particularly to address the possibility of the incident occurring during a holiday. A school party will have home contact numbers but if an incident involves children not on a school activity, e.g., the abduction of a child, information might come first from the media.



## NOTE 1 - GATHER INFORMATION

### Information required

Schools and services are encouraged to follow JESIP (Joint Emergency Services Interoperability Principles) when gathering information and communicating a critical incident. The mnemonic 'M/ETHANE' is a very helpful aide memoir for staff:



See Appendix C for an incident report form to record the above details.

### School CIMT also needs to know

- Who has been informed?
- What has been said?

**Important note:** If an incident involves the Emergency Services, management issues will need to be agreed with them. It is advised that the school/local CIMT appoint a link person for the emergency services.

## NOTE 2 - ASSESS CONTINUING RISK

- Is there still a continuing danger?
- Is it likely that further injuries or damage may occur?

If so, the school must immediately:

- safeguard the welfare of the children and adults present, as a priority.
- contact the appropriate emergency services; and

- ensure that any immediate action taken to protect people or property, does not give rise to further risk.

### **NOTE 3 - DECLARING A CRITICAL INCIDENT - CONVENE ED CIMT & SCHOOL CIMT**

#### **The CYPES Critical Incident Management Team (CIMT)**

- The CYPES CIMT Lead Person is the Director General. In the Director General's absence, a nominated member of the CYPES CIMT will lead the team.
- The CYPES CIMT Lead Person should formally declare a critical incident.
- Members of the CIMT should immediately attend a critical incident meeting, to be chaired by the CYPES Lead Person. No other members of staff should attend this meeting unless requested to do so. The door of this meeting should be closed to enable the team to concentrate on managing the incident.
- The response to the incident will be managed from either the Education Committee room or the Education Board Room. If these rooms are unavailable, the Department's CIMT will operate from Highlands Campus College Hive rooms 225/226, or Grainville Conference room (as defined in the Business Continuity Plan)
- The CYPES CIMT will be supported by the Service Manager Governance and Risk (*CIMT Coordinator*) and the PA to the Director General. Support will also be provided by the Associate Director, the Service Manager Business Support and Administration and the Head of Communications. If required, further staff will be asked to support the team.
- Once a critical incident has been declared by the Lead Person, a Loggist will be appointed to record all decisions made by the Lead Person and the CIMT (see SECTION 9 for further information on the role of the Loggist).
- If appropriate, the Lead Person will nominate a member of the CYPES CIMT to go to the incident site to report information to the team. On arrival at the site, the CIMT member will liaise directly with the Local Lead Person (*see Schools and Services section below*).

#### *Informing key members of the Government of Jersey*

- The CYPES Lead Person will inform the Minister of the incident immediately. If requested by the Minister, the Lead Person will also inform the other members of the Ministerial team.
- The Minister and his/her team will be asked to join a briefing session at the operations room at the earliest possible opportunity.
- The CYPES Lead Person will contact the Chief Minister and the Chief Executive of the States of Jersey at the earliest opportunity. Updates will then be provided to the Chief Minister and the Chief Executive at regular intervals.

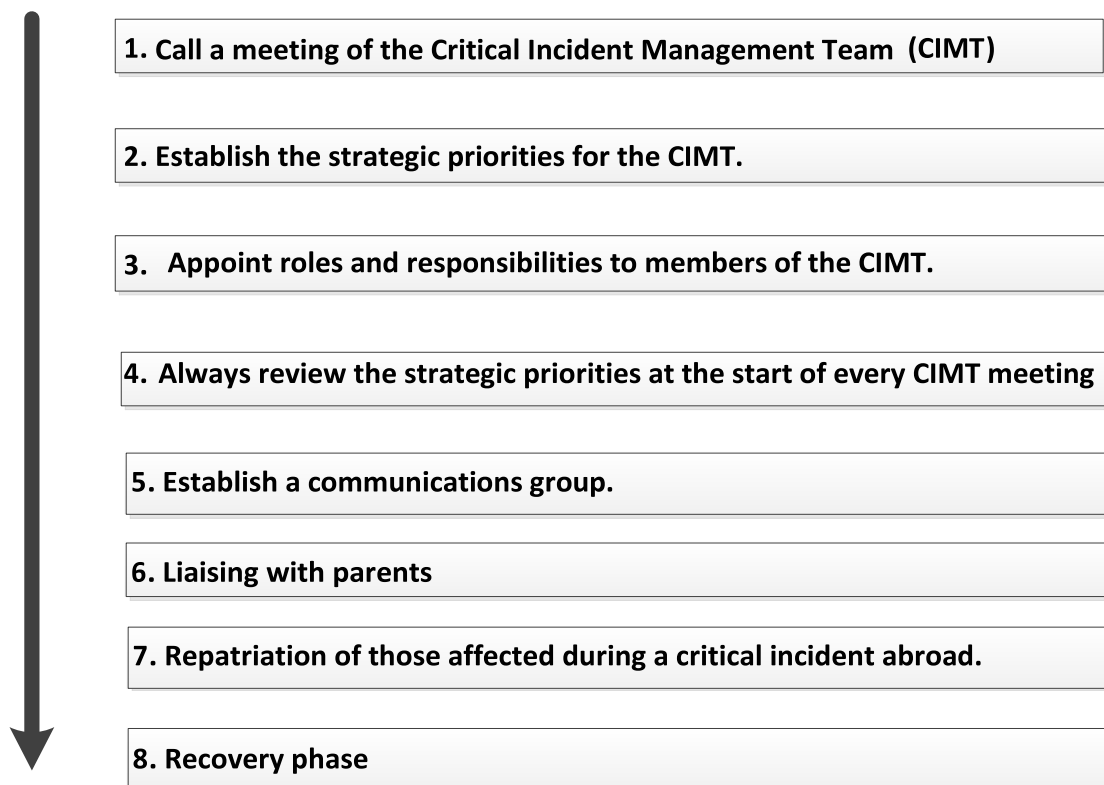
## **The School/Local Critical Incident Management Team (CIMT)**

As soon as practically possible the School/Local CIMT should be gathered and briefed on the incident. It is vital that this team coordinate their activities and ensure that the appropriate steps are taken.

- Each school and service are to identify members of their critical incident management team (Local CIMT) team and include these names within their critical incident management plan.
- The Local CIMT will appoint a lead person, who will liaise with emergency services on their arrival (*This will be the Head teacher within a school environment*). The local critical incident management plan will identify an alternative Lead Person, should the appointed person be unavailable to fulfil this role.
- When an incident occurs and following the necessary contacts to the emergency services, the school / service will report the incident to the CYPES CIMT Lead Person. If this person is unavailable, the school / service will then contact another member of the CYPES CIMT. An up to-date CYPES CIMT contact list will be held in each school's/service's local critical incident management plan.
- The local Lead Person will then liaise directly with the CYPES lead person, or if available at the incident scene, the onsite member of the CYPES CIMT.
- Once a critical incident has been declared by the Lead Person, a Local Loggist will be appointed to record all decisions made by the Local Lead Person and the Local CIMT (see SECTION 9 for further information on the role of the Loggist).
- The main telephone number of the school / service will be used during the incident as the public information contact number. If appropriate, a recorded message will be used to provide information to the public. The development of content for all messages to the public is the responsibility of the CYPES CIMT.

## NOTE 4 - APPROACHING A CRITICAL INCIDENT

*“Bring in the structures to manage the chaos. In the first four hours it will be chaos”.  
(Michael Long, Former Emergency Planning Officer, States of Jersey).*



### 1. Call a meeting of the Critical Incident Management Team (CIMT)

The Critical Incident Management Team (CIMT) will set the strategy and priorities for the management of the incident. It is the responsibility of this team to direct others to carry out necessary tasks. It is important to have the right people at the table at the beginning of a critical incident.

CRITICAL INCIDENT MANAGEMENT TEAM
Director General
Group Director - Education
Group Director – Integrated Services and Commissioning
Head of Finance Business Partnering - CYPES
Associate Director, Education
Associate Director, Education

Associate Director, Innovation, Transformation and Business Support
Senior Human Resources Manager
Governance and Risk
Associate Director of Engagement and Participation
Associate Director Young People Services
Interim Head of Skills Jersey
Associate Director for Children's Social Care Services
Associate Director for Mental Health and Wellbeing
Head of Communications
Head of Informatics
PA Director General

NB: up to date contact details for CIMT will be provided directly to schools/services.

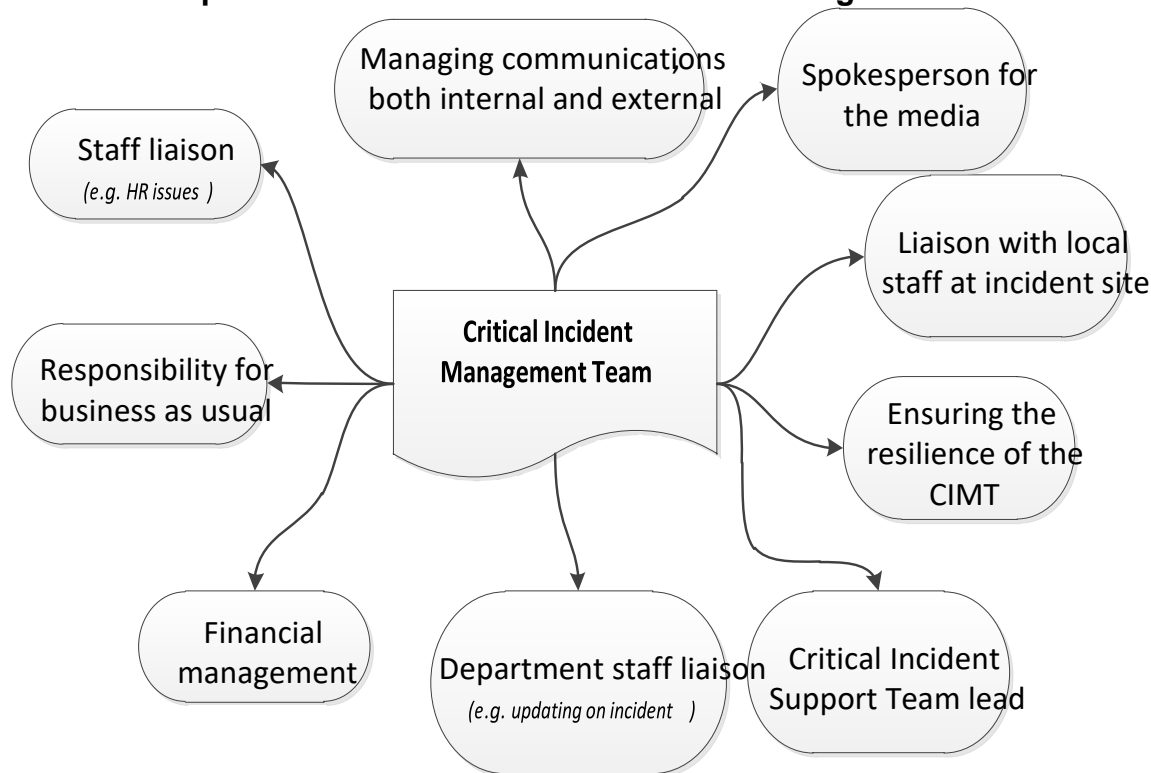
## **2. Establish the strategic priorities for the CIMT**

- The CIMT lead person must establish the strategic priorities for the group from the outset.
- A Loggist should be appointed to record all decisions made.
- The CIMT lead person should inform the local lead of the status of the incident.

## **3. Appoint roles and responsibilities to members of the CIMT**

Consideration should be given to the allocation of roles and responsibilities to members of the CIMT.

## Roles and responsibilities for the Critical Incident Management Team



- *Liaison with local staff at the incident site* – A member of the CIMT to provide onsite support to the Local Lead.
- *Managing communications, both internal and external* – to appoint staff to the following roles. (These can be Officers outside of the CIMT).
  - a. Managing incoming phone calls.
  - b. Being the telephone link with local CIMT leads (e.g., head teachers) and / or CYPES CIMT member at location of incident.
  - c. Liaison with central Communications Team.
  - d. Responsibility for social media.
- *Spokesperson for the media* – To provide interviews with the media. A back-up spokesperson should be nominated.
- *Financial management* – e.g., to liaise with insurance companies.
- *Staff liaison* -e.g., consideration of terms and conditions during an incident, support for staff during the incident.
- *Critical Incident Support Team lead* (from Health & Social Services and / or department).
- *Keeping department staff updated about the critical incident* – To inform staff outside of the CIMT of their role during the incident.
- *Responsibility for business as usual* – to ensure the department continues to operate as required.

- *Ensuring the resilience of the CIMT* (see below).

#### **4. Always review the strategic priorities at the start of every CIMT meeting**

The Loggist will provide the CIMT lead person with an up-to-date list of strategic priorities, which the group are to review and then agree at the beginning of each meeting. At the end of each meeting, the CIMT lead person should review all actions with the Loggist.

#### **Resilience of the CIMT**

It must be recognised that an incident can last for a long time. The welfare of group members must be considered, and it is advised that no person should work for more than 12 hours in one day. This should include a 1-hour handover to a deputy member of the CIMT.

The CIMT is advised to consider identifying officers from CYPES and other departments to act as deputies to existing members of CIMT.

#### **Resilience of other staff involved in the incident.**

The resilience of other staff must also be a priority for the CIMT. For example, if a school is involved in an incident, the impact of the incident and the on-going welfare of the head teacher should be considered. It is advisable that a head teacher from another school is appointed to work with the head teacher at the local level, to support them to manage the incident<sup>1</sup>.

#### **5. Establish a communications group**

During a multi-agency incident, all communications will be coordinated by a central media cell, normally based at the police station. This cell will include CYPES officers.

For a CYPES led incident, communications will be led by the department. A communications group should be established, which will manage all communications for the incident, including:

- Liaison with external media.
- Liaison with the SoJ Communications Team.
- Providing information through Government media channels, including gov.je, Twitter and Facebook.
- Providing phone support for the CYPES Department.

The CIMT lead person is responsible for liaising with the Minister for Children & Education during the incident. A link should also be established with the Chief Minister's Department, who in turn will liaise with the Governor's Office and the Bailiff.

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<sup>1</sup> To clarify, this will be a supporting role. The appointed supporting head teacher is not jointly responsible for managing the incident at a local level; this is firmly the responsibility of the head teacher of the school at which the incident has occurred.

## **Media Management**

Due to the scale of the incident, it may be necessary to establish a media centre. This should be detached from the school or the department. Please contact the Emergency Planning Officer for further advice.

*See Note 5 for further information on communications.*

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### **Considerations**

- Identify a spokesperson, and a deputy spokesperson, for talking with the media.
- Provide training for the spokesperson, and deputy, to give interviews during a critical incident, including press conferences.
- Ensure all information given out to the media has been validated.
- If required, establish a media centre away from the affected school and the department.
- As long as the media are not interfering or affecting the on-going operation, they should be left to report / film as they see fit.
- Identify officers at CYPES to answer calls during the incident from designated phone lines.

## **6. Liaising with parents**

A dedicated parent liaison officer should be appointed from the school/service. This person will liaise with the Police Liaison Officer, providing support and information to parents, family and friends affected by the incident.

If the incident occurs off island, the department will facilitate travel for parents abroad to be with their injured or deceased child.

*See note 6 & 7 for further information.*

## **7. Repatriation of those affected during a critical incident abroad**

The repatriation of those affected during an incident will be organised by the department, through the insurance company.

## **8. Recovery phase**

As the incident draws towards the recovery phase it is important that all relevant documents are put in one safe and secure place. All notes, including those produced by the Loggist, should be retained.

## **NOTE 5 - COMMUNICATIONS**

Dealing with the media, liaising with the Department, contacting worried parents and so on clearly requires coordination to ensure a consistent message is delivered and important tasks carried through. It is also vital that these and other activities are coordinated by the Department in partnership with school/local team.



- The Department's CIMT will be supported during a critical incident by CYPES's Head of Communications.
- An initial task for the Head of Communications will be to provide a list of pre-empted questions from the media.
- Until otherwise informed, the only CYPES representatives to have contact with the media will be the CYPES Lead Person and the Local Lead Person at the incident.
- An immediate task for the Department CIMT will be to develop a media strategy for the incident. This will include the following.
  - It must be established who will provide information directly to the media. For example, this could include.
    - The Director General or his /her designate.
    - The Minister for Children & Education.
    - The Head teacher / Centre Manager,
  - The Head of Communications will work with the emergency services media teams throughout the incident.
  - A standard response to the incident will be communicated to the media, particularly during its early stages. This response will include factual information known to the Department about the incident, the nature of CYPES's response and when further information will be provided. This message must be simple and factual.
  - A decision will be required whether to organise one or a series of press briefings for the media. It is advised that any press briefings should be delivered in tandem with the emergency services.
  - It is advised that a briefing is organised for politicians at the earliest opportunity to inform them of CYPES's response to the critical incident. Politicians are to be regularly kept informed of the management of the incident by the CIMT.
  - Online content will need to be updated, including the gov.je website and if applicable the school's website, alongside other social media channels.
  - Recorded telephone messages are to be updated when required.
  - Both CYPES and SoJ staff, who have responsibilities for dealing with public queries, are to be briefed on what messages are to be provided to the public.

Practical advice for families of those affected by an incident should be communicated as and when required. For example, pupils are encouraged to leave their mobile phones in their lockers during lesson time. If the building is evacuated then many pupils will leave the building without their phones, which could result in panic amongst family members trying to establish contact. This and similar information should be communicated through the media at the earliest opportunity.

There is the possibility of the school telephone line being inundated with incoming calls from anxious parents/carers. The CIMT should provide the school with a factual statement to assist them to deal with incoming queries.

Any request by the media for information or comment must be directed immediately to the CYPES CIMT Lead Person. In his/her absence this should be his/her nominee.

It is important to avoid speculation and not to make statements about further information or developments unless confident that it will be achieved. Governors can be kept informed through a previously agreed cascade initiated by the school CIMT member.

School communities will face the need to deal with the media. Pupils, parents, carers, governors, teaching and other staff may be approached directly by press, radio, or TV reporters in the earliest stages of an incident. In an out-of-school incident the media might learn of it before the school and may have information at odds with that of the school. In the most difficult circumstances, the police will usually provide some protection against media intrusion.

Any request by the media for information or comment must be directed immediately to the Director General. In his absence this should be his nominee.

The Department will work closely with the media to minimise opportunities for misunderstandings within the community. It is vital that the information presented to the public and staff is consistent and accurate.

### **When Requests for Information are made**

Confirm who is telephoning and which organisation they are representing. Take a contact number and advise them that the Director or nominee will issue a press release. In their absence no comment should be made to the media.

### **NOTE 6 - CONTACT FAMILIES DIRECTLY AFFECTED**

This must be done quickly and with sensitivity. It points to the need for the names and contacts of any excursion party or individual involved to be centrally available and easily accessible if the building needs to be evacuated. Consistency of information is vital, so it is best to avoid using a chain of communication. Any message should relay known information and assurances of appropriate action being taken and should indicate if further information will be made available.

It may be appropriate for parents/carers to come into school to be ready for further information. Some people are likely to need immediate emotional support. The school CIMT in conjunction with CYPES will arrange this immediate support.

### **NOTE 7 - INFORMATION FOR PARENTS**

If there is any possibility of legal liability, police action, or a health issue, the CYPES CIMT should be contacted before the school issues information to parents/carers.

It may be sufficient to inform parents/carers by sending a letter with children/young people. In some cases, it will be appropriate to call a meeting at school, especially if the incident is one

which will generate concern about some aspect of the school's organisation (e.g., injury following violence at school). The school CIMT should provide a letter to take home as soon as possible. Sample letters for parents/cares that schools can use are included in Appendix F.

Any prepared statement should give necessary facts, expression of sympathy/concern and possibly a message for the community. It is important to remember that this is likely to be accessible to the media and guidance should be sought from CYPES. It is sometimes better to delay this statement by two or three days until full information is available. In other circumstances, it will be important that a letter goes out immediately, to ease anxiety amongst parents.

Head teachers should contact the Department to check the content of any such letters or statements.

## **NOTE 8 - INFORM TEACHING AND SUPPORT STAFF**

It is vital that all adults in contact with pupils are kept well informed and feel secure in handling questions and comments. A schedule for updating needs to be arranged. For example, during breaks, at the end of the day or first thing next morning. Such meetings ensure that knowledge is common, and questions are answered consistently. Staff should be advised not to talk to the media or respond to questions from reporters.

## **NOTE 9 - INFORM PUPILS**

This is best done in classes or small groups with particular care being taken to protect and support both children close to someone involved with the incident and staff who are unable to handle the emotions or distress confidently. Children should receive a consistent account of the incident while allowing for differences in their ability to understand - see Appendix G.

## **NOTE 10 - ENCOURAGE PEOPLE TO TALK**

In some instances, people involved in an incident (children, young people, and staff) will want to talk before going home. Advice and support should be sought from the Education Psychology Service.

## **SECTION 2 - SUPPORT AVAILABLE**

Critical incidents test the spirit, organisation and leadership of schools affected and their communities in extreme ways. Communities and other organisations will often rally to support each other through the difficulties, but in some circumstances, either because of the incident itself or through tensions already affecting the school, an emergency can produce or worsen conflict. For many people, critical incidents will provoke spiritual issues beyond their ordinary experience, which need to be acknowledged. Individual reactions to acutely abnormal circumstances cannot be predicted. Some understanding and expectation of disturbed responses need to be developed.

**Again, it must be emphasised that:**

- Schools are likely to cope better and recover more fully if they have anticipated a major incident and planned their response to it.
- Staff providing support to pupils, colleagues and so on require support and guidance as well.

## **What additional help is available?**

Experience indicates that a school at the centre of a critical incident will usually need external support from the Department, including help from the Education Psychology Service in planning for psychological support. Support from other agencies (e.g., social services, local churches, health services, voluntary organisations) to provide emotional support, expertise in defusing and exceptionally referral to counselling services are best arranged in consultation with the Department.

A school can, in the aftermath of an incident, be inundated with well-meaning offers of help and advice. It may also face intense media interest. The priority objective, shared between school and the Department, must be to serve the best interests of pupils and staff in coping with the incident individually and collectively.

The Department can arrange specific types of support to schools, in the first hours, days and weeks of a critical incident. (In addition to the technical and organisational services which some situations will require).

## **Telephone contacts for support and advice**

The Department will offer immediate support to the Head/staff/governors and parents.

## **Support sessions for staff**

The Head of Inclusion can arrange support to help a group of staff come to terms with a critical incident and to plan their response. This could be done by holding a staff meeting where people could talk over individual reactions. Experience shows that follow up support may need to continue over a period, particularly in the period preceding the anniversary of the critical incident. However, if it becomes clear that individual staff need more substantial support or counselling, the Department can help to refer to appropriate expertise but cannot itself, usually provide such support.

It is very important that natural concern for the well-being and emotional recovery of pupils does not lead to an assumption that teachers and Head teachers will cope unaided. It is normal for some, maybe all, staff to need support.

## **Support sessions for pupils**

It is appropriate to offer support to all pupils affected by a critical incident. Some pupils who have been directly involved as witnesses to a traumatic incident can benefit from an individual session offering practical and emotional support. Defusing can also be beneficial to pupils otherwise affected. This enables them to understand their emotional responses and be supported to talk about them. The Educational Psychology Service can support schools to arrange this.

In some circumstances specialist support may be identified and will be arranged by the

Department. Such an intervention needs careful negotiation and is likely to be held between 1 and 4 weeks after the incident. Parental consent to this involvement is essential.

### **Longer term support**

Some individuals or groups may find it very difficult to shed the distress, anxiety, guilt, and depression that an incident can provoke. Others may suffer a delayed, or not obviously related, effect. Advice and referral to support agencies such as Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) is available for such circumstances.

Where the CYPES Critical Incident Management Team has been involved with a school in dealing with a critical incident, a follow up visit will be offered after an appropriate interval to review continuing needs and to reflect on the process at the time of crisis.

### **Support for parents/carers, teachers, and pupils**

The Department can advise on arranging for support to parents. Information sheets for circulation among parents/carers, teachers and other adults involved in supporting pupil are included in Appendices G to I. These sheets alert parents/carers and others to the possible reactions of their child(ren) to an incident and makes suggestions about helping them through it.

### **Support for Head teachers and Deputy Head teachers**

The emotional effect of leading a school through a critical incident may not be profoundly disturbing but may not be identified or acknowledged until after the crisis has subsided. The support of family, senior colleagues, governors, other Heads, and close friends needs to be engaged. The CYPES Department contacts identified here can also be called on. Head teachers may be in a particularly isolated position when police investigations are in progress due to the strict codes of confidentiality involved.

Experience so far suggests that Heads/Deputies often underestimate the impact on themselves of such an ordeal and may be reluctant to seek out support. Caring for the care-takers is sound management.

## **SECTION 3 - ESTABLISHING EMERGENCY CONTACT NUMBERS**

### **Local Critical Incident Management Team**

<b>NAME</b>	<b>WORK</b>	<b>HOME</b>	<b>MOBILE</b>

## Other Useful Numbers

The names and telephone numbers of organisations and individuals who may be useful to the School / Service in an emergency:

NAME	WORK

## SECTION 4 - CYPES EMERGENCY CONTACTS

**Contact CYPES Reception on 445504 between 08:45 and 16:30 - Monday to Friday.**

The CYPES Critical Incident Management Team (CIMT) will provide strategic leadership and direction in response to a major incident.

The Management Team may decide to modify the membership of this group depending on the nature of the incident. This may include representatives from other States departments, the emergency services and so on.

NB: up to date contact details for CIMT will be provided directly to schools/services.

CRITICAL INCIDENT MANAGEMENT TEAM
Chief Officer
Group Director - Education
Group Director – Integrated Services and Commissioning
Head of Finance Business Partnering - CYPES
Associate Director, Education
Associate Director, Education
Associate Director, Innovation Transformation and Business Support
Senior Human Resources Manager
Governance and Risk

Associate Director of Engagement and Participation
Associate Director Young People Services
Head of Skills Jersey
Associate Director for Children's Social Care Services
Associate Director for Mental Health and Wellbeing
Head of Communications
Head of Informatics
PA Director General
Director General
Chief Librarian

#### Other Useful Numbers

NAME	WORK
CYPES Department	445504
Emergency Planning Officer	07781 134410
Emergency Planning Assistant	07797744606
States of Jersey Police	612612
Anti-terrorist hotline	0800 789 321
Jersey Property Holdings – Helpdesk	449222
Out of Hours / Emergency line	08:30 -17:00 Monday to Friday only 07797 749222
Environmental Health Section (Medical Officer of Health)	445808
Health and Community Services (for children/vulnerable adults' issues)	442000
Environment Policy and Education Officer	441600
Pollution Hotline (Environment Department)	709535 (24hrs)
Customer and Local Services	444444

Infrastructure, Housing and Environment	445509 (transferred to emergency number after 4.30pm)
Ports of Jersey – Harbours and Airport	446000
Liberty Bus	<a href="tel:828555">828555</a>
Condor Ferries	872509
Jersey Electricity	505460 (customer care) 505050 (emergency only)
Jersey Gas (Island Energy)	755500 (general) 755555 (emergency only)
Jersey Water	707300 (general) 707302 (24hr emergency)
Jersey Telecom	882882
Bailiwick Express	887740
BBC Jersey	837260
Channel 103 FM	888103
ITV Channel TV	480526
Jersey Evening Post	611640 (news desk) 07700 720595 (out of hours mobile)

Note: This list is an indication of useful contact numbers and is likely to differ depending on the incident.

## Politicians

NAME
<b>Minister for Children &amp; Families</b> Constable Richard Vibert
<b>Minister for Education &amp; Lifelong Learning</b> Deputy Rob Ward
<b>Assistant Minister for Children and Families</b> Deputy Malcolm Ferey
<b>Assistant Minister for Education &amp; Lifelong Learning</b> Deputy Carina Alves
<b>Chief Minister</b> Deputy Lyndon Farnham



## SECTION 5 AFTER THE EVENT

The effective management of an incident involves providing support after the event as well as during the initial response phase. This recovery timeline will vary and will focus on individual need for continuing support.

Specific advice and support can be provided through the CYPES Department, for example, the Education Psychology Service.

When the initial response is completed a structured debrief will provide an opportunity for everyone involved to review their actions and identify:

- What was supposed to happen?
- What actually happened?
- Why were there differences?
- What lessons are identified?

The main outcomes from this should be to:

- agree on the basic principles of the actions taken during the incident.
- identify key lessons learnt and adapt the plan accordingly.
- identify positive points that might establish 'good practice' for incorporation in the response to other incidents; and
- identify issues that may require further review.

## **SECTION 6 THINKING AHEAD/BEING PREPARED**

No one can predict when a critical incident might occur. By their very nature, critical incidents or life-threatening events are unexpected and can be overwhelming and disorientating for those involved.

An organisation that plans for a major critical incident is likely to handle the actual event more effectively and confidently. If we know who will assume key roles, have checklists and procedures in place, contact lists up to date, a tested framework for communications and some practised skills to draw on, then our response to a crisis will be more assured and effective.

This guidance is designed to encourage and support pre-planning. Each critical incident is unique and the range and complexity of issues across the service are enormous. Although we cannot plan for every eventuality and the journey through this sort of crisis will always be difficult, planning ahead is a necessary precaution and can be crucial.

### **WHAT CAN YOU DO TO PREPARE?**

- form a Critical Incident Management Team (CIMT) who, collectively or individually, take the lead in an emergency.
- use this guidance and experience to develop an action plan. All staff members, governors, etc., should understand their part in this plan.
- assign key roles and responsibilities so you can move into action without delay or seek clarification of what to do.
- ensure basic information, contact lists, communication and procedures etc. are in place, known to all staff and kept up to date.
- ensure all staff and other interested members (e.g., governors, parents, etc.) are aware of the existence of a planned response; and
- ensure timescales for review, updating and so on are in place.

### **FURTHER PLANNING ISSUES FOR SCHOOLS**

- Maintain up to date and readily available lists of all pupils and staff, with next of kin and contact details.
- Stress the importance of registers being completed promptly at both morning and afternoon sessions.
- Ensure that lists of staff and pupils, (and volunteers on off-site visits) are readily available and are placed in a known location.
- Devise and maintain a list of important telephone contact numbers (see section 6).
- Staff in charge of off-site visits should carry mobile telephones, have a contact number for two senior staff and carry information regarding individual pupils.
- Alert staff, including administrative, to expect the following:
  - The need to respond quickly and efficiently to queries from distressed families.
  - That no names will be released until identification is confirmed and parents have been informed and given consent.
- Recognise that information needs to be accurate and provided as soon as possible. Any request by the media for information or comment must be directed immediately to the Director General. In his absence this should be his nominee.
- Ensure that all those who need to be informed are (see section 6 – Key Contacts).

- Consider how other pupils should be informed.
- Ensure that pupils are not sent home without their parents' prior knowledge. Given the need for some continued supervision, consider whom you can call for help.
- Maintain a simple log of events. Log telephone calls to avoid unnecessary calls.

## **SECTION 7 WHAT IS A CRITICAL INCIDENT?**

A Critical Incident is not necessarily an event that attracts large media attention or results in a fatality, although clearly in defining 'critical', such events are the usual ones that spring to mind. Definitions of 'critical' vary from individual to individual.

In short, a critical incident may involve the following:

- serious injury or death of a colleague.
- serious injury or death of a pupil.
- any incident charged with profound emotion.
- any incident involving serious threat.
- fire, flood or building collapse.
- a disaster in the community such as a gas leak, pollution incident, etc.; and
- any incident with extremely unusual circumstances which produces a high level of immediate or delayed emotional reaction, surpassing the individual's normal coping mechanisms.

The majority of 'critical' incidents can be categorised broadly into three levels, each requiring a different input from both the site and others (e.g., emergency services, the Department, the Educational Psychology Service, etc.).

Examples of level 1, 2 and 3 incidents are provided below along with a table that outlines the recommended initial response and action typically required for each level.

### **Level 1 examples:**

- Deaths or injuries on an out of school activity.
- Death of a pupil or member of staff as a result of an accident at school/on site.
- Physical/sexual abuse of a pupil during term time (on or off site).
- Unlawful killing of a parent/carer, pupil, or staff.
- Suicide of a pupil, parent/carer, or member of staff.
- A deliberate act of violence on school/site premises, such as a knifing, the use of a firearm etc.
- Pupil, teacher, or member of staff being taken hostage (during or out of hours).
- Serious damage to school/site premises.
- A school fire or explosion causing extensive damage.
- Bomb threat.
- A child is seriously endangering him/herself and/or others.

### **Level 2 examples:**

- Death of a pupil or member of staff through natural causes.
- Extensive vandalism to building(s) necessitating temporary closure.
- Other building related issues leading to temporary closure e.g., failure of heating, electricity, water etc.

- Temporary closure because of adverse weather conditions.

### Level 3 examples:

- Physical abuse of staff by a pupil/parent/carer/intruder/staff.
- Accidental deaths of pupils or colleagues out of school/office hours not on a residential trip and unconnected with a school event.
- A non-fatal traffic incident involving a pupil/member of staff.

Head teachers who have experienced such events comment upon several important factors. These include:

- the suddenness of the occurrence.
- the shock effect.
- the apparent uniqueness of the occurrence.
- the publicity and media attention which can sometimes follow.
- the need to communicate with a number of people quickly.
- the need for support to be available very rapidly for those directly affected, and for the larger number who might be indirectly affected; and
- the need that they and senior members of staff have for support.

	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
<b>Response</b>	<b>Immediate</b>	<b>Immediate</b>	May be able to wait until working hours
Convene CIMT	Yes	Yes	Occasionally
Contact Department	Yes	Yes	Yes
Emergency Services	School will contact	School will contact	School will contact
CYPES Department Health & Safety	CYPES will contact	CYPES will contact	CYPES will contact
Media	CYPES will contact	CYPES will contact	GOJ to contact CYPES
Ministerial Team	CYPES will contact	CYPES will contact	CYPES will contact

In critical incidents (Levels 1, 2 or 3), schools and the Department need to act in partnership.

## SECTION 8 - THE IMPACT OF CRITICAL INCIDENTS ON SCHOOLS AND INDIVIDUALS

The effects of a critical or traumatic incident on a child, young person or member of staff can be wide ranging and can impinge upon his/her family, other children (particularly those close to the child or young person or the incident, or who may be emotionally vulnerable themselves) and upon colleagues at the site where the incident occurred.

As indicated above, the potential effects of a traumatic incident upon children, young people and/or staff are significant. They might include:

- recurrent dreams of the event.
- feeling as if the event is recurring.
- sleep disturbance, or fear of the dark.
- guilt about surviving.
- diminished interest in significant activities.
- feelings of detachment.
- exaggerated startle response.
- memory impairment.
- trouble concentrating.
- disturbing images and memories of the event.
- avoidance and disruptive behaviour problems.

The reactions of the young person will be influenced by his or her developmental stage, and may include separation anxiety in the very young, apparent indifference in young children, to feelings of guilt or anger in older children.

The effects of a traumatic event, whether on or off site, can be profound, disruptive, and long lasting. The immediate impact may involve shock, particularly to those who witnessed the event. After the event there may be continuing need to support staff/pupils affected. The consequences may last for a significant period of time. Some individuals may go on to develop Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. Most people suffer no long-term effects with respect to their mental health following a critical incident.

Information sheets on bereavement, grieving and supportive school and classroom practices are included in Appendices G to I.

## **SECTION 9 - THE ROLE OF A LOGGIST DURING A CRITICAL INCIDENT**

The role of the Loggist is to accurately record key information and decisions made during a critical incident. Within the department, the Loggist will support the Lead Person and the Critical Incident Management Team (CIMT).

At the local level, the Loggist will support the Local Lead Person and the Local Critical Incident Management Team (Local CIMT).

The recording of information is written into an Incident Logbook. This logbook may be used in a court of law should there be an enquiry into the critical incident. The role of the Loggist is, therefore, key during a critical incident.

Once a critical incident has been declared by the Lead Person, a Loggist should be appointed. Ideally this should be someone who has been trained and has attended a Loggist training course.

If this is not possible, particularly at the local level, then please follow the guidance below. Furthermore, if a critical incident is declared at a local level, advice should be sought from the department.

## **Commencing the Log**

The relationship between the Lead Person and the Loggist is very important. It is advised that a verbal contract is established at the beginning of the process so that both parties are comfortable with the duties the Loggist will carry out.

### **Administration**

The Loggist should record the time (synchronising watches with the lead person), date, venue and staff present during the meeting of the CIMT.

The Loggist should record the aims and objectives of the CIMT meeting, including the strategic priorities for team (it may be appropriate for the Loggist to request this from the Lead Person if these have not been clearly stated).

The Loggist should record the sequence of events, the decisions made, the actions taken and the rationale for these actions, in the Incident Logbook.

Times should be noted when appropriate, this will include when situational information is established and when decisions are made. For example.

*“At 14:30 the decision was taken to close the school.*

*Or at 16:03 it was established that three people were injured. “*

The log should also include times when staff leave or enter the meeting.

### **Situational awareness**

It is important to include in the Incident Logbook information concerning the nature of the incident. This should include.

- Scale of incident.
- Impact of incident.
- Dimensions.
- Duration.

As new information is established, the Loggist should record the new information, noting the time this was made available to the CIMT.

### **Context**

When recording decisions made by the Loggist, it is important to put context into why and how these decisions were made. For example, if a decision was made following a prolonged period of discussion, and / or was a consequence of not making other decisions, this should be recorded. The Loggist should be careful not to make value judgements about decisions and should always review the log with the Lead Person.

## **Review**

A periodical review of the logbook with the Lead Person is essential. It is advised at the end of a CIMT meeting, or during a natural break, the Loggist and the Lead person review what has been recorded. When both parties are comfortable with the content of the log, the Lead Person should sign his/her approval, noting the date and time.

## **Logbook recording**

A logbook is not a set of minutes, it is the recording of key information and decisions during a critical incident.

- If a mistake is made, this should be struck through. Never use Tipp-Ex. Pages should not be torn out.
- Clear and factual information should be recorded. It is not a spelling or grammar test so Loggist should not be concerned if mistakes are made. If helpful, draw diagrams, use table or bullets etc.
- Do not rewrite a neater version of the Incident Logbook. It is the original book that is needed.
- Always review the logbook with the Lead Person to check accuracy of decisions and information. This should be signed for approval by the Lead Person.
- Ensure all decisions recorded are carried out, noting the time these were carried out.
- The role of the Loggist should be considered a professional one, it is not an administrative role. It is essential the CIMT consider the welfare of the Loggist during the incident.
- Complete the log in black pen. A handwritten log is always best.
- If a Loggist is to be replaced by another Loggist, the Loggist should sign out and the new Loggist sign in the Incident Logbook. One logbook should be used.

## **Record Management**

When the log has been completed, the original must be retained.

For the department, a scanned copy should be retained in Livelink, and the original copy retained with the Directorate.

Local CIMT should ensure appropriate governance arrangements are in place to retain Incident Logbooks.

## **Other information**

During a CIMT meeting several tools can be used to assist in the decision-making process, including photographs, white boards, computer records and flip charts. These should be collected and collated

with the logbook as a record of the CIMT meeting. If a white board is used, a photograph can be taken as a record.



## SECTION 10 - INFORMATION REQUIRED TO RESPOND EFFECTIVELY TO AN INCIDENT

The following information was first provided by the States of Jersey Police as part of the Project Argus training, held at Highlands on 8<sup>th</sup> April 2014. This training was updated and delivered by officers from the Southwest Counter Terrorism Intelligence Unit.

### Considerations for schools and services

- Staff should be familiar with the mnemonic “Methane” when responding to an incident.
- Schools and services should develop a dynamic lockdown procedure. This should be communicated to all staff and tested periodically (an example is provided in appendix K).
- Staff and pupils should be aware of ‘Stay Safe’ principles (Run Hide Tell) to adopt during an incident (see below).
- Staff should be confident at challenging individuals who are on or around premises and are acting suspiciously. If following a discussion with them concern remains, contact the local police or anti-terrorist hotline.
- If an incident occurs, then it is vitally important that first aid responders are immediately available to treat the injured. Consideration is to be given to the location of first aid boxes and ensuring enough staff are appropriately trained to respond to need.
- All education premises must adopt a signing in/out process with staff / visitor badges worn at all times.

### Responding to an incident

The following mnemonic “Methane” is useful when responding to an incident:

Major incident declared.

Exact location

Type of incident

Hazards – present and potential

Access – routes, and Rendezvous Point

Numbers – approximate

Emergency services present and required.

## **Dynamic Lockdown Procedures**

The following advice is provided by the National Counter Terrorism Security Office (NaCTSO) and should be followed to develop a dynamic lockdown procedure.

*This advice has been adapted for this guidance. For full advice please search for NaCTSO Lockdown.*

### **What is dynamic lockdown?**

Dynamic lockdown is the ability to quickly restrict access and egress to a site or building (or part of) through physical measures in response to a threat, either external or internal. The aim of lockdown is to prevent people moving into danger areas and preventing or frustrating the attackers accessing a site (or part of). It is recognised that due to their nature some sites may not be able to physically achieve lockdown.

### **Planning dynamic lockdown?**

Those seeking to conduct attacks often undertake a level of planning including hostile reconnaissance. All opportunities to detect and deter threats at the attack planning phase should be taken. This will include:

- Presenting a strong security posture through visible and effective activity; • Staff awareness and reporting processes.
- Efficient use of CCTV.

Planning should also consider:

- How to achieve effective full or partial lockdown.
- How to let people know what's happening; • Training staff in procedures.
- STAY SAFE principles.

### **How to achieve effective full or partial lockdown**

- Identify all access and egress points in both public and private areas of the site. Remember, access points may be more than just doors and gates.
- Identify how to quickly and physically secure access/egress points.
- Identify how your site can be sectorised to allow specific areas to be locked down.
- Staff roles and responsibilities should be included in the plans. Staff must be trained to act effectively and made aware of their responsibilities.
- Establish process for stopping people leaving or entering the site – direct people away from danger.
- Ability to disable lifts if necessary.
- Processes need to be flexible enough to cope with evacuation or remaining on site.

## How to let people know what's happening

Schools and services should consider the best method for communicating to staff and pupils if a lockdown is actioned. This can be achieved by:

- Public Address (PA) system.
- Existing internal messaging systems; text, email, staff phones etc.
- “Pop up” on employees’ computers / internal messaging systems.
- Dedicated “Lockdown” alarm tone.
- Word of mouth.

## Training staff in procedures

- Train all staff using principles of “Stay Safe” (see below) and the mnemonic “Methane” (see above)
- Ensure people know what is expected of them, their roles, and responsibilities.
- Check staff understanding.
- Regularly test and exercise plans with staff.
- Regularly refresh training.

## Training young people

Available from the Counter Terrorism Policing website are specific resources such as a lesson plan, video, and guidance aimed at 11- to 16-year-olds. This is free to use and download.

<https://www.counterterrorism.police.uk/resources/>

It has been suggested that this is made part of a planned series of PSHE lessons rather than a “one off” to reduce feelings of anxiety for young people.

Advice from Gov.uk suggests that policies and handling plans should be tested regularly, and that having practice drills will identify where improvements can be made and enable a better assessment of what the wider residual effects of an incident are likely to be. Involving neighbouring schools or colleges, local police, local authorities, academy trusts or other outside agencies can help in evaluating practice drills.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-and-college-security/school-and-college-security#testing-security-plans>

*An example lockdown procedure is provided as Appendix K*

## Firearms and weapon attacks

‘Stay Safe’ principles (**Run Hide Tell**) give some simple actions to consider at an incident and the information that armed officers may need in the event of a firearms and weapons attack.

Full guidance is contained on the NaCTSO website <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/recognising-the-terrorist-threat>

<https://www.counterterrorism.police.uk/adviceforbusinesses/>

## Run

- Escape if you can.
- Consider the safest options.
- Is there a safe route? **RUN** if not **HIDE**.

- Can you get there without exposing yourself to greater danger?
- Insist others leave with you.
- Leave belongings behind.
- Consider evacuation routes away from the premises and danger.

## **Hide**

- If you can't **RUN, HIDE**.
- Find cover from gunfire.
- If you can see the attacker, they may be able to see you.
- Cover from view does not mean you are safe, bullets go through glass, brick, wood, and metal.
- Find cover from gunfire e.g., substantial brickwork / heavy reinforced walls.
- Be aware of your exits.
- Try not to get trapped.
- Be quiet, silence your phone.
- Lock / barricade yourself in.
- Move away from the door.

## **Tell**

- Call 999 - What do the police need to know?
- Location - Where are the suspects?
- Direction - Where did you last see the suspects?
- Descriptions – Describe the attacker, numbers, features, clothing, weapons etc.
- Further information – Casualties, type of injury, building information, entrances, exits, hostages etc.
- Stop other people entering the building if it is safe to do so.

## **Armed Police Response**

- Follow officers' instructions.
- Remain calm.
- Can you move to a safer area?
- Avoid sudden movements that may be considered a threat.
- Keep your hands in view.

## **Officers may**

- Point guns at you.
- Treat you firmly.
- Question you.
- Be unable to distinguish you from the attacker.
- Officers will evacuate you when it is safe to do so.

## **You must STAY SAFE**

- What are your plans if there were an incident?
- What are the local plans? e.g., personal emergency evacuation plan.

## **Step 1, 2, 3 – Casualty Hazard Awareness**

### **STEP 1**

One casualty collapsed, with no logical explanation or cause.

- Approach with normal First Aid procedures.

## **STEP 2**

Two casualties collapsed, with no logical explanation or cause.

- Approach with extra caution, reporting your arrival and giving regular updates.
- Consider the CBRN (Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear) possibility.

## **STEP 3**

Three or more casualties collapsed, with no logical explanation or obvious cause.

- DO NOT approach. Assume it is a CBRN incident.
- Set-up an RVP (Rendezvous Point), upwind and at a safe distance.
- Request specialist CBRN officers' assistance.

## **Secondary Hazards**

Consider if the device has been planted near a secondary hazard, which might increase the effect of its detonation, such as:

- Potentially explosive locations.
- Large amounts of shrapnel.
- Potentially flammable sources, e.g., petrol stations or gas canisters.
- Cordons must always be implemented to take account of the potential danger from any secondary hazards and the size of the original device.

## APPENDIX

### APPENDIX A - CRITICAL INCIDENT MANAGEMENT PLAN CHECKLIST

The following may be useful in preparing your critical incident management plan.

Information (Up to date)	
<b>Pupil/staff emergency contact details</b> Maintain up to date and readily available lists of all pupils and staff with next of kin and contact details, landlines, and mobiles. Registers must be completed promptly at both morning & afternoon sessions	
Education and other emergency contact numbers	
Bus/coach lists	
Emergency supply/support list	
Up-to-date site plan	

Communication Plan	
Evacuation procedures – visible and practised	
Telephone lines – private, mobile, emergency access	
Designated small room/quiet area for interviews, support, or police statements	
Consider how pupils other than those directly involved should be informed	

Management Support	
Copies of local CIMP in accessible published locations	
Access to qualified first aiders	
Screening of entrances/exits	
Closure of blinds/curtains on ground floor, to protect from media interest	
Immediate info share with staff (instant assemblies to release teaching staff – who will lead?)	
Knowledge of support available after an incident	
Department informed that local CIMP up to date	

### APPENDIX B - EDUCATIONAL VISITS POLICY

The Educational Visits Policy is available on the Government of Jersey website at:

[www.gov.je/educationpolicies](http://www.gov.je/educationpolicies)

## APPENDIX C - INCIDENT REPORT SHEET (M/ETHANE)

<b>Name and role</b>	
<b>Contact Number</b>	
<b>Organisation</b>	
<b>Date and time of initial call</b>	

<u><b>M</b></u> ajor incident declared	<b>YES / NO</b>
<u><b>E</b></u> xact location  <b>Where the incident is taking place e.g. school / service</b>  <b>Location within school / service of incident e.g., Hall / science block</b>	
<u><b>T</b></u> ype of incident  <b>e.g., crime / terrorism, extreme weather, public order / safety</b>	
<u><b>H</b></u> azards – present and potential  <b>e.g., traffic collision, explosion, rising tide</b>	
<u><b>A</b></u> ccess – routes, and Rendezvous Point  <b>Information about location of incident and staff / pupils</b>	
<u><b>N</b></u> umbers – approximate (adults / children), numbers injured, location of injured  <b>Include casualty types</b>	
<u><b>E</b></u> mergency services present and required	

<b>Additional Information</b>	
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# AIDE MEMOIRE FOR ALL STAFF

## Shared Situational Awareness

<b>M</b>	<b>MAJOR INCIDENT</b>	Has a major incident or standby been declared? (Yes / No - if no, then complete ETHANE message)
<b>E</b>	<b>EXACT LOCATION</b>	What is the exact location or geographical area of the incident?
<b>T</b>	<b>TYPE OF INCIDENT</b>	What kind of incident is it?
<b>H</b>	<b>HAZARDS</b>	What hazards or potential hazards can be identified?
<b>A</b>	<b>ACCESS</b>	What are the best routes for access and egress?
<b>N</b>	<b>NUMBER OF CASUALTIES</b>	How many casualties are there, and what condition are they in?
<b>E</b>	<b>EMERGENCY SERVICES</b>	Which and how many, emergency responder assets/personnel are required or are already on-scene?



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V3.0

## APPENDIX D - STAFF 'PERSONAL NOTES' FORM

Everyone involved in responding to the emergency should start and maintain a written log of their actions as soon as possible. This should include any information and messages received, the source, and time and date. This is extremely important and will enable you to provide detailed information should it be required at a later stage or if an inquiry or investigation takes place.

<b>Full Name:</b>	<b>Site Name:</b>
<b>Job Title:</b>	<b>Date of Incident</b>
<b>Address:</b>	<b>Time of Incident</b>
<b>D.O.B:</b>	<b>Your location at Outset</b>
<b>Tel. No:</b>	
<b>In your own words, write below your own account of what you saw, heard, and did in this incident:</b>	
<b>(Continue on another sheet if required)</b>	

## APPENDIX E - SAMPLE LETTERS

### Appendix E (i) - Informing parents about a critical incident Sample Letter

Dear Parents/Carers

You may have heard /

It is with great sadness and regret that I have to inform you (known facts of the incident).

As a school community we are all deeply affected by this tragedy /

I am sure that you will wish to join me and my staff in offering our condolences and sympathy to  
*(refer to individuals. families affected, only where it is appropriate to release this information)*

I have now spoken to all pupils and staff in school about what has happened, and you will need to be aware of the following arrangements that we have now made:

*(Relevant details about)*

- *School closure*
- *Changes to timing of school day*
- *Transport*
- *Lunchtime arrangements*
- *Changes to staffing*
- *Arrangements for specific classes/year groups*
- *Counselling support*
- *Media contacts*

I think it is very important that we all take the time to talk with and reassure children about what has happened. This is likely to be a very difficult time for us as a school community and we will all need to support each other.

We appreciate the expressions of concern we have received; however, it would be helpful if parents did not telephone the school during this time so that we can keep phones and staff free to manage the situation.

Yours faithfully

## **Appendix E (ii) - Informing parents about available support for pupils Sample Letter**

Dear Parents/Carers

You may have heard that ...

It is with great sadness that I have to inform you

*(Brief details of the incident, perhaps some positive remembrances of the person(s) lost and the sense of loss)*

As part of our contingency plan, we are able to call on specialists who are skilled in offering support to children and adults who are feeling upset. This will consist of talking to pupils in small groups with members of staff and offering advice and reassurance as appropriate. In fact, many of these conversations have already taken place today. This help will be available for all pupils and staff who request it.

I hope this information is helpful.

Yours faithfully

## **Appendix E (iii) - Informing parents of arrangements for counselling children Sample letter**

Dear Parents/Carers

As a school community we have all been affected by the recent tragedy involving *(give relevant details)*

As part of our care and support for the children, we have been able to make arrangements involving outside agencies to provide counselling and support for children in school. We would like to make this available to your child.

This support is likely to consist of staff and professionals from outside agencies talking to pupils in small groups and offering advice and reassurance as appropriate. Please contact me if you have any queries regarding this.

Yours faithfully

## APPENDIX F - INFORMATION SHEETS FOR TEACHERS

### Appendix F (i) - Informing pupils

- Pupils should be told simply and truthfully (where permitted) what has happened, in small groups if possible (e.g., class, tutor group, year group). In some circumstances it may be appropriate to bring pupils together as a whole school. Where this is the arrangement ensure that all pupils have an opportunity to ask questions and talk through what they have heard with class teachers in smaller groups afterwards.
- Begin by preparing pupils for some very difficult/sad news.
- Taking account of children's development level, needs and backgrounds, give simple, factual information using language and concepts appropriate to the age of the children.
- Avoid using euphemisms; use words like 'dead' and 'died'.
- Pass on facts only; do not speculate on causes or consequences.
- If questions cannot be answered, this should be acknowledged.
- Address and deal with rumours.
- Try to give expression to the emotions that individuals may be experiencing (e.g., shock, disbelief) and explain that strong and difficult feelings are a normal part of the process of coming to terms with this sort of experience.
- Do not refrain from referring to the deceased by name, perhaps highlighting some positive aspects of their lives.
- Finally explain what arrangements the school has in hand for coming to terms with what has happened.

*"I've got some very sad news to tell you today that might upset you. There is a serious illness called meningitis. Sometimes people with meningitis get better but sometimes people die from it. Some of you will have known that Jane Smith in Year 4 was suddenly taken ill last week. I have to tell you that Jane died in hospital yesterday.*

*Like me, many of you will find it hard to believe that this has happened. It is obviously a very big shock for us all. Jane was a happy girl who got on well with everybody. We will all miss her.*

*It is important for you to know that strong and perhaps difficult feelings are part of the normal process of coping with this sort of situation. It will help to talk about what has happened and about your thoughts and feelings. Please take the opportunity to talk to your family, friends, teachers, and adults in school. This is likely to be a difficult time for us as a school community and we should all try to support each other. Please come and see me if you have any questions or if you just want to talk.*

## Appendix F (ii) - Emotional distress – (responding to a class)

- Maintain normal routines and care.
- **Be prepared to be more tolerant and accepting of children who might be more restless, distractible, irritable, emotionally volatile and/or difficult to engage than would normally be the case.**
- Where possible, and if this is something that the pupils clearly need, be prepared to deviate from your lesson plan to allow them to talk and ask questions.
- **When in discussion with children do not be afraid of referring to the deceased by name.**
- Be honest when answering questions. Do not be afraid of saying that you do not know the answer or that the question is too difficult for you to answer. Taking account of children's developmental levels, needs and backgrounds, give simple, factual information using language and concepts appropriate to the age of the children (avoid using euphemisms).
- **Consider setting up a 'Questions Post Box'. Consider how best to follow up the questions raised.**
- Allow children to talk about their feelings, including difficult, confusing, and complex feelings. Give them the message that it is okay to talk and that their feelings are a normal experience given the situation. Be accepting.
- **In the same way, allow younger children to express themselves through their play. They are likely to feel the need to 'work out' difficult and confusing experiences and play gives them the opportunities to act out some of the issues. Adults may feel uncomfortable witnessing children's excitable 'playing out' of what has happened and may feel the need to intervene. Try to be accepting and permissive except where this is clearly unhelpful and/or distressing for other children.**
- Allow children to support each other.
- **Manage discussion in a calm and reassuring manner. Allow the expression of feeling but try to manage the emotional temperature. Try to help the children to achieve a sense of perspective. Reassure children about anxieties that they may be experiencing.**
- Consider setting up a display area for artwork, writing and other mementoes that children may wish to contribute.
- **Calmly and, where possible, discreetly, intervene if individual pupils are clearly too distressed to remain in class. Ask if they would like to remain in class but in an area away from the main body of children. Make sure they are supported by a friend. If appropriate send them with a friend to whatever pastoral support arrangements are available in school. Inform their parents.**
- Be aware of other children in your classes who may not be so visible but who nevertheless may be struggling to cope. Make times and opportunities for them to talk. If you continue to have concerns refer them through the school pastoral system. Inform their parents.

## **Appendix F (iii) - Helping pupils understand their reactions to a critical incident.**

Anyone experiencing such a trauma needs to know that what they do, feel, and think after such an event is a normal reaction to an abnormal event.

### **TYPICAL REACTIONS CAN INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING:**

#### **SUDDEN FEELINGS**

You may feel as if the traumatic event were happening again; this may just come over you when some sort of reminder occurs.

#### **INTRUSIVE THOUGHTS AND IMAGES ABOUT THE EVENT**

These thoughts and pictures of the circumstances may force themselves into your mind, even when you don't want them to. The pictures and thoughts may be very vivid, and it may feel as though the event is happening all over again, with sensations like sound and smell being experienced. Re-experiencing like this is common, even though it is very distressing and frightening.

#### **FEELING NOTHING MUCH AT ALL**

You may surprise yourself, or other people, because you can't feel very much at all about anything. You may seem just numb, as if anaesthetised.

#### **GUILT FEELINGS**

If you have been in an incident where others did not survive or where others were injured more severely than you, you may later suffer from intense feelings of guilt. You may feel you should have died, or that it was not fair that others were more severely injured. You may wish you had acted differently in some way at the time. Your feelings and thoughts may not make sense, but in spite of that, they can affect you quite powerfully.

#### **DIFFICULTY IN CONCENTRATING AND REMEMBERING**

Difficulties here can make us feel angry or very worried: you may think you are 'losing your mind'. Poor memory and poor concentration can last for quite some time after a traumatic event.

#### **FEELING JITTERY**

You may find yourself behaving as though you are very much on edge, or jittery. You may find yourself being startled by noises, even quiet ones, or by people coming in and out when you are not expecting them.

#### **A TENDENCY TO AVOID REMINDERS OF THE EVENT**

You may notice that even some time after the event, you are avoiding doing things or going to certain places, because those things remind you of the event. These avoidances can be protective and helpful for a while, but counterproductive or unhelpful later on.

#### **SLEEPING BADLY**

You may find it difficult to get off to sleep or you may find you keeping waking up, especially if you are suffering nightmares. If you have woken up, it may be impossible to get back to sleep.

#### **FEELINGS AND BEHAVIOUR BEING 'TRIGGERED' BY WHAT WE SEE AND HEAR**



We cannot always protect ourselves from chance reminders of what was a traumatic event for us. News reports on TV and in the papers, pictures, and conversations, can be avoided to begin with, but these and all sorts of other things can trigger memories and bring back problems such as lack of sleep.

## Support Services for Children, Young People and Families



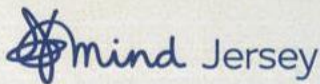
### Children and Families Hub

Information, advice and support for families and young people  
Call: **519000** or email [childrenandfamilieshub@gov.je](mailto:childrenandfamilieshub@gov.je)

### The YES project (Youth Enquiry Service)



Counselling for ages 13-25  
Freephone: **0800 7350 010**  
or visit [yes.je](http://yes.je)



Mental Health Charity  
Freephone: **0800 7359 404**  
or visit [mindjersey.org](http://mindjersey.org)

### School-Based Counsellors

Available in most secondary schools  
Visit [gov.je/cypmentalhealth](http://gov.je/cypmentalhealth)

### Mental Health and Wellbeing Drop-In

Young people and families can speak confidentially to a mental health practitioner or youth worker  
Open every Saturday at YES  
Visit [gov.je/cypmentalhealth](http://gov.je/cypmentalhealth)



### Kooth Jersey



Online counselling and support for ages 10-25  
Visit [kooth.com](http://kooth.com) and "choose Jersey"

### SAMARITANS

### Samaritans Jersey

116 123 or email [jo@samaritans.org](mailto:jo@samaritans.org)

For a full list of support available scan here:



### Out of Hours Mental Health Support

For urgent help call the Emergency Department on **442264** or **999** in an emergency

## Appendix F (iv) - Helping bereaved children.

- **Find time to listen.** Take your cue from the child; when he wants to talk try to find the time to listen. If this is not possible immediately explain to the child that you would like to talk and name a time and place when you can have some quiet time together. Be patient and reassuring. Gently encourage the child to talk of their lost parent, sibling or friend and do so yourself. Reassure the child that you are there to help.
- **Expect questions and try to answer them honestly.** The child may become intensely curious about death and burial. Try to find out about the family's religious or cultural beliefs so as not to confuse the child, but do not be afraid to say, "I don't know". Children may fear or resent a God that takes to heaven someone they love and need.
- **Be alert for changes in behaviour.** During the first few weeks of bereavement the child may be withdrawn, feel abandoned, helpless, desperate, anxious, apathetic, angry, guilty and/or afraid, have sullen moods and lack concentration. These are common and are often acted out aggressively because they may be unable to express feelings verbally. Try to handle them patiently and calmly; do not seem surprised and do not get cross. Try to help them find an accepted way of expressing strong emotion.
- **Be open and honest with feelings.** Create an atmosphere of open acceptance that invites questions and fosters confidence and love. Encourage children to express their grief in all its forms. Be supportive and available.
- .
- **Believe what the child says and acknowledge his feelings and thoughts.** Resist the temptation to make comments such as, "I'm sure you don't mean that" when a child says that it's his fault his mum has died, or to say to a distressed child that, "You'll soon feel better". These strong feelings must be acknowledged, believed, and discussed. Children have magical thinking and may believe that their behaviour or thoughts can cause or reverse death.
- **If possible, talk to a few of the bereaved student's friends** to help them cope and explore how to be supportive. Friends may be uncomfortable and awkward in their attempts to make contact.
- **Help a student find a supportive peer group;** perhaps there are other students in the school who are coping with similar losses. An invitation to share with each other might be welcome.
- **Close liaison between home and school is particularly important at this time.** It will help the child feel more secure and provide extra information on how the child is coping.
- **Be sensitive to special days.** Mother's Day, birthdays, and the anniversary of the bereavement may all revive painful memories and as always, it's important to take your cue from the child.
- **"Death" as part of the curriculum.** Children need a clear explanation of the cause of death using correct terms such as 'die' and 'dead', not 'going away' or 'asleep' as this merely adds confusion.

- **Ensure that members of staff**, especially in a large school, are fully aware of what has happened to a bereaved school, so that the child is not unnecessarily hurt by a chance remark made in ignorance by a staff member.
- **Provide a quiet private place to come to** whenever the student needs to be alone. Almost anything can trigger tears. Help students realise that grief is a natural and normal reaction to loss.
- **Do not isolate or insulate children from death.** Expose students to death as a natural part of life. Use such opportunities as a fallen leaf, a wilted flower, the death of an insect, bird, or class pet to discuss death as part of the life cycle. Talk together as a classroom family. By sharing a grief, we help eliminate the isolation the bereaved often experience.
- **Try not to single out the grieving child for special privileges or compensations.** The child needs to feel a part of their peer group and should be expected to function accordingly. Temper your expectations with kindness and understanding but continue to help them to function.
- **Have resources available in the library about death and grief.** You may offer to read a book with the child. See list of suggested Reading and other Resources.
- **Establish lines of communication with the parents. Keep each other informed about the student's progress.**
- **It is important and appropriate for the school community to acknowledge the death of a student.** Make a scrapbook; hold an assembly; plant a tree; have a small memorial service. Do something to acknowledge the death (thus giving students permission to do the same).

## Looking after yourself

It is important to recognise that you need to look after yourself as well as others.

Shocking news affects us in many different ways, even when we don't realise this in ourselves. Memory is often affected and you can find that you forget the simplest of things. That is normal and it's okay.

You may also find you are making silly mistakes with things. Remember to be kind to yourself in these times.

Emotions can be a little frayed at times and you may find yourself becoming frustrated or angry at the silliest of things. This is okay.

Give yourself time; be kind to yourself and take things slowly. What may feel like important jobs can often wait.

Acknowledge it is okay to seek help and advice. There are lots of skilled people you can contact to ask for help and advice. It is a sign of strength to seek out help. No one is expected to know everything, and be able to do everything.

## Contacts

Jersey Hub  
01534 519000

Youth Enquiry Service (YES)  
0800 7350010

Samaritans  
01534 116123



## Critical Incident

## Response Leaflet

Jersey Psychology and Wellbeing Service

**Supporting each other in times  
of need: information for  
parents and carers**



June 2020



### Hearing about the situation

No-one wants to hear bad news and talking about these things can be hard, but there are some simple rules to remember when talking about critical incidences such as death and suicide.

Its okay to show you are upset.

People react to bad news in a variety of ways. Some people get upset, some get angry. Some people don't show any reaction at all.

All of these responses are okay. Do not worry if other people deal with the situation in a different way to you.

### Talking about the situation

It is very likely that the information you receive won't be all the information known. Often news comes in stages.

Do not try to fill in the gaps with your own ideas and thoughts about what is going on. Although it can be hard, try not to make assumptions about what has happened. Wait until you get the facts told to you properly by someone who knows them, not what you have heard or what people think.

Talking to children can be hard, but it is important you talk openly. Consider only telling them the simple facts - they do not need to know about everything. They may have lots of questions that you do not know the answer to. It is okay to say "I don't know" and spend time validating the way they feel.

### Helping each other

Just as we respond to difficult events in different ways, there is also a wide range of ways in which people like to be helped. Some people will need a lot of comforting; some people may want to be alone. Others prefer to talk and others keep themselves busy or avoid talking about it.

All of these responses are okay. It is important to acknowledge this.

It can be very helpful to ask people how you can help them, but don't be offended if they refuse your offer. Time will settle things and they may come to you later for a talk. Being there for others, even if you are not doing anything, can be very comforting for them.



## Working together when things are hard is the best way

Look after yourself. Be kind to yourself.



Look after others



Talk to other people about how you are feeling



Listen to other people who want, or need to talk



**Working together makes the hard goodbyes easier to deal with.**

## Contacts

Youth Enquiry Service (YES)

0800 7350010

Samaritans

01534 116123

In school you can talk to:

- Your headteacher
- Your class teacher or form tutor
- Your school based counsellor
- Your school council
- Your school ELSA

Childline

0800 1111



## Critical Incident Response Leaflet

Jersey Psychology and Wellbeing Service

**Supporting each other in times  
of loss: information for  
students**



June 2020

## Hearing about the situation

Every day is filled with Hellos and Goodbyes.



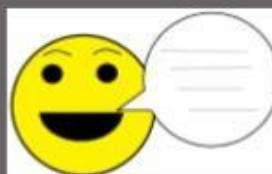
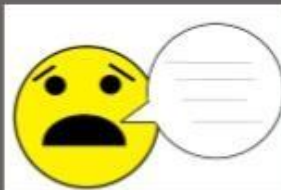
But some goodbyes can be really hard.

Sometimes people leave us, and we don't know why, and this can be hard to understand.



## Talking about the situation

When we get upset about people leaving us It is important to talk about how those hard goodbyes make us feel.



Talking about our feelings really can help us to feel better.

Knowing **what** has happened can help sometimes.

But knowing **why** it happened is not always possible and we have to be okay that we won't always know everything we want to know.

It is important you find a trusted person to talk to in school and/or at home.



## Helping each other

When people are upset they can get:

- Tearful
- Angry
- Feel lonely...



They may want to talk about things or be left alone.



That is okay

Remember these three things:

1. Be kind ( to yourself and others)
2. Be thoughtful ( to everyone)
3. Be there to talk when your friends are ready.





# Critical Incident Response Support: guidance for children, parents and families following a bereavement/critical incident.

Jersey Psychology and Wellbeing Service

May 2020

## Introduction

A critical incident can be defined as a sudden, unexpected event that is distressing to pupils and/or staff. It may involve violence against members of a school, a serious accident, the sudden death of a child or teacher, or a health pandemic such as COVID-19 (Coronavirus).

It is important to remember that reactions will vary depending upon how directly a child or parent/carer has been involved in the critical incident and upon their past experiences.

Following an incident, a range of feelings may be experienced. Some feelings may be very powerful. Children often do not have the same understanding as adults. They may have more difficulty talking about, and controlling their responses to the feelings aroused by the incident.

This leaflet has been written to offer some general guidance to parents and carers following a critical incident. It may be distributed by a school as a measure of support but is also available to download on gov.je.



## In this document:

- What is a critical incident?
- Talking to children about a critical incident.
- How you can help children.
- When to seek help.
- Self-care checklist.
- Taking care of well-being: children and young people.
- Resources and activities to share with children.
- Reading resources.
- Videos.
- Bereavement charities—Jersey.
- Bereavement charities—UK.





The following responses are common after a critical incident:

**Shock** – a child may be very quiet or they may cry uncontrollably.

**Denial** – they may find it difficult to believe that something so awful has happened. If someone has died, even though they know the person has died, they may think that the person will return.

**Searching** – they may worry about losing other people or worry whether the incident will happen again.

**Despair** – the child may become tearful and reject the affection of others.

**Anger** – towards the people around them or people involved in the incident, including those who may have been injured, become ill or died.

**Anxiety** – about things they may or may not have done, or said, to have caused the incident.

**Guilt** – they may feel that in some way they might have stopped it from happening.

**Confusion** – about what has happened to those involved in the incident, particularly if someone has died.

Children may show their feelings through behaviour rather than words. These behaviours might include:

- behaving like a younger child
- being more irritable, naughty or aggressive
- becoming very withdrawn
- sleep disturbance, including bad dreams and flashbacks to the incident, fear of being alone or fear of the dark; wanting to be with their parents, or a trusted adults, at all times
- difficulty concentrating, especially at school
- changes in appetite or eating habits
- fears for their own safety, or for the safety of family or friends
- reluctance to talk
- being easily upset
- unwilling to attend school.

All of these can be normal reactions to a distressing event.

## Talking to Children about a Health Pandemic: Covid-19 (Coronavirus)

In the current context of Covid-19 parents/carers are faced with the challenge of explaining to their children a whole new situation which brings with it a whole new vocabulary: lockdown, the need to stay home and school being closed, social distancing when out and about and the need for frequent hand washing. These conversations are extremely important as they give parents /carers an opportunity to help their children feel more secure and understand the world in which they live.

Situations such as the current health pandemic are not easy for anyone to comprehend or accept. Understandably, many young children feel confused, upset, and anxious. Parents, teachers, and caring adults can help by listening and responding in an honest, consistent, and supportive manner. Most children, even those exposed to trauma, are quite resilient. Like most adults, they can and do get through difficult times and go on with their lives. By creating an open environment where they feel free to ask questions, parents can help them cope and reduce the possibility of emotional difficulties.



The following information may be helpful to parents and carers when talking with children and young people:

### Listen

- Create a time and place for children to ask their questions. Don't force children to talk about things until they're ready.
- Remember that children tend to personalize situations. For example, they may worry about friends or relatives who live in the UK or other countries.
- Support children to find ways to express themselves. Some children may not be able to talk about their thoughts, feelings, or fears. They may be more comfortable drawing pictures, playing with toys, or writing stories or poems directly or indirectly related to current events.

### Provide Support

- Help children establish a predictable routine and schedule. Children are reassured by structure and familiarity. Family rituals, routines and activities take on added importance during stressful times.
- Children who have experienced trauma or losses may show more intense reactions to tragedies or news of critical incidents such as COVID-19 and keep safe stay home lockdown policies in place. These children may need extra support and attention.
- Watch for physical symptoms related to stress. Many children show anxiety and stress through complaints of physical aches and pains.
- Watch for possible preoccupation with violent movies or war theme video/computer games.
- Children who seem preoccupied or more stressed about health concerns, for themselves or family and friends, should be evaluated by a qualified mental health professional. Other signs that a child may need professional help include: on-going trouble sleeping, persistent upsetting thoughts, fearful images, intense fears about death, and trouble leaving their parents or going to school. The Primary Mental Health Team can assist with relevant assessments (talk to your school) or see your GP.
- Help children communicate with others and express themselves at home. Some children may want to write letters to the Minister, local newspaper, or to family members.
- Let children be children. They may not want to think or talk a lot about these events. It is OK if they'd rather play ball, climb trees, or ride their bike, etc.



### How to help children

Try to answer questions as honestly and accurately as you can.

Continue to do the things that you normally do. Familiar routines and events will provide security.

Be ready to listen if your child wants to talk about his or her feelings.

Treat your child in your usual way, provide continued assurance of love and support.

Allow children to go through their own individual stages of grief.

Don't become upset if your child does not want to talk about his or her feelings.





## When to seek help

Children's reactions to a critical incident vary. Some may have reactions that are short-lived. Others may have more severe and long-lasting reactions. As a general rule, counselling would be recommended if the child was continuing to show symptoms 6 months after the critical incident.

If you are concerned about your child, talk to your child's class-teacher or the Head teacher, who may suggest involving an Educational Psychologist or a member of the Primary Mental Health Team.

Alternatively you may wish to call the Educational Psychology Consultation line to talk through your concerns: (07797 713411).



## Self-care checklist

This checklist is for anyone who is touched by the Critical Incident, whether directly or indirectly, e.g. family, friends - all should consider their own needs.

Ideally find someone to talk to (colleague, friend, and partner) both for support and sharing of experiences. If there is no one, it may be helpful to sit quietly and go over the events in as much detail as possible. Carry out your own debrief in drawn/written form.

Be aware that you may experience physical and emotional effects such as: fatigue, anxiety, depression, irritability, aggression, anger, etc., which are normal reactions.

- Be gentle with yourself! Remember that we can't 'fix' everything and we are bound to feel helpless at times. Caring and being there are sometimes more important than doing.
- Give support, encouragement and praise to loved ones and learn to accept it in return.
- At the end of each day, focus on a positive thing that occurred during the day.
- Take time to care for yourself, and engage in hobbies or relaxing activities.

If you feel you are continuing to have intrusive thoughts about the event and these feelings are not lessening after a few weeks, you may need some more support. Your GP may be able to signpost you to relevant help.

## Taking Care of Well-being: advice for children and young people

- Give yourself a fear reality check. It's normal to be worried about your safety and your family's safety; even though you may be observing all the guidelines and advice given..
- Share your feelings. Anger, sadness, fear, and numbness are some of the reactions you might have. Don't be embarrassed or afraid to express how you feel. Just talking and sharing your feelings with your parents, friends, teachers, and others can help them and help you.
- Take care of yourself. Losing sleep, not eating, and worrying too much can make you sick. As much as possible, try to get enough sleep, eat right, exercise, and keep a normal routine. It may be hard to do, but it can keep you healthy and better able to handle a tough time.
- Limit the time you spend watching the news. It's good to be informed about what's happening, but spending hours watching the news reports can make you feel more anxious and sad.
- Be respectful of others. When out and about during the Covid-19 response for example, you may observe others not adhering to the guidance about social distancing, try not to give into negative feelings towards them.
- Keep in touch with friends and loved ones via your preferred platforms for communication, connecting with others to share and talk through your feelings may be helpful during this challenging time.
- Get additional support. A traumatic event can cause strong reactions, but if your feelings make it impossible for you to function and do normal things, like go to school, it's time to seek additional help. Turn to a parent, teacher, religious leader, or guidance counsellor, so you can get the help you need.





## Resources and activities to share with children

**Memory Jar**—Children can write or draw special memories, thoughts, wishes, hopes or worries fears. The activity provides an opportunity to explore feelings through a fun activity.

**Stone Painting** - Suitable for primary and secondary age children. Pebbles can be decorated using paints or coloured pens. Sharing a creative activity together with parents can provide an opportunity for children to share their feelings.

**Comfort Box**—Through this activity children and young people are able to explore memories. Collecting photos, pictures or special items to help remember good times or a particular person.

**Making positive affirmation cards**—Allow children to write positive affirmations that are personal to them.

### Rhythmic movement

**Balls** (rolling them back and forth along the floor to each other, bouncing them, throwing them to each other).

**Clapping games** (repetitive activities – you can 'teach' and the child can 'teach').

**Drumming** (copy me rhythms, turn taking, opportunity to 'lead the adult').

These activities allow children to become engrossed in a fun movement activity which is engaging and fun at the same time as promoting relaxation and positive well-being.



## Calm space

Provide a place to be calm and relax such as a 'peaceful corner', where children or young people take time out in a quiet place to regain composure and reduce stimulation.

Sometimes having a cuddly soft toy, or favourite toy, a range of picture books with a focus on well-being, music or a jigsaw puzzle, or even plasticine where agitated hands can work, are calming activities.

For older children, spending time in a calm space with a beanbag or soft cushions to chill out with music, or creative arts are all strategies that young people have found useful.

## Mindfulness

This is a gentle mindfulness activity. It is a simple body scan script. All that is needed is a quiet space to sit and enjoy.



Ice into water body scan.mp3

## Reading resources

Reading and sharing books is a helpful way to open up conversations about feelings. This is a suggested Reading List to use with children and young people (a more comprehensive list is available on the Winston's Wish website).

**Reading Well for children** provides quality-assured information, stories and advice to support children's mental health and wellbeing. The booklist is targeted at children in Key Stage 2 (aged 7-11), but includes titles aimed at a wide range of reading levels to support less confident readers: <https://reading-well.org.uk/books/books-on->

## Books for children under 5 years

*I Miss You - A First Look at Death*, P. Thomas ISBN 0764117645

*Goodbye Mousie*, R.H. Harris ISBN 978-0689871344

*Goodbye Grandma*, D. Brauna ISBN 1405219017

*Muddles, Puddles and Sunshine: Your Activity Book to Help When Someone Has Died*, Crossley and Sheppard ISBN-10: 1869890582

*The Day the Sea Went Out and Never Came Back: A Story for Children Who Have Lost Someone They Love*, M. Sunderland ISBN-13: 978-0863884634

*The Invisible String*, P. Karst

*The Invisible String Workbook, Creative Activities to Comfort, Calm and Connect*, D. Wyss

Michaels Rosen's Sad Book, M. Rosen

## Books for children aged 5—8 years

*Badgers Parting Gifts*, S. Varley ISBN 978-0006643173

*Always and Forever*, A. Durant ISBN 978-0552548779

*Flamingo Dream*, D.J. Napoli ISBN 978-0688167967 (About a father who is ill then dies)

*The Sunshine Cat*, M. Moss ISBN 978-1841215679 (A child's cat gets killed in a road accident)

*When Dinosaurs die*, L.K. Brown and M. Brown ISBN 031611955 (A factual book exploring issues about why someone dies and feelings about death)

## Books for children aged 9—12 years

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*Milly's Bug Nut*, J. Janey ISBN 978-0-9539123-4-6 (About a girl whose father dies)

*Water Bugs and Dragonflies*, D. Stickney ISBN 978-0264674414 (A pocket book explaining death)

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*Help for the Hard Times*, E. Hipp ISBN 1-56838-085-5 (Refers to different types of loss and grief and skills to help teenagers)

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*Straight Talk about Death for Teenagers: How to Cope with Losing Someone you Love*, E.A. Grollman ISBN 978-0807025017

## Books for teachers and parents

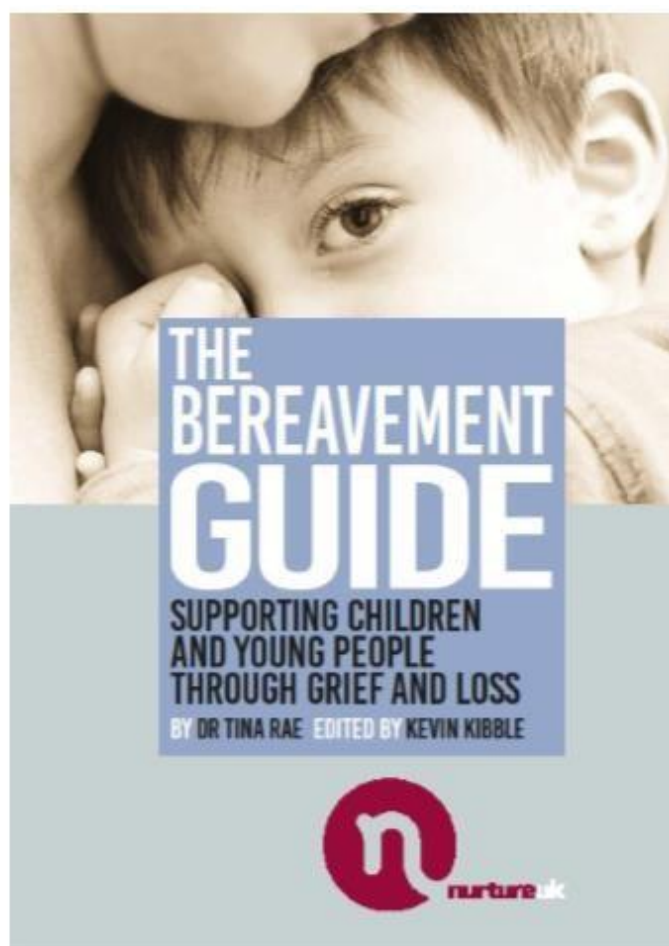
Help is at Hand: Support after someone may have died by suicide.

Published by States of Jersey, 2016



ID Help is at Hand document 20160127 J





## Videos

This video shows a group of secondary aged friends talk about their thoughts on loss and bereavement.

Video - Coping with loss featuring Niki 'n' Sammy. Childline Publisher NSPCC (2017)  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X\\_XVBDhYuR0](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X_XVBDhYuR0) -



## Bereavement charities—Jersey

**Jersey Hospice Care** - Community Bereavement Service, 01534 876555  
[www.jerseyhospicecare.com](http://www.jerseyhospicecare.com)

**Mind Jersey**—0800 7359404  
[www.mindjersey.org](http://www.mindjersey.org)

**Childline**—0800 1111, [www.childline.org](http://www.childline.org)

**Samaritans**—116 123, [www.samaritans.org](http://www.samaritans.org)

## Bereavement charities—UK

**Jeremiah's Journey**—Support for children, young people and their families when they are facing grief. [www.jeremiahsjourney.org.uk](http://www.jeremiahsjourney.org.uk)

**Young minds**—Advice and mental health support: [www.youngminds.org.uk](http://www.youngminds.org.uk)

**Childline** 0800 1111, [www.childline.org](http://www.childline.org)

**Kooth**—Free counselling and support, [www.kooth.com](http://www.kooth.com)

**4 mental health** – new resource to help you find ways to feel a bit calmer and for ideas to help you cope - [www.learn.4mentalhealth.com](http://www.learn.4mentalhealth.com)

**Cruse Bereavement Care**—0800 808 1677  
[www.crusebereavementcare.org.uk](http://www.crusebereavementcare.org.uk)

**Youth website of CRUSE**—Website designed for young people by young people.  
[www.hopeagain.org.uk](http://www.hopeagain.org.uk)

**The Compassionate Friends UK**—Support for siblings. [www.tcfsiblingsupport.org.uk](http://www.tcfsiblingsupport.org.uk)

**Child Bereavement UK** - supports families when a child of any age dies or is dying, or when a child is facing bereavement. <https://childbereavementuk.org>

**Winston's Wish** - Charity for bereaved children: [www.winstonswish.org.uk](http://www.winstonswish.org.uk)

**Marie Curie**—0800 090 2309  
[www.mariecurie.org.uk](http://www.mariecurie.org.uk)

# Critical Incident Response Support: information for schools

Jersey Psychology and Wellbeing Service

May 2020

## Critical Incidents

**A Critical Incident is a single incident or a sequence of incidents which:**

- Are sudden and unexpected.
- Contain real or imagined threats to a person.
- Overwhelm usual coping mechanisms.
- Cause severe disruption.
- Are traumatic to anyone.

**Critical Incidents may include:**

- Death of a pupil, a family member, a close friend or a member of school staff.
- A serious accident involving pupils or school personnel, on or off school premises.
- A violent attack or intrusion into premises e.g. armed intruder or bomb alert.
- Fire, flood, building collapse, or major vandalism.
- A disaster in the community.
- A health pandemic such as COVID-19 (Coronavirus).



### In this document:

- Critical Incidents
- Providing Information to Pupils
- Informing Parents and Carers
- Supporting Pupils and Staff
- Immediately following the Event
- Subsequent Weeks and Months
- Long Term Impact
- Support from the Educational Psychology Service and PaWBS
- The Best Support
- Self-Care Checklist
- Sample Letter
- In the Event of a Suicide
- Resources and Useful Websites
- Appendices
  - When a Parent Dies
  - Talking to Children about a Health Pandemic: Covid-19 (Coronavirus)
  - Taking Care of Well-being: young people, parents and teachers



### Providing Information to Pupils

- Depending on the nature and timing of the incident, some pupils may already know or suspect that something untoward has happened. As above it is important to ensure that accurate information, containing facts, rather than speculation, is disseminated.
- Inform close friends and close friends of any siblings, individually or in small groups.
- Inform other pupils with factual information calmly and sensitively – if possible within their form or class groups, rather than in large groups (e.g. whole school assemblies).
- When talking to groups of pupils, ensure there are at least two adults available. Ideally, one adult should be known to them.

### Informing Parents and Carers

- Prepare a sensitively written letter informing parents / carers of the facts of the incident, on the same day. Depending on the circumstances, it may also be necessary to provide additional health information, or contact numbers where such information can be obtained. This is particularly important where parents/ carers may have concerns for their own child's health or well-being – for example in the case of known or suspected meningitis.
- The families of close friends or class members of the pupil(s) / staff who have died may also be reassured to be provided with information about how to support each other regarding loss and bereavement.
- Remember that churches and other religious, or community based groups, may be able to provide support at this time, but be sensitive and alert to religious and/or cultural sensitivities for individual families.

### Supporting Pupils and Staff

- It is generally felt that keeping as much 'normal structure' as possible to the school's day is beneficial – this is to ensure some stability in the lives of pupils at a time of crisis. Although it may not be possible for much learning to occur, it is important that the usual routine - lessons, breaks, lunch-times etc. – is kept.
- Feelings and expressions of grief are normal, appropriate and healthy.
- As with any 'emotionally charged' experience, it is important for staff to remain aware of confidentiality issues, and respond appropriately to information or concerns shared with them by their pupils.
- Identify and make available designated places for children to go for reflection time, or for expressions of emotion. This will reduce the likelihood of whole classes becoming increasingly upset through the expressed grief of a small number of its members. Consider using a book or a blank display board to share memories and thoughts.
- Allow children the 'benefit of the doubt' if unsure as to whether or not their response is genuine. Some children / young people may use the event as an opportunity to avoid normal lessons, but this is usually quite rare.
- Offer appropriate reassurance and have plenty of tissues available.
- Keep staff regularly updated and supported. Providing comfort for distressed pupils is a difficult and draining task; all staff – including the senior management team, need the opportunity to express their own feelings. Having the time and space for this to happen is essential.
- Be alert for individual staff or pupils who may be particularly vulnerable to such events due to their own particular circumstances.



## During the Days Following the Event

- It is important to try and re-establish normality within the running of the school. However, it is likely that continued opportunities for pupils to take 'time-out', and the availability of extra support, will be needed.
- Contact families directly effected to express sympathy.
- Ensure that a member of staff makes **contact** with any pupils who may have been affected if they are at home or in hospital.
- Arrange a sensitive return to school or alternative teaching if necessary.
- Establish procedures for identifying and monitoring the wellbeing of vulnerable pupils.
- Encourage pupils and staff to be open with their **feelings and memories** e.g. a collection of photographs. Some children may not know that they are 'allowed' to talk about the person who died. They should be.
- Ascertain details of the funeral arrangements. Allowing children and young people to attend the funeral may help in their grieving process. If the friends/classmates wish to attend, the permission of their parents needs to be obtained.
- It is recommended that pupils in primary schools are collected by, and attend the funeral, with their parents, taking them home afterwards if necessary. Secondary schools may be able to arrange transport and staffing to enable their pupils to attend. Links with Jersey Youth Service may also be helpful.
- An after-school meeting (arranged with relevant support staff if required) for parents to discuss practical concerns and / or bereavement issues may be helpful. Although the numbers attending may be small, this provision has been highly valued by parents.
- Continue to ensure that staff members have the opportunity (perhaps with the help of outside support) to deal with their own feelings, both about the incident and the distress of the pupils.



## Subsequent Weeks and Months

The impact of the 'critical incident' is likely to continue to be felt for a considerable time.

- It will be important to **be vigilant** and to monitor pupils and staff so that any signs or symptoms of delayed grieving can be identified, and appropriate action taken. Pupils should be clear about who they can talk to, and those providing the listening service, need to be clear about their role, boundaries and confidentiality issues.
- Good **home-school links** will encourage the early reporting of difficulties being experienced in the home.
- Be aware of the potential power of anniversaries of the incident, or of the deceased person's birthday etc. in reawakening feelings of distress.
- Consider whether a school-based **memorial** would be helpful and appropriate. Always check this out with the family first. This could take the form of a service or ceremony, dedicated piece of equipment or furniture, an award, an area of the school grounds etc. Planning a memorial can, in itself, be a therapeutic act and such an event can acknowledge that an incident is over.



Long-Term Impact	Support from Educational Psychology/PaWBS
<p><b>The effects of trauma can manifest as:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Re-experiencing of the trauma.</li> <li>• Numbing of responsiveness to, or reduced involvement with, the external world beginning sometime after the trauma.</li> <li>• Heightened anxiety and arousal.</li> </ul> <p><b>Some affects of trauma include:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sleep disturbance.</li> <li>• Separation difficulties.</li> <li>• Concentration difficulties, day dreaming.</li> <li>• Memory problems.</li> <li>• Intrusive thoughts.</li> <li>• Heightened alertness to dangers.</li> <li>• Fears.</li> <li>• Irritability, anger, rage.</li> <li>• Behavioural difficulties.</li> <li>• Depression.</li> <li>• Anxiety/panic attacks.</li> </ul> <p><b>Also some developmental aspects:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Repetitive play.</li> <li>• Repetitive drawing.</li> <li>• Aggression/anti-social behaviour.</li> <li>• Repeated questioning.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Our involvement may include:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Immediate telephone contact for practical support, information sharing and support for pupils, staff, and parents.</li> <li>• Support for senior staff dealing directly with the media or distressed parents or governors</li> <li>• Consultation with parents and staff around how to support children and young people who have experienced a traumatic event.</li> <li>• Advice/information for teachers on strategies that may be helpful for colleagues who may have been traumatised.</li> <li>• Initial debriefing for staff (see self-care checklist).</li> <li>• Advice on the management of grief and loss in school, including coping with strong emotions such as anger; providing sympathetic and effective pastoral care.</li> <li>• We believe school staff are the most appropriate adults to support pupils when at school. Occasionally however, it may feel appropriate for the EPs to provide some 'talking and listening' time for pupils in the aftermath if staff feel overwhelmed. The EP Team and Psychology and Wellbeing Service (PaWBS) can guide and advise staff in how to support pupils at this difficult time.</li> <li>• Long-term monitoring of the impact of a CI as discussed through termly planning and review meetings.</li> </ul>
<p><b>If you are concerned or worried about the long-term impact of a critical incident on a child or group of children, seek support from outside agencies, such as The Educational Psychology Team.</b></p>	<p><b>Psychology and Well-Being Service</b>  Inclusion and Early Intervention  Children, Young People, Education and Skill  PO Box 142 Highlands Campus  Jersey JE4 8QJ  01534 445504</p> <p><b>Educational Psychology Team Consultation Line</b>  Available Wednesdays 12:30 to 3:30—07797 913411</p>

## The Best Support

The first thing to acknowledge is that there is no 'best way'. The most useful guideline is to try and communicate that you care. It is probably better that you don't have preconceived ideas about what is the best way to help, as different people will appreciate different approaches and acts.

Here are a few guidelines to consider:

- What to say? In the initial stages you may need to say very little. A hug or a touch often communicates care (but be sensitive to those who may be uncomfortable about touch). Take your cues from the mourner.
- Religious messages: For people who are not religious, comments about God or Allah may be hurtful or annoying.
- Take care with the use of humour. Whilst it is a good idea to 'lighten' the atmosphere, what is humorous for one person may not seem funny to another and may be seen as an attempt to minimise the loss.
- Be yourself.
- Be realistic: avoid offering to do, or give, what you are not able to follow through.
- Avoid clichés – 'life just has to go on' etc.
- Don't probe for details about the affect of the situation or trauma but be a good, willing listener if the person wants to talk about it.
- Be available and sympathetic.
- Learn to accept silence. Don't feel that you have to force a conversation, chatter on aimlessly, or force socialisation.
- Avoid talking to people about disclosures made by another person.
- Avoid making assumptions. Do not attempt to tell the mourner how he or she feels, e.g. "you must feel really angry..." Ask naive questions such as, "I was wondering if you felt a bit sad this morning in the playground, or whether you were just cold?"
- You may, particularly at first, feel awkward or uncomfortable trying to help, or express your concern to people who have had a devastating personal experience. Possibly the best way to overcome this is to concentrate on the other person (rather than yourself) at the time.

Responding to traumas and other major disasters can be extremely exhausting, traumatic and overwhelming at times. This is true for the community as well as those directly affected. If you are in a 'helping role', or in a position of responsibility, you will have particular demands made upon you and you are likely to make heavy demands of yourself. Try to take care of yourself which will support you to help others.



## Self Care Checklist

This is for anyone who is touched by the Critical Incident, whether directly or indirectly, e.g. office staff, family, friends - all should consider their own needs.

### Immediate:

Ideally, find someone to talk to (colleague, friend, and partner) within the first 12 hours. If there is no one, sit quietly and go over the events in as much detail as possible. Carry out your own debrief in drawn/written form.

In addition, ask yourself or a colleague:

- Is my continued involvement appropriate?
- Is this the time to be involved in a different way?
- Do I need any additional support?
- Who should I talk to about my involvement / experience, so others understand how I am feeling (you may not feel sociable or you may feel angry etc)?

### Short Term:

- Share your experiences with colleagues. Participate in personal/team discussion both for support and sharing of experiences.

- Be aware that you may experience physical and emotional symptoms such as fatigue, anxiety, depression, irritability, aggression, anger, etc., which are normal reactions.
- Consider setting up a 'buddy' system so that everyone is able to support each other.

### Long Term:

- Be gentle with yourself! Remember that we can't 'fix' everything and we are bound to feel helpless at times. Caring and being available are sometimes more important than doing.
- Give support, encouragement and praise to peers and to management. Learn to accept it in return.
- At the end of each day, focus on a positive thing that occurred during the day.
- Take time to care for yourself, and engage in hobbies or relaxing activities.

If you feel you are continuing to have intrusive thoughts about the event, and these feelings are not lessening after a few weeks, you may need some more support. Your GP/work place may be able to signpost you to relevant help.



## Sample Letter

Address line 1

Address line 2

Address line 3

Post Code

Date

Dear Parent/Carer

It is with great sadness and regret that I am writing to inform you about the death of (name and details of deceased, include outline details of what happened).

I want to reassure you that the pupils and adults in school will be offered support. The next few days will be difficult for all, but it will be important to maintain our normal routines, whilst allowing everyone to grieve in their way and time.

Advice from The Psychology and Wellbeing Service will be available to us in order to provide additional support.

If you have any concerns then you are most welcome to make contact with the school.

Yours sincerely

*Your Name*

Head teacher



## In the Event of a Suicide

Schools need to ensure that great care is taken when using the term 'suicide'. It should not be used until it has been established, with a good degree of certainty, that the death was as a result of suicide. Families may be very sensitive about the use of the term.

A staff member should contact the family to establish the exact facts and the family's wishes about how the death should be described. The phrases 'tragic death' or 'sudden death' may be used instead.

When a person dies through suicide, those who know the person experience a deep sense of shock. The unexpectedness of the death, and the taboo often associated with suicide, can leave a school community feeling unsure of how to proceed. A wide range of reactions are experienced and close friends and relations may be especially upset. For some, it may bring back memories of other loss experiences. For a small number, especially those who may already be experiencing difficulties, it may raise the awareness of suicide as an option. There may also be a number of students who may not be impacted by the event.

Concerns about youth suicide have led to increasing demands for schools to assume a role and responsibility in the prevention and management of suicidal behaviour among students. While schools are key settings for reaching young people at a formative stage of development, careful consideration needs to be given as to the most appropriate approach to suicide prevention in the school setting.

Programmes focused directly on raising student awareness of suicide may appear desirable, especially in the aftermath of a suicide, when there is a heightened awareness of the need to do something, but they are controversial. It is thought that they may carry the risk of increasing suicidal behaviour among young people through normalising it as a legitimate response to adolescent stress. Suicide awareness programmes aimed at school staff are often more appropriate.

School policies and programmes should promote mental health and wellbeing; the development of school care systems that assist in the early identification of students at risk; the provision of targeted interventions for this group of students; work at interagency level to support the promotion of mental health, and to facilitate access to services that are responsive to the needs of young people.

### **There is a formal procedure for alerts when there is a suicide:**

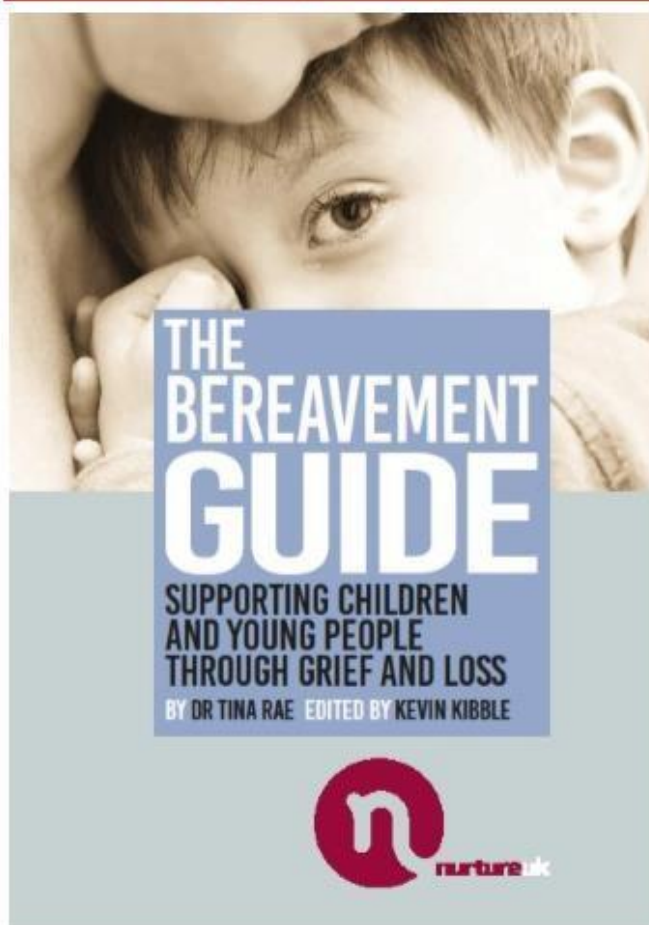
The police will be alerted and then a chain of communications will occur which will involve the following personnel. (The order of contact may vary depending on individual circumstances:

- Director General
- Director of Inclusion and Early Intervention
- Head teacher
- Principal Educational Psychologist
- Psychology and Well-being Service

The Director of Inclusion and Early Intervention, and The Head of Psychology and Well-being ( PaWBS) will work closely to determine a critical incident management and support plan. A CAMHS manger might also be linked to the school to create an awareness of the 'ripple effect' of suicide, and possible repeats (this is linked to safeguarding).



## Resources and Useful Websites



### Bereavement charities—Jersey

**Jersey Hospice Care** - Community Bereavement Service, 01534 876555  
[www.jerseyhospicecare.com](http://www.jerseyhospicecare.com)

**Mind Jersey**—0800 7359404  
[www.mindjersey.org](http://www.mindjersey.org)

**Childline**—0800 1111, [www.childline.org](http://www.childline.org)

**Samaritans**—116 123, [www.samaritans.org](http://www.samaritans.org)

**Citizens Advice Bureau**—01534 724942,  
[www.cab.org.je](http://www.cab.org.je)

### Bereavement charities—UK

**Jeremiahs Journey**—Support for children, young people and their families when they are facing grief: [www.jeremiahsjourney.org.uk](http://www.jeremiahsjourney.org.uk)

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**Marie Curie**—0800 090 2309  
[www.mariecurie.org.uk](http://www.mariecurie.org.uk)



### Reading resources

This is a suggested Reading List to use with Pupils (a more comprehensive list is available on the Winston's Wish website).

### Books for children under 5 years

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Goodbye Mousie , R.H. Harris ISBN 978-0689871344  
Goodbye Grandma , D. Brauna ISBN 1405219017  
Muddles, Puddles and Sunshine: Your Activity Book to Help When Someone Has Died, Crossley and Sheppard ISBN-10: 1869890582  
The Day the Sea Went Out and Never Came Back: A Story for Children Who Have Lost Someone They Love, M. Sunderland ISBN-13: 978-0863884634  
The invisible String, P. Karst  
The Invisible String Workbook, Creative Activities to Comfort, Calm and Connect, D. Wyss  
Michael Rosen's Sad Book, M. Rosen

### Books for children aged 5—8 years

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Always and Forever, A. Durant ISBN 978-0552548779  
Flamingo Dream, D.J. Napoli ISBN 978-0688167967 (About a father who is ill then dies.)  
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Water Bugs and Dragonflies, D. Stickney ISBN 978-0264674414 (A pocket book explaining death.)  
What on Earth to do when someone dies, T. Romain ISBN 978-1575420554

### Books for young people aged 13 –16

Help for the Hard Times, E. Hipp ISBN 1-56838-085-5 (Refers to different types of loss and grief , with skills to help teenagers.)

The Spying Game, P. Moon ISBN 978-1842750049 (About a boy whose father dies , revealing the boys response.)

Vicky Angel, J. Wilson ISBN 978-0440865896 (A girl's friend is run over and killed).

Straight Talk about Death for Teenagers: How to Cope with Losing Someone you Love, E.A. Grollman ISBN 978-0807025017

### Books for teachers and parents

Help is at Hand: Support after someone may have died by suicide.

Published by States of Jersey, 2016



ID Help is at Hand  
document 20160127 J

## When a Parent Dies

- A representative from the school should discuss with the family and, if appropriate, the child what information should be given to classmates and other school pupils.
  - Some will want to be absent and some will want to participate.
  - Use this opportunity to talk about grief and reactions.
- Consider whether a representative from the school should attend the funeral. Some closest friends may also want to attend.
- After the bereavement, there will be a long period when the child will have a reduced capacity to work.
- Extra help may be needed at a later time.
- Let the child decide how much s/he wants to talk about what happened, but let them know you are willing to listen if s/he comes to you.
- Maintain contact with the home about the child's progress in school.

## Talking to Children about a Health Pandemic—Covid-19 (Coronavirus)

In the current context of Covid-19, parents are faced with the challenge of explaining to their children a whole new situation which brings with it a whole new vocabulary: lockdown, the need to stay home with school being closed, physical distancing when out and about and the need for frequent hand washing. These conversations are extremely important as they give parents an opportunity to help their children feel more secure and understand the world in which they live.

Situations such as the current health pandemic are not easy for anyone to comprehend or accept. Understandably, many young children might feel confused, upset, and anxious. Parents, teachers, and caring adults can help by listening and responding in an honest, consistent, and supportive manner. Most children, even those exposed to trauma, are quite resilient. Like most adults, they can and do get through difficult times, and go on with their lives. By creating an open environment where they feel free to ask questions, parents can help them cope and reduce the possibility of emotional difficulties.



The following information may be helpful to parents and carers when talking with children and young people:

### **Listen**

- Create a time and place for children to ask their questions. Don't force children to talk about things until they 'are ready.
- Remember that children tend to personalize situations. For example, they may worry about friends or relatives who may live in the UK or other countries.
- Support children to find ways to express themselves. Some children may not be able to talk about their thoughts, feelings, or fears. They may be more comfortable drawing pictures, playing with toys, or writing stories or poems directly or indirectly related to current events.

### **Provide Support**

Help children establish a predictable routine and schedule. Children are reassured by structure and familiarity. Family rituals and routines and activities take on added importance during stressful times.

Children who have experienced trauma or losses may show more intense reactions to tragedies, news of critical incidents, such as COVID -19, and lockdown policies. These children may need extra support and attention.

Watch for physical symptoms related to stress. Many children show anxiety and stress through complaints of physical aches and pains.

Watch for possible preoccupation with violent movies or war theme video/computer games.

Children who seem preoccupied, or much stressed about health concerns for themselves, or family and friends, should be evaluated by a qualified mental health professional. Other signs that a child may need professional help include: on-going trouble sleeping, persistent upsetting thoughts, fearful images, intense fears about death, and trouble leaving their parents or going to school. The child's GP can assist with appropriate referrals.

Help children communicate with others and express themselves at home.

Let children be children. They may not want to think, or talk a lot, about these events. It is OK if they'd rather play ball, climb trees, or ride their bike, etc.

## Taking Care of Well-being: young people, parents and teachers

- Give yourself a fear reality check. It's normal to be worried about your safety, and your family's safety, even though you may be observing all the guidelines given by the government.
- Share your feelings. Anger, sadness, fear, and numbness are some of the reactions you might have. Don't be embarrassed or afraid to express how you feel. Just talking and sharing your feelings with your parents, friends, teachers, and others can help them and help you.
- Take care of yourself. Losing sleep, not eating, and worrying too much can make you sick. As much as possible, try to get enough sleep, eat right, exercise, and keep a normal routine. It may be hard to do, but it can keep you healthy and better able to handle a tough time.
- Limit the time you spend watching the news. It's good to be informed about what's happening, but spending hours watching the news reports can make you feel more anxious and sad.
- Be respectful of others. When out and about you may observe others not adhering to the guidance about social distancing, try not to give in to negative feelings towards others or the situation.
- Keep in touch with friends and loved ones via your preferred platforms for communication. Connecting with others to share and talk through your feelings may be helpful during this challenging time.
- Get additional support. A traumatic event can cause strong reactions, but if your feelings make it impossible for you to function and do normal stuff, like go to school, it's time to seek additional help. Turn to a parent, teacher, religious leader, or guidance counsellor, so you can get the help you need.



## Appendix F (v) - Useful reading material and other resources

## **Children's Books**

- 'Good Grief' by Barbara Ward. 19 Bawtree Road, Uxbridge, Middlesex. 09 51288 22
- 'Badger's Parting Gift' by Susan Varley. Picture Lions. 09 9620502 0 2
- 'When Mum Died'; 'When Dad Died' by Sheila Hollis and Lester Sireling. Silent Books.  
1 85183 0202 0; 1 85183 019 7
- 'Taste Of Blackberries' by Doris Buchanan Smith. Puffin Books. 0 14 032020 2
- 'Simon Has Cancer'. The Royal Victoria Infirmary, Newcastle Upon Tyne. 1 871476 04 6
- 'When Your Child Dies'. Michael and Elaine Counsell. 0 264 67086 8
- 'Water Bugs And Dragonflies' by Doris Strickney. 0 264 66904 5
- 'Goodbye And Keep Cold' by Jennie Davis. 0 00 673386 7
- 'When Uncle Bob Died' by Althea. 0 85122 727 9
- 'I'll Always Love You' by Hans Wilhelm. 0340 40153 2
- 'The Velveteen Rabbit' by Margery Williams. 0 552 52056X
- 'Someone I Love Died' by Christine Harger Tangvald. 9 780745 916088
- 'Christopher's Story' by Elizabeth Reuter. 0 09 174141 6
- 'The Death of a Child' by Tessa Wilkinson. 1 85681 250 2
- 'Will My Rabbit Go To Heaven?' by Jeremie Hughes. 9 780745 912219
- 'The Not So Great Place' by Charlotte Graeber. 0 551 01310 9
- 'Ben And The New Life' by Regine Schineller. 085439 303 X
- 'Gran's Grave' by Wendy Green. 9 780745 915562
- 'The Bereaved Child' by Wendy Duffy. 0 901 819 13 1
- 'Beginnings And Endings With Life In Between' by B Mellome and R Ingen. 1 85028 0388X

## **Appendix F (vi) - Local & National Bereavement Support Services**



## **LOCAL SERVICES**

### **Educational Psychology Service (EPS)**

The EPS provides psychological services and support to all education settings (0-19 years) in Jersey, to help children and young people overcome barriers to learning. Support is also provided in times of crisis and bereavement.

Educational Psychology Service  
CYPES Department  
PO Box 142  
Highlands Campus  
JE4 8QJ  
01534 449433

### **Emotional Literacy Support Assistants (ELSAs)**

ELSAs are school-based key workers in primary and secondary schools with specific training in supporting pupils who have experienced a bereavement. Support from an ELSA can be arranged within school.

### **School-based Counsellors**

The majority of Jersey's secondary schools and colleges employ school counsellors. Support from a school counsellor can be arranged within school.

### **Well-being Team**

Education's team of Well-being Facilitators (WBFs) provide all primary schools with a regular visiting service. Access to WBFs can be arranged through schools.

Well-being Team  
CYPES Department  
PO Box 142  
Highlands Campus  
JE4 8QJ  
01534 449433

### **Youth Enquiry Service (YES)**

YES, offers free confidential advice, counselling, and information to anyone aged 14 – 25 and is based at St James Centre in St Helier. YES was developed by the Youth Service in partnership with Jersey Youth Trust.

[www.yes.je](http://www.yes.je)  
[yes@jys.je](mailto:yes@jys.je) 01534  
280530

Youth Enquiry Service  
St James Centre  
St James Street  
St Helier  
JE2 3QZ

### **Jersey Hospice Care**

Jersey Hospice Care provides a Community Bereavement Service:

<http://www.jerseyhospicecare.com/our-services/community-bereavement-service/>

## **NATIONAL SERVICES AND ONLINE RESOURCES**

### **Child Bereavement UK**

Child Bereavement UK supports families and educates professionals when a baby or child of any age dies or is dying, or when a child is facing bereavement.

0800 02 888 40 [support@childbereavementuk.org](mailto:support@childbereavementuk.org)

[www.childbereavement.org.uk](http://www.childbereavement.org.uk)

### **Childline**

Childline is a free confidential service set up to help anyone under 19 in the UK with any issue they're going through. Support is provided 24/7 on the phone, by email or through a 1-2-1 counsellor chat. 0800 1111

<https://www.childline.org.uk/>

### **Childline - When Someone Dies**

This section of Childline's website provides children and young people with information about their responses to bereavement and how to support someone else who has been bereaved.

<https://www.childline.org.uk/info-advice/your-feelings/feelings-emotions/when-someone-dies/>

### **Cruse Bereavement Care & Hope Again**

Cruse offers support, advice and information to children, young people, and adults when someone dies.

0808 808 1677 [helpline@cruse.org.uk](mailto:helpline@cruse.org.uk)

<http://www.cruse.org.uk/home>

### **Hope Again**

Hope Again is the youth website of Cruse Bereavement Care where young people who are facing grief can share their stories with others. Bereavement counsellors are available via the free confidential telephone number (NB: this is the same number as Cruse Bereavement Care.)

0808 808 1677 [hopeagain@cruse.org.uk](mailto:hopeagain@cruse.org.uk)

<http://hopeagain.org.uk/>

### **Winston's Wish**

Winston's Wish offers a wide range of practical support and guidance to children, families, professionals, and anyone concerned about bereaved children.

08452 03 04 05 (NB: Monday to Friday, 9am – 5pm. Calls are charged at two pence per minute.)

[www.winstonswish.org.uk](http://www.winstonswish.org.uk)

## **APPENDIX G - INFORMATION FOR PARENTS**

### **Appendix G (i) - Behaviour your child may show following a critical incident.**

#### **Feelings**

In tragic situations children and young people experience similar feelings to adults. They need support in coming to terms with traumatic events, but they might not be able to express their feelings in words. Children, particularly young children, often show their feelings through their behaviour.

### **Physical Effects of the crisis**

Changes in eating habits, sleep disturbance, headaches, feeling sick, periods stopping or becoming irregular, toileting accidents.

### **Mental Effects of the crisis**

Increased sensitivity to potential danger or loud noises, loss of concentration, memory problems, bad dreams, feeling confused about life, constant tiredness, fear of being left alone, fear of the dark, fears for their own safety and that of loved ones.

### **Emotional Effects of the crisis**

Feeling scared or nervous, angry, numb, helpless, guilty at surviving, sad for the loss or losses, shame at being 'emotional' or 'not coping' with everyday events, unwillingness to go to school, clinginess, reluctance to talk (particularly older children), withdrawal, lots of pretend play.

*Of course, every individual will respond to events differently, but people who have suffered a bereavement or other loss may go through these stages –*

- Accepting the reality of the loss ..... (Goodbyes...)
- Experiencing the pain and grief ..... (Crying ...)
- Adjusting after the loss ..... (Exploring ...)
- Letting go and moving on ..... (Making plans ...)

### **How can you help your child?**

**Do** take opportunities to talk about what has happened.

**Do** be honest about how you feel.

**Do** encourage your child to express their genuine feelings.

**Do** try to keep to a normal routine.

**Do** reassure your child that these are normal reactions to abnormal events.

**Do** reassure your child that they did everything they could.

**Do** allow time for healing to take place and encourage your child not to expect too much of themselves.

**Do** emphasise that seeking 'help' is not weak .... it shows strength to face your fears.

**Do** point out that other people will be experiencing their own reactions to the incident and that they may handle things differently.

**Don't** let any personal sense of helplessness keep you from reaching out.

**Don't** say "You ought to be feeling better by now", or anything to imply a judgement about their feelings.

**Don't** tell them what they should feel or do.

**Don't** change the subject when they mention their loss.

**Don't** avoid mentioning their loss out of fear of reminding them of their pain (they haven't forgotten it)

**Don't** suggest that at least they should be grateful for their .....

**Don't** make any comments which in any way suggest that their loss was their fault.

### **BOOKS for children and young people following bereavement:**

#### **Very Young – 3 - 6 Years**

Badger's Parting Gifts – Susan Varley

The Very Hungry Caterpillar – E Carle

Remembering Mum – G Perkins and L Morris

The 10th Good Thing About Barney – Judith Viorst

#### **Mid Age – 7 - 11 Years**

Geranium Morning – E Sandy Powell

The Accident – Carol Carrick

I'll Always Love You – H Wilhelm

#### **Teenage – 11 - 16 Years**

The Charlie Barber Treatment – C Lloyd

Gaffer Samson's Luck – Jill Paton Walsh

Alex and Alex in Winter – T Doder

A Summer to Die – L Lowrey

## **Appendix G (ii) - The needs of bereaved children**

- Accurate information given in an open and honest way. Give age-appropriate explanations about the cause of death aiming to reduce confusion. Do not use abstract explanations or euphemisms (e.g., has gone to sleep, or on a journey).
- Having fears and anxieties addressed. Give reassurance that they are not to blame and give opportunities to make this clear even if the fear is not expressed openly. This may include fear of themselves or other family members. Be willing to answer their questions despite the fact that they may be very awkward. If you do not know the answer, say so and talk about how you could help the child to find out.
- Do not presume you know what the child is feeling. Be active in listening and reflect back what they say. We do not know how they feel, and we need to acknowledge this, purely to take a lead from the child. Sometimes they need space but at other times they may wish to raise a situation and respond to this. Feelings should be respected as real and genuine, and you can help by listening and reflecting.
- Reassurance that they are not to blame. Give opportunities to make this clear even if the fears are not expressed openly. This is especially so for young children who may feel responsible in some way for the death.
- Model appropriate grief behaviours, particularly true in terms of remembering the death. Do not be afraid to use the person's name and share the memories. Be willing to share your own experiences of loss, taking about sad and happy memories.
- Opportunities to remember. Anniversaries, birthdays, keeping photos and reminders such as memorials are important in helping the child to make the loss real and find a way of remaining connected. Validate their feelings. Establish a balance between reassuring that time heals but acknowledge current feelings. Allow time to talk. It is important to give this time for cognitive mastery. Writing, drawing and music may also help during this process.
- Help to deal with overwhelming feelings. School may be a safe place where they can show emotions without upsetting family members. Opportunities to write and draw and play will allow expressions of these strong emotions in a secure environment and help to make the feelings more manageable. During the grieving process emotions may feel overwhelming and children will need to know how they can deal with these within the context of school. Talking and listening, but most importantly respecting the child's needs. Talk when they want to and respect their privacy at other times.
- Continued involvement and inclusion in daily activities. Children need the structure and familiarity of their routines to support them through the period of grief. Help them to return to school and maintain their social lives.

## **APPENDIX H - INFORMATION SHEETS DESCRIBING PUPILS' POSSIBLE RESPONSES FOLLOWING AN INCIDENT:**

### **Appendix H (i) - Pupils in Key Stages 2 and 3**

This sheet will try to explain feelings you might have about death.

Use this sheet:

- If someone you know has died
- If a friend is upset about a death and you want to help

Everyone loses things at some point, and everyone will lose someone they care about at some point. It is normal to be upset when this happens, and it can help you to talk to a grown up about how you feel.

Death is a natural part of life for everything – you may have learnt about how a leaf starts as a bud, grows to be a little leaf, then a bigger leaf, then dies and floats peacefully down.

When someone close to you dies -

Some people:

- Want to eat more, or less.
- Find it hard to sleep or feel tired all the time.
- Get headaches or feel sick.
- Feel scared or the dark, or of loud noises.
- Worry about being safe, or about people they love being safe.
- Don't want to be on their own, or only want to be on their own.
- Have bad dreams.
- Can't concentrate or can't remember things.
- Think the death is their fault.
- Feel worried, or angry, or sad, or ashamed.
- Feel bad that they are still alive when someone else isn't.
- Don't want to go to school.
- Get upset about ordinary things.

Nearly everyone will feel some of these things. It is a good idea to talk to a parent, teacher, or friend about your feelings when someone dies.

It is a good idea to share happy memories about the person who has died, with other people who were close to them.

It is a good idea to draw pictures of the good memories you have of the person and make your pictures bright and colourful, or to write a poem or story about the happy things you can think of.

## Appendix H (ii) - Pupils in Key Stages 4 and above

This sheet will try to explain feelings you might have if you have been affected by death, or if you are trying to prepare for a loss.

After a death, it can be difficult to talk about your feelings. As well as your parents or teachers there are other people available to listen to you such as counsellors and psychologists. Your school Educational Needs Coordinator will be able to put you in touch.

It is useful to talk to friends or other young people who have experienced a similar situation.

*Further information can be found on the Internet and in 'Good Grief: Exploring Feelings, Loss and Death' by Barbara Ward, Jessica Kingsley Publishers.*

### If someone you know has died

- Do not be afraid to use the name of the person who died and talk about them naturally.
- Remember that other people will feel the same as you do, so don't be afraid to talk.
- Do not be scared of crying or being emotional – it's an entirely healthy reaction to loss.
- It may help to write your feelings down on paper, in a diary or a letter that you don't send. Or write a letter to the person you lost and tell them things; don't send the letter anywhere.

Natural responses to grief vary, and you may experience some, all, or none of these.

- Anxiety.
- Not wanting to go to school or college.
  - Feeling depressed, guilty, or angry.
  - Becoming ill more easily, like a cold or stomach upset.
  - Feeling more nervous and restless.
  - Feeling afraid of the dark.
  - Finding it difficult to sleep.
  - Having nightmares.
  - Developing a fear of hospitals or doctors.
  - Loss of concentration.
  - Become fixated on food.
  - Wanting to talk only to people in your family, or only wanting to speak to 'outsiders'.

These reactions are normal, and they will stop with time. The grief process may take years, and people take different amounts of time to deal with things.

If you are trying to prepare for the death of someone close to you, you might find this advice from someone to whom this happened helpful:

- When the tragic news is given, there may be feelings of numbness and sadness. Allow your feelings to come out and talk to the person if possible. They may have some ideas of how they would like to be remembered. It will be difficult but will give some comfort after they have died, knowing that their wishes were fulfilled.



- Having lots of people around can be very helpful and can assist everyone in dealing with the situation.
- The person who is dying, is often the most realistic and “comfortable” of all. Sometimes they are more able to accept what is happening, than family and friends.
- While funerals/cremations are emotional, they help everyone who cared for the person who has died and signify the completion of the cycle of birth to death. They allow closure and allow those affected to lay their loved one to rest.

## **APPENDIX I - INFORMATION SHEET ABOUT THE GRIEVING PROCESS**

Grieving is a normal, essential response to the death of a loved one. It can be short lived or last a long time depending on the personality involved, the closeness of the relationship, the circumstances of the death and previous losses suffered.

In many cases, this grief can take the form of several clearly defined stages. Very often a bereaved person can only resume a normal emotional life after working through these stages.

### **Shock and Disbelief**

This happens when our model of the world is upset. One not only loses the person but life also can feel that it has lost its meaning. Shock can take the form of physical pain or numbness but more often consists of complete apathy and withdrawal or abnormal calm, in some cases even anger. Numbness can act as a defence, so we are able to cope with the immediate jobs and needs.

### **Denial**

This generally occurs within the first 14 days and can last minutes, hours or weeks. In this stage the bereaved person behaves as if the dead person is still there, no loss is acknowledged. The dead person's place is still laid at mealtimes, for example, or a husband may make arrangements for both him and his wife to go somewhere together.

### **Growing Awareness**

Many feels at this stage that they are abnormal because they have never experienced the waves of savage feelings that surge through them and over which they have not control, e.g., tears, anger, guilt, sadness, and loneliness. Some or all the following emotions may be experienced over a year or more:

- **YEARNING AND PINING** - Urge to search, go over death, trying to find a reason for death, visiting where it happened.
- **ANGER** - This can be against any or all the following – the person who caused the death, in case of accident, God for letting it happen, the deceased for leaving them.
- **DEPRESSION** - The bereaved person begins to feel the despair, the emptiness, the pain of the loss. It is often accompanied by feelings of redundancy, the lack of self-worth and point to anything. If a person can cry, it usually helps to relieve the stress.
- **GUILT** - This emotion is felt for the real or imagined negligence or harm inflicted on the person who has just died. People often say “If only I had called the Doctor – not gone out” etc. There is a tendency to idealise the person who has died and feel they could have loved them better. The bereaved can also feel guilty about their own feelings and inability to enjoy life.

- **ANXIETY** - In extreme cases, anxiety can even become panic – as the full realisation of the loss begins to come through. There is anxiety about the changes and new responsibilities that are taking place and the loneliness looming ahead. There may even be thoughts of suicide.

### **Acceptance**

This generally occurs in the second year, after the death has been relived at the first anniversary. The bereaved person is then able to relearn the world and new situations with its possibilities and changes without the deceased person.

## **APPENDIX J - INFORMATION SHEET ABOUT COPING WITH A TRAUMA**

A traumatic event that has caused strong reactions has potential to interfere with our ability to function normally. Even though the event is over it is likely that a number of reactions will be experienced. Sometimes stress reactions appear immediately and briefly and sometimes they occur for several days or weeks or months after the end. These variations are normal. If it is overwhelming, it does not mean that you are weak or crazy. It simply means that the event has a powerful personal effect. Different people need different amounts of time to recover.

### **Distress signals**

#### **Thinking distress signals**

confused thinking  
difficulty making decisions or solving problems  
disorientation  
nightmares  
suspiciousness  
intruding images  
blaming someone  
poor attention span  
heightened or reduced alertness

#### **Physical distress signals**

excessive sweating  
dizzy spells  
  
increased heart rate  
chest pain  
muscle tremors  
headaches  
grinding teeth

#### **Emotional distress signals**

fear, panic, anxiety  
guilt  
denial  
agitation, irritability  
depression, intense anger  
apprehension  
emotional outbursts  
feeling overwhelmed out of control  
displaying inappropriate emotions

#### **Behavioural distress signals**

becoming withdrawn  
antisocial actions  
inability to rest  
changes in speech patterns  
loss or increase in appetite  
being hyper alert

### **Common reactions include.**

**alarm** - efforts to make sense, shock, and stunned confusion. Our usual abilities to cope are overwhelmed with heightened level of suggestibility, fear, and inadequacy.

**resistance** - this involves coming to terms with the event and experiencing less intrusive responses and more personal control.

**exhaustion** - occurs when coping or management of the experience is ineffective.

## **Effective coping strategies**

The best coping strategy is to talk about the events with family, friends, clergy, or co-workers. Other positive coping strategies include:

- taking extra time to accomplish ordinary tasks.
- maintaining a regular routine of eating, sleeping, and working.
- getting quiet recreational exercise in nature.
- interpreting physical symptoms.
- reminding yourself that you're normal having these normal reactions.
- getting plenty of rest.
- realising that thoughts/flashbacks are normal and decrease over time.
- spending time with others.
- keeping busy.
- maintaining a normal schedule.
- asking yourself what emotions you are actually experiencing.
- writing about your experiences.
- being careful not to make the event into an obsession.
- learning a relaxation technique.

## **Maladaptive coping strategies**

Maladaptive coping strategies serve either to push out of awareness any memory of the traumatic events, or to give you a false sense of accomplishment. Unfortunately, such strategies serve no purpose in helping you integrate the trauma into your sense of self.

- a compulsion to work more than usual.
- an increased use of alcohol, coffee, etc.
- a temptation to make hasty major life decisions.
- a tendency to avoid any feelings or thoughts about the events.

## **Adjusting to the experience**

The process can be assisted by the emotionally affected person engaging in the following:

**Acceptance** - recognising their own reactions and acknowledging that they have been through a highly stressful experience. Excessive denial or lack of acceptance may delay recovery.

**Support** - seeking other people's physical and emotional support. Talking to about feelings to loved ones and close friends. Sharing with others who have had similar experiences.

**Going over the events** - allowing memories of the critical incident to come into their minds as there is a need to think about it and to talk about it. Facing the reality bit by bit rather than avoiding reminders of it.

**Expressing feelings** - expressing feelings rather than bottling them up. Talking about experiences and feelings are natural healing methods for these types of events.

**Taking care of self** - sleep, diet, rest.

**The positive effects** - after traumatic events people frequently become wiser and emotionally stronger. They are better able to cope with everyday stresses of life. The traumatic event can be a turning point where they can re-evaluate the meaning and value of life and appreciate little things that often they had overlooked.

Director of Counselling & Psychotherapy for the Government of Jersey

## APPENDIX K - EXAMPLE LOCKDOWN PROCEDURE

### Name of School

*Date Issued*

#### Who to report to

Call 999 (if using a mobile switch to silent)

#### What is a lockdown?

A lockdown is implemented when there is a serious risk (e.g., violent, or armed intruder) to building occupants. The initiating threat can be either inside or outside the building.

#### How will I know a lockdown is occurring?

All staff (and pupils if appropriate – **delete / amend as appropriate**) will be notified of a lockdown by:

**(Delete as appropriate)**

- Public Address (PA) system.
- Existing internal messaging systems; text, email, staff phones etc.
- “Pop up” on employees’ computers / internal messaging systems.
- Dedicated “Lockdown” alarm tone.
- Word of mouth.

### **Lockdown steps to be actioned.**

1. Secure entry and exit points.
2. Communicate the threat to staff and pupils.
3. Move immediately to the nearest room you feel is safe with as many people as possible.
4. Lock and barricade the door and consider covering the windows.
5. Turn off the lights or maintain minimal lighting.
6. Move away from windows and doors.
7. Lie flat on the floor to take cover out of sight.
8. Turn mobile phones off or to silent.
9. Keep calm and quiet.
10. Stay in the room until police arrive.

Remember it may be several hours before you can be safely evacuated

### **What to report**

Use the mnemonic "Methane".

**M**ajor incident declared.

**E**xact location

School / service name, room number and specific location

**T**ype of incident

If you have seen the assailant or identified a threat:

Location and number of suspects

Direction of travel

Clothing and description

Their identity if known.

**H**azards – present and potential

Any weapons or accessories (e.g., backpack)

Any unusual or threatening sounds (e.g., gunfire or explosion)

**A**ccess – routes, and Rendezvous Point

Lockdown procedure

**N**umbers – approximate

Include staff / pupil (ages) breakdown.

**E**mergency services present and required.

If there are injuries include the number and types of injuries

### **What if someone is injured?**

When it is safe to do so:

Call 999 (if using a mobile switch to silent)

*N.B do not expose yourself to additional danger in the process of helping others*

### **What if fire alarm sounds?**

DO NOT respond normally as a fire alarm during a lockdown may be a ploy by an armed intruder.

Remain calm in your lockdown secure area, if safe to do so and attempt to verify fire alarm activation with onsite contact or emergency services.

If fire is verified, follow fire/evacuation procedure