



## CRISIS MANAGEMENT PROCEDURE

### INTRODUCTION

As an essential part of their duty of care, school leaders are responsible for preparing crisis plans to deal with crises/emergencies. It is self-evident that where a school has anticipated a major emergency, and made plans for managing a response, it is likely to handle the actual event more effectively and confidently.

To this end, where the school staff know the following:

- who will assume key roles;
- that checklists and procedures are in place;
- that contact lists are accurate;
- that there is a tested framework for communications;
- that the appropriate training has been undertaken;

the response to a crisis will be more assured than that based on improvisation.

Handling crises is a normal part of life in children's settings. Some emergencies, however, are more critical than others and tend to disorientate and overwhelm those involved, exposing staff, children, young people and parents to periods of prolonged stress. Each crisis/emergency is unique in its range and complexity, and **there is no rigid formula for managing the consequences** but, by its very nature, the journey through this sort of event is always going to be difficult. Planning ahead, therefore, is a necessary precaution, and will greatly reduce the pressure on those managing the incident.

The Crisis Management Team (CMT) at Geneva English School comprises the School Leadership Team (SLT):

- |  |                 |
|--|-----------------|
| • Head                                     | Tim Meunier     |
| • Deputy Head                              | Nicky Fortune   |
| • Finance & Business Development Director  | Patrick Le Roy  |
| • Assistant Head (GES Secondary)           | Catherine Peart |
| • Head of Upper School and School Transfer | Sue Power       |
| • Head of Pastoral Care and Lower School   | Emily Brown     |

*Highlighted text in blue relates to procedures or checklists on file.*

In case there is a situation where staff cannot gain access to the School, all members of the Crisis Management Team should ensure that they keep the following information at their homes:

- A hard copy of the latest Crisis Management Plan (to include [Emergency Contact numbers](#))
- Emergency contact numbers for members of the Crisis Management Team ([Emergency Contact numbers](#))

**Note:** As some of the above information is confidential, it should be locked away securely in staff homes. It should not be left unaccompanied in a car at any time.

It is important that the above information is kept as up to date as possible and members of the Crisis Management Team should be given updated lists at least once each year.

Function of the Crisis Management Team:

- To act as the decision-making authority for the management of an incident.
- To develop the procedures and practices to be used for handling emergency situations and communicating these to all those involved or affected.
- To establish and maintain an incident room which will have the necessary equipment available for rapid activation during an emergency. The equipment includes communications equipment, emergency plans and procedures, a log to record all actions taken during the crisis, necessary office equipment/supplies and appropriate maps and building plans.
- To test the Crisis Management Plan on a regular basis to ensure that it is suitable and sufficient and amend/review it as necessary.

## AIM

To ensure that any crisis on the GES site or involving pupils on trips and visits out of school are handled in an organized, sensitive, efficient, proactive and clear way.  
(Refer also to the [Educational Visits Policy](#))

## OBJECTIVE

This plan aims to provide a basis for managing all levels of an emergency. A major emergency will however, require the introduction of a clear set of measures as outlined in this document and in all check-lists and procedures, in order to provide a satisfactory response.

## OTHER TYPES OF INCIDENT

Some other types of incident that could result in a crisis at GES are: (see also the extended list in the [Health and Safety Risk Register](#))

- Accident on site – requirement to call 144
- Explosion, fire or chemical hazard
- Building damage or destruction

- Loss of access to premises
- Intruder on premises/hostage taking/abduction
- Terrorist incident
- Civil disturbance
- War
- Airplane incident on site
- Serious health hazard or infectious outbreak
- Environmental disaster, severe flood, high winds, snow
- Vandalism
- Utilities failure (gas, electricity, water, telephones, computer links) or loss of fuel supplies
- Incident attracting major media attention
- An incident in the community witnessed or experienced by pupils or staff that necessitates the use of school premises/grounds for emergency purposes.

**IMPORTANT**

**Obtain facts and information – keep an ongoing written record of events/actions – what/who/where/when? It is vitally important to write everything down as this information may be required at a later date as evidence at a public enquiry, in court, etc.**

The following GES-associated documentation is available, so that in the event of an incident all relevant literature is readily accessible.

- [Educational Visits Policy](#)
- [Health and Safety Policy](#)
- [Fire Safety Policy and Procedures](#)

It is further advised that this plan, including a completed telephone contact list ([Emergency Contact numbers](#) and the [School Directory](#) - parents phone numbers) and accident report forms, are carried by the leader on a school visit, since the guidance is intended to alert responsible persons to the actions they should take when an emergency arises. However, the document does not provide guidance on preventative measures that should be taken as a matter of course, or in advance of a particular event. Preventable measures should have been considered on completion of a Risk Assessment, prior to any trip, as per the [Educational Visits Policy](#).

### **EMERGENCY NUMBERS**

	Switzerland	France
FIRE	118	18
POLICE		117 17
AMBULANCE	144	15
POISONING EMERGENCY	145	0033 (0)47 211 69 11
<b>Emergency international number</b>		<b>112 (without code)</b>

### **Advice for Nominated Spokesperson**

- Stick to the facts: do not give any fact unless you are certain it is correct
- Be sympathetic: "Our thoughts are with etc..."
- Do not speculate or apportion blame: your interpretation or understanding may be exaggerated or quoted as hard fact
- Do not allow yourself to be distracted from the main point of any statement
- Try to avoid "No comment" unless the question relates to legal/criminal matters. It can be taken as an unhelpful, negative answer as in "refused to comment".
- Do not be afraid to say, "I don't know". Try to obtain an answer for a later response
- Tell the truth
- Have confidence in yourself and your command of the situation in order to take a positive attitude towards the media
- Questions that will need answering:
  - What happened, when and where?
  - Are there any injuries or fatalities?
  - How many pupils/staff were present when the incident happened?
  - Has everyone been accounted for?
  - What action is being taken?
  - What advice do you have for next of kin/relatives?
  - When will normality be restored?

### **Guidance for Group Leaders following a major incident during an out of school activity:**

- Establish who is in charge. Delegate, if possible, the following tasks:
  - Call the Emergency Services (Police/Ambulance/Fire)
  - Administer First Aid where possible
  - Account for all members of the party
  - Call other assistance as necessary: staff, passers-by, doctor, those with First Aid training
  - Keep an incident log/record
- Arrange for non-casualties to return to base and await further instructions
- Ensure non-casualties stay together
- Establish contact point
- If possible, one member of staff should remain at the incident site to liaise with emergency services.
- Travel with casualties to hospital
- Inform school/senior staff member (refer to Telephone Contact List if out of school hours) and provide as much information as possible:
  - nature of incident, date, time, location
  - names of those involved (injured, non-injured) and details of known
  - details of any supervising adults
  - action taken/on-going
  - contact point/details
- Request on-site assistance, as necessary for pupil support, interpreters etc
- Consider abandoning the activity
- Prepare for reception/accommodation of relatives
- Arrange for non-casualties to return to school
- Consider transport arrangements/need to hire additional vehicles/drivers

- Complete accident forms
- Consider obtaining immediate legal advice but do not discuss legal liability
- Prepare to deal with the media (see page 9). Do not speak to the media or discuss the incident with journalists.

### **Guidance for senior staff at the School advised of a major incident affecting an out of school activity**

- Confirm who is in charge at the scene and establish:
  - Nature/date/time/location of incident
  - Names of those involved – injured/non-injured
  - Details of known injuries and location of injured/non-injured
  - Details of any supervising adults.
  - Action taken/on-going
  - Contact point
- Are back-up staff required? Review staff and levels regularly
- Initial school contact to inform Head/senior staff member
- Headmaster or delegated member of SLT to inform:
  - Other staff
  - Chair of Governors
  - Other Governors
- Decide what information can/should be released.

### **The Aftermath: General Guidance for Headmaster and staff**

- Care and support for individuals will be needed as quickly as possible after the event.
- At this stage you will not be on your own and outside support will be available to you.
- The Service de santé de l'enfance et de la jeunesse (SSEJ) can help. They can offer:
  - Debriefing following a trauma and providing advice on the management of strong emotions
  - Supporting traumatized staff and pupils
  - Providing links with other agencies who may be able to offer long-term support

### **In the tragic event of the death of a pupil**

#### **In case of emergency: call 144**

#### **Keep to the normal routine**

- Talk to pupils today, tomorrow and so on
- Talk to the other staff – lean on your colleagues – they are your best support group
- Listen to your pupils and each other – expect feelings of heightened anxiety or guilt
- Arrange for debriefings – pupils/staff involved in or affected by the incident
- Remember the incident – draw pictures, separate facts from feelings or thoughts.
- Facilitate support for pupils/staff involved/affected by the incident and monitor possible effects – seek professional help. e.g.: Service de santé de l'enfance et de la jeunesse (SSEJ)
- Be careful how you answer the telephone – it may be a relative of a casualty or the media.
- Do not speak to the media without prior consideration/approval
- Try not to apportion blame
- Consider how families of the injured and bereaved should be contacted – use the most appropriate people with relevant skills – consider how governors can help.

- Consider how hospital visits should be arranged – who should go
- Consider protocol for funerals with family – seek advice e.g. ethnic, religious considerations.
- Consider a special assembly
- Consider how to handle spontaneous memorials – e.g. flowers in school

**Later**

- Consider what may have been lost – not only lives but other items e.g. resources, accommodation, coursework, personal property, continuity
- Keep an eye on pupils/staff involved/affected by the incident – distress can last for some months
- Consider re-entry to school for injured pupils/staff
- Consider establishing a memorial/holding a service
- Consider anniversaries/remembrances
- Complete the incident report form

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Updated: September 2018

Next review date: July 2019