



**Harrogate Ladies' College
Highfield Prep School
Bankfield Pre-School**

Crisis Management Plan

Aims

The aim of this Policy is to ensure that all staff and governors are equipped with a full and concise working document to deal with any crisis that affects the school, its staff or pupils.

All senior members of staff and governors must be clear about their responsibilities and duties at such a time and should be able to use this document to identify who should be contacted and how, in a number of different scenarios.

It is the responsibility of the Headmistress to ensure that the contact lists are kept up to date and it is the responsibility of all holders of this document to ensure that they keep the personal information that it contains as confidential.

Taking the correct course of action in response to incidents or threats involving school staff, pupils or property may determine whether there is a further incident, whether the school will receive the available support at the right level and in some cases whether justice is served. In addition to dealing with individual incidents, the proper response will involve the investment of staff time and resources in recording, analysing and taking preventative measures against future incidents.

Intruders on School Premises

The School has always maintained a controlled 'Open Door' Policy for parents and visitors alike but this must be balanced against the likelihood of serious threats to the safety of staff and pupils.

All visitors who have made an appointment are requested to come to the Reception desk where their arrival is noted and where visitors' badges are available. Unplanned visits will be recorded in the same way, whether at the HLC, Highfield or Bankfield buildings. Visitors should (if at all possible) be escorted to their destination and introduced to the relevant person. All staff should feel confident in issuing a polite challenge to any unaccompanied visitors.

If any member of staff or pupil feels uneasy about the presence of behaviour of any visitor they should report their concerns immediately to the nearest member of staff or by asking the visitor to accompany them to Reception desk.

Any serious concerns or threats should follow the procedures below:

- Do not stand too close or invade personal space
- Be polite. Stay calm; speak gently, slowly and clearly.
- Ideally tell another person when going to speak to possible intruders.
- Do not turn your back, and if you leave the room, do so backwards.
- Try to leave yourself an escape route which you have planned on entry to the area.
- Be on the look out for weapons.
- If there is more than one intruder, do not confront them on your own, seek support first.
- If you do not feel sufficiently confident to challenge an intruder, do not do it. Seek help.

Emergency Services should always be contacted in the following circumstances: –

- There is any danger to life.
- Actual or expected threat of violence.
- Threat of damage to property.
- A crime is in progress.
- There is any other incident which in your judgement requires an immediate response.

Any violent incident that takes place in a school must be reported in accordance with the Health & Safety Policy. An Accident or Incident Form (Report of an accident, violent incident, disease or ill-health) must always be completed and sent to the Headmistress, the Bursar's Office and the Health Centre.

It is possible that staff or pupils may be traumatised by intruder incidents, even if they do not display immediate signs of trauma or disturbance. There may be an ongoing need for psychological support and guidance to help the school community come to terms with the incident. The Health Centre staff will offer advice in this situation.

If an intruder has left the premises and may pose a threat to other people, contact should be made with the Community Police officer.

If there is media interest no member of staff or governor should speak to the press or broadcast media without first consulting the Headmistress. She must be the first point of contact.

In less serious cases of nuisance or disturbance (e.g. intruders on site) the following steps should be taken:

- a) Politely ask them to leave the premises as they are on private property.
- b) In cases of persistent offences or if the offender takes no notice of a warning given, ask for the offenders name and address and make a written report of the incident. Take a separate statement from any witnesses to the incident.
- c) Report the matter to the Community Police service.

When handling difficult people, especially at a pre-arranged meeting, seek the advice of either the Headmistress or Deputy Head and ensure that a colleague is present throughout any such meeting.

If it is apparent that someone you are meeting has been drinking, or if there is a suspicion that they may be under the influence of drugs, all staff should be very cautious. If it is possible to withdraw from the situation to enlist assistance then do so.

Premises Emergencies & Adverse Weather Conditions

Premises emergencies may come under a number of areas: –

- 1) Fire
- 2) Damage to buildings
- 3) Loss of power and/or heating
- 4) Loss of water and/or drainage
- 5) Computer failure
- 6) Adverse weather conditions

Requests to close the school premises for whatever reason should be passed to the Headmistress for approval. Day parents should be informed using Group Call text messaging and the School website if possible. Stray FM should also be notified using the password supplied in advance.

Senior staff should be consulted to decide on the immediate courses of action necessary to ensure the safety of staff and pupils and property. Where the crisis involves damage to property, the School's Insurance Company must be informed immediately.

A reciprocal agreement drawn up between Ashville College and Harrogate Ladies' College provides a mutually beneficial arrangement in the event of a catastrophic failure of systems, loss of facilities or significant numbers of staff.

This Memorandum of Agreement caters for all pupils and staff at Bankfield, Highfield and Harrogate Ladies' College.

Fire

In the event of fire or threat of fire the buildings should be evacuated immediately following the usual procedure.

- Admin staff are responsible for collecting registers, visitors' book and pupil contact file on evacuating the building, if safe to do so.
- Teachers or Teaching Assistants are responsible for checking any toilet/cloakroom area on their way out of the building.
- The last member of staff out of an area is responsible for closing any fire doors.
- Registers should be checked by form teachers and visitors' book should be checked and any missing pupils or adults reported to the Headmistress or Deputy Head immediately.
- On no account should anyone go back into the building until safe to do so.
- If necessary the emergency services should be contacted.
- Under no circumstances should pupils be allowed to leave the premises with anyone other than their parent/carer unless prior consent of that parent/carer has been sought.
- Only the Headmistress should deal with the media.
- She will make the necessary arrangements as soon as possible to post notices on the website and contact Stray FM with progress reports.
- School answerphone should be used if possible to relay current information.

Loss of Power/Heating, Water/Drainage

- The Clerk of Works should firstly try to establish the problem and repair the damage.
- The Headmistress is responsible for making decisions about vacating all or part of the school premises.

Computer Failure

- It is the responsibility of the Systems Manager to ensure that daily backups are taken of the data held on the main server. These backups should be held in a secure location accessible only by the Network Manager and Headmistress.
- The Network Manager will advise on a replacement server and/or computers, if necessary, and make arrangements for reinstatement of data.

Adverse Weather Conditions

The Headmistress will decide at the onset of severe conditions whether school closure is warranted for day pupils.

If it is decided to close the Schools, Group Call text messaging should be distributed on the instruction of the Headmistress to the respective parts of the organisation. The website will also be used to provide up to date information.

Special arrangements should be made for residential pupils and staff and catering staff notified as a matter of urgency.

In adverse weather conditions, day staff are expected to make all reasonable efforts to get to school, even if their arrival is delayed. Even if the school is wholly or partly closed to pupils, staff are expected to report to work and undertake appropriate preparation or other duties as directed by the Head. Staff unable to reach School should contact the Headmistress' PA or Mr Gill.

Parents should be advised to keep a check on Group Call and the Schools' website during emergency conditions in case closures or changes to normal school arrangements are made. Parents will be emailed asking for acknowledgement of receipt. The remainder of parents, together with those who did not respond to email will be contacted by telephone.

Death of Pupil or Staff Member

- It is the responsibility of the Police to advise the parents, or next of kin of the staff member, of the tragedy.
- The Senior Leadership Team should ensure that all staff members and governors are made aware as quickly as possible of the situation.
- Lexicon PR should be informed to assist in devising and managing a Press Statement.
- All staff should be asked to respect the need for all communications with the local community, parents, and the media to only be done through the Headmistress.
- The Headmistress should make arrangements to close the school if necessary (although as far as possible, normal practice should continue)
- The Headmistress should make arrangements to write/email a letter home to parents as soon as possible giving as much information as is felt appropriate.

Tragedy during a School visit

- The leader of the visit should ensure that the Headmistress is informed immediately of the tragedy. Parents should only be informed once the Police have given the authority to do so.

- A member of the SLT should, if at all possible, travel to join the trip participants. It may be necessary to take other members of staff or governors depending on the number of pupils on the trip to support both staff members and pupils.
- The leader of the trip, or nominated person, should ensure that they are able to keep telephone communication open with the senior members of the SLT at all times.
- The SLT should make arrangements to return pupils from the trip as soon as possible.
- The Police will advise the relevant parents, or next of kin of staff member, of the tragedy. Once this has happened the police will give authority for the school to inform others.
- The SLT should ensure that all staff members and governors are made aware as quickly as possible of the situation; the Chair of Governors should ask fellow governors to assist in this process.
- All staff and governors should be asked to respect the need for all communications with parents and the media to be done through the Headmistress acting on the advice of Lexicon pr.

Infectious Diseases in School

Decisions should be made in discussion with Health Centre staff.

If there is an outbreak of illness, the Health Centre staff should contact the Health Protection Agency to discuss management issues. The HPU will, if required, assess the situation and decide what, if any, further action is necessary either to investigate the source of the outbreak or to stop further spread.

If an outbreak of food poisoning is suspected the NYCC Environmental Health Department should be asked to investigate. Environmental Health may also assist in the assessment and control of outbreaks of diarrhoea and/or vomiting not thought to be due to food poisoning (e.g. nonovirus)

For certain infectious diseases the HPU might deem it necessary for letters to be sent home with all pupils in a class or School. Arrangements for this will be made through the Headmistress.

If the Environmental Health Department or the HPU consider there is a need for extra cleaning this will be arranged with the Cleaning Manager.

Exclusions from School

- Day pupils who are not well should not be at school even if they are not infectious
- In individual cases, children must not return to school until 24 hours after their last bout of sickness or diarrhoea.

- Contagious eye or skin infections such as conjunctivitis or impetigo also require pupils to be isolated until no longer infectious.
- As some children may have illnesses which affect their immunity, the parents of these children should be warned if there are known to be cases of infectious diseases.

Carole Cameron
January 2010