

Critical Incident Plan Guidance

Your critical incident plan needs to be written in a similar way to the missing person's policy but needs to reference these points: 'In the event of':

- death or serious injury as a result of violence, accident, self harm and/or sudden traumatic illness
- major fire
- building collapse
- riot or civil disorder
- natural and/or man made incidents
- missing person or abduction
- terrorism
- bomb scare
- Pandemic illness

This can be written as one procedure that will cover all these possible incidents. The plan needs to be clear and concise, so bullet points may be easier to read rather than long pieces of text.

You will need to consider:

- Who will receive the alert or discover an incident and what information that person will need to ask for or relay about the incident. Perhaps a typed up list of questions that the person who takes the call or manages the incident should ask, i.e. what has happened, where, when, how many involved, how it affects the setting and what should you do.
- A contingency plan should be made for roles and responsibilities during the incident i.e. who will call the emergency services if needed and who should ensure the emergency contact details are at hand. You must think about how you will contact the parents.
- Do you need to move the children to another building, if so where will you take them? It would be advisable to identify somewhere off site and agree with the owners of the premises that it can be used prior to any incident.
- How you are going to deal with media attention. (A draft statement may be useful)
- How are you going to provide support after a critical incident and deal with any after effects, shock or trauma suffered by staff/children? What monitoring and observation processes do you have in place to alert you to signs of stress? What support agencies can you access to provide counselling? You might like to include a list of these in your critical incident plan along with their contact details.

It is advised that the critical incident evacuation should be practiced, so that the staff are aware of their roles within the plan. (This does not need to be as frequent as your fire drill, but should be recorded). It is good practice to display your critical incident evacuation procedure.

During an incident it is common that people become flustered and forget simple information, such as the setting telephone number and address. Therefore it is good practice that information about the setting is displayed near the phones so that the person ringing the emergency services can give clear and concise details.