Ormiston Academies Trust

(Academy Name)  
Crisis Management policy

Policy version control

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| Policy type | Mandatory |
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| Approved by | Executive Team September 2022 |
| Release date | September 2022 |
| Review | Policies will be reviewed in line with OAT's internal policy schedule and/or updated when new legislation comes into force |
| Description of changes | This new policy combines and replaces the previous Crisis Management policy, and Emergency & Critical Incident policy and lockdown policy |
| Supporting documents | * Crisis Management plan template - [Crisis management site](https://ormistonacademiestrust.sharepoint.com/sites/healthandsafety/SitePages/Crisis-Management-plan.aspx) * Classification of incidents template - [Crisis management site](https://ormistonacademiestrust.sharepoint.com/sites/healthandsafety/SitePages/Crisis-Management-plan.aspx) * Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy * Health and Safety Policy   [Keeping Children Safe in Education](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2) |

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Who is this document for?

This document should be read by all members of the academy senior leadership team (SLT) including governors. It has been developed as a reference for both primary and deputy members of [Academy Name] Crisis Management Team (CMT) and to be read in conjunction with the Crisis Management Plan

Key information for academies

1. This policy must be read and adopted by all academies and key information disseminated to all staff
2. This policy is stored within the OATnet policies [page](https://ormistonacademiestrust.sharepoint.com/sites/policies/)
3. The Crisis Management Plan – can be found within the [Crisis Management site](https://ormistonacademiestrust.sharepoint.com/sites/healthandsafety/SitePages/Crisis-Management-plan.aspx) on OATnet and must be downloaded and adapted by each academy and stored within their own documents In their estates academy site on SharePoint
4. Lockdown drills must be carried out on an annual basis at minimum and findings recorded within the crisis management plan and stored on your academy OATnet page
5. Fire evacuation drills must be carried out on an annual basis and outcome recorded
6. Introduction
   1. This policy, created by Ormiston Academies Trust (OAT), sets out the legal requirements and responsibilities to ensure all children and staff are safe in situations where there is a crisis or threat in the academy grounds or outside the academy.
   2. It also provides the detail on how serious incidents and/or events should be managed to minimise injury and disruption with limited damage to reputation.
   3. This policy is to be used in conjunction with the ‘crisis management plan’ and for all eventualities as detailed below and to include in the event of a situation where the academy may have to lockdown.
7. Scope
   1. This policy applies to employees, volunteers, parents/carers, children, and everyone on the academy site. It covers the procedures and personnel responsible when the academy is required to go into lockdown.
   2. Managing a crisis effectively (or preventing an incident becoming a crisis) will depend on the response and having the following in place:

* Clear procedures and lines of responsibility.
* Staff and other resources that can be deployed at short notice.
* Agreed principles for dealing with the media.
* Immediate access to relevant information.
* Communication plan to all stakeholders.

1. Actions
   1. This policy is to be adopted and read by all academy governors, senior leaders and those part of the crisis management team.
   2. This policy is to be read in conjunction with the crisis management plan and disseminated to all academy staff.
   3. A letter to parents/carers is to be sent outlining communication plans in the event of a crisis or incident (as detailed within this policy). It is not advised to provide detailed information of the plan to not cause any additional risk and/or threat to the academy and/or trust.
   4. This policy and associated plans must be checked annually, and emergency drills carried out and recorded within the OAT accident and incident form.
2. Definition
   1. Incident and crisis definition
      1. An incident is defined as an event that has the potential to cause an adverse impact on the operations and/or reputation of Ormiston Academies Trust (OAT). Incidents can range from administrative errors, health, and safety accidents, through to serious events with multiple business impacts.
      2. A crisis is defined as an event or series of events that seriously threatens people, operations, assets, long-term business prospects, reputation and/or brand. It can escalate from an existing incident or issue or occur suddenly and without warning. If an incident ever does escalate to the stage that it becomes a crisis, it is the responsibility of the academy level Crisis Management Team (CMT) to implement the plan as set by the OAT trust wide team.
   2. Situation type
      1. There are several types of situations which can be considered as crisis situations; these include but are not limited to:

* Natural disasters – flooding, tornadoes, weather-related incidents, fires, or any incident that is created by a weather disaster.
* Suicide – when a person either takes their own life, plans to die by suicide or declares an intention to do so.
* Accident or deliberate acts of violence.
* The release of a hazardous substance near to or on school premises.
* Disease – infectious diseases, epidemics, pandemics.
* Death or major injury of a student, member of staff, governor, visitor.
* Reputational incident attracting negative press impacting the normal functioning of the school.
* Terrorist attack or serious threat.
* Cyber incident or non-availability of IT whereby IT systems are compromised, and data is either totally or partly lost and/or not accessible
  1. Location and time
     1. It is recognized that incidents can occur:
* In and out of school hours.
* On and off school premises.
* In and out of the UK.
* On school transport.
* When school premises are being used by third parties such as community groups, extended school activities etc.
* As a result of external influences such as neighbouring properties and/or intruders.

1. Immediate response
   1. It is recognised that a different response will be required for different incidents however the common response will be as detailed below. At all times it is paramount that communication with emergency services (as required) and stakeholders are always kept clear and open.
   2. Lockdown activation
      1. This will apply when children and staff need to be locked within buildings for their own safety and may be activated in response to any number of situations; some of the more typical ones are:

* A reported incident or civil disturbance in the local community which potentially poses a risk to the academy community.
* A dangerous individual in the locality.
* An intruder on the academy site with the potential to harm children, staff and visitors.
* A warning being received regarding a local risk of air pollution (e.g. smoke plume, gas cloud).
* A major fire in the vicinity of the academy.
* The proximity of a dangerous animal roaming loose.
* Serious accident on-site requiring good access for emergency services.
  1. Emergency evacuation
     1. This will apply when children and staff need to evacuate from buildings for their own safety and may be activated in response to any number of situations; some of the more typical ones are:
* Fire and/or explosion
* Building collapse, flooding etc.
* Gas or another chemical leak
  1. Individual response
     1. This will apply when there is an incident that requires a localised and/or wider event needs to be controlled to protect children and staff either initially or for a period of time, and may require lockdown and/or evacuation (or a mix) in response to any number of situations; some of the more typical ones are:
* Death or major injury of a child, member of staff, governor, visitor.
* Local or wider threat
* Reputational incident attracting negative press impacting the normal functioning of the school.

1. Responsibilities
   1. Head office responsibilities
      1. It is the responsibility of the OAT Head Office Health & Safety team to ensure the following documents are up to date, stored within OATnet and easily accessible to academies:

* Crisis Management policy
* Crisis Management plan template (including lockdown)
* Classification of incidents template\*
* Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
* Health and Safety Policy
  + 1. It is the responsibility of the OAT Head Office Health & Safety team to ensure the following:
* Categorise incidents as MINOR, MEDIUM or MAJOR, according to the complexity, severity of injuries, anticipated speed of response and potential organisational effect on an individual academy and/or entire trust.
* Provide consistent and effective communication across the trust.
  1. Academy responsibilities
     1. It is the responsibility of the principal to ensure the following has been undertaken and records kept securely:
* Crisis management policy read and understood by all key staff
* Appoint key roles such as the Crisis Management Team and ensure relevant training is carried out
* Crisis Management plan to be completed and stored on OATnet
* Crisis management plan to be disseminated to all relevant staff
* Assess any additional threats or risks specific to its own location, to a child or children or other factors and include these in plan and security and fire risk assessments (and others as required)
* Communication - remain available and visible to all parents and other stakeholders through effective and professional communications.
* Vulnerable children – ensure a list of vulnerable children (who may find a serious incident, lockdown, or evacuation (real or drill) particularly frightening, e.g., children with ASC or who may have suffered trauma which could be triggered by a lockdown) is kept up to date, secure and accessible in the event of an incident. Note that additional work will be carried out with these children where necessary to prepare them for a drill and staff alerted to additional measures to take during a drill or real event. This may form part of a child’s personal emergency evacuation plan (PEEP).
* Test the crisis management plan, emergency evacuation and lockdown drills annually as minimum
* Governing body to be kept informed and have oversight of the individual academy plan.
* To be ethical and honest - make incident management decisions on honest, legal, and ethical grounds.
* Retain a strategic view - consider the wider perspective such as resilience for concurrent situations, the situation changing and medium-long term recovery to educational provision.
* Take responsibility - the academy cannot delegate its responsibility for the care of pupils/staff to anyone else, for example to subcontractors

1. Communication
   1. Parents and carers
      1. Lockdown procedures, in outline form only, should be shared with parents and carers annually, particularly regarding arrangements for communicating with them in the event of an emergency. It is not advisable to share entire lockdown plans.
      2. In the event of an actual lockdown, it is strongly advised that any incident or development is communicated to parents and carers as soon as is possible. Parents and carers will obviously be concerned but regular communication of accurate information will help to alleviate undue anxiety.
      3. Parents and carers should be given limited information about what will happen so that they:

* are reassured that the academy understands their concern for their child’s welfare, and that it is doing everything possible to ensure their child’s safety,
* do not need to contact the academy, as calling the academy could tie up telephone lines that are needed for contacting emergency service providers,
* do not come to the academy, as they could interfere with access by emergency service providers and may even put themselves and others in danger,
* wait for the academy to contact them about when it is safe to come to collect their children, and where this will be from.
  + 1. This part of the plan must reassure parents and carers that the academy understands their concern for their children’s welfare and that everything that can possibly be done to ensure children’s safety will be done. However, it may also be prudent to reinforce the message *“…the academy is in a full lockdown situation. During this period the switchboard and entrances will not be staffed, external doors will be locked and nobody will be allowed in or out…”*
  1. Emergency services
     1. It is important to keep lines of communication open with emergency services as they are best placed to offer advice as a situation unfolds. The academy site may or may not be cordoned off by emergency services dependent upon the severity of the incident that has triggered the lockdown. Emergency services will support the decision of the principal with regarding the timing of communication to parents.
     2. In the event of a prolonged lockdown or more severe scenario it may be appropriate to liaise with the emergency services to arrange a reception centre for family members outside of the cordoned off area.

1. Monitor and review
   1. The principal will report as required to the *Local Governing Body* and *Ormiston Academies Trust (OAT)* on how well the arrangements are succeeding and who will review the policy annually.
   2. The academy safety officers will ensure that procedures are in place and are regularly monitored and will report to the principal any changes or update.
   3. The Head Office team will monitor and carry out regular checks to ensure compliance with this policy. Any changes to the policy will be carried out in line with local and national guidance.