

Crisis Management Policy

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VERSION CONTROL	
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Date of Approval of this version:	August 2025
Next Review Date:	August 2026
Version Number:	2.00



“One of the most consistently high-achieving independent schools in Britain” Sunday Times Schools Guide

Introduction

Crisis, by its very nature, is unpredictable and therefore specific responses cannot be provided for all possible eventualities. However, it is possible to prepare for a broad range of crises.

When a crisis occurs, the Senior Leadership Team will establish a team to control the crisis, the team will consist of staff members such as the Principal/Vice Principal(s), School Directors and Coordinators, Operational Manager, Boarding House Parent(s) and any other appropriate members of staff. The Principal/Vice Principal(s) will be responsible for overall coordination and communication as well as any internal administration and organisation.

Westbourne School benefits from access to various sites including the Senior School, Prep School, Innovation Hub and Boarding House. This enables the School to continue to function in the event of a number of conceivable situations e.g. one or more buildings being damaged by fire, by staggering teaching in one of the teaching buildings or distributing displaced students around a number of areas.

Westbourne School caters its own food and, in the event of this not being possible, a local catering company would be used.

Aims

The aim of Crisis Management at Westbourne School will be to:

- To ensure the safety and continued wellbeing of the student body and any affected employees.
- Minimise any of the negative outcomes directly associated with a specific crisis.
- To enable the education of the student body to continue.
- To ensure that students, parents, employees, the local community etc. are kept fully informed of all aspects of the crisis.

Planning for Lockdown/Critical Incidents

Please refer to the Lockdown and Critical Incident Management Arrangements procedure.

Planning for a virus/infectious disease outbreak

Onset of viruses such as norovirus would be particularly problematic as they often occur without notice and are extremely contagious. Where symptoms of other infectious diseases can be more readily identified, isolation can be implemented more effectively, thus reducing the likelihood of widespread infection. The unannounced onset of the norovirus through projectile vomiting is likely to create an extremely contagious area, with widespread infection a serious possibility.

In the event of an outbreak, the assembled crisis team led by the Principal/Vice Principal(s), together with the Boarding House Parent(s), will liaise with the local medical practice to ascertain any special requirements as well as communication with Parent(s)/Legal Guardian(s).



Where straightforward symptoms of the norovirus (nausea, stomach cramping, diarrhoea) are identified in a student, the student will be immediately isolated in their own room (where the room is a twin the other student will be moved to a different room) or the designated room¹ (sick bay) within the Boarding House with designated washroom(s).

Where the onset is without warning and is in the form of projectile vomiting:

- The immediate space will be evacuated.
- The space will be cleaned and disinfected by a member of the maintenance staff.
- The space will be isolated for the next two days.

The student will:

- Be provided with food by a member of the maintenance staff, and
- Use isolated toilet and washing facilities

Where the number of student illnesses is such that the sick bays are full:

- Ill students will be confined to their room and, if in a boarding house, supervisors will be put in place during the daytime.

Where the site of the onset is in one of the School dining areas, that area will be closed and provision will be made for meals to be provided by outside catering companies.

There will be a daily meeting between the Senior Leadership Team and crisis team to assess developments, conduct Risk Assessments and develop strategy.

There will also be a daily assessment of the impact of the outbreak on teaching and other School activities. Should a significant number of teachers be affected, either directly or indirectly due to family commitments, classes will be amalgamated, as necessary.

With diseases with a longer quarantine period, such as 21 days with Ebola, appropriate arrangements are planned to provide isolation for students. Advice from the Medical Centre and the Home Office will be sought and implemented. This is coordinated by the Principal/Vice Principal(s).

Accidents

If a student has a significant accident, medical help is summoned as outlined in the [Health & Safety Policy](#). In the case of a member of staff having an accident, cover staff and, if necessary, senior staff are available for cover at very short notice.

Fire

If a fire breaks out on the premises the alarm should be sounded immediately, unless a member of staff is able to extinguish the fire easily and quickly. The person who sounds the alarm should arrange for the Fire Brigade to be summoned by dialling (9) 999 if they think it necessary and then report to the Principal/Vice Principal(s).

¹ The designated sick room will be assigned according to the circumstances, students in single rooms are aware they may need to move to accommodate this.



- The Senior School will assemble in the front court area on the Hickman Road site.
- The Prep School will assemble in the front playground on the Victoria Road site.
- The Boarding House will assemble in the car park area of Plymouth Road.

Form Tutors should check the pupils in their class, using the school attendance register, and then report to the designated school Fire Officer in charge.

Boarding House Parent(s) should check the number of students in the Boarding House, using the appropriate AM/PM register.

In the event of the absence of the Fire Officer, a suitable replacement will be nominated from the relevant section of the School and will take over the duty of checking and reporting.

Students unable to travel

In the event of travel disruption for example, planes not being able to fly due to volcanic ash, and students therefore being unable to return home for holidays, some or all of the Boarding Houses would be kept open with the trained Boarding Staff being able to supervise. In the unlikely event that Boarding staff could not cover, several teaching staff have sufficient knowledge of Boarding practices and would be able to cover the supervising of accommodation.

Bad weather

In the case of bad weather e.g. snow, staff who live within walking distance of the School should be available to supervise students in school. If snow occurs during the school day and day students are unable to get home, they would be accommodated within the Boarding Houses. Staff will be contacted via email and text message.

Activities/Trips

All trips and outside activities will have been subject to a risk assessment.

Contact details of all students are held on file and the accompanying staff will have a mobile telephone.

The accompanying staff will be familiar with the procedures in line with the [Educational Trips Policies](#).

In the event of a serious incident this will be communicated to the School at the earliest opportunity. If there is significant incapacity such that members of the party are not able to communicate with the School then it is anticipated that emergency service will do this.

If he or she is able, the accompanying member of staff will initially remain at the most appropriate location and the crisis team will be assembled and, with their roles as outlined above, will be



responsible for travelling to the location of the incident and thereafter providing both information to the School and local support.

