



REIGATE GRAMMAR SCHOOL

Critical Incident Policy

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1. Introduction

Reigate Grammar School seeks to ensure that pupils, school visitors and staff are safe in situations where there is an immediate threat within the school, the school grounds or outside the school perimeter that may affect the school directly. We recognise that as a school with a strong public profile and awareness, both nationally and increasingly internationally, we need to adopt an approach that “it could happen here”. This policy, and the accompanying procedures, is based on the government guidance on countering threats to security in schools and legislation on countering security threats to public events.

The member of SLT with responsibility for H&S will maintain a current understanding of security and counter terrorism guidance which applies to school, and how this is implemented through policies. The school Security Lead is a senior member of the Estates team with responsibility for implementing the policy through procedures and training. This policy should be read in conjunction with the Security Policy, which focuses on prevention of an incident. This policy focuses on the response to an ‘immediate threat’. The procedure should be instigated as a sensible and proportionate response to such a threat.

2. Aims

This Critical Incident Policy will:

- Identify the types of ‘immediate threat’ which might require activation of critical incident procedures, and the different procedures which might be implemented
- How steps will be taken to minimise disruption to the learning environment whilst ensuring the safety of all pupils, staff and school visitors;
- Identify the procedures for evacuation, invacuation and lockdown, including the actions pupils, school visitors and staff must take once the procedure is activated;
- Outline the incident response procedure, including taking account of the Emergency Services response;
- Outline methods of communication during and after the procedure;
- Provide policy in respect of procedure drills and the training of staff to deal with such situations;
- Provide references used to develop the procedure.

3. Identifying the appropriate response to an immediate threat

There are a number of different incidents which could occur and constitute an ‘immediate threat’ to the school community. This list is not exhaustive, but may include:

- A reported incident or civil disturbance within the local community that may pose a threat to pupils and staff;
- An intruder(s) on the school premises or close by;
- A report of a local air pollution risk (chemical, biological or radioactive contaminants);
- A major fire in the vicinity of the school;
- A report or sighting of a dangerous animal.

The government guidance for schools identifies three responses which may be appropriate to an immediate threat:

- **Evacuation** – movement away from the school premises to a location a significant distance from the school buildings. This might be appropriate if there were a bomb threat, or large fire at the school.
- **Invacuation** – all members of the community stay within buildings, typically with windows closed, but carry on with normal activity as far as is practicable.
- **Lockdown** – all members of the community move to and stay in safe spaces within buildings, with doors and windows secured by locks or physical barriers. The aim is to avoid detection, and so normal activity would be suspended.

4. Evacuation procedure

This procedure is followed when a threat is identified which means remaining on the school site is unsafe. This could be, for example, a large fire, or a bomb threat.

Setting off the alarm:

- A member of SLT will identify that evacuation from the site is necessary and will contact Estates to activate the alarm. They will post notification of a site evacuation on the SLT team & are responsible for notifying the emergency services of the incident and action.
- The fire alarm will be raised on both sites in order to evacuate students, staff and visitors to the normal muster points.
- Actions following the alarm:
- The SLT member acting as fire officer on each site will announce an evacuation to a distant muster point and will direct groups of students, with teacher supervision, to leave site calmly.
- The distant muster point will be the fields behind RSM.
- Main site will leave through the playground gates and will walk through the graveyard.
- Top site will leave the site via the Music School/Broadfield House exits and use Lesbourne Road and the A25 footpaths to walk to RSM.
- SLT responsibilities will be divided between accompanying students and staff to RSM, to act as liaisons, and remaining at a suitable, safe location to act as liaison with the emergency services.

5. Invacuation and Lockdown procedures

The invacuation procedure is followed when a threat is identified which means remaining outdoors is unsafe. This could be, for example, a large fire in the local area which is producing harmful gases. The lockdown procedure is followed when a threat is identified which means remaining outdoors is unsafe and there is an immediate need to avoid detection, e.g. an armed intruder.

In each case, one or more members of SLT will act as the incident manager.

Setting off the alarm – common procedure for both types of incident:

- A member of SLT, or other designated member of staff, will identify that invacuation/lockdown is necessary and will initiate the alarm.
- There are two alarm mechanisms in place:
 - **Loudhailer sirens** – manually operated by nominated staff (see appendix A)
 - **External Sounders (Bodet System)** – designated staff can trigger the air raid sirens to spread the lockdown alert externally to our larger spaces. Sounders are located around the site to give coverage to the Playground, Back of Hamlin/Pool area, Broadfield Lawn, Coach Park, Broadfield car park/Drama & Cornwallis pathway.

Initial actions following the alarm:

- All outside activity to cease immediately and all pupils, staff and school visitors to return to the nearest school building.
- All staff should act as 'sweepers' to ensure all pupils and other personnel are ushered indoors and escorted to the nearest classroom or office.
- Make your way to the nearest classroom or designated refuge areas which are the Harrison Sixth Form Centre, Concert Hall and PMH.
- If already inside the buildings when the alarm sounds, staff and pupils must remain in their classroom or move to the nearest classroom. Office staff to remain in their offices.
- Staff should escort visitors to the nearest classroom or office.
- All windows should be closed.
- Staff should access the general channel of the ALL STAFF Team to determine whether an invacuation or lockdown has been initiated.

Ongoing actions – Invacuation:

- Staff should monitor the general channel on the ALL STAFF Team to receive notifications from the incident managers.

- Normal lessons and work can continue so far as is practicable, but no one should leave buildings.
- Depending on the duration of the invacuation, alarms may be silenced to allow work to continue. The invacuation is only, therefore, ended when a notification is posted online.
- **Remain in Invacuation status and await further instruction from senior staff, who will be undertaking dynamic risk assessments based on advice from the emergency services.**

Ongoing actions – Lockdown:

- Lock all external doors and windows; Secure classroom doors using door wedges (if available), by pulling furniture in front of the door or using the “thumb turn” lock or door key if available.
- Close blinds or cover windows where possible. Students and staff should position themselves away from windows and lines of sight into rooms (e.g. under tables).
- Everyone should be silent.
- All mobile phones need to be switched to silent – and no one is to use phones to attempt to contact friends or family outside of school, or to post on social media.
- The alarm will sound for the duration of the incident. Lockdown only ends when the alarm is silenced and a notification is received via the communication channel.
- **Remain in Lockdown status and await further instruction from senior staff, who will be undertaking dynamic risk assessments based on advice from the emergency services.**

6. Communications during a Critical Incident

To staff:

- Keep the classroom PC switched on or your office PC. The general channel of the ALL STAFF team should be monitored to allow for further messages.
- Staff should keep their mobile phones switched on (with the volume low) and available to take incoming communication updates from the incident managers. Communication will be via Teams.
- Do not make unnecessary calls or communicate with outside parties (via messaging services or social media).
- **Sit tight and wait.** The emergency services will be on their way and the incident managers will communicate with you through all available means.

To students:

- Staff will pass on messages to students as instructed via the ALL STAFF team.
- Staff should reassure pupils and ask pupils to turn off mobile phones and devices and leave them visible (on the teacher’s desk if appropriate) so they are not tempted to use social media or make contact with family members.

To parents:

Parents should be made aware that an incident is occurring, although specific details should not be shared.

In the event of an actual incident, it is imperative that parents are informed as soon as it is deemed by the Incident Managers to be safe to do so. This will be achieved by SMS message and a voicemail on the school phone system. It is prudent to reinforce this message: ***“The school is in an evacuation/ invacuation/ lockdown situation. During this period the switchboard and entrances will be un-manned, external doors locked and nobody is allowed in or out. For your safety, and to allow the emergency services to respond, please do not attend the site.”***

There is an added danger of parents attending the school and they should be advised accordingly. It is natural that parents will be concerned but regular and accurate communication will help to alleviate undue anxiety.

Should parents attend the school during an invacuation or lockdown, under no circumstances should members of staff leave the building to communicate directly with them.

7. Incident management

The incident manager is responsible for coordinating the response to an incident, including communication with the emergency services. It is anticipated that two (2) or more members of SLT, likely to be the Deputy Heads and Bursar, will work closely with the Headmaster to undertake the following responsibilities:

- making fast, clear decisions, to get people to immediate safety.
- responding appropriately to any safety concerns, for instance people reported missing.
- liaising with the police and fire services to incorporate their advice into the overall response
- make ongoing decisions on the response as the situation evolves
- communicating about the incident to parents and carers of those affected.
- communicating about the incident to staff and students.
- leading any responses to interest on social media and in the mainstream media, if required.
- coordinating support for staff, students and parents after the response has ended.

It is unlikely that SLT members on the Incident Management team will be in the same physical location, therefore, Teams chat will be used to communicate information and decisions.

It is vital to keep lines of communication open with Emergency Services as they are best placed to offer advice as a situation unfolds. The school site may or may not be cordoned off by Emergency Services depending on the severity of the incident that has triggered the lockdown. Emergency Services will support the decision of the Headmaster regarding the timing of communication to parents.

8. Training and drills

Not unlike a fire practice, it is important that the invacuation and lockdown procedures are practiced in a drill. The Government recommendation is that drills should occur in stages:

- An initial briefing to raise awareness and introduce procedures (with additional written resources for staff)
- A pre-warned drill with a full briefing in advance
- Further drills with less information provided in advance, unless individuals require additional support due to SEND or personal experience

This process will be followed for staff and students, with staff training preceding student drills.

Drills should focus on developing confidence in following procedures. They should not attempt to replicate the traumatic elements of an incident. Each drill should be fully debriefed to monitor the effectiveness of the procedure. Any practice of the lockdown procedures will be communicated to staff, parents and students before the drill.

Government guidance is that students should be taught “RUN, HIDE, TELL**” as part of their PSHEE curriculum on personal safety and risk management.**

<https://www.protectuk.police.uk/advice-and-guidance/response/act-youth-run-hide-tell> provides resources for these lessons. Focusing on how to manage personal safety, rather than the reasons why it is needed, can help to reduce the anxiety this topic may cause.

9. Response during public events

These procedures will be used to ensure, as far as is reasonably practicable, the safety of attendees, including staff, students, parents and other visitors, during school events. One or more members of SLT will be present at the majority of out-of-hours events and so will act as the incident manager.

Staff will assist with the implementation of the procedures by helping to direct visitors, including parents, who will not have received training on the alarms and responses. All other aspects of the procedure will be followed as normal.

If a member of SLT will not be present, a member of staff will be identified who will take ownership of the initial response, sound the alarm and ensure the evacuation, invacuation or lockdown takes place. They will be provided with the mobile numbers of the duty Deputy Heads, who should be contacted immediately after the emergency services are called. The Deputy Head(s) will then assume responsibility as incident manager and coordinate the ongoing response remotely, in close communication with the emergency services and staff on site.

10. References

This policy has been written with in accordance with recommendations taken from:

- ProtectUK – NaCTSO and Police guidance:
<https://www.protectuk.police.uk/catalogue/EducationLearningandGuidance> (updated 2025)
- DoF – Protective security and preparedness for education settings:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/protective-security-and-preparedness-for-education-settings> (updated 28 April 2025)
- GOV.UK – Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Bill 2024:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/terrorism-protection-of-premises-bill-2024-factsheets>
(updated 3 April 2025) *Also known as Martyn's Law*

Appendix A: Critical Incident – Nominated Staff Members

Handheld loudspeaker locations: June 2025-2027

Building	Specific Location	Person/s	Name
Main School	Reception	Duty Receptionist	Duty Receptionist
	Porters' Desk	Duty Porter	Duty Porter
	HM PA office	HM and PA/Secretary	Shaun Fenton, Lisa Marriott, Hannah Willard
	Admin Building – Bursar's office	Bursar	Helena Briggs
	Admin Building – Foundation office	Head of Foundation & Business Development	Jonny Hylton
	Admin Building – Estates office	Estates Manager and Deputy	Carmel Grater, Rob Stannard
	Deputy Head's office – foyer stairs	Deputy Head	Brendan Stones
	Hamlin Building – Maths office	Head of Maths	Edward Hughes
	Pool Building – office	Pool Supervisor or duty person	Ben Rutland
	DofE Building – ground floor office	DofE or Maths senior staff member	Harry Cuthbert or others
	Assistant Head's office – 1st floor	Assistant Head	Lisa Robertson
	DT office – ground floor	Head of DT	Simon McShane
	Geography office – ground floor	Head of Geography	Nathalie Innes
	Estates office and workshop (off playground)	Maintenance Team Supervisor	Andy Allingham & team
Harrison Centre	Head of Sixth Form– ground floor office	Sixth Form	Elizabeth Taylor and Rob Verdon
	Deputy Head's – 2nd floor office	Deputy Head	Michelle Pope

Building	Specific Location	Person/s	Name
Broadfield site	Drama building – ground floor office	Director of Drama & Theatre	Hugh Edwards
	Wellbeing Centre – ground floor office 1 st floor – Deputy Head's office	Executive Assistant Deputy Head	Bronwen Eustace or another member of the school office team Sarah Arthur
	Broadfield House – 1 st floor office 1 st floor International Office/	IT Manager RGS International	John Moore Alice Brooking
	Upper and Lower School office (Conservatory offices)	Head of Lower and Upper School respectively	Martin Hetherington and Charlotte Case
	Head of Science office – 1 st floor	Heads of Science, Biology, Chemistry, Physics	Gabrielle Cooper, Will Harvey, Tom Thake
	Ballance Building – Assistant Head's office 2 nd floor	Director of Studies	Robert Flook
	PMH – ground floor office	Catering Manager	Stacey-Ann John/Luke Hardy
	Music School – ground floor office	Director or Performing Arts	Joanna Korzinek
Hartswood site	Hartswood – ground staff mess room	Groundsman	Robert Bartholomew

Appendix B: Critical Incident – All Staff Briefing Handout

ALL STAFF – to follow the basic response **RUN – HIDE – TELL**

RUN

- Run inside to classrooms, designated refuge areas Harrison Centre, Concert Hall, PMH or offices “sweeping” up students and staff and visitors as go shouting **CRITICAL INCIDENT** as loudly as possible to alert as many people as you can whilst on the move to safety.
- If already inside remain in your space if safe to do so or move to the next nearest safe space

HIDE

- Barricade yourself and others inside using door locks, door wedges, furniture to physically secure your space as best you can.
- Close blinds where possible and turn off lights
- Move away from doors and windows and hide behind or underneath furniture or around the outer edges of the room
- Remain calm and quiet, gather student phones in and do **NOT** allow the use of phones, social media or contact with family members

TELL

- Adults must do what they can to alert key people to the situation as quickly as possible using own mobile phone or office phone if accessible, and **Tell**
 - The Police 999 (keep it simple, be factual about what is happening and where on site)
 - Any member of the Senior Team
 - Porters, Front Office Team, Estates Team and IT Team

REMAIN in position and wait for further instructions from SLT and the Emergency Services

Senior (Designated) Staff, IT and Estates

Will follow the above procedure in addition to making use of systems in place to widen the alert, update communications, dynamically risk assess the changing emergency situation and support the emergency services using systems such as:

- **Handheld loudspeakers** located in key areas around the school for Designated Staff to use to widen the alert
- **Radios** used by Estates and IT staff – can be used to assist with the above
- **Computer Screen Notification (Impero)** – Designated Staff and IT team can send messages to all switched on **computer screens**