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| **ST ANDREW’S COLLEGE POLICY DOCUMENT** |
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**House Manager Sickness**

If a house manager is sick, there is a separate policy to address the issue. See House Manager Sickness Policy.

**Property crises**

**DEALING WITH THE INCIDENT**

It is impossible to anticipate the proper response to every possible incident or disaster.

However, certain principles apply in most crises:

* Clear leadership is needed
* All involved must know who is in charge and follow that personʼs instructions.
* Debate may delay an urgently needed response
* In a crisis, firm decision-making is more important than assessing all the options and consulting about them
* Saving human life and health is more important than preserving property or reputation
* Heroic gestures should not be encouraged or supported; leave dangerous situations to the professionals

There will usually be a typical pattern. This will be along the following lines:

**1.DISASTER OCCURS**

**2.INITIAL RESPONSE**

**3.EMERGENCY ACTION**

**4.RECOVERY**

**5.BUSINESS AS USUAL**

**INITIAL RESPONSE**

On discovering an emergency situation, all members of the staff should understand that they have authority to call the police, fire service or ambulance service without requiring authorisation. It is then the responsibility of the person who made the call to await the arrival of the emergency service and direct them to the location of the problem. That person should also contact the Principal (Wayne Marshall) and the Services Director (Hanna Claydon). If the situation occurs out of hours that person should call the school emergency phone.

**PHASES OF THE RESPONSE**

The incident can thereafter be divided into three separate phases:

1. The emergency phase, when the important actions are directed towards saving

people and minimising damage to property;

1. The recovery phase, when the emphasis is on information management, restoring

order, making emergency arrangements and salvage.

1. The return to “business as usual”, or as near to that as can be achieved.

**1. EMERGENCY PHASE**

**The Crisis Management Team (CMT)**

The immediate role of the CMT is to take whatever action is required to deal with the

emergency. The role of the team is to bring order, do whatever is needed to ensure

the safety of those involved and, where possible, take steps to limit the damage.

**Composition** The core of the team will consist of:

The Principal

The Services Director

The relevant House Manager

The Dukes Managing Director (Tim Fish)

Other staff may be co-opted as required.

**Immediate responsibilities of the Crisis Management Team during the emergency phase:**

**Actions**

* Ensure that emergency services have been called
* Whoever discovers the disaster should evacuate buildings if appropriate by activation of the fire alarm
* Immobilise utilities if necessary
* Take a roll call to confirm evacuation
* Follow normal fire drill procedures
* Call in additional staff to undertake recovery phase
* Decide the next steps
* Ensure everyone remains accounted for
* Keep off site people who are not required

**2. RECOVERY MANAGEMENT**

* Prepare a summary of what has happened
* Inform schoolʼs insurers
* Maintain a log of events and communications
* Retrieve data on parent and staff contact numbers
* Identify immediate needs (food, electricity, heating, lighting etc)
* Have a prepared statement for the press
* Contact staff and parents
* Start to identify the next steps
* What will be needed for the next 48 hours?
* This activity should only commence when all pupils and staff are safe and well supervised

**Re-accommodating students**

Alternative accommodation may be required for the students. This could take the form of another hall of residence, student accommodation or a local hotel but adequate supervision would be required and safeguarding measures put in place.

**Other Crises**

Incidents which do not threaten the schoolʼs physical property can take many forms,

examples of which are listed below:

• Serious accident to a pupil or house manager – on or off site.

• Outbreak of serious infectious disease.

• Criminal offence (or alleged offence) by a pupil or house manager.

• Inappropriate relationship between a pupil and a house manager/ their partner.

• Fraud or impropriety on the part of staff.

• Death or suicide of a pupil or house manager.

Many other potential crises can be imagined. In these situations, there may not be a need

to call the emergency services, but speed and clarity of response can reduce the damage

done. It is just as important to set up a Crisis Management Team, though the members would need to be chosen to match the needs of the circumstances.

**GUIDANCE ON HANDLING THE MEDIA**

When a disaster occurs, one of the most critical factors in making a successful recovery

may be the way that public relations are handled. This is even more vital when the crisis takes the form of an accident or a scandal relating to staff or pupils, when the press can be expected to be highly intrusive and merciless in their investigations. Saying the wrong thing can have significant repercussions.

There are certain principles which apply in all cases:

* Staff should be told not to speak to the press themselves, but to refer the query to the Principal. Nobody else should speak to the press.
* The Principal, Services Director and Dukes Managing Director will agree a consistent strategy for dealing with the press. The briefing notes should take account of the following:

o Questions about normal policies should be anticipated

o Do not get drawn into answering hypothetical questions

o Do not admit liability

o Do not attribute blame

o Do not identify any individuals involved until their next of kin have been informed

o Do not attribute views to other individuals or organisations

o Only use facts which are absolutely certain, and avoid unnecessary detail

o Never comment “off the record”

o If giving a TV interview or posing for a press photograph, consider the background of any location shots – do not stand in front of the disaster scene.

* A holding statement should be cleared with the Dukes Managing Director and issued as quickly as

possible, ideally within one hour. Routine enquiries should be answered by

reference to the statement.

       • The press statement should be reviewed at least once every day, and revised and

reissued as required.

       • Early consideration needs to be given as to whether to employ professional public

relations advisers; if so, the sooner they are on board the better.

       • Press should not be allowed on the premises, except by invitation.

       • Staff and Pupils should be asked not to speak to the press, and to report to the

         Services Director any incidents where they have been approached.

       • Staff should be aware that members of the press will sometimes pretend to be an

          old pupil or a parent. They should treat all enquiries with extreme caution.

       • It is vital that any information given to the press is correct in factual content and

          consistent with the line that has been given to parents and pupils. Any discrepancies

          will be quickly revealed and will reflect badly on the school.

**GUIDANCE FOR STAFF HANDLING TELEPHONE CALLS**

• Give your name if it is requested.

• Keep calm and listen carefully to the caller.

• Show that you understand their concerns and want to help them.

• Reassure the caller that the situation is under control.

• Do not in any circumstances admit liability or fault.

• Never criticise the school, any of its staff, or the way the crisis is being handled.

• Do not give out personal details relating to individuals without the authority of a senior

manager.

• Never say anything ʻoff the recordʼ or ʻin confidenceʼ.

• Do not become impatient or lose your temper.

• Only promise to call back if you are certain that you can do so.

• If a journalist or reporter calls, refer them to the press statement. If they have other

queries, pass the call to the Deputy Director.

• Be aware that journalists can masquerade as parents or old students. Be very

wary of intrusive questions and if in doubt, say you will call back. Check the number they

give, or ask for other details (e.g. confirmation of address) before providing information.

• Make a brief note of each call, logging the time, who called and what information was

Given.

**Next review: August 2021**