

COLLINGHAM

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COLLINGHAM CRISIS MANAGEMENT POLICY

Scope

The college has adopted policies and procedures to minimise risks to students and staff and has a Health and Safety policy and procedures that are regularly reviewed. The Directors recognise that not all circumstances are under the control of the college and that emergencies and disasters may happen.

Some events have the potential to disrupt business continuity. A detailed business continuity plan has been prepared by the Directors, with the aim to better prepare Collingham for recovery from a disrupted status towards a return to normal operations. However, this crisis management policy aims to outline our response to major incidents that affect the health, safety and welfare of our students.

Aims

The aims of this policy are:

- to prepare Directors, staff and students for any disasters that may occur
- to ensure that there is a plan that can be implemented swiftly in the case of an emergency caused by a disaster
- to help all involved in identifying when this policy should be activated
- be a guide to actions in circumstances that are liable to strain the capacity of those handling the situation to think clearly

Use of this Policy and Procedures

This set of guidelines is to be checked before a college offsite visit takes place. It will also be used in the aftermath of an emergency. All staff and Directors should be familiar with the contents of this guidance.

What can happen?

By 'crisis' we mean an incident that has caused death or serious injury to a member or members of the college community (staff, students, adults and others visiting Collingham or closely associated with the business of the college) or events that have the *potential* to result in death, serious injury and disruption to business continuity, e.g.:

In college:

- the death of a student or member of staff from natural causes
- a road traffic accident (RTA) involving staff or students
- a deliberate act of violence against staff or students
- a college fire or major incident in a laboratory or workshop
- a serious accident of any sort involving death or mutilation

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Out-of-college:

- deaths or injuries on college journeys
- tragedies involving children with many others (e.g. Manchester Arena)
- pandemics that threaten life and threaten to become internal
- a bomb incident or threat
- terrorist activity in London or its environs

Most aspects of disasters are self-evident but two are important to emphasise for the purpose of our response:

Feelings of grief, guilt and insecurity caused by the disaster. These are felt by survivors, parents and staff alike (not only by those directly involved) and may strike at any time over a long period after the disaster (see Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder below).

Inevitable media interest. This will focus on the ‘human interest’ and on discovering ‘who is to blame’. To the media there is no such thing as an accident. Whether intended or not, the result can be to persuade people to say things in haste that they will bitterly regret at leisure. The media can sow discord and prevent healing. In the immediate aftermath the media may interfere with communications and distract people from coping with the emergency.

It is assumed in what follows that our first duty is to support and help students, parents and staff involved. We are also concerned to ensure that the handling of the disaster does not result in damage to the college (business continuity), which will then cause all students and staff to lose out in the long term.

Roles and Responsibilities

In term time, other things being equal, the crisis will be managed by a team that will include:

- the Directors
- the Principal
- the Deputy Principal and Vice Principals
- other relevant staff, depending on the situation

The Principal, if not disabled in the disaster, will be first contact for the media. It is probable that as things develop the Directors will need to make a statement and written statements may be issued by others. Statements will only be authorised by the Directors and the Principal.

The Principal, or Deputy Principal, will be responsible for arranging the necessary communications network, including allotting duties to other support staff for preparing statements, etc. The Principal will also be responsible for checking with insurers (Marsh), etc. to make sure that we do not make mistakes at that stage of the crisis.

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The exact roles of others will be decided at the time (as any crisis will undoubtedly have its own particular character and need a different reaction) but among the roles will be:

- contact with parents
- support for staff directly involved
- liaison with remainder of staff and students
- finding assistance for the college, e.g. legal etc.
- liaison with relevant authorities e.g. police/Foreign Office /Health and Safety Executive.

Out of term, the **first** thing for the person in charge on site to do will be to contact as many members of the Emergency Team as possible.

Links to trips and visits (off-site safety) policies

When a disaster occurs off site, it is critical to know quickly who has been involved, therefore:

- all trip leaders will make sure that there is a list in each of the college offices with the names of all students and a contact number/s for parent/s
- every member of staff on the trip (not only the leader) will keep with them at all times a list of students on the trip. This may be the only starting point for identifying students and the leader may be incapacitated
- the Principal, Deputy Principal and Director of Studies will also be emailed with a list of all contact numbers for parents
- risk assessments containing contact lists will also be sent to the Director with Responsibility for Safeguarding prior to any overseas trip
- a list of key contacts will be made available to SLT and Directors via a google doc
- a crisis management WhatsApp group for SLT and Directors will be set up

It is also vital that information is passed to the college as soon as possible so that support can be given to the staff on the ground and parents and that accurate information can be given to the media.

All the staff on a trip will:

- know how an alarm is to be raised
- will have to hand a number to contact to report any disaster. This will be the Principal and Deputy Principal's mobile phone numbers. Contact details for the Principal and Deputy Principal are posted on the Engage Portal. This will not be the college number in case the media jam the phone lines. Any such number must be kept absolutely confidential
- give priority to looking after the injured and ensuring that they are in the hands of competent assistance. Once that has been done, the priority of those on the ground

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becomes to look after students and each other. Dealing with the media, with parents and all other issues must be handled by the Crisis Management Team.

Terrorist Activity in London

Any incident of terrorist activity occurring in London will be assessed by the Senior Leadership Team as to the risk posed to students making their way home from college.

In the event of an ongoing terrorist incident, students will be advised to remain in the college until the level of risk lessens or the situation becomes clearer. During an incident, the SLT will convene in the hallway at the Front Door. Students (13-19 years) wishing to leave college will be required to obtain permission from a member of the SLT or a parent which can be communicated to the college via e-mail, phone or by the student's phone. This policy will be communicated to parents at the start of the college year and again, in the event of an incident, via e-mail and text.

Data recovery and business continuity

Financial and personal data relating to the college, its students and staff is held securely and electronic data backed up remotely. In the event of a crisis that might potentially threaten data, Akita should be informed immediately.

Immediate Action in the Case of Crisis

1. The Directors will be contacted immediately and will be contacted and asked to join the Crisis Management Team
2. Marsh Insurance contacted.
3. The police will be contacted immediately to ask for help in controlling access to the college, if required
4. The Crisis Management Team will convene at the A level Building or, alternatively, the GCSE department. Should it not be feasible to utilise the Collingham buildings, the Crisis Management Team will convene on Teams
5. Roles will be allotted according to the guidance within this policy
6. If the disaster affects our students while they are abroad, then a contact will be opened up to authorities in the foreign country through the appropriate embassy or the Foreign Office and arrangements made to get a senior member of staff and someone familiar with the language (if possible) out to the scene of the disaster as a matter of urgency to take charge from the staff involved
7. Parents will be contacted by mobile phone
8. If children are off-site, parents should be re-united with them as fast as possible. (It is the duty of the Principal - or Principal's delegated representative - to determine in the circumstances whether it may be helpful for parents to view the accident site so they can share the situation with their children.)

Communicating with Parents

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Only nominated members of staff/Directors have the authority to contact parents. Such persons, when answering or contacting parents will have a written list of known facts issued by the Principal (or Directors). The nominated person will only:

- say what is known for a fact
- say how parents will be updated as information becomes more complete
- say how parents should contact hospitals, etc.
- check whether any help is needed with transport

While the college's main responsibility is to parents whose children are involved, there will be other parents who, for one reason or another, will want to know what has happened. Depending on the circumstances, the Principal (or Directors) will decide to:

- send an account that is written
- post information on the college website
- use the media to communicate with parents

Communicating with Students

If the disaster occurs during term time, the first priority will be to make sure that students know what is true. This is important as the media often target students and their families at this time, even if not directly involved. The second priority will be, as appropriate, for the college community to share its shock and/or grief.

The procedure will be:

- students will be given plain facts (no speculation) by selected staff or through a full college meeting
- to give absolutely honest responses to questions that may be difficult to answer immediately

If a disaster occurs during the holiday, there may have to be special arrangements to allow families, friends and others to come into college, and for an appropriate member of staff to be available to inform and support. This will be determined by the Principal (or the Directors) and put into place by the Crisis Management Team.

Communicating with the Media.

Media interest will seem intrusive and unhelpful. It is important to realise, however, that their interest is legitimate. Used properly the media can help to communicate important messages to parents and the community. It is important to do everything to be helpful, short of compromising the essential interests of the college. The Directors will contact Marsh who will refer to a Public Relations company. Under this direction, the Principal will explain to the press what is happening but will stress that students' and parents' interests must come first for us. He will ask for the press's co-operation in achieving this aim.

All statements to the media will be made after discussion with the Principal (or Directors). In ideal circumstances, the Principal will act as press officer. If he is not

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present, he should be contacted if possible. The Deputy Principal will cover the Principal's absence. The Directors will make a statement at the earliest but appropriate moment. Directors and staff will refer all questions to the Principal (or delegated representative) and must refuse to make any comment or react to any statement put to them by the media.

It should be remembered that the media will be looking for a story and headlines. A 'story' only lasts for a short time in media terms so they will be looking for a quick result: grief to dramatise or blame to allot. They only polarise. However, there are possible stereotypes which we can help to get sympathetic treatment. As such, the following will be the principles to guide dealings with the press:

- Close-knit college with charitable ends, devastated by disaster
- Staff trying to hold things together under difficult circumstances
- Caring college trying to do what it can
- Bolt from the blue overwhelms all sensible precautions

N.B. We must remember that we have to be careful that nothing we say should increase grief or wrong-foot ourselves in possible legal action.

The media will normally not be invited onto the college site and if they do make their way into the site uninvited, they should be referred to the Principal, who will normally ask them to leave, and will explain why. The assistance of the police will be sought if necessary.

It is the responsibility of the Principal in consultation with the Crisis Management Team to determine whether a Press Conference should be arranged in a place away from the students. If there are signs of devastation on the college site, it may be inevitable that they will have to be allowed to take pictures but the Crisis Management Team will attempt to ensure that these do not add to the grief of parents and others.

Students will be kept away from the media for their own protection, and the importance of this will be explained to the students. No addresses or personal details will be given to the media.

Appendix 1

Procedure for a Pandemic

Current government guidance advises that people should continue their everyday (essential) activities as normally as possible during a pandemic while taking personal responsibility for reducing their risk of exposure to the disease and social responsibility to lessen its spread. High March will follow advice from the **DfE, ISA, and LA** and will implement any model plan or checklist for schools when required. As needed, a detailed risk assessment to accompany our policies and procedures will be produced and shared with appropriate stakeholders.

There are some specific issues to consider concerning students. There may be circumstances in which the government advises the closure of schools and group childcare settings during a pandemic. Collingham will follow **DfE** and **ISA** guidance regarding school closures, subject to the discretion of the Principal and Directors.

The **World Health Organization** recommends that all schools and childcare settings plan for both staying open and possible closures during a pandemic. Closure may be very localized and brief (e.g., if there are too few staff to operate safely) or more widespread and long-term to reduce the spread of infection among children and the wider community.

If the College were to close for child welfare reasons, **Collingham would still require staff to work**, in line with advice given to employers in all sectors.

Communication

The **Principal and Directors** will be responsible for disseminating information to staff and parents. Any relevant leaflets will be distributed to parents. The school website will be kept updated, and email messages will be sent to all parents.

All pupil and staff contact details are kept up to date and used in line with **data protection regulations**. These include **addresses, telephone numbers (both home and mobile), and email addresses**.

Staffing

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In the event that multiple staff members are unable to work due to illness or caregiving responsibilities, the **Principal and Directors** will decide whether there are enough staff to open the school safely. Collingham will provide support to staff who are sick or bereaved and will handle requests for leave to care for sick dependents sympathetically.

Staff or children who begin to develop symptoms will be told to stay at home, check their symptoms on the **NHS Choices** website (www.nhs.uk), and, if still concerned, contact their **GP** or **NHS 111**.

If illness occurs on either site of the College:

- The **First Aid Rooms** will serve as the designated area for unwell children.
- Students who are ill will be removed from the classroom, taken to the designated area, and collected by their parents as soon as possible in their best interests.
- If it is necessary to isolate a child due to a possible infectious illness, the child will be placed in **Room 4 at Collingham Gardens** and **Room 3 at Young Street**.

In the Event of Closing the College

If the **College is required** to close in the short term due to exceptional circumstances, **Collingham parents and staff** are requested to monitor the **College website and school messages** for updates.

Reopening the College

Collingham will follow **DfE** and **ISA** guidelines for reopening the College, subject to the discretion of the **Principal and Directors**. The College will reopen at the **earliest practicable opportunity**, provided it is in the best interests of the pupils and complies with **Health and Safety policies and procedures**.

Appendix 2

Short-Term Closure of the College in Exceptional Circumstances

If the College is obliged, in exceptional circumstances, to close in the short term, due, for example, to adverse weather conditions, Collingham parents and staff are requested to monitor the College website closely. A message will be displayed at the earliest possible opportunity, informing the College community whether the College is:

1. Open for business as usual.
2. Open with constraints in the curriculum due to staff absence.
3. Shut.

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In the event of a short-term closure (e.g., due to extreme weather), a pack of prepared work will be available for children to access via Teams. The College will endeavour to provide continuity by making all academic lessons available on Teams and teaching online. Communications will be sent as early as possible on the morning of any closure via text, email, and the College website.

Guidance will be followed, and plans will be re-evaluated on an hourly or daily basis. The intervention team (Principal, SLT, and any other co-opted members) will consider the following matters in the event of such an incident:

- Consider whether a lockdown of the College is necessary.
- Prepare for the evacuation of College buildings if required. Alternatively, consider how an area of the College site might be cordoned off if necessary.
- Take a roll call of staff, pupils, and all those known to be on the College premises.
- Ensure utilities can be shut off quickly and safely if required (see Appendix 1).
- Implement the College's crisis and media checklist (see Appendix 1), including alerting staff, pupils, and parents and preparing a media statement.
- Ensure one of the Directors contacts the College's insurance company and/or other relevant third-party suppliers.
- Consider how continuity of College business might be achieved, e.g., how quickly the ICT network could be restored.
- If ICT capabilities remain intact, teaching will move online using relevant technology (currently MS Teams).

Appendix 3

Lockdown Procedure

All staff will be notified that lockdown procedures are to take place immediately upon hearing the lockdown alarm signal. A Teams message will be sent to staff if possible, concurrently with this, to provide any available information about the situation.

If it is safe to do so:

1. The alarm will activate a process in which any pupils in the school grounds will be ushered into the nearest school building as quickly as possible.
2. The lockdown alarm signal sounds similar to the fire alarm. However, the fire alarm sounds continuously, whereas the lockdown alarm emits four or five alarm pulses followed by a two-second silence. This sequence is repeated until the alarm is turned off.
3. Staff should lock all external doors once pupils and adults are inside.

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4. Upon hearing the alarm, pupils will remain in the room they are in. All staff must ensure that windows and external doors are closed/locked and that any blinds are pulled down. Pupils should be positioned away from possible sightlines from external windows and doors. Lights and smartboards should be turned off. Staff should assess whether it is necessary to move pupils to another area, such as an upstairs classroom or a location away from the front of the school.
5. Pupils or teaching staff who are not in class for any reason should proceed to the nearest occupied classroom and remain with that class and teacher (e.g., pupils using toilets). Support staff should remain in their designated areas if appropriate.
6. Each member of staff should take a register of the pupils and adults with them and post it on Teams.
Please ensure that the surnames of the adults are included in your message.
7. Staff should reassure and support pupils, keeping them calm and quiet. Staff must remain in lockdown positions until informed by a member of SMT or the School Office that the all-clear has been given. The Principal (Collingham Gardens) (Paul Caffell at Young St) or, in his absence, a member of SMT, will determine this.

No one should move around the site once the school is in lockdown. The School Back Office will serve as the center of operations. If this location is inaccessible, the backup will be the Principal's office. At Young St, the Head of GCSE will be the center of operations, with the staff room as the backup location.

Appendix 4

Location of shut off points

Collingham gardens: Electricity and gas can be shut off in room 4. The water shut off is in the dark room directly next to room 4 on the right-hand wall.

Young St: Water and gas are shut off in the external cupboard in the front basement of Young St next to the metal staircase. Electricity is shut off in the electrical cupboard between rooms 2 and 3 in the front basement of YS.

Signed:

Date: March 2025

James Alder
Principal

Edward Browne and Robert Marsden
Board of Directors

Appendix:

Guidance to the Principal (or representative) on dealing with the media

The Principal will say that the college will:-

- tell them everything known definitely as soon as we have told parents;
- tell them what we do not know at this stage;
- tell them when further information will be available;
- not speculate or go along with their speculation; and
- not be giving any names or confirming any names until all the members of a trip are accounted for.

Within these limits, the Principal has the responsibility to give quotable statements and go on air.

Interview Technique

Generally it will be important to 'come in under the question', being calmer and quieter than the questioners. Two points clearly made and repeated are worth many made in a confused way. It is crucial to remember that you are talking to the audience beyond the interviewer while answering the interviewer's questions. Meet aggressive questions with facts, e.g.

- 'all trips go through a vetting procedure';
- 'we have fire practices termly';
- 'we have records and once we have done our duty by our parents and students we will check it out'.

Generally the college will be saying over and over again that the college will turn its attention to causes and lessons to be learned when we have done what we can do for students and parents.

Short and Medium Term Actions

Short Term Action

The Directors will meet as soon as practicable to be briefed by the Principal and Crisis Management Team, and to decide how any inquiry should be carried. The Crisis Management Team will seek advice on this as appropriate. It will be the responsibility of the Principal to make an announcement about any inquiry. The Principal will ensure that included in any public statement will be the Directors' resolve to co-operate fully with any external inquiry.

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The Crisis Management Team will determine in the circumstances how to help the college community come to terms with the shock and grief, and which appropriate agencies to use. The Crisis Management Team will bear in mind in all its decisions the importance of enabling normal life to be resumed as soon as possible without denying or minimising what has happened.

Immediate steps should be taken to restore the situation in the case of fire, etc. and lessons should be as normal as possible as soon as possible. The Principal will make alternative accommodation arrangements for teaching, to maintain the continuity of learning.

The Principal (or Directors) will seek legal advice, as appropriate.

Medium Term

The Crisis Management Team will determine how best to ease the return of young people involved and what support they will need. Normally appropriate consultancy/counselling will be sought (see Appendix C).

Note on Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder and the Role of Counselling

It must be expected that some of those involved in the disaster will suffer from post-traumatic stress disorder. This may involve panic attacks, flashbacks, feelings of depression and guilt. They may be deeply disabling and are often affect adults more than children. Expert advice should be sought on this and part of the longer term plan must include plans to support both students and staff members who may be unable to return to college.

It was generally thought in the past that immediate access to counselling was helpful in the aftermath of a disaster. This has been shown to be counter-productive and in some cases damaging.

Advice now suggests that counselling should be postponed until at least a month after the event and then brought in for those who have been unable to 'move on.' The main thrust of the college's policy must be not to deny the events but to emphasise that 'life goes on' and that 'we have the strength to cope with even this.' It is vital that children and adults are not disempowered in dealing with the trauma of the disaster by the suggestion that they cannot cope without help or that they must relive the disaster to come to terms with it.

Coronavirus and Influenza

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The college has a separate Coronavirus Policy which will also be followed in the event of an influenza outbreak or any other epidemic such as an outbreak of H1N1 (“Swine flu”) or H5N1 (“Avian flu”).

Closing the College

In the event that the college is advised by the Government agencies that it should be closed to prevent further spread of the virus then the following procedure will take place:

- 1) The Principal, in consultation with the Directors, will make the decision whether to close the college.
- 2) A message will be posted on the college’s website: www.collingham.co.uk.
- 3) If the college is informed during college hours that it must close then students will be informed. An e-mail will be sent to inform parents. Parents will also be able to confirm details by viewing the college’s website.
- 4) In the event of this decision being made outside normal college hours, then the message will be put on the website and students will be met upon arrival at college. Parents and students will be contacted by e-mail and text.
- 5) If the Government advice is to distribute a vaccine or preventative drugs then arrangements will be put in place for collection of these from college for students and staff. Details will be posted on the website and in the letter sent home. Students, parents or guardians will collect these, as required.
- 6) The Senior Leadership Team should continue to attend college as normal unless informed otherwise.
- 7) In the event of a closure, students should remain at home and updates will be posted on the college’s website and Teams. E-mails will be sent regarding the period of closure, the date of reopening and the college’s remote teaching arrangements.
- 9) For students sitting public exams, the college will follow advice from the Examination Boards and students and parents will be informed accordingly. Where possible, examinations will continue as planned.
- 10) In the event of the college being advised not to have staff on site, a telephone message will be left on the college system informing those who contact of arrangements. Details will also be posted on the college website and portal, and e-mails sent.