Currently Under Review

Doucecroft School Services

Emergency Closure Procedures and Plan

Last Reviewed by: Jane Smart
Date: January 2019
Ratified by Governors: Pending March 2019
Next Review date: January 2022
Autism Anglia, Doucecroft School Services Emergency Closure procedures and plan

CONTENTS

1. Ethos and Mission
2. Definition, Aims & Scope of the Plan
3. Activation
4. Emergency Action list
   Action by on site coordinator
   Action by Emergency Management Team (SMT)
   Action by Administrative Assistants and other staff
5. Appendices.
   Appendix 1. Points to Note with Media Interviews
   Appendix 2. Criteria for school closure
   Appendix 3. Contact list
   Appendix 4. Contact Pyramid
1. **Ethos**

We welcome individuality and provide a safe and positive learning environment, to enable our students to thrive and meet their full potential preparing them for their future.

**Our Mission:**

At Doucecroft School Services our mission is that our students are/have:

- Developing – Independence and life skills
- Opportunity – to experience and learn new things
- Understanding – to be understood and valued as an individual
- Creativity – to express myself as an individual
- Encouraged – to try new things and realise my potential
- Confidence – to achieve and develop my self esteem
- Respect – to feel accepted and accept others
- Openness – to share experience and feelings with others
- Fairness – to be recognised for achievement
- Tolerance – accept that everybody is different

Doucecroft School Services is part of Autism Anglia that provides services to support both children and adults with Autistic Spectrum Conditions. Within this policy, Doucecroft School Services relates to the school day and residential services.
2. Definition, Aims and Scope of the Plan

**Definition.** An event (or events) usually sudden, which involve experiencing significant personal distress, to a level which potentially overwhelms normal responses and procedures and which is likely to have emotional and organisational consequences. This will include severe or potentially severe weather conditions which may cause the closure of the School Services.

**Aims.** The aims of the plan are to:

1. Create an awareness of the need for planned arrangements to be made.
2. Provide re-assurance of the practical help that is available from CEO, SMT and other agencies, at short notice.
3. Recommend the need for the school site to develop complementary emergency arrangements (see Critical Incident Policy).
4. Pass on advice based upon previous experiences.
5. Give guidance on other source of information and help.

**Scope of the**

**Plan In School**
- A deliberate act of violence, such as the use of a knife, firearm, bomb threat
- A school fire or explosion
- A student or teacher being taken hostage
- The destruction or serious vandalising of part of the school
- Prolonged failure of essential services; eg water, power.
- Serious weather conditions endangering staff and students, eg heavy snowfall, severe gales, flooding.
- Public health incident, serious outbreak of infectious or contagious disease leading to a significant reduction in staff numbers to impact on student safety.

**Outside School**
- The death of a student or member of staff through natural causes or accidents
- A transport-related accident involving students and/or members of staff
- A more widespread disaster in the community
- Death or injuries on school journeys or excursions
- Civil disturbances and terrorism
- Serious disruption to transport infra structure.
- Serious adverse weather conditions.

In respect of school trips and visits guidance is available from the DfES good practice guide Health & Safety of Students on Educational Visits.
The plan draws on guidance from DfE Emergency planning and response
3. Activation

In the event of a School-related emergency, the proposed arrangement is outlined here:

**INCIDENT OCCURS**

Head Teacher is notified

↓

Head teacher rings:
Assistant Head Teachers, Head of FE and Care Manager requesting help

↓

If, Out of Office Hours
On call person contacts the SMT and if appropriate Chair of Governors

↓

The Senior Officer Activated: (on call person)
1) Establishes contact with Jane Smart
2) Activates ‘First Response Officers’ as per contact list, to attend the school

↓

**Head Teacher**
- Nominates on-site Coordinator
- Identifies on-site facilities
- Mobilises on-site Team (if appropriate)
- Informs chair of Governors/CEO

↓

**On-call person or senior on-site**
Attends site to:
- Assist/advise Head Teacher/Nominee
- Determines full needs
- Takes action accordingly
**Action by On-Site Co-ordinator**

Initial Actions will have been undertaken by Head teacher as detailed under Section 4.1. It will then be the responsibility of the On-Site Co-ordinator to manage events through to conclusion and take responsibility for the following phases:

**(b) Stage 2 : Once Established**

- If other agencies have been contacted and need to attend. Arrange for On-Site facilities for them. i.e. someone to meet and direct
- Agree appropriate identification of staff by using badges
- Expect to see identification of personnel from other agencies or those collecting students.
- Set up arrangements to manage visitors – arrange for their names to be recorded, record who collects students if different from the usual arrangements.
- Set up arrangements to enable accurate information to flow into and out of the school and for telephones calls, by ensuring:
  - sufficient help is available to answer the many calls that could be received
  - appropriate and up-to-date information is recorded on answer phone message
  - staff maintain records of all calls received
  - brief, but up-to-date prepared statements are available to staff answering phones
  - media calls are directed to Head Office
  - care is taken when answering telephone calls
  - an independent telephone is made available for outgoing calls only (a mobile phone can be useful) but remember such messages can be readily intercepted
  - telephone staff are reminded that some calls could be bogus
  - local media information channels are used to warn of school closure. eg. local radio
- To arrange for all staff (not just teaching staff) to be contacted and, if necessary, briefed at an early stage. (Subsequent briefings should be arranged to ensure information is up to date)
- To be aware of how colleagues are coping
- To arrange for all students and families to be told, in simple terms, at and early stage.
- To brief Team to discourage staff and students from speaking to the Media.
- To arrange, if appropriate, for Team members to each have a copy of the Next-of-Kin List.

**Parents:**

- If students are involved, the contacting of parents will be an important early task (remember if it is a major Incident, the parents may well have
already heard). It may be appropriate to ask the parents to come to the school for a briefing and support and to collect their child. This will need to be done with the utmost care.

- Maintain regular contact with parents.
- If Incident is away from school seek Police advice whether parents should travel to the scene, or whether children should be taken home or back to school.
- If the school is closed due to adverse weather conditions all parents/carers to be contacted and kept up to date about transport arrangements.
- Ensure a consistent response is given to any parental/transport enquiries re closure due to adverse weather.

Staff:

- Remember to have regular breaks, and advise others to do so.
- Maintain regular contact with staff (Teachers and office staff). Make a point of seeing that all staff involved know each other’s roles & responsibilities.
- Always try to think of something positive to say to staff & respond positively to ideas and suggestions
- Be available to see staff when required.
- Remember some members of staff may be so affected, that they will not be able to help in supporting children
- Recognise also that if the burden of dealing with the situation falls disproportionately on a small number of staff, they too could need professional support.
- If Incident is away from school, try to dissuade shocked staff from driving parents to the scene.
- If school is closed contact all staff and ensure they know about what is happening and how to get up to date information.

(c) **Stage 3 : Period Following Close of the Incident**

- Prepare joint report with named Senior Officer, for funding authorities.
- Arrange for a member of staff to make contact with any students and their families either at home or in hospital.
- Make sensitive arrangements for the return to school (as appropriate).
- Once school is reopened ensure all families, carers, transport companies and staff are informed and know how to get up to date information.

(e) **Stage 4 : Longer term Issues**

The effects of some Incidents can continue for years. Thought will need to be given to:

- Work with Staff to monitor students informally
- Clarify procedures for referring students for individual help
- Be aware that some Staff may also need help in the longer term.
- Recognise and if appropriate, marking anniversaries
• Remember to make any new staff aware of which students were affected and how they were affected.
• Remember that legal processes, inquiries and even news stories may bring back distressing memories and cause temporary upset within the school.
• Remember if the Incident does attract Media attention, it is likely that interest will continue for many weeks.
• Ensure once “tested” the emergency plan is reviewed by the SMT

**Action by Emergency Management Team**

(a) **Stage 1 : Initial Actions**

• Obtain full facts of Incident or event from Jane Smart
• Open and continue to maintain a personal log of information received, actions taken and the time of those events
• Assist, where appropriate, in assessing the emotional needs of the staff and students. Co-ordinate rapid action to sensitively inform staff and students to provide appropriate support
• Assist class teachers and Senior Support Workers who will undertake student briefings
• Ensure students are protected from gossip and speculation.
• Arrange special groups/support for very distressed students.
• Make decision about sending students home taking into account the distances they have to travel.
• Ensure supervision levels are maintained until all students depart.

(b) **Stage 2 : Once Established**

• Under guidance from School On-Site Coordinator, assist Jane Smart to maintain student and staff safety.
• Work with Autism Anglia, Jane Smart and School On-Site Coordinator as directed.
• If weather conditions are adverse then those who can most easily get home should stay until the students have all gone. Sensitivity will be required as to the personal needs of staff, eg. child care, mode of transport.

(c) **Stage 3 : Period Following Close of the Incident**

• As above

    **This team should comprise:** Up to 4 senior members of staff, together with office staff
Action by Administrative Assistants & Other Staff

(a) **Stage 1: Initial Actions**

- Obtain full facts of Incident from the Head Teacher
- Open and continue to maintain a personal log of information received, actions taken and the time of those events
- If coming in from home, remember to bring useful items, such as any keys needed.

(b) **Stage 2: Once Established**

- Under guidance from School On-Site Coordinator, assist the Head Teacher and SMT.
- Work with SMT and School On-Site Coordinator as directed.
- Remember the School Office is likely to be the first point of contact for visitors, parents/carers, so exercise caution in making comments
- Concerning incoming telephone calls
  - take special care when answering telephone calls early on
  - maintain a record of calls received
  - only give out information from prepared statements that will be made available
  - remember that some calls could be bogus

(c) **Stage 3: Period Following Close of the Incident**

- As above
Appendix 1

Points to note with Media Interviews

• Have another person with you, if possible, to monitor the interview. If possible, agree an interview format i.e. establish what the interviewer wants to ask
• Be prepared to think on your feet, but try to decide beforehand what you want to say. Do not read it out
• Remember you could be quoted on anything you say to a journalist, even if it is not part of the formal interview
• Be prepared to say you cannot comment
• Don’t overelaborate your answers
• Refuse requests for photos or schoolwork of children/staff involved
• Try to keep a grip on your emotions during interviews-especially if it is TV
• Most journalists are responsible, but check where interview/camera team go, when interview is over
Appendix 2

Potential Reasons for the Temporary Closure of School Services

- Weather
- Site safety
- Significant disruption to staffing
- Significant disruption to transport infrastructure
- Outbreak of contagious or infectious disease
# Appendix 3

## Contact List

The following names and telephone numbers of organisations and individuals who may be useful to the School in an emergency:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organisation</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Telephone Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Doucecroft</td>
<td>Jane Smart</td>
<td>01206 771234 (o)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>01787 269852 (h)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>07815017411 (m)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emergency team</td>
<td>Samantha Lawrence</td>
<td>01206 771234 (o)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>07713 147385 (m)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emergency team</td>
<td>Mandy Spragge</td>
<td>01206 771234 (o)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>07769274557 (m)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emergency team</td>
<td>Kuben Reddy</td>
<td>01206 771234 (o)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Admin Contact</td>
<td>Cat Symington</td>
<td>01206 771233 (o)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>078018 482780 (m)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Site manager</td>
<td>Jamie Shields</td>
<td>07760 143869 (m)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caretaker</td>
<td>Les Blake</td>
<td>07936 861519 (m)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Head Office</td>
<td></td>
<td>01206 577678</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chair of Governors</td>
<td>Alan Bicknell</td>
<td>01206 577678 (o)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>01206 241766 (h)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Care</td>
<td></td>
<td>0845 603 7627</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social care out of hours</td>
<td></td>
<td>0845 603 7638</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents</td>
<td>See attached list</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transport</td>
<td>See attached list</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local media</td>
<td>BBC Essex</td>
<td>01245 495050</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local police, non-emergency</td>
<td>All areas</td>
<td>101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local health</td>
<td>NHS Direct</td>
<td>0845 4647</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 4

Contact Pyramid

Jane Smart

Kuben Reddy  Samantha Lawrence
Mandy Spragge

Cat Symington
contact staff

Jane Smart  Mandy Spragge  Samantha Lawrence  Kuben Reddy
Coordinator  Health, CP issues  School site  Admin/contact
Currently Under Review