

Emergency Policy

Definition of 'emergency'

1. An incident where a student/ staff member/ anyone connected to the school has:
 - a) suffered a life-threatening injury or fatality
 - b) is at serious risk of the above
 - c) has gone missing for a significant, unacceptable period of time, particularly if this is linked to the above.
2. An incident that is beyond the normal coping mechanisms of the team leading an off-site visit.

An emergency could, therefore, be linked to a road or rail crash, freak weather, a crowd that has gone out of control (e.g. a violent demonstration), serious equipment malfunction/ collapse (e.g. at a theme park, or a gas explosion), a random violent attack carried out by a lone person, or a planned terrorist attack. Emergency procedures should aim to cover all eventualities.

Control Centre

If an emergency situation occurs, The Reception area at The Leeds School of English (or the Centre Management Office at the Junior Summer School) becomes the Control Centre.

All students and staff not involved in the emergency operations need to vacate the Control Centre.

Leadership

The emergency (and therefore the Control Centre) is led by the Operations Manager (or the Centre Manager at the Junior Summer School). If they are not available, the Academic Manager takes control.

In sustained periods of emergency, leadership may be shared or taken over by the next senior member of staff available within the organisation (Executive Director, Director of Academic Development, Administration Manager, Student Services Officer, Activities Manager).

Off-site visits

For all off-site visits and activities, risk assessments need to identify the following

- possible venues for taking refuge for all participants;
- possible hotels or hostels for overnight accommodation;
- alternative travel arrangements available;
- the nearest A&E departments

When the off-site visit has more than one participant under the age of 18, staffing has to be planned in a way that staff: student supervision ratios can be maintained even if a member of staff needs to accompany a student to the hospital.

External communication

Communication with external parties (including the media and parents/guardians) is maintained solely by the Control Centre for the whole duration of the emergency.

Any communication made by the Control Centre must remain factual, calm and honest.

Responding to an emergency (off-site staff)

Immediate action

- The leader must assume control;
- Groups of students must be kept together;
- In case of a terrorist attack, staff and students should all be reminded of the 'Run, Hide, Tell' principle: to get away from danger, try to find a safe place, and call emergency services;
- The leader has to assess the situation, establish the next steps, and remain in control;
- The leader has to ensure that all students, especially those under 18, are accounted for, safe, adequately supervised, and know what they need to do to remain safe;
- In case anyone is injured, establish the extent of the injuries, administer First Aid, and call the emergency services.

Communication

- In any case, if an emergency occurs, the appropriate emergency services must be called first;
- If an emergency occurs during an off-site visit, the Operations Manager (or the Centre Manager at the Junior Summer School) or the next available senior manager must be notified immediately, so that the Control Centre can be set up;
- Always keep the Control Centre updated with the current off-site situation;
- Parents/guardians are only to be contacted by the Control Centre while the emergency lasts;
- Members of staff must not speak to media; they should be referred to the Control Centre;
- Leaders should discourage students from calling their family until the situation is resolved.

Subsequent action

- Move group away from danger if possible;
- Maintain supervision;
- Start keeping a records as close to real time as possible;
- Remain calm;
- Maintain contact with Control Centre and emergency services;
- Ensure minors are accompanied if taken to hospital.

Responding to an emergency (Control Centre)

Upon receiving news

- Remain calm;
- Advise the leader of the off-site protocol;
- Ask for help from another member of staff to clear and set up the Control Centre.

First steps

- Start recording information, and ask the following questions:
 - Is anyone in immediate danger?
 - Have the emergency services been called?
 - Is everybody accounted for?
 - Is everybody adequately supervised?
- Advise leader on how to proceed to a safe refuge if necessary.
- Inform the Executive Director of the ongoing situation.

Considerations

- Consider if additional staff are needed for the emergency operation;
- Consider if any stakeholder has to be notified at this stage and make contact with appropriate parties;
- Only notify parents/guardians when the whole extent of the situation is known in order to avoid unnecessary stress;

Further steps

- Continue recording information;
- Advise off-site staff and identify what support may be provided, e.g.:
 - Directions;
 - Medical supplies;
 - Food and drink;
 - Travel arrangements;
- Prepare for the return of students / staff

Post-emergency

- Ensure appropriate emotional / professional support is provided;
- Collect and complete records;
- Ensure all appropriate services have been notified;
- Ensure students have made contact with family, encouraging students to call them;
- Focus on the many acts of human kindness that have happened when talking about the emergency;
- Review emergency procedure.