

Health and Safety Bulletin

Ref: 2015/03

October 2015

Emergency Planning in Schools

Emergency Plan and Guidance

This Bulletin notifies Heads of all schools in Northumberland about the need to devise an Emergency Plan to enable them to deal with extremely serious or catastrophic incidents that could occur in schools or the local community or, in very rare instances, where a national state of affairs could impact on schools. Colleagues in the Civil Contingencies Team have prepared a Template to assist schools to comply with the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 and meet the DfE recommendation for schools to formulate and maintain an up-to-date Emergency Plan. The document can be accessed [here](#). The Civil Contingencies Team has also produced Guidance on how best to populate the Template, and that document can be accessed [here](#).

The aforementioned Act establishes a new and very broad definition of what constitutes an “emergency”, as follows:

- Any event or situation which threatens serious damage to human welfare or the environment
- War or terrorism which threatens serious damage to security.

In February 2015 Children’s Services publicised these documents in a letter that was sent to all schools. Unfortunately, evidence suggests that very few schools know of the existence of that letter or the Emergency Plan. This Bulletin is an attempt to remedy that situation.

Managing Temporary Crises in Schools

This document, which the Health and Safety Team has produced, is designed to help Heads deal with those crises that most schools will experience at some time and which could prove very difficult or disruptive. These include inclement weather, such as snow or high winds, and the failure of utilities, such as the heating or water supply. This document is also located on the Health and Safety webpage and can be accessed by clicking [here](#).

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What action needs to be taken?

- Prepare and maintain a School Emergency Plan
- Adopt the document Managing Temporary Crises in Schools
- Discard any hard copies of the School Emergency Incident Procedure which Children's Services issued in January 2007, as that document is now superseded.

Further Information

If Heads require any further information on the above matters they should contact the following members of staff who will be pleased to assist:

- For the School Emergency Plan and Guidance – Ben Allan, Civil Contingencies Officer on 01670 621206
- For Managing Temporary Crises in Schools – Geoff Goodman, Assistant Health and Safety Adviser on 01670 623804