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**Support for Schools following a Critical Incident – Summary Document**

**Children’s Services**

Educational Psychology Service

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**Introduction**

**A Critical Incident is an event or sequence of events, usually sudden, which involves the experience of personal distress to a level which has the potential to overwhelm individuals. These incidents are wide ranging and unpredictable in their form.**

A flexible and sensitive range of responses is required, based on sound psychological understanding of the variety of reactions and needs of children, young people and adults at such times.

If a Critical Incident occurs in your school or setting, a telephone call to the Educational Psychology Service (EPS) – **07920 147126**– will usually bring an offer of support in the form of a response planning meeting.

* Schools can contact the EPS for advice during working hours
* When contacting the EPS following a Critical Incident, please be ready to share the following information:
  + Your name and position
  + Which school you are from
  + The nature of the incident
  + Where the incident happened
  + The people involved
  + Contact details for a return call

**Aims of MK EPS support through a crisis response planning meeting:**

* To support the Senior Management Team deal with the initial impact of a Critical Incident
* To mobilise individual and collective resources for dealing with trauma and grief
* To provide psychological support to reduce the impact of the event and re-establish normal routines as quickly as possible

**What sort of things will the support include?**

* Dealing with the initial impact, including first reactions and breaking bad news in your setting
* Managing communications about the incident in the wider community
* Discussion of the needs of the children and staff
* Review of the skills and resources available in the school
* Advice or information for parents and staff supporting children who have experienced a Critical Incident
* Advice or information for teachers on strategies which are helpful to colleagues who have been affected
* Advice on management of grief and loss in school, including coping with strong emotions such as anger or fear, and providing sympathetic and effective pastoral care
* Support for senior staff who are dealing directly with distressed pupils, parents, or staff
* Recommendations of relevant resources
* Links with other agencies who may carry out longer term support.

**Milton Keynes Educational Psychology Service’s Guidance on responding to Critical Incidents can be found online at:**

<https://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/schools-and-lifelong-learning/special-educational-needs/critical-incidents-schools-and-settings>