

Critical Incident Policy



LONDON EAST ACADEMY & AL MIZAN SCHOOL

ISLAMIC SECONDARY SCHOOL FOR BOYS & ISLAMIC JUNIOR SCHOOL

Date agreed	Chair of Governing Body	Head Teacher	Review
Sep 2026	Kawsar Ahmed	Anamul Khan	Review as necessary

This policy is written in conjunction with the wider East London Mosque Trust (ELMT) emergency and security framework, including the ELMT Security Policy, ELMT Security – Bomb Threats Policy and Procedures, and the ELMT Emergency Plan.

1. RATIONALE

This policy sets out the school's operational response to a critical incident. It is intended to support clear leadership, effective communication, the safety of pupils, staff and visitors, and continuity of school operations during and after a serious incident.

Definition – what is a critical incident?

"An event or events, usually sudden, which involve the experience of significant personal distress to a level which potentially overwhelms normal responses, procedures, and coping strategies and which is likely to have emotional and organisational consequences"

Examples

In school :

The death of a student or a member of staff through natural causes, such

1. as illness.
2. a traffic accident involving a student or member of staff
3. a deliberate act of violence, such as knifing or the use of a firearm
4. a school fire or an explosion in a laboratory

Out of school:

1. deaths or injuries on school journeys
2. tragedies involving children from many schools
3. civil disturbances
4. refugee children joining a school

A critical incident may have a significant impact on pupils, staff and the wider school community. The school will respond in a way that is calm, proportionate and focused on maintaining safety, clear communication, and continuity of education.

Where relevant, the school will follow ELMT emergency, security and evacuation procedures.

Remove as not needed for an operation document during an emergency, the above short paragraph will suffice.

2. PURPOSES

- *To ensure a clear and immediate response to a critical incident*
- *To establish effective leadership and decision-making through the Critical Incident Management Team (CIMT)*
- *To ensure accurate, controlled and timely communication with staff, pupils, parents and external stakeholders*
- *To maintain the safe and orderly running of the school as far as possible*
- *To support pupils, staff and the wider school community following an incident*

The procedures outlined in this policy provide a structured approach to managing a critical incident. The level of response will be determined by the Critical Incident Management Team based on the nature and severity of the incident.

Emergency services must be contacted immediately where required, and their guidance must be followed at all times.

3. GUIDELINES & RESPONSIBILITIES

The Critical Incident Management Team (CIMT)

The Critical Incident Management Team (CIMT) will be responsible for leading and coordinating the school's response to a critical incident.

The Headteacher will act as the overall lead and responsible person during a critical incident.

The CIMT will typically consist of members of the Senior Leadership Team, with clear roles assigned as follows:

- **Lead (Headteacher):** overall decision-making, liaison with external agencies, and oversight of the response
- **Operations Lead:** responsible for the day-to-day running of the school, including staffing, timetable and behaviour
- **Communications Lead:** responsible for communication with staff, pupils, parents and, where appropriate, the media
- **Administration/Logistics Lead:** responsible for managing calls, records, room allocation and coordination of on-site arrangements

One member of SLT will be designated as the **School Continuity Lead**, ensuring that the school continues to operate as normally as possible while the CIMT manages the incident.

All external communication must be approved by the Headteacher. Staff must not share unverified information or speculate about the incident.

Where incidents involve the wider site or facilities, coordination will take place with ELMT leadership and in line with ELMT security and emergency procedures.

Action to be taken within hours

Upon becoming aware of a critical incident, the following actions should be taken as soon as possible:

- Confirm key facts (what has happened, where, when, who is involved)
- Ensure emergency services have been contacted where required
- Inform the Headteacher or most senior member of staff available
- Convene the Critical Incident Management Team (CIMT)
- Assign roles within the CIMT
- Identify any immediate risks to pupils, staff and visitors
- Take appropriate action to secure safety (e.g. evacuation, lockdown, supervision) in line with ELMT procedures
- Ensure accurate records are kept of key information and actions taken

Communication

All communication during a critical incident must be clear, factual and controlled. The Headteacher will oversee all external communication. Staff must not share unverified information or speculate about the incident.

With external agencies and ELMT

Relevant external agencies and ELMT leadership should be informed as appropriate. Communication should be coordinated by the Headteacher, and advice sought where necessary.

With the Governors

The Chair and Vice Chair of Governors should be informed as soon as reasonably possible, and will update other governors as appropriate.

With Families Directly Affected

Contact with families must be handled sensitively and led by designated members of the CIMT. This will be the responsibility of the CIMT - either one or two members depending on the number of contact needed. In the CIMT file there will be hard copy of all telephone numbers and addresses for staff and students. This must be updated half-termly by School Administrator. Before the first

contact is made, the CIMT will prepare as follows :

- brief the member[s] of staff making the contact rehearsing the message first
- remember to take careful note of those parents who still need to be informed so that those who already know are not made contact with unnecessarily
- offer help/advice with the arrangement of transport
- check that parents are not left alone in distress, perhaps making suggestions for making contact with relatives or neighbours offer useful phone numbers,

either for support or for more information - for example the emergency disaster number if one has been given or the hospital number. It may be appropriate for parents to come into school to be ready for further information. Some people are likely to need immediate emotional support. The CIMT should decide on this at their briefing meeting and request such from the LEA/Al Mizan or mobilise the school's own resources.

With Students and Staff Directly Affected

Students and staff who were involved in or witnessed the incident should be identified quickly as they may require higher levels of support. The CIMT to decide on appropriate support – this could involve staff who have had counselling training or LEA similarly trained staff.

With Staff Not Directly Involved

Staff must be reminded not to discuss the incident externally or on social media. Staff should be informed as soon as possible. Preferably, this will be at specially convened staff meeting. Advice should be given on managing the students and on media enquiries. Staff are most likely to be asked if they will brief other students in the school. Staff should be able to decline this task if they feel unable to do so. The CIMT should be sensitive to the problem particular staff may have with the incident

and should ensure that support is available for these staff.

With Students Not Directly Involved

Information shared with students must be age-appropriate and limited to confirmed facts. This should be done in the smallest groups possible - classes, tutor groups. Students' questions should be answered as straightforwardly as possible. Staff who undertake this task should be told to pass on facts only and never to speculate on the causes of the crisis or its consequences. Where questions cannot be answered at the time, that should be said.

With Families Not Directly Involved

The CIMT will determine appropriate communication to parents, ensuring messaging is factual, proportionate and approved by the Headteacher. This letter should explain what has happened and let parents know that their children may be distressed. If there is any possibility of legal liability or police action, the LEA and Al Mizan personnel section should be contacted before the school issues information to parents. A letter may be sufficient, but the CIMT should also consider whether the school should call a meeting at a future date - this may be appropriate if the incident was one which would generate concern about some aspect of the school's organisation.

All media enquiries must be referred to the Headteacher. Where appropriate, communication will be coordinated with ELMT leadership.

What happens next depends on the nature of the incident. The CIMT should meet after steps 1-3 have been followed and decide on their next priorities. Matters to consider are:

- Support needed in following days for students, their parents and staff
- Media Management
- Timetable for the next day

Post-Incident Actions

Following a critical incident, the school will take a structured and proportionate approach to recovery:

Communication

- Provide clear and updated information to staff, pupils and parents as appropriate
- Ensure all communication remains factual and controlled
- Liaise with ELMT leadership and external agencies where required

Support

- Identify pupils and staff who may require additional support
- Provide appropriate pastoral support and, where necessary, access to external services
- Monitor the wellbeing of those affected over time

Return to normal routines

- Re-establish normal school routines as soon as it is safe and appropriate to do so
- Ensure staff are supported in maintaining a calm and structured environment

Review and follow-up

- Record the incident and actions taken in line with school and ELMT procedures
- Review the response to identify any improvements required
- Implement any necessary changes to procedures or training

Where relevant, follow-up actions will be coordinated with ELMT leadership in line with security and emergency procedures.

Where a critical incident occurs outside normal school hours, the same principles of response will apply.

The Headteacher, or the most senior member of staff available, will take initial responsibility for the response and convene the Critical Incident Management Team (CIMT) as soon as possible.

During School Holidays

During school holidays, an SLT duty rota will be in place. The designated member of staff on duty will take initial responsibility for the response and will contact the Headteacher and other members of the CIMT as required. The school will ensure that up-to-date contact details are maintained to enable timely communication with staff, parents and relevant stakeholders.

Where incidents relate to the wider site or facilities, coordination will take place with ELMT leadership in line with their emergency and security procedures.

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