

**Summary Document**

**Support for Schools following a Critical Incident.**

**May 2024**

**Educational Psychology Service**

**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)**: 01908 252116** 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.mksendlocaloffer.co.uk/education-and-send/what-send-team-does/educational-psychology-service>

