



PARTNER OF THE EVERYONE MATTERS SCHOOLS TRUST

Critical Incident Policy

Rainford High School



Guidance Owner	Principal
Policy responsibility	Safeguarding Lead
Scope of the Policy	Rainford Academies Trust
Written/last reviewed	September 2026
Next review due	September 2027
Summary of key changes	Included reference to contacting chair of governors.

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Trustee's are committed to ensuring staff, students, volunteers, visitors and contractors enjoy a safe working and learning environment. The aim of this guidance is to lessen the impact of critical incidents on staff and students and reduce the likelihood of long term detriment by means of a consistent, coordinated and effective support mechanism.
- 1.2 A critical incident is any situation faced by an individual that causes them to experience unusually strong reactions that can interfere with life at work and home. It is something a person experiences which is outside the range of usual human experience and that would be markedly distressing to anyone.
- 1.3 This guidance supports the organisation in meeting the requirements of health and safety Legislation as stated in the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and the Management of Health and Safety Regulations 1992. These place a 'duty of care' on organisations, with an onus on assessing all risks to staff and putting in place measures to reduce them insofar as is reasonably practicable in the circumstances.
- 1.4 This document has also been drafted to comply with the principles of Keeping Children Safe in Education, Working Together to Safeguard Children and the Human Rights Act.

2. DEFINITION OF CRITICAL INCIDENT

The definition of a Critical Incident is;

“any incident where the effectiveness of the schools response is likely to have a significant impact on the confidence of the victim, their family, staff, students and/or the Community”

3. CATEGORIES OF CRITICAL INCIDENT

(This is a list of examples and is not exhaustive as the definition is all about a person's perspective)

3.1 Internal

- An assault by a student on a teacher, member of support staff or visitor. The nature of the attack and level of injury to be considered
- An assault by a member of staff on another member of staff
- An assault by a member of staff or visitor on a student
- Inappropriate behaviour between students
- Inappropriate behaviour between staff that if students, parents or the press were made aware could have a negative impact for the school
- Students with weapons or drugs
- Closure of the school due to accidents or criminality
- Anything that could cause an adverse press report

3.2 External

- A member of staff being arrested
- A student being arrested
- Forced marriage or honour based violence

- Pregnancy of a student
- The death, or more precisely the circumstances of the death of a member of staff or a student
- Radicalisation
- An event in the local or wider community that may directly impact on the emotional well-being of students or staff.

4. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

4.1 Principal

- The Principal has responsibility and oversight in critical incidents. The Principal may pass this responsibility to an appropriate member of SLT. The Principal will notify the Chair of Governors.

4.2 SLT

- Providing access to staff for education or support to be delivered
- Providing defusing information to line managers
- Ensuring that a debrief takes place following a critical incident as appropriate
- To support and provide flexibility to ensure their necessary release of appropriate personnel to assist in post-traumatic de-brief

4.3 Members of Staff

- To identify a critical incident at an early stage.
- To partake in an incident if appropriate
- To provide a verbal or written account and any supporting documents
- To participate in a debrief
- To maintain confidentiality

5. SUPPORT

- 5.1 In the event of a critical incident, which impacts a number of students and/or staff, the school will provide a manned support room for students and staff who may be affected. The school will work with the LA to maximise the support available. The preferred room will be the Everyone Succeeds Centre and the Health and Well-Being Room.
- 5.2 When a critical incident impacts on a small number of people, or a single person, the school will look to provide individual support and call on the expertise of external agencies as appropriate.
- 5.3 The DSL will update St Helens safeguarding unit on all critical incidents and write a report on how this was handled, which will be submitted to them.