

# Myanmar International School Yangon

## Emergency and Critical Incident Policy and Procedures



**Approved by:** Ei Ei Zin (Board of Directors) **Date:** 24th October 2022

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**Next review due by:** 25th October 2023

This document should be reviewed at the start of each academic year to ensure it reflects the evolving management structure of the schools; up to date student and staff numbers and the expansion / reallocation of buildings and rooms on both campuses.

## **1. Purpose and scope**

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In order to respond to the many and varied crises that can arise from time to time in any organization this policy aims to provide a broad framework; guiding procedures and decision making that might be needed in response to a crisis.

## **2. The Critical Incident Team (CIT)**

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2.1 The Critical Incident Team (CIT) represents the whole school. It may co-opt others as required and depend on the particular circumstances.

The Critical Incident Team consists of:

- The Head of School ( or Head of Section where the Head of School is not available)
- A representative of the Board of Directors
- Designated Safeguarding Lead(or Deputy)
- Facilities manager
- Business Manager
- Head of Security
- Healthcare Manager

2.2 When a crisis situation is anticipated or occurs, the following steps should take place:

- The CIT will immediately meet. This meeting can be called by any member of the CIT.
- Information will be presented about the crisis situation and decisions will be made on how to handle the situation.
- Information will then be disseminated as required and agreed by the CIT. A useful model on which to base the dissemination of information is:
  - What has happened?
  - How have we responded?
  - What will happen next?
  - Who will be responsible for what?

2.3 The procedures forming Appendix 1 will be used in the event of an evacuation

2.4 The checklists forming Appendix 2 should be used when the crisis being dealt with involves the death of a student or staff member. It should be noted that these checklists are for guidance and not all will apply in all cases. The CIT will need to make judgements about this.

2.5 Procedures in Appendix 3 should be used following a lock-in.

2.6 Should a decision be made that the school needs to be closed then procedures as per Appendix 4 should be implemented.

2.7 Should a decision be made that school is a 'safe haven' then procedures as per Appendix 5 should be implemented.

2.8 Action should communication systems (telephone, mobile phone, email) go down is covered in Appendix 6.

### **3. Generic policy for emergencies**

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Detailed procedures and evacuation routes etc. will be located in the relevant areas and documentation, such as school offices, classrooms and staff handbook. This policy is intended as an overall guide to the essential approaches and methods for coping with an emergency.

The main emergencies are likely to be:

- Fire or similar event requiring evacuation of buildings. This is the most frequently practiced drill.
- Bomb warning, requiring either evacuation or safe haven.
- Imminent explosion. Remain in place and take cover, e.g. under tables, and away from windows.
- Earthquake. Remain in place and take cover, e.g. under tables, and away from windows.
- Threat by armed intruder, requiring lock-in protection.
- Fire or similar events and bomb warnings will need evacuation of school buildings, and possible direction to new locations. The alarm signal for evacuation is a continuous two tone sound.
- Imminent explosions and threats by armed intruders need immediate protection inside. The alarm signal for “take cover where you are” is an on/off alarm sound

A minimum of seven practice drills per academic year will be undertaken, covering all of the potential emergencies identified above.

### **4. Fire Evacuation**

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While attempts will be made to take into account a wide range of circumstances, it is impossible to predict and provide for every eventuality – or to remember highly complex alternative sets of procedures. The emphasis is therefore on a limited number of essential, fundamental principles. **It is important to note that the senior member of staff present on the scene should take charge and take decisions and actions as they see fit in the event of a fire.**

#### 4.1 Basic principles

- Everyone should take responsibility for their own safety by being ready to exit rapidly, quietly and in an orderly fashion, at any time. This applies to both adults and students.
- Fire-fighting is **NOT** the priority, although trained fire-fighting teams are on site. Removal of people from the danger zone is the priority.
- Responsible adults who are present at the time, whenever that is, should do their best to check that internal areas (rooms, toilets etc.) have been evacuated. For all buildings operational staff should be assigned to check.
- Emergency telephone numbers are shown on the emergency evacuation instructions in each room. The person discovering a fire should ensure that this number is called – either personally or by a senior or administrative colleague or by a security guard.

#### 4.2 Time and circumstance

During normal school time, specific duties are allocated to individuals for the purpose of systematic checking of the evacuation of each area; checking of names and groups; accounting for all persons.

Emergency evacuation instructions must be posted in each room in school. These instructions should contain the contact telephone numbers of the ambulance, fire and police services.

Instructions should be dated and printed on a different colour of paper each year to make their annual updating easier.

After or between lesson time (ie. lunch break), the situation becomes more variable and unpredictable. In these cases, responsible adults at hand should oversee the evacuation according to the above principles of speed, order and the checking of inside areas. Administrative staff should have hard copies of class registers and after-school activity registers and will distribute these to class teachers and tutors at the evacuation point so that all people can be accounted for.

At other times, such as evenings and weekends, the same principles will apply, although there will not be any means of carrying out an immediate, formal and systematic check as to the whereabouts of all people. However, adults at hand can check evacuation and all individuals can be responsible for removing themselves to places of safety outside. Additionally, nominated staff will check buildings to see that they have been evacuated.

#### 4.3 Visitors

Office staff should note all visitors on the premises, so that they may be accounted for. The sign-in book completed by the security team should be used for this purpose.

#### 4.4 Other points

Members of staff should remember to advise the office and security team if they are leaving the premises for whatever reason; this is to facilitate accounting for people in an emergency, and also to enable duties allotted to absent colleagues to be carried out by others.

Following the all clear the CIT will meet to determine the necessary actions to be taken.

## **5. Bomb Threat Evacuation**

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The threat of a bomb is to be treated according to the nature of the threat – e.g. whether the location is known or not. All threats will be treated as real and reactions will be immediate. The receiver of the threat should attempt to obtain as much information as possible about the threat. The way in which the announcement of the threat (i.e. the initiation of the emergency procedure) is made will depend on the circumstances. If it is considered that an overt announcement would increase risk, alerted people may be sent to convey the warning and to indicate the appropriate action. **It is important to note that the senior member of staff present on the scene should take charge and take decisions and actions as they see fit in the event of a bomb threat.**

5.1 If a bomb threat is announced staff / students should:

- Stay calm;
- Briefly scan the area and note and report anything suspect or out of the ordinary;
- Not touch suspect items;
- Open doors and windows if possible;
- Prepare to follow instructions.

The response to a threat – either through message or discovery – will involve either:

- Evacuation to the designated area outside of the school premises, in the case of a hazard located within the school, or;
- Proceeding to a designated internal 'safe haven'.(see appendix 5)

## 5.2 Bomb evacuation.

The procedure is the same as that for a fire evacuation, with stress placed upon readiness to hear and respond to instructions as to where to relocate. In the event that relocation is required, then the following route should be followed:

- Through the main entrance then turn left beside the sports field then almost immediately right moving along the road towards the Mercure Hotel.

Hazard outside – safe haven inside. If it is suspected that a device has been placed somewhere outside, then personnel should retire to a location providing the best protection from the blast and flying glass. The designated safe havens are:

- B1 (Assembly Hall)
- A block classrooms
- B block classrooms

These will be assigned to students, staff and visitors based on decisions made by the most senior member of staff present.

Following the all clear the CIT will meet to determine the necessary actions to be taken.

## **6. Imminent Explosion**

**It is important to note that the senior member of staff present on the scene should take charge and take decisions and actions as they see fit in the event of a possible imminent explosion.**

If it is believed that an explosion is imminent, then personnel are advised to remain where they are, rather than to move around the campus.

Response:

- Move quickly away from all windows and glass;
- Do **NOT** react to an explosion by going to look out – there may be a secondary explosion;
- Shelter away from windows and with overhead cover – e.g. under tables;
- Groups or individuals outside should go inside the nearest available location and do the same;
- Remain inside in this way until advised of the all-clear by messenger;

Following the all clear the CIT will meet to determine the necessary actions to be taken.

## **7. Earthquake**

Earthquakes will occur without warning and it is impossible to predict the magnitude and duration of any earthquake. The emphasis is therefore on a limited number of essential, fundamental principles. **It is important to note that the senior member of staff present on the scene should take charge and take decisions and actions as they see fit if an earthquake occurs.**

In the event of an earthquake please use the following procedures.

If you are indoors:

- Stay inside;
- Drop down onto your hands and knees so the earthquake doesn't knock you down

- If you are in danger from falling objects, and you can move safely, crawl for additional cover under a sturdy desk or table. If possible cover your head with one arm and with the other hold onto the table leg;
- If no sturdy shelter is nearby, crawl away from windows, cover your head and neck with your arms and crouch next to an interior wall;
- Stay away from glass, windows, outside doors and walls, and anything that could fall, such as light fixtures or furniture;
- Stay indoors until the shaking stops.

If you are outdoors:

- Stay outside;
- Drop down onto your hands and knees so the earthquake doesn't knock you down;
- If possible move away from buildings, streetlights, and wires;
- Stay out in the open until the shaking stops.

## **8. Intruder lock-in procedure**

**It is important to note that the senior member of staff present on the scene should take charge and take decisions and actions as they see fit in the event of a lock in.**

In the event that it is believed an armed intruder poses a threat, then the evacuation procedures will be inappropriate, and protection should be sought inside.

The whole school intruder alarm is activated.

In the event of an intruder being sighted or reported a message must be relayed by whatever is the quickest means to any personnel located in the school office.

Children must be advised that if they see an intruder they must immediately report this to a member of staff. Any staff member so advised, or who themselves see an intruder, should immediately instigate the sounding of the intruder alarm.

The security guards at the main vehicle entrance to the school are also able to alert the school office to activate the whole school intruder alarm.

Following the all clear the CIT will meet to determine the necessary actions to be taken.

## **9. Emergency Closing**

The Head of School is authorized to announce the closing of school if actual or potential hazards threaten the safety and well-being of students or employees. The decision to close the school shall be made by the Head of School or designee upon consultation with a representative of the Board of Directors. In the event of extended closures, such instances will have Board approval prior to implementation.

Teaching days lost due to emergency closing may be rescheduled through extended days, weekend classes, or an extended school year by order of the Board of Directors.

## Appendix 1:

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### Evacuation

#### Step 1- Alarm is sounded:

There is a fire alarm that will sound around the campus.

#### Step 2 - Exit classrooms and start evacuation:

- Early Years and Primary teachers should collect their emergency registration clipboard before leaving the classroom.
- Students line up quickly and quietly outside the classroom (no talking, single file) and prepare to exit. They should put on their footwear quickly unless the situation is clearly dangerous and there is no time to do so.
- Ideally, windows should be closed and lights and air conditioners turned off. Doors should be closed but not locked.
- Teachers lead students in a single file line to the evacuation point, with the Teaching Assistant (if there is one) following behind the class. If the class does not have a Teaching Assistant, a responsible student should be designated to be the last person in line.
- Do not wait for children who may be in the bathroom or at a water cooler etc. Children should have been previously instructed to join another class and unite with their own class once they are out on the front street.

Evacuation points for classes are now located on the front street as follows:

#### Exit gate

#### Entrance gate

TLC-Y13-N-Y12-R-Y11-Y1-Y10-Y2-Y3-Y4-Y5-Y6-Y7-Y8-Y9-ASDAN

#### Step 3 - Assembly and registration at the assembly point:

- MISY security will shut down the road as soon as an evacuation begins.
- Teachers should take the class they are teaching at the time of the evacuation to the students' designated assembly point on the front street. They should then return to their own class if they are a primary class teacher or secondary tutor.
- Primary teachers should take registration using the emergency registration clipboard from their classroom.
- Primary Teaching Assistants should remain with their class to help the class teacher,
- Secondary tutors should take registration using an emergency registration clipboard which will be given to them by the Head of Secondary.
- Secondary assistant tutor teachers should line up with their tutor class to help the tutor.
- Class teachers / tutors report missing children by holding up the red side of their clipboard, or "all present" by holding up the green side of their clipboard.
- Teachers who are not a primary class teacher, secondary tutor or assistant tutor should report to the Head of Section who may assign them to help with class registration, or other duties as appropriate.

#### **Step 4 - Building sweep:**

Designated operational staff members will sweep the campus (i.e. check all locations, toilets, library, classrooms, labs, etc.) and bring with them any students left behind and then report to the Head of School.

#### **Step 5 - “All Clear” or “Further Evacuation”:**

- The Head of Primary will account for all primary classes.
- The Head of Secondary will account for secondary classes.
- The SENCO will account for all TLC and ASDAN staff and students.
- The Business Manager will account for all office staff.
- The Head of Security will account for all security and maintenance staff, and report to the Business Manager.
- If the building sweep has revealed no evidence of danger, the Head of School (or their designated deputy) will give the “all clear” signal, after which everyone can return to the campus. In a real emergency the decision might involve moving to the designated evacuation point further away from the school.

#### **Important things to remember:**

- All staff must come out during any emergency evacuation and stay at their evacuation point until advised by the Head of School about the next step, (most likely an all clear, or perhaps to move to the designated evacuation point further away from the school).
- Ensure students exit the classroom quickly and that they put on their footwear quickly.
- Do not stop to pick up anything on the way whilst walking.
- Hold on to the handrails when walking down the stairs.
- Do not run, shout, or attempt to create panic or fear in others.
- Move quietly and remain quiet during any drill so that instructions could be heard clearly.
- Take the evacuation seriously and be alert and concentrate throughout the entire procedure.
- Line up in an orderly fashion at the correct muster point on the front street
- The use of mobile phones is not permitted during evacuations.



## Appendix 2

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### Checklists for use when notified of the death of a student or staff member

#### Critical Incident Team's checklist:

- Contact the police and/or hospital
- Verify the facts concerning the death.
- Assess the impact this death will have on the school community.
- Prepare an announcement to be read to the students/staff as appropriate. This may mean the calling of emergency meetings or assemblies.
- If necessary, arrange for a substitute to assist the student's classroom teacher/s.
- List the teachers and staff who will need extra support because of their closeness, etc. to the deceased.
- Maintain this list of 'high risk' students/staff.
- Where the death of a student occurs inform the parents
- Where the death of an expatriate member of staff occurs nominated next of kin should be informed and the embassy/consulate of the staff member consulted.
- Arrange for the provision of an emergency counselling service for staff and students as appropriate.
- Ensure the school office is briefed about handling calls and requests for information.
- Ensure the deceased is removed from mailing lists, class lists, school database etc.
- Designate a person(s) to act as a contact person to the media.
- When appropriate visit and extend condolences to the immediate family and provide appropriate representation at services.
- Direct a staff member to immediately remove the contents of the deceased student's/staff members locker.
- Archive the student's / staff member's file.
- If needed, identify a support centre area in the school.
- Designate a staff member to collect information about funeral arrangements.
- Inform students/staff regarding funeral arrangements.
- Prepare a letter to be sent home to all parents regarding the death.
- Arrange a 15 minute after-school meeting with school staff to process the day.
- Ensure the CIT meets at the end of the day to plan for the next day and review the list of 'high-risk' students/staff.
- Keep the school board informed.

#### Teacher's checklist

- Attend any emergency / after-school staff meetings.
- If needed, request a substitute teacher to assist so that the teacher can have individual time to console students, visit with the deceased student's parents, etc.
- Model the classroom discussion by sharing with students his/her feelings and reactions, or, if the teacher feels that he/she cannot lead class discussion he/she should inform the Head of School or CIT
- Keep a list of student(s) they think are 'high risk' and give names to the CIT during and at the end of the day.
- Offer colleagues, who are in need of help, any assistance he/she can give them.
- If appropriate, attend the visitation and/or funeral.

### Checklists for use in the case of serious injury or illness of a student or staff member

- Alert the healthcare manager immediately.
- Contact emergency medical services

- Apply first aid until assistance arrives
- Notify parents or carers as soon as possible.

## Appendix 3

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### Procedures following a lock-in

- Immediately following a real lock-in situation all children and staff will assemble on the basketball court. A roll call will be made to ascertain that all staff and children are accounted for. This will be overseen by a member of the CIT, The Head of School will be immediately notified of any missing persons.
- The CIT will meet with any authorities that have attended the incident to debrief and pass on the names of any missing persons.
- It is likely in the event of a serious emergency that it will be necessary either to send children home or declare school a safe haven and this will require the use of our school emergency communication system
- The CIT will establish what if any casualties have been sustained and instigate procedures as required and inform staff as necessary.
- The CIT will establish what, if any damage to property has been sustained and the extent of that damage and inform staff as necessary.

### The Head of School will:

- Brief the school office about handling calls and requests for information.
- Act as a contact person to the media or designate a person to act in that capacity.
- Keep the school board informed.

## Appendix 4

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### School Closure

**A decision to close the school can only be made by the Head of School and that decision should be immediately communicated to the Board of Directors**

If a decision is made to close the school after the commencement of the school day the following procedures will be followed:

- All staff to be informed via the school emergency communication systems of the arrangements which are being made to send children home. All advised to check the school website on a half daily basis for any updates.
- All parents are contacted to make arrangements to come and pick up their children via the school emergency contact systems. All advised to check the school website on a half daily basis for any updates.
- No child should be allowed to leave unless we are certain that parents are aware the child is leaving for home. Responsibility for monitoring this falls on the Head of Primary / Head of Secondary
- Children who are left at school must be supervised until such time as they can be collected.
- Any staff member wishing to request they be released to go home immediately can submit that request to the Head of School who will make a decision based on the needs of the school and the individual circumstances for the member of staff.

If a decision is made that the school will be unable to open to accept students following a weekend or holiday then the following procedures will be followed:

- All staff to be informed via the school emergency contact systems. All advised to check the school website on a half daily basis for any updates.
- All parents are contacted and advised of the closure via the school emergency contact systems. All advised to check the school website on a half daily basis for any updates.
- Work will be set by teachers for students to access remotely. For Primary students this will be through class Dojo and for Secondary students through Engage and SMS messaging. The Head of Section will coordinate these arrangements during the period of closure.

## Appendix 5

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### Safe haven

In certain situations when an incident occurs during the school day, the CIT may declare the school a safe haven. In such circumstances staff and children may need to stay at school beyond the normal school day and, possibly, for an extended period. Such a situation could arise in response to civil unrest, terrorist activity, severe flooding etc. In such cases the following procedures will be adopted:

- Information will be sought from the fire, police and other external authorities as to the level of threat.
- The CIT, security guards and other authorities will attempt to ensure the full perimeter of the school is secured.
- Classes will continue to operate normally as far as is possible until the end of the day.
- Staff will be informed by the school emergency communication systems that an incident has occurred/ is occurring and that the school has been designated a 'safe haven'. Staff should continue to monitor their email regularly through the day.
- Any staff member wishing to request they be released to go home immediately can submit that request to the Head of School who will make a decision based on the needs of the school and the individual circumstances for the member of staff.
- Parents, via the school emergency communication systems, will be advised that the school is being kept open as a safe haven and that they should only come and collect their children if they believe that it is safe for them to do so. This has to be the parents' decision. No children will be allowed to leave unless with their parent or a designated driver who has the specific permission of the parent.
- At the end of the normal school day children will initially stay with their class or form teacher.
- Arrangements will be made to ensure sufficient food and water is available to sustain the school population for up to 24 hours.

## **Appendix 6**

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### **Communication systems failure**

Our communication with parents and outside agencies during the school day is reliant on website, email, mobile telephone and landline communication. Should there be a simultaneous failure of all of these systems it is likely that there will be an emergency situation needing the response of either school closure or 'safe haven' procedures. We would expect that parents and drivers would arrive to pick up children randomly in such a scenario and the arrangements to allow children home would need to be made by the CIT.

## Appendix 7

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### Recommended Contents of a Basic Survival Kit

(Advice given to staff in Myanmar by the United Nations.)

Prepare a survival kit with the following items, or at least make a list and identify the items so that you will be able to assemble them in a hurry if needed:

- Portable wind-up or battery-operated radio with spare batteries.
- Torches plus spare batteries, candles and (waterproofed) matches.
- Strong shoes, a pair of leather working gloves, overalls and goggles.
- First Aid kit.
- Combination tool or pocket-knife.
- Medications, toiletry and sanitary supplies (spectacles, soap, toothpaste).
- A full change of suitable clothing per person.
- Any special needs for infants, elderly, disabled or sick family members.
- Water in sealed containers (minimum of 3 litres per person for 3 days).
- Canned and non-perishable food (sufficient for 3 days for each family member).
- Can-opener and eating utensils.
- Portable stove (gas camping stove) with spare gas.
- Blankets/sheets and sleeping mat.
- Emergency shelter materials (a tent, tarpaulin, or plastic sheet).
- Books, games, cards and small entertainment items for your children.
- Mobile phone and charger.
- Strong waterproof plastic bags, for protecting clothing and valuables.
- Masking tape (for taping up windows during cyclones and other uses).
- One strong carry bag per person to carry everything in the event of relocation or evacuation.