

1. Introduction

TopUp Learning prioritises the health, safety, and welfare of all students, staff, and stakeholders. This Critical Incident and Emergency Plan outlines a systematic response to emergencies across all teaching premises, accommodation settings, off-site activities, and temporary or seasonal centres. It ensures swift, coordinated action to minimise risk and harm in the event of an incident.

2. Scope and Applicability

This plan applies to:

- Full-time and part-time staff, including activity leaders, visiting tutors and group leaders
- All enrolled students, including short-term and long-term learners
- Contractors and volunteers working on TopUp Learning premises
- Partner organisations and host families

It is applicable in all locations and contexts in which TopUp Learning operates, including:

- Teaching sites and offices (including seasonal sites)
 - Student residences and host family accommodation
 - Transport between locations
 - Excursions, field trips, and off-site learning activities
 - Temporary or seasonal centres (e.g., summer schools)
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3. Emergency Scenarios Covered

In all cases:

- Stay calm
- Inform the management through emergency channel **+44 7456 314794 or groups**
- **Call 999** if necessary
- Take charge of the situation
- Ensure you are safe – don't put yourself at risk
- Assess the situation:
 - Decide whether there is any further danger to the people you are in charge of
 - Check that all students are accounted for
 - Identify casualties
- Safeguard uninjured members of the group
 - Move them to a safer place

- Supervise them and keep them calm and informed
- Attend any casualties
 - Identified injured and prioritise those who are unconscious first
 - Do not attempt to move the injured, apart from those with small wounds who can be moved to a safer spot
 - Perform first aid if you can all call first aiders
 - Call 999

The following scenarios are covered, with specific protocols for each:

a. Fire and Evacuation

- Immediate **activation of alarms** and evacuation
- Fire Marshals guide staff and students to pre-identified meeting points
- Attendance is taken and emergency services are contacted
- Students and staff are only allowed to re-enter when declared safe by emergency personnel

b. Medical Emergencies and Mental Health Crises

- Trained First Aiders provide assistance
- Ambulance services are contacted where appropriate
- Staff follow safeguarding procedures for mental health concerns
- Management to contact Parents or guardians within 2 hours if injury is serious

c. Accidents and Injuries

- On-the-spot first aid and incident reporting to management
- Move other students to a safe place
- Staff escort injured individuals to medical care if needed
- Parents or guardians are informed depending on the severity within 2 hours
- The site is assessed for safety risks following the incident

d. Missing or Absconded Students

- Immediate search of the building and surroundings
- Attendance records, sign-in sheets, and CCTV (if available) reviewed
- Accommodation and group leaders contacted
- Police informed if the student is not found within 30 minutes
- Parents/guardians contacted in an agreed and appropriate time

e. Natural Disasters and Severe Weather

- Site-specific action plans (e.g., for floods or storms)
- Students moved to designated safe areas indoors
- Communication with emergency services as needed
- Parent/guardian updates provided in an agreed and appropriate time

f. Pandemic or Infectious Disease Outbreak

- Isolation of affected individuals
- Health authority advice followed
- Deep cleaning protocols activated
- Contingency learning plans (e.g., online learning) may be implemented

g. Utility Failures (Power, Gas, Water)

- Site evacuation if necessary
- Notification to service providers and emergency repair teams
- Relocation of students and continuation of lessons at an alternate site if possible
- Stakeholders informed about disruption and timelines

h. Cybersecurity or Data Breach

- Systems are immediately taken offline
- IT support investigates and patches vulnerabilities
- The data protection officer leads reporting and mitigation
- Affected individuals are notified in accordance with GDPR

i. Accommodation-Related Emergencies

- Host families or residence providers alert emergency staff
- Students are moved to safe alternative housing if required
- Group leaders are notified
- Parents/guardians are notified if necessary
- Property inspections and coordination with accommodation partners follow

j. Terrorist Attack or Security Threat

In the event of a suspected or confirmed terrorist incident (e.g., bombing, armed assailant, suspicious package, or local attack):

- Staff immediately alert emergency services (999 – Police)
- All staff are informed through the internal group chat
- Excursions and external activities are halted or cancelled
- All staff and students follow the **lockdown procedure** if threat is on or near the premises
- Group leaders, parents, and guardians are notified as soon as it is safe to do so
- Counselling and follow-up support are arranged post-incident

k. Lockdown Plan

Lockdown is used when it is safer to remain indoors than to evacuate — for example, during a terrorist attack or civil unrest.

Lockdown Procedure:

1. **Initiate Alert:** Lockdown signal issued via Staff Group Chat system
2. **Secure Premises:**
 - External doors locked
 - Internal doors closed if necessary
 - Lights switched off
 - Blinds and curtains drawn
3. **Shelter in Place:**
 - Students and staff stay quiet and hidden from view
 - Devices put on silent
 - No one allowed to leave rooms
 - No one allowed to stand near windows
4. **Communication Maintained:**
 - Silent apps or messaging platforms used
 - Mobile phones used only when authorised
 - Updates relayed by designated staff members – staff in charge of the centre
5. **All-Clear Signal:**
 - Only given by staff in charge of the centre or emergency services
 - Evacuation only occurs if the situation changes and it is safe to do so

Post-Lockdown Actions:

- Attendance taken to confirm everyone is safe
- Emergency medical attention given if required
- Parents and guardians contacted
- Debriefing sessions held for staff and students
- Formal incident report completed and submitted

Lockdown Drills: (Stay Safe Drill)

- This is very sensitive for some short term international students. Therefore we test it once a year to keep the staff trained. We call it Stay Safe Drill to not to scare students.
- Conducted once a year in each centre
- Staff are trained to lead procedures calmly and efficiently
- Students are briefed using age-appropriate language
- Lessons from drills are documented and used to improve readiness

4. Procedures for Locating and Communicating with Students

During an emergency, the safety and whereabouts of all students are a priority.

Locating Students:

- Class registers and attendance logs are maintained daily and accessible digitally
- Accommodation records are updated
- For excursions, group leaders carry lists of all participants

Communication:

- Each staff member has access to a centralised emergency contact list, including student numbers, group leaders, next of kin, and agents
- Communication methods include:
 - SMS alerts via a bulk messaging service
 - WhatsApp groups for real-time updates
 - Email notifications to parents, guardians, and agents
 - Direct phone calls where necessary
- Designated staff are trained to handle media or external enquiries.
- No other staff are allowed to discuss any matter with media as parents need to be informed first.
- A communication log is maintained for all outgoing/incoming emergency communications

Emergency Hotlines:

- A 24/7 emergency contact number is provided to all students and stakeholders
- **+44 7456 314794**
- Staff carry mobile phones on trips

5. Staff and Student Awareness

Staff Induction and Training:

- All new staff undergo mandatory training on health and safety, safeguarding, and emergency response
- Refresher sessions are held every six months, with specific drills conducted every 6 months (e.g., fire drills, missing person simulations)
- Staff are issued with printed emergency protocols and flowcharts

Student Briefings:

- Orientation sessions include:
 - Fire safety and evacuation routes
 - Whom to contact in an emergency
 - Local emergency services (police, ambulance, fire)
- International students receive culturally-sensitive briefings
- Information posters and contact details are displayed in all classrooms, halls, and accommodation

6. Stakeholder Collaboration

TopUp Learning works in collaboration with:

- Group leaders and international agents
- Host families and accommodation agencies
- Transport providers
- Venue and excursion partners
- Local emergency services and the local authority

Key Measures:

- Pre-arrival information is shared with agents and group leaders
 - Host families and accommodation providers are briefed on procedures and emergency expectations
 - Third-party providers (e.g., bus companies, museums) are vetted and required to share their own risk assessments
 - Clear responsibility matrices are agreed in advance of events and excursions
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7. Emergency Plans for Seasonal Centres

TopUp Learning adapts the emergency procedures of rented or temporary premises to suit its unique operational and safeguarding needs.

Adaptation Process:

- A pre-season risk assessment is conducted at each site
- Emergency exits, meeting points, and equipment (e.g., fire extinguishers, defibrillators) are inspected
- Staff are trained on the host organisation's procedures and TopUp Learning's additions
- Joint drills may be conducted to ensure preparedness

Communication with Hosts:

- A designated liaison officer is appointed for each seasonal site
 - Contact details for both parties are exchanged and posted at the site
 - Incident reporting protocols are agreed in advance
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8. Communication and Safety Protocols

On-Site Emergencies:

- The Site Manager or most senior staff member coordinates the initial response
- First Aiders provide immediate care
- Emergency services are contacted as required
- Evacuation or lockdown procedures are followed depending on the scenario
- A post-incident report is completed and submitted to the Senior Management Team

Off-Site Emergencies:

- Group leaders are trained to take immediate action (e.g., first aid, calling emergency services)
- The central office is contacted immediately using the emergency line
- Parents/guardians and agents are informed of the situation and actions taken
- Incident logs are completed upon return

Post-Incident Support:

- Psychological support or counselling services may be offered to students or staff
 - A formal review is carried out and improvements implemented where necessary
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9. Examples of Good Practice

Sensitive Briefings for Students:

- Delivered in simple, clear language, often using visuals or translated materials
- Reinforced throughout the course and reviewed when risk levels change (e.g., during a heatwave)

Group Leader Training:

- Comprehensive emergency briefing packs provided
 - Training includes:
 - Identifying early warning signs (e.g., student distress)
 - Using emergency contacts and procedures
 - Coordinating with TopUp Learning staff during excursions
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10. Plan Review and Continuous Improvement

- This plan is reviewed at least annually or after any incident
- Feedback is collected via incident debriefs, staff feedback, and student surveys
- Changes are implemented promptly, and all stakeholders are updated

Key Review Metrics:

- Response time
- Communication effectiveness
- Accuracy of student location data
- Stakeholder feedback
- Lessons learned from real incidents or near misses