 **Incident Response Checklist**

**Considerations for school and college leaders in the event of a terrorist incident that impacts upon a school or college:**

This checklist signposts resources and highlights some areas for consideration in the immediate aftermath of a terrorist incident that affects a school or college. This could be students, staff members or the wider community directly affected by an incident; not necessarily an incident that takes place on school/college premises.

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| **Timings – 0 to 48 hours** | **Context** | **Considerations** |
| **Immediate need to clarify what has happened and what impact there is upon the school or college (students and staff)** | In the unlikely event of a terror-related incident that impacts a school or college, senior management will quickly need to clarify how the school/college has been affected and their immediate response to this. Social media will be rife with rumours, press reporting will be varied, and students will have their own sources of information. Establishing the truth is key to being able to correctly and sensitively communicate this with staff, students and the wider community | Establishing relationships with key partners in the local authority, police and DfE contacts[[1]](#endnote-1) in the region will enable quick confirmation of what has happened or dispel rumours. **Add details for your school/college below**:  Local police contact:…………………………………………………  Local authority emergency contact:…………………………  Local authority Prevent lead:…………………………………..  HE/FE Coordinator:…………………………………………………..  Counter-Terrorism Security Advisor:…………………………  **Consider immediate communications:** Central messaging to students and parents; updates on school/college websites and portals, mass student text groups, local authority websites. Consider whether there are any automatic processes (for example automated text messages for lateness) that should be stopped as they might cause distress to families |
| **Press intrusion** | In the event of a major incident, schools/colleges may receive calls and visits from the press who might use intrusive techniques to gain information about victims | Advice and guidance for handling the press can be found in the Gov.UK [Handling media attention after a major incident](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/handling-media-attention/handling-media-attention-after-a-major-incident) webpages and on the [Victims of Terror](https://victimsofterrorism.campaign.gov.uk/)ism website  It is likely that the switchboard will receive an elevated number of calls following an incident. Management teams could consider adding a dedicated contact number or e-mail address to the school/college website if appropriate. Local authorities should be able to advise on whether they have a press liaison officer who can field any calls or provide support on handling press. In the event of heightened press intrusion, school/college leaders might consider sharing a keyword with parents to quote upon contacting the school or college |
| **Mental Health Support** | NHS trauma guidelines state that active monitoring should take place during the first month, or within a month, of a traumatic event. For children and young people aged under 18 who present with trauma symptoms e.g. nightmares and/or high level of anxiety referral should be made to mental health services. In the immediate aftermath of a traumatic incident, school/college leaders might be approached by providers of mental health support and be unsure whether to accept. The NHS gives the following advice:  *When to seek medical advice: It's normal to experience* *upsetting and confusing thoughts after a traumatic event, but most people improve naturally over a few weeks. You should see a GP if you or your child are still having problems about 4 weeks after the traumatic experience, or if the symptoms are particularly troublesome. If necessary, your GP can refer you to mental health specialists for further assessment and treatment* | [The Victims of Terror](https://victimsofterrorism.campaign.gov.uk/)ism webpage provides advice on obtaining mental health support for those affected by acts of terrorism  Guidance for dealing with trauma can be found in the NHS [Coping with stress following a major incident](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/645123/NHS_Trauma_Leaflet.pdf) leaflet. |
| **Consideration for members of communities linked to perpetrators** | Terror attacks can be particularly disturbing for those members of communities linked to the perpetrators of the attacks. While school/college leaders might not wish to draw attention to any potential divisions, members of these communities might be affected in different ways | The Department for Education's [Educate Against Hate](https://educateagainsthate.com/) website gives teachers, parents and school leaders practical advice and information on protecting children from extremism and radicalisation |
| **Exam Considerations** | When a student is unable to sit their examinations due to circumstances beyond their control, or is disadvantaged during their examinations, special consideration may be applied for | The two types of special consideration: the application of a tariff where a student is present for an examination but disadvantaged; or the awarding of an enhanced grade where a student is absent for an examination due to circumstances beyond their control, are detailed in [the JCQ publication: A guide to the special consideration process](https://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/access-arrangements-and-special-consideration). |
| **Timings: 2 to 7 days** | **Context** | **Considerations** |
| **Financial support and advice** | Any immediate or longer-term requests for financial support following an attack will depend on the nature of the support required and the type of school or college affected. Key links into local authorities and DfE regional co-ordinators will assist school/college leaders in contacting the relevant parties to expedite any urgent requests  School/college leaders might also receive charitable donations from those willing to help those impacted by a terror attack | The [UK Solidarity Fund](https://donate.redcross.org.uk/appeal/uk-solidarity-fund) was established by the British Red Cross to help people affected by terror attacks in the UK following the attacks of 2017. School/college leaders might consider communicating details of the UK Solidarity Fund to anyone who enquires about donating either directly or on the school/college website |
| **Timings: Medium to longer term** | **Context** | **Considerations** |
| **Mental Health Support** | NHS trauma guidelines state that active monitoring should take place during the first month, or within a month, of a traumatic event. For children and young people aged under 18 who present with trauma symptoms e.g. nightmares and/or high level of anxiety referral should be made to mental health services. School and college leaders will need to consider the medium to longer term impact of trauma on their students and continuity of care throughout their career.  Particular thought should be given to transition points e.g. changing year group/school/college; anniversaries and any associated legal proceedings | [The Journey](https://thejourneyofrecovery.co.uk/) [of Recovery](https://thejourneyofrecovery.co.uk/) animation was developed by the We Love Manchester Emergency Fund in collaboration with the NHS’ Manchester Resilience Hub and is based on the experience of young people affected by the Manchester Arena terror attacks. It covers detail on triggers such as fire drills and the potential impact on the mental health of survivors  School and college leaders should also consider the effect on the wider school/college community of funerals, memorials, anniversaries and the likelihood of press intrusion at these events |
| **HR Support for affected members of staff** | This could be staff members physically injured, deceased, witness to an incident or suffering from mental health issues following an incident | School/college leaders may have existing support mechanisms for staff. This may include signposting to internal policies or benefits packages, assistance from human resources, and trade union benefits |

1. Prevent Education Officers (PEOs) are the point of contact for the Department for Education and Home Office on Prevent delivery in education settings. PEOs work to local authority Prevent Leads.

   Regional Further Education (FE)/ Higher Education (HE) Co-ordinators provide FE and HE providers with support to build resilience against the dangers of radicalisation. [↑](#endnote-ref-1)