

Handsworth Grange Community Sports College

Bomb Threat Policy and Response Procedure



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Governor Committee: Finance

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INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this document is to provide guidance on how to deal with Telephone Bomb Threat Calls, Suspect Packages and 'White Powder' incidents.

We will test these plans regularly, and evaluate the response.

Plan for

- Evacuation
- Search
- Recovery

TELEPHONE BOMB THREAT CALL

Should you receive a bomb threat call:

1. Listen....

- Stay calm and listen carefully to what you are being told, don't interrupt, Pay attention to the words used.
- Listen for any accent in the voice (real or faked).
- Listen for any background noises.
- Think – do they sound like children or hoaxers?
- Think – do they sound intoxicated?
- Make a note if any Password or Code word given.

2. Ask...

- Where has the bomb been put?
- What time is it due to go off?
- What does it look like?
- Why are they doing this?
- **DO NOT ASK THE CALLER FOR A CODEWORD IF ONE IS NOT GIVEN.**

3. What to do next...

- It is good working practice for members of staff who deal with external telephone calls to have a knowledge and availability of the 'Bomb Threat' checklist. (see appendix 1)
- Dial 1471 (if facility available and no automatic number display) to see if you can get their number – then take the receiver off the telephone so that it cannot be used further until the Police have completed their enquiries.
- The recipient of the call should immediately inform the Head teacher. The Head teacher should assess the threat (if the caller was a giggling child, you may assume it is a hoax and adopt the 'do nothing' approach. If there is the slightest doubt you should consider your policy and procedures on search and evacuation)
- Making telephone Bomb Calls is a criminal offence. The Police must be notified of the circumstances.

- In the event of a suspicious device being located on or near the premises personnel **MUST NOT** use a mobile phone or any form of radio communication to transmit any information.

Personal Safety:

- **Communications:** before transmitting by radio or mobile phone move away:
 - Hand held radio - 15 metres
 - Radio fitted in vehicles - 50 metres
 - Mobile phones switch off or retreat 15 metres
 - Do not take photographs in particular by means of a mobile phone

Please be aware, all the above points could activate a real device when used.

IN THE EVENT OF A SUSPICIOUS ITEM BEING FOUND THE BUILDING WILL BE EVACUATED IMMEDIATELY

BOMB THREAT EVACUATION PROTOCOL

The purpose of evacuation is to move people from an area where they might be at risk to a place of lesser risk. The biggest dilemma is how to judge where might constitute a place of safety.

The decision to evacuate will normally be taken by the Headteacher but the Police will be ready to advise.

In exceptional circumstances, when the Police have received specific information, they may themselves order an evacuation, if necessary, overruling Headteacher.

Evacuation may need to take place in response to:

- A threat call directly to the site venue;
- A threat call received elsewhere and notified to site venue by the police;
- Discovery of a suspicious package in the building;
- Discovery of a suspicious item or vehicle outside site venue building; or
- Discovery of an external device, notified to you by the police.

The Evacuation Plan

The evacuation plan must involve:

- Full evacuation outside the building; or
- Evacuation of part of the building if the device is small and thought to be one-off confined to one location;
- Evacuation of all staff and pupils
- Full evacuation to an internal safe area.

Re-occupancy

Must always be discussed with the police and as necessary the other emergency services for approval and agreement.

Rehearsals

Evacuation procedure must be rehearsed at regular intervals as per our fire drills .

SUSPICIOUS PACKAGES / PARCELS / LETTERS

Preparing for the Possibility

Based on two simple features that the mail will already have undergone some rough handling, by the postal service, uncertainty over exact delivery times, the weight and complexity of reliable timing devices, all makes it very unlikely that a timer will trigger the device. Handling delivered mail is therefore not generally dangerous itself.

Possible indicators of that a delivered item may be of concern

Many of these indicators are quite general. One alone will not necessarily constitute a cause for concern. Their individual relevance will vary with context, e.g. depending on the nature of the organization's business, and in light of the current threat and Response Level. Any suspicions should be considered in combination with a thorough risk assessment.

General indicators

General indicators that a delivered item may be of concern include:

- unexpected item, especially if hand delivered;
- a padded envelope ('Jiffy Bag') or other bulky package;
- additional inner envelope or other contents that may be difficult to remove;
- labeling or excessive sealing that encourages opening at a particular end or in a particular way;
- oddly shaped or lopsided;
- envelope flap stuck down completely (normally gummed envelope flaps leave slight gaps at edges);
- marked 'to be opened only by...' 'personal' or 'confidential';
- item addressed to the organization or a title (rather than a specific individual);
- unexpected or unusual origin (postmark and/or return address);
- no return address or return address that cannot be verified;

- poorly or inaccurately addressed;
- address printed unevenly or unusually;
- unfamiliar writing or unusual style;
- unusual postmark or no postmark;
- more stamps than needed for size or weight of package;
- greasy or oily stains emanating from package;
- odours emanating from package.

Explosive or incendiary indicators

Additional explosive or incendiary indicators include:

- unusually heavy or uneven weight distribution;
- small hole(s) in envelope or wrapping.

"White powder" indicators

Additional chemical, biological or radiological (CBR) indicators include:

- powders or liquids emanating from package;
- wrapping stained by liquid leakage;
- unexpected items or materials found in package on opening or X-raying (loose or in a container) such as powdered, crystalline or granular solids; liquids; sticky substances or residues;
- unexpected odours observed on opening;
- sudden onset of illness or irritation of skin, eyes or nose.

extract from PAS 97

WHITE POWDER INCIDENTS

Firstly, it is important to remember that incidents involving chemical or biological attacks have been extremely rare. Hoax calls are a possibility. Most emergency services are highly skilled in the event of an incident.

Considerations for staff in the event of a suspicious package as described being found.

- Reassure those directly involved and move if possible to a nearby safe location thereby minimising spread – lookout for symptoms. (**LOOKOUT:** for sudden onset of illness or irritation of skin, eyes or nose).
- Allow those involved to remove any powder contamination from body /clothing by wiping with a dry paper towel or similar item. For the purposes of a police investigation there will be sufficient amount of white powder or substance in or around the package for evidential purposes. Reassure and monitor the person(s) involved for health & safety reasons.
- If available, seal the package in a plastic container (Tupperware type containers are ideal), and secure and isolate in a room.
- Close down air conditioning systems to minimise spread.
- Use latex gloves / face mask
- Look out for unusual smells, e.g. garlicky, fishy, fruity, mothballs, peppery, meaty, and rotten. If you detect a smell, do not go on sniffing / touching / licking it.

APPENDIX 1 – BOMB THREAT CHECKLIST

BOMB THREAT CHECKLIST

Bomb threat checklist

This checklist is designed to help staff to deal with a telephoned bomb threat effectively and to record the necessary information.

Actions to be taken on receipt of a bomb threat:

- Switch on recorder/voicemail (if connected)
- Tell the caller which town/district you are answering from
- Record the exact wording of the threat:

Ask the following questions:

- Where is the bomb right now?
- When is it going to explode?
- What does it look like?
- What kind of bomb is it?
- What will cause it to explode?
- Did you place the bomb?
- Why?
- What is your name?
- What is your address?
- What is your telephone number?

Record time call completed:

- Where automatic number reveal equipment is available, record number shown:
- Inform the Security Co-ordinator of name and telephone number of the person informed:
- Contact the police on 999. Time informed:

The following part should be completed once the caller has hung up and the Security Co-ordinator and the police have been informed.

- Time and date of call:
- Length of call:
- Number at which the call was received (i.e. your extension number):

About the caller

- Sex of caller:
- Age:
- Nationality:

✓ Tick where appropriate

Language

- Well spoken
- Irrational
- Taped message
- Offensive
- Incoherent
- Message read by threat-maker

Caller's voice

- Calm
- Crying
- Clearing throat
- Angry
- Nasal
- Slurred
- Excited
- Stutter
- Disguised
- Slow
- Lisp
- Accent

Type of accent

- Rapid
- Deep
- Hoarse
- Laughter
- Familiar

If so, whose voice did it sound like?

Background sounds

- Street noises
- House noises
- Animal noises
- Crockery
- Motor
- Clear
- Voice
- Static
- PA system
- Booth
- Music
- Factory machinery
- Office machinery
- Other (specify)

Other remarks

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Print name: _____

Remember: the more information you get, the easier it will be to decide if the call is genuine.

Immediately inform your Headteacher

It is important to write down as much as you can remember. You are the only link between the caller and those assessing the call.

1. Even the slightest change can affect the meaning of the message. Write it down as accurately as you can, BUT if you realise you have made a mistake, do not be afraid to say so. Correct wording can make a difference. Especially note any inconsistencies if the message is repeated.
2. Try to find out exactly where a device is. Any ambiguity could mean persons being evacuated towards the device instead of away from it.
3. Time is an important factor. How long do we have to assess, decide and take action?
4. A good description may help a device to be identified more quickly.
5. It will help bomb disposal officers decide the best way to deal with a device if you can tell them what sort it is. This can also be important later, when trying to trace the persons who planted the device.
6. If we know whom the caller represents, we will know what code words to look for in the message. **DO NOT ASK FOR A CODE WORD** – only record one if provide voluntarily.
7. Knowing the leader of a cause is important, especially if the faction is a breakaway group.
8. The name of the group/faction, or the code word will help decide if the call is genuine or otherwise.
9. The address given could also give clues as to the real identity of the caller/group.
10. The precise time of the call is very important. Assessors need this as a base time to work from.
11. Accurate information about the caller may help later identification.
12. Every inflection could be important – there is a difference between a prepared message and a spontaneous one.
13. Information about the telephone, line and quality of call is of use to assessors

14. Background noises can give clues as to where the call is coming from
15. It is vital to note who took the call and how to contact you in case investigators need to speak to you later.
16. The number, which was called, is also important, especially if it is an extension number or an ex-directory line.



Approved by

Governor: **Date:**

Signature: