



## Bomb Threat Policy

Reviewed by Trustees:

April 2021

Signed on behalf of Trustees:

Gareth Logan

Review frequency: 3 years

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## **Overview and Rationale**

This document outlines procedures to be followed when dealing with bomb threats. Threats include:

- Suspicious devices/packages
- Bomb threat warnings – made by telephone, email or any other means of communication

This guidance aims to:

- Save lives and minimise injuries
- Protect Trust property from damage
- Preserve operational functions of the Trust.

## **Links to Other Documents**

This should be read in conjunction with individual school Fire Evacuation and Invacuation procedures

## **Responsibilities**

### **Head of School**

The Head of School has overall responsibility for managing bomb threats. They should:

- Ensure key staff and other senior leaders are familiar with this policy so that they can act appropriately in the event of a threat, including when they are absent from the site.
- Oversee the immediate reporting of the threat to the police, which can be delegated to another member of staff.
- Oversee the school response to the threat

### **Staff**

All staff should:

- Actively engage in any training or information provided by the school/Trust.
- Immediately follow any instructions given by senior leaders/other appointed staff in the event of a bomb threat
- Immediately report people/persons acting in a suspicious manner or any suspicious package/device
- Employ good 'housekeeping' practices so that suspicious packages may be more easily identified.

## Immediate Actions on Receiving a Threat

All threats should be taken seriously, until officially confirmed to the contrary. Schools must make an emergency call (999) to the police in **all** cases, making it clear that a bomb threat has been received. The person who finds the suspect device or receives the threat should be available for interview by the police or other authorities.

## Responses to a Bomb Threat

There are four responses that can be made to a threat, which will be taken following advice from police/emergency services:

- **Do Nothing:** This may be appropriate in cases where there is strong evidence that the threat is malicious or a prank, such as a call from an intoxicated person or child.
- **Search and Evacuate if Necessary:** This option is appropriate when the assessment of the threat level is low.
- **Search and Partial Evacuation:** Normally employed for moderate threats where there is no reason to believe an explosion is imminent, the suspected device is small, or part of the site is deemed to be a safe distance away from the threat.
- **Immediate Evacuation:** This is appropriate for high risks where there is a possibility of an imminent explosion. The urgency of the situation may necessitate the Head of School making this decision without first gaining advice from police/emergency services, such as when there is a credible warning of an imminent explosion.

## Telephone Warnings

Bomb threats are normally made via school reception, but may be relayed directly through a member of staff. In all cases the person receiving the threat should:

- Remain calm
- Record the call where possible
- Obtain as much information as you possible (using Appendix 1 as guidance where relevant)
- Make a note of the caller's phone number where displayed or available through calling 1471
- Immediately inform the Head of School (or most senior person in their absence)

## Email or Social Media Warnings

If a threat is received by email or social media:

- Do not reply to, forward or delete the message
- Make a note of the email address (email) what application has been used (social media), username/ID
- Preserve all web log files to assist police investigations

## Searching for Devices

The police do not always evacuate premises, and may advise that a search is made to confirm the existence of a device.

Devices are normally placed in easily accessible areas, and searches should look to identify items that should not be there, can't be accounted for, or appear out of place.

## **Search Protocols**

Staff searching for devices should adhere to the following protocols:

- 1) Stand still at the entrance/threshold of a room/area, looking round to identify signs of a device. These include small (LED) light sources, ticking or whirring noises.
- 2) Make a first search around the **sides of the room/area**, checking walls from top to bottom and the floor area close to the walls. This includes checks behind curtains, pelmets, on and around furniture or similar. The search should start and finish at the entrance to the room/area.
- 3) Make a second search around the **main floor area**. Furniture should NOT be moved but drawers should be opened and gaps in and under furniture should be explored. If the floor covering shows recent evidence of disturbance, then this must be reported.
- 4) Look at the **ceiling area**, starting in one corner and then systematically scan the whole area.

After the search has been completed, the findings should be immediately reported to the Head of School/senior leader in charge in their absence.

## Actions if a Suspicious Package/Device is Discovered

- Immediately stop any radio/telephone transmissions within 50 metres of the suspect package. Mobile phones should be removed from the area but **must not** be turned off in the vicinity of the package
- Do not touch or move the suspected device
- Where possible, leave something nearby to mark the location of the device
- Make written notes and a sketch plan of the device's location
- Where directed, set up a cordon of staff around the suspected area ensuring this is not within direct line of a potential explosion
- The person finding the device should remain accessible so they can brief police/emergency services
- Where there is reasonable doubt whether the package is a bomb, make enquiries to establish ownership in order to offer further clarification. This should be a secondary action which isn't taken in preference to the earlier steps.

## Suspicious Letters/Parcels

The 7s' can be used to help identify suspicious letters or parcels:

**SIZE:** Is the letter/parcel big enough to house a device? Does the package seem heavy for its size?

**SENDER:** Do you recognise who sent it from the postmark, label or typeface? Do they match and can you check with the recipient? Has it been hand-delivered or from an unknown source or unusual location? Does it have poor or illegible handwriting?

**SHAPE:** Does it have an unusual shape or weight distribution?

**STAMPS:** Are there no stamps on the parcel, or is it over stamped? Is the postmark blurred, smudged or missing all together?

**SEAL:** Has the letter/parcel been sealed more securely or excessively wrapped to ensure contents don't fall out? Is there any wiring or tin foil visible inside packages where open/partially open?

**STAIN:** Are there any oily stains/grease marks visible on the envelope or oily fingerprints on the outside? (Some explosives weep/sweat small amounts of liquid that produce a stain).

**SMELL:** A strange smell such as almonds or marzipan should therefore be treated with suspicion. An overpowering fragrance such as perfume, could be used to cover up or disguise other smells.

## **Evacuation**

Evacuation procedures and assembly points should be the same as followed during Fire Evacuation. This may change if assembly points are deemed to be too close to the perceived threat. Wherever possible, the school should consult with and follow advice from the police/emergency services on safe evacuation locations and distances.

Bags and personal belongings should ideally be taken where immediately at hand, so as to facilitate any searches for devices

## **Decision to Re-Occupy**

The decision to re-occupy should be made by the Head of School/senior leader deputising in their absence, after advice from police/emergency services.

Staff returning to buildings should check their work areas to ensure that there are no further suspicious packages/devices. Anything suspicious should immediately be reported to police/emergency services and Head of School.

**Appendix One: Carlton Academy Trust Bomb Threat Guidance**

- **Remain calm and promote conversation with the caller**
- **Record caller's number and record the call (if possible)**

|                                       |
|---------------------------------------|
| <b><u>Exact Wording of Threat</u></b> |
|---------------------------------------|

**Questions to Ask Caller**

**Exact Time of Call:**

| Question  | Answer |
|---|--------|
| What is your name?<br>Telephone Number?<br>Address? |        |
| Exact location of bomb?                             |        |
| When is it going to explode?                        |        |
| What does it look like?                             |        |
| What does it Contain?                               |        |
| How will it be Detonated?                           |        |
| Who placed the bomb and why?                        |        |

## Appendix Two: Bomb Threat Post-Call Record

|  |  |
|--|--|
| <b>Date, Time and Duration of Call</b>   |  |
| <b>Telephone Number</b>  |  |
| <b>Caller Details:</b><br><b>Male/Female/Accent/Age</b>                                  |  |
| <b>Voice:</b><br><b>Calm/angry/slurred/lisp/stutter</b>                                  |  |
| <b>Threat Language: Well-spoken/irrational/recorded message/foul language/incoherent</b> |  |
| <b>Background Noise:</b><br><b>vehicles/animals/house/music/etc</b>                      |  |
| <b>Additional Comments</b>   |  |

**Note: to be completed following notification to Head of School and 999 call**