

Newton International Academy — Smash

Critical incident policy with lockdown addendum

Aligned to: the Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MoEHE) and the State of Qatar Ministry of Interior General Directorate of Civil Defence (QCD) procedures

1) Policy statement

NIA Smash is committed to safeguarding students, staff, visitors, and contractors by preventing, preparing for, responding to, and recovering from critical incidents. This policy aligns with MoEHE crisis and emergency guidance and QCD fire and life safety requirements. It establishes clear roles, communication protocols, decision authority, and drill routines for evacuation, lockdown, shelter in place, and controlled relocation.

2) Scope

Applies to all NIA Smash sites, off-site activities (including trips, fixtures, and exams at alternative venues), school transport, and any time the school is operating an activity under its duty of care.

3) Definitions

Critical incident: Any sudden or escalating event that overwhelms normal operations and presents a risk to life, safety, or the school's functioning.

Evacuation: Leaving a building or area to an external assembly point.

Lockdown (invacuation): Securing people inside rooms or areas due to an immediate threat internal or nearby.

Shelter in place: Staying indoors, sealing rooms, and limiting air exchange due to hazards outside (for example, smoke, gas, sandstorm).

Controlled relocation: Moving to a pre-identified alternate site if the campus cannot be re-occupied safely.

4) Legal and standards alignment

- MoEHE crisis and emergency procedural expectations for private schools.
- QCD (General Directorate of Civil Defence) technical and operational requirements, and local adoption of NFPA life-safety principles for egress, alarms, and drills.
- Qatar Police, Ambulance, and Fire emergency services coordination.

5) Objectives

1. Protect life and reduce harm.
2. Comply with national requirements (MoEHE and QCD) and good international practice.
3. Ensure fast, accurate communication (Arabic and English).
4. Restore safe operations and wellbeing quickly.
5. Record, review, and learn from all incidents and exercises.

6) Roles and responsibilities

6.1 Incident command structure (ICS)

- **Principal (incident director):** Overall decision authority; activates or stands down; approves messages; liaises with MoEHE and MOI/QCD; media spokesperson.
- **Senior management team (SMT):** Deputise incident director; coordinate sections; maintain command continuity.
- **Critical incident manager (CIM):** Runs the incident room; maintains the incident log; manages information flow.
- **Operations lead (facilities/QHSE):** Site safety, utilities isolation, alarms, access control, cordons, and liaison with first responders.
- **Safeguarding and student support lead:** Student accounting, reunification, triage of vulnerable learners (SEND, EAL, EYFS), and psychosocial support.
- **Medical/first aid lead:** Triage, first aid posts, ambulance liaison, casualty tracking.
- **Communications lead:** Internal PA, two-way radios; SMS, email, ClassDojo; social media hold; Arabic and English templates; parent hotline.
- **Data and IT lead:** MIS access for roll calls, backups, printing lists; ensures power/UPS for essential systems.

- **Loggist:** Dedicated note-taker for time-stamped decisions, actions, and requests.
- **Security/reception:** Visitor control, CCTV bookmarking, gate management, and emergency services access.

6.2 All staff

Know alarm signals, nearest exits or safe rooms, student accounting procedures, and how to secure a space. Carry class lists or have MIS access.

6.3 Cover staff, contractors, and visitors

Must receive a concise safety briefing and wear visible ID. Reception maintains a real-time register.

7) Prevention and preparedness

- Annual risk assessment and campus risk register (reviewed termly).
- Training and drills: Induction, annual refreshers, and regular exercises in evacuation, lockdown, and shelter in place. Include scenario-based table-tops for SMT.
- Plans and maps: Laminated site maps (Arabic and English) with exits, assembly points, fire-fighting equipment, shut-offs, and safe rooms. Copies in the incident room, security, and grab bags.
- Grab bags at reception and key blocks: hi-viz vests, torches, first aid, loudhailer, printed rolls, pencils, door wedges, signage, spare radio, USB with plans, and emergency cards.
- Systems: Maintain fire detection, alarms, emergency lighting, PA, CCTV, access control, and radios; test on a recorded schedule in line with QCD requirements.
- Welfare: Trained first-aiders per block and per floor; trauma kits in strategic points.
- Information: Multilingual signage; parent communication templates (English and Arabic).
- Coordination: Annual liaison meeting and at least one joint exercise invitation with local QCD, Police, and EMS where feasible.

8) Activation and severity levels

- **Level 1 – Minor:** Managed by site team; limited disruption (for example, small leak).

- **Level 2 – Significant:** Partial campus impact; potential evacuation or lockdown of areas.
- **Level 3 – Major:** Whole-school impact; life risk; immediate emergency services involvement.

Authority to activate: Principal or SMT duty lead can order evacuation, lockdown, or shelter in place immediately when indicators are present. Retrospective confirmation to follow.

9) Response procedures (all modes)

1. Raise alarm: Use fire alarm, PA, or radio as appropriate; state clear plain-language command and location.
2. Call emergency services: Provide school name, GPS or area, gate to use, hazard, casualties, and on-scene contact.
3. Account for people: Class registers or MIS; report missing or extra persons to incident room.
4. Triage and first aid: Deploy first-aiders and medical lead; request ambulance if needed.
5. Secure utilities: Operations to isolate power, gas, or water if directed and safe.
6. Communicate: Internal updates every 3–5 minutes when dynamic; external updates to parents when stable and approved.
7. Liaise with QCD, Police, and EMS: Provide maps, keys, and a single on-scene contact.

10) Evacuation

- **Signal:** Continuous fire alarm or PA announcement.
- **Action:** Leave belongings, close doors, follow primary or secondary exit routes to assembly points. Do not re-enter until authorised by QCD or incident director.
- **Roll call:** Tutors or teachers complete headcount; year leads collate to incident room.

- **Special groups:** EYFS, SEND, visitors, contractors, prayer rooms, labs, and PE areas have assigned escorts and evacuation aids.
- **Transport:** Buses follow the transport emergency SOP (safe parking loop, remain on buses unless directed, driver roll call).

11) Shelter in place (environmental hazard)

- **Triggers:** External smoke, gas, dust or sandstorm, police advisory to stay indoors.
- **Action:** Move to indoor rooms; shut doors and windows; set HVAC to recirculation if possible; use “Shelter” signage; avoid ground-floor windward rooms.
- **All-clear:** Via PA from incident director after official confirmation.

12) Communications and parent engagement

- **Channels:** SMS, email, ClassDojo, website banner; Arabic and English.
- **Principles:** Fast, factual, calm; never speculate.
- **Parent arrival:** During lockdown, gates remain closed; parents are directed not to come to school until the all-clear.
- **Media:** Principal is the sole spokesperson; social media posts are suspended until approved.

13) Student reunification and early dismissal

- Controlled release points and ID checks.
- One-way flow through gates; barcode or class lists to record release.
- Unaccompanied students: Safeguarding team supervises until collected.

14) Recovery and continuity

- **Return to learn:** Prioritise safe resumption of teaching; phased return if needed.
- **Psychosocial support:** Counsellors and educational psychologist available; staff welfare check-ins.
- **Facilities restoration:** Remediate damaged areas; QCD re-inspection if required.
- **Reporting:** Incident report to MoEHE; internal after-action review (AAR) within 10 working days with SMART corrective actions.

15) Training, exercising and record keeping

- **Programme:** Annual training plan for all staff; termly drills for evacuation and lockdown or shelter in place (mix announced and unannounced, varied timings).
- **Logs:** Drill records, maintenance logs, incident logs, and training attendance kept for regulatory review.
- **Review:** Policy reviewed annually or after any major incident or exercise.

Lockdown addendum (invacuation)

A) Purpose

To provide a clear, rapid, and safe response when a threat is within or in the immediate vicinity of the school, or when advised by authorities.

B) Types of lockdown

- **Full lockdown (code red):** Immediate threat on site or in the building.

- **Secure or modified lockdown (code amber):** External threat nearby; perimeter and building hardened, internal movement restricted.
- **Hold in room:** Short-term hold to keep corridors clear (for example, medical response); teaching continues behind closed doors.

C) Triggers (examples)

- Violent or aggressive behaviour or intruder.
- Nearby police operation or civil disturbance.
- Intelligence or notification from authorities.
- Dangerous animal on premises.

D) Signals

- **PA phrase (repeat 3x):** “**Lockdown, lockdown, lockdown** – follow lockdown procedures immediately.”
- **All-clear phrase:** “**All clear – lockdown ended.**” (Do not use the fire alarm to end a lockdown.)

E) Classroom or area procedure (staff)

1. Bring people in from corridors or playgrounds immediately if safe.
2. Lock doors; secure windows; cover windows if possible; turn off lights where appropriate.
3. Silence mobile phones; maintain quiet.
4. Position students out of sight lines from doors or windows; adopt safe corner posture.
5. Roll call quietly; notify incident room of missing or extra persons by approved silent method (radio text, secure app, runner).
6. Do not open the door for anyone until the all-clear with the agreed phrase or police or QCD presence.

7. First aid: Treat only if safe; report urgent needs to incident room.

F) Administration and reception procedure

- Lock external doors and gates; switch access control to secure mode.
- Direct latecomers to safe cover or instruct them to leave the area if unsafe to approach.
- Activate parent notification advising not to come to school.
- Prepare site map and keys for first responders.

G) Movement during lockdown

- No movement between rooms unless directed by incident director or first responders.
- Toilets or prayer rooms: Staff nearby usher students into the nearest securable room.
- Exams: Seal the exam room; continue only if safe; log timing disruptions for awarding bodies.

H) Special considerations

- **EYFS and SEND:** Pre-assigned rooms with additional aids; staff carry distraction and calming packs.
- **PE or outdoor:** Move to nearest indoor safe room or disperse to cover if movement is unsafe.
- **Transport or buses:** If on site, drivers secure doors and keep students low and out of sight; if off site, follow reverse lockdown (move away from threat) and contact school.

I) Interface with evacuation

- If fire alarm activates during a lockdown, do not evacuate unless you perceive immediate fire or smoke or are instructed by first responders or incident director.

J) Stand-down and transition to recovery

- All-clear via PA using the exact phrase.
- Controlled release by zone to assembly or classrooms.
- Welfare checks, incident debrief, parent update, and AAR.

Appendices (operational tools)

Appendix 1 – Contact and call-out tree (English and Arabic)

- 999 emergency; local QCD station; nearest health facility; school leadership contacts.

Appendix 2 – Incident log template

- Time, decision, action, owner, outcome, outstanding items.

Appendix 3 – Roll call sheets and vulnerable learners list

- Printed class lists; daily visitor and contractor list; SEND or EYFS support plans.

Appendix 4 – Parent or community message templates (English and Arabic)

- Initial notification; holding message; all-clear; reunification instructions.

Appendix 5 – Drill and training planner

- Annual calendar with varied timings and mixed scenarios; record sheet with lessons learned.

Appendix 6 – Site maps and utilities isolation

- Marked exits, assembly points, safe rooms, hydrants and extinguishers, gas, electric, and water shut-offs.

Version control

- **Owner:** Principal
- **Approved by:** SMT
- **Version:** 1.0
- **Effective date:** 28/09/2025
- **Review due:** 27/09/2026

Implementation notes

- Localise names, phone numbers, maps, and meeting points.
- Translate quick reference pages to Arabic.
- Brief all staff and display **lockdown quick card** in every room.
- File drill and maintenance records for audit and review.