

5.4

Emergency Preparedness Policy

It has been mandated that every school have a readily available emergency plan for natural disasters (earthquake/tsunami/fire), as well as for instances of real or potential threat from humans or animals (dangerous intruders/active shooters etc.).

Our primary concern is student and staff safety. To achieve this, escape routes and procedures as well as lockdown procedures are planned, practiced and followed. Drill practices align with the BC Emergency Management Guide and reflect its recommended minimum emergency drill frequencies:

- Fire Drills: 6/year
- Earthquake Drills: 3/year
- Lock-down Drills: 2/year

EARTHQUAKE and TSUNAMI

Haida Gwaii is one of the most seismically active areas in Canada, making earthquakes and tsunami's a real threat to residents.

The Village of Queen Charlotte issues a brochure and tsunami evacuation map: <http://www.queencharlotte.ca>, which is posted in the school at the two main exits.

All Staff at The Living and Learning School that own cell phones will be registered on the Q.C. notification phone list – when emergency services are alerted, that phone will be called.

The Queen Charlotte Emergency Response Committee (QCERC) lists the “first responders” as: RCMP – Hospital – Ambulance Service – Fire Department. In the event of an earthquake/tsunami, First Responders will be in circulation around the Village with PA systems for issuing instructions.

Natural Disaster Preparedness Basics

1. Practice Drills (earthquake/tsunami) each term
2. Drill includes walking to Terry Tollestrup's (see map in Emergency Manual and posted at the two main school exits)
3. Emergency Manual reviewed at the beginning of every school year and updated as needed throughout the school year
4. Post building plans with all escape routes marked at the two main school exits.

5. Keep emergency manual within easy reach (main copy in office, smaller manuals in emergency backpacks)
6. Have emergency kits located at each of the two main exits, in easy to carry backpacks
7. Have a radio handy (in emergency backpack)
8. Audit building for falling debris hazards
9. Secure heavy objects over 1m tall to the wall
10. Place aquarium away from seating
11. Store any chemicals enclosed and near floor
12. Know main water and power switches for turn-off (located in closet under stairwell)

Earthquake Drill

Earthquakes come without warning – practice this drill at least once every term.

1. DROP onto your hands and knees and crawl to take cover under a sturdy desk or table; face away from windows.
2. Assume the CRASH position (on hands and knees with head down and hands clasped on the back of the head)
3. Hold on until shaking stops and count aloud to 60 (calms kids and gives them a focus).
4. Once the shaking has stopped, evacuate via nearest exit and rally at stackwall at the edge of school property.

Note: the QCERC states that “if an earthquake shake lasts 60 seconds or longer, assume that a tsunami will come”, and after the shaking stops, follow the tsunami evacuation protocol. Remain at high ground (i.e. at Terry Tollestrup’s place that is over 15 m above high tide line) until cleared to go by emergency officials. If earthquake less than 60 seconds, evacuate to the stackwall in the front yard, avoiding power lines if down.

Evacuation Protocol

If earthquake is over 60 seconds, invoke full tsunami evacuation.

1. Go to high ground at Terry Tollestrup’s house at 223 2nd Ave., where there are emergency supplies (see map and details in Emergency Manual and posted at the two main school exits)
2. If earthquake is less than 60 seconds, evacuate to the stackwall in the front yard of the school
3. Principal (or adult in charge) leads kids out of building by nearest exit and complete a final sweep for any stragglers, once clear of the building the principal/adult does student headcount
4. Principal/adult takes emergency kit containing first aid kit, student ID, radio
5. Principal/adult issues first aid if necessary
6. Whether evacuate to stackwall or Tollestrup’s, stay put and await Emergency officials’ (First Responders) instructions

7. Never re-enter the building unless emergency officials deem it safe to do so.

Communications Plan

1. Expect worst case (i.e. power and phone lines down)
2. Anticipate First Responder's instructions via Village PA system
3. Tune into CBC for news on handheld radio
4. If phone lines work call parents AFTER students are in safe position
5. Await Responder's instructions before leaving safe position/location
6. All parents are informed that in the case of an earthquake/tsunami that students and teachers will evacuate to Terry Tollestrups.

FIRE

Unlike earthquake and tsunami, fire is not likely to be a whole-community emergency. Accordingly, emergency response is discussed in terms of the immediate Living and Learning School area.

Preparedness Basics

1. Smoke detectors in stairwell and upstairs hallway – check monthly
2. Five fire extinguishers throughout the building – inspect each October
3. Practice Fire Drills twice each term
4. Students/Adults always wear shoes indoors so they can evacuate immediately

Evacuation Protocol

1. Leave building under supervision immediately via nearest exit – closing all doors and windows if possible
2. Take attendance roster and emergency kit if possible
3. Last person out is the Principal (or adult in charge) who is responsible for doing a sweep for any stragglers
4. All assemble at the stackwall in the front yard, teacher/principal does student headcount.
5. Principal/adult use cell phone to call Fire Department and parents
6. Do not re-enter building until cleared by the Fire Department.

SAFETY THREAT or VIOLENCE

Threats include, but are not limited to: unwelcome guests, dangerous animals, weapons intrusion or student threats.

Preparedness Basics

1. Police will be contacted in cases of aggressive or violent behaviour/presence of weapons.
2. Police phone number will be posted by each phone in the school.
3. Students and staff who become aware of a threat are to inform the school principle immediately.
4. Direct all onlookers to a safe area

Lockdown Protocol

In the case of an intruder or threatening person attempting to enter the building the teachers are required to isolate students from dangers outside, or within, the building.

1. Staff are to lead students to a safe area within the school, which can be locked.
2. For the lower level of the school, teacher leads students to the library. The window curtain is to be closed and the library door locked. If library is inaccessible, then teacher leads students to bathroom and door is locked.
3. For the upper level of the school, teacher leads students to the office. The window blinds are to be drawn and the door locked. If office is inaccessible, teacher leads students to bathroom.
4. The police are to be called immediately, either via the office phone or via cell phone.
5. Students and teachers are not to leave the safe lockdown space until police have deemed it safe.
6. Student parents are to be notified immediately following the resolution of the situation.
7. The principal is responsible for ensuring the Violent Incident Report is completed.

In the case of an emergency situation where the threat is outside the school, not on school grounds, but in the neighbourhood, or if there is a dangerous animal on school grounds then the school is to follow Lockout / Shelter-in-place procedures.

Lockout / Shelter-in-place Procedure

1. All exterior doors are locked and students are monitored so no one leaves the school.
2. Principal/teacher calls the police to confirm the safety of the situation in the neighbourhood.
3. School continues as normal with the exception of having indoor recess/lunch recess.
4. If the lockout situation is extending past 3pm, all parents are to be notified via phone/text about the situation and that the lockout would continue until police have deemed it safe for staff and students to leave the building.