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**Threat to School Safety: Shelter in Place  
AP 400.33**

<b>Procedure for:</b>	All school staff	<b>Adopted:</b>	July 4, 2012
<b>Submitted by:</b>	Trish Kings, Superintendent of Education	<b>Revised:</b>	July 4, 2012
<b>Category:</b>	Operations		

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**Purpose**

The purpose of this administrative procedure is to establish consistency across the Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board regarding school response to emergency situations, specifically, "Shelter in Place".

**Responsibilities**

All school staff shall follow this administrative procedure adhering to specific directions for principals, teachers and support staff.

**Principal**

The school principal is responsible for the overall safety of staff and students and for ensuring that all staff and students are aware of the procedures involved in a "Shelter in Place" response.

**Staff**

School staff members are responsible for the safety and well-being of students and will understand and efficiently implement all parts of the "Shelter in Place" procedures.

**Students**

Students have a responsibility to be familiar with the "Shelter in Place" procedures and to respond quickly to the staff during a crisis situation.

**Police**

Police are responsible for supporting the schools in terms of the safety of students and staff.

**Parents/Guardians**

Parents and guardians are responsible for reinforcing their children's responsibility to follow directions during a crisis situation at school.

**Information**

1. A "Shelter in Place" response is initiated in heightened risk situations.
2. In most instances, the school will be contacted by the police and/or other agencies, such as, fire services, having jurisdiction over the incident. They are responsible for managing the crisis and will recommend a "Shelter in Place" response.
3. In the event the school receives information of a serious nature from other sources the principal should call the Police to determine whether the school falls within the parameters of the "Shelter in Place" response.



## **Procedures**

A "Shelter in Place" is initiated when there is possible environmental danger in the neighbourhood.

### **1. INITIATING "SHELTER IN PLACE"**

1.1 Ring emergency bell.

1.2 Make a P.A. announcement stating:

**Our school is initiating a "Shelter in Place" response.  
Staff and students are to respond accordingly.**

1.3 Inform all occupants, tenants and visitors (permit holders daycare centres, etc.) that a "Shelter in Place" response has been initiated.

1.4 Call 911 if necessary. Typically, this will not be necessary, as the "Shelter in Place" response has been initiated by Police/Emergency Services.

1.5 Ensure that both a telephone line and a cell phone connection are kept open for incoming communication from Police, Board personnel.

1.6 Contact your Superintendent and the Manager of Communications & Community Relations.

1.7 Contact the Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board's Student Transportation Services at 519-751-7532 to advise of "Shelter in Place" response.

1.8 Prepare a message for the school answering system indicating that a "Shelter in Place" response is in effect at the school.

### **2. SECURING THE SCHOOL BUILDINGS**

2.1 Ensure that air exchange systems (fans, exhausts and air conditioners, etc.) are turned off when applicable.

2.2 Students/staff outside school buildings and portables should proceed indoors promptly.

2.3 Exterior doors should be secured and monitored by staff to permit entry of persons and to prohibit anyone from leaving.

2.4 "Shelter in Place" signs are posted on exterior doors.

2.5 Windows and window covers are closed.

### **3. SECURING PERSONS**

3.1 Attendance should be taken in each room, noting those who are absent. This includes all classrooms, cafeterias, gyms, hallways, libraries, offices, etc.



- 3.2 Non-teaching staff should report to a previously designated location (Main Office, library, etc.)
  - 3.3 Adults should remain calm and reassure students that the situation is under control. Students should be aware that the "Shelter in Place" response may be in effect for an extensive period of time.
  - 3.4 Cell phones and electronic devices should be turned off.
  - 3.5 No calls for information should be made to the office. Updates will be provided.
  - 3.6 Normal operations may continue inside the school, however, all outdoor activities are cancelled.
4. "Shelter in Place" Response School Bus Considerations
- 4.1 Notify the Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board's Student Transportation Services that a "Shelter in Place" response has been initiated at your school. Student Transportation Services will provide direction.
  - 4.2 If buses are arriving at the school:
    - designate the safest access to the building, i.e., entry furthest from the danger, as the drop off point
    - have staff escort students from the bus to the school/portables.
  - 4.3 If buses are redirected to an alternate drop-off site:
    - use bus lists to record the names of students who have been relocated
    - notify parents/caregivers to collect students at the alternate site.
  - 4.4 If students can be safely dismissed from the school:
    - have staff escort students to buses using the exit furthest from danger
    - use bus lists to record the names of students who are placed on buses
    - have staff remain on site until all students have departed by bus or have been collected by parents.
  - 4.5 If students cannot be safely dismissed from the school:
    - retain students pending instructions from Police and Emergency Services, Superintendent, Manager of Communications and Community Relations, and Student Transportation Services.
  - 4.6 School Buses in Transit

If a school bus approaches a designated drop-off site where:

    - a) Emergency Services are restricting access, or
    - b) Student Transportation Services Dispatcher has advised of an emergency situation, the driver will follow established Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board's Student Transportation protocols.



**5. LIFTING THE “SHELTER IN PLACE” RESPONSE**

When the Principal receives information from Police or other Emergency Services that the “Shelter in Place” response may be lifted (i.e., the danger has passed), the Principal will:

5.1 Ring the emergency bell.

5.2 Make a P.A. announcement stating:

**The “Shelter in Place” response has been lifted.**

5.3 Communicate specific instructions as required, e.g., revised bus schedules, dismissal procedures, etc.

5.4 If the Principal has invoked the “Shelter in Place” response independent of Police or other Emergency Services, it is the responsibility of the Principal to confirm with the local Police that the “Shelter in Place” response may be lifted.

**6. FOLLOW-UP**

6.1 In consultation with the Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board’s Manager of Communications & Community Relations:

- update the school answering system message
- prepare a scripted response to be given to callers
- amend auto-attendant message if needed
- prepare a letter for the school community to communicate the details of the incident and response.

6.2 Schedule a meeting with staff to debrief the incident and response.

6.3 Schedule a meeting with students to debrief the incident and response as needed.

**Definitions**

Heightened risk is defined as an external environmental threat in the area of the school.

Examples could include:

- A chemical spill or gas leak in the neighbourhood
- The presence of smoke or fire in the vicinity
- Extreme weather conditions.
- These incidents require prudent action but do not require the implementation of Hold and Secure or Lockdown Procedures.



**References**

Section 265 (l) (j) of the Education Act (Care of Pupils and Property)

Section 6 of Ontario Regulation 298 (Emergency Procedures)

Section 11 (E) of Ontario Regulation 298 (Duties of Principals)

Board Policy 400.04 – Emergency Response 10/12/04

Board Emergency Response Manual

School Emergency Response Manual

Ontario Ministry of Education: “Guidelines for Developing and Maintaining Lockdown Procedures for Elementary and Secondary Schools in Ontario” – June 25, 2009