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Child Killed, Others Injured After School Coach Overturns in Somerset

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A tragic road incident in Somerset has left one child dead and several others injured after a school coach overturned and slid down an embankment. The coach, which was carrying between 60 and 70 pupils and staff from a middle school in Minehead, crashed on the A396 near Cutcombe Hill on Thursday afternoon.

The collision occurred at approximately 3:15 p.m. as the group was returning from a school outing. According to early reports, the coach left the road and flipped onto its roof before sliding around 20 feet down a slope. Emergency services responded swiftly, with police, fire, and air ambulance teams arriving on the scene to conduct a large-scale rescue and recovery effort.

Avon and Somerset Police confirmed the fatality in a press briefing held later that day. Chief Superintendent Mark Edgington stated: “Several other people have presented or been taken to hospital, some with serious injuries. This includes two children who were transported by air ambulance. Many passengers sustained only minor injuries or were physically unharmed and were taken to a rest centre while arrangements were made to return them to Minehead.”

Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Service praised the swift response of an off-duty firefighter who was travelling behind the coach and immediately began assisting with the evacuation of trapped passengers. Gavin Ellis, representing the service, described the scene as “extremely difficult” and confirmed that multiple extrications were carried out under challenging conditions. “This was a very complex and technically difficult incident for our crews to deal with, and I’m grateful for their tireless efforts,” he said.

The identity of the child who died has not yet been released, and next of kin are being supported by specialist officers. Investigators have launched a formal inquiry into the cause of the crash, which remains unknown at this stage. Mechanical failure, road conditions, and driver error will all be considered as part of the investigation.

Cutcombe Hill, where the accident occurred, is a narrow and winding rural road often used by local traffic but not typically suited for larger vehicles. Calls have previously been made by residents for improved safety measures in the area, particularly concerning road width and signage.

This incident will no doubt reignite debate over school transport safety, rural road infrastructure, and the suitability of certain routes for large passenger vehicles. While the investigation is ongoing, authorities have asked anyone who witnessed the crash or has relevant dashcam footage to contact Avon and Somerset Police via their 101 number, quoting incident reference 5224182792.

What began as a routine school trip has ended in tragedy, and the impact on the Minehead school community will be profound. Support services are being offered to students, parents,

and staff as they begin to process the devastating events.