Gaelscoil de hÍde

DÚN EALA, DÚN TEACHAÍN, MAINISTIR FHEARMAÍ,CO. CHORCAÍ

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Critical Incident Policy

What is a Critical Incident?

"A critical incident is any incident or sequence of events which overwhelms the normal coping mechanism of the school and disrupts the running of the school". Below are some examples:-

- Death, major illness/outbreak of disease.
- Criminal incidents.
- Major accidents, serious injury.
- Suicide
- Civil unrest, war (refugees may be traumatised by events that happened elsewhere)
- Fire, natural and technological disaster (e.g. school ceiling collapsing in Cork)
- Disappearance of student from home or school (e.g. Midleton incident in Cork)
- Unauthorised removal of student from school or home.

Critical Incident Management Team
(Múinteoirí le Poist Freagrachta & Rúnai Scoile)

Task	Name
Overall Management of Response	Tomás Ó Sé
Communication	Tomás Ó Sé
Supervision	Martina de Róiste/Fiona Mhic Ghearailt
Media Liaison	Tomás Ó Sé/Martina de Róiste
Administration Tasks	Louise agus Máiréad
Parent Liaison/Community Liason	Fiona Mhic Ghearailt Richeal Nic Gearailt
Student Liaison	Órla Uí Mhurchú/Tomás Ó Sé
Staff Liaison	Maria Uí Phollaird

Emergency Contact List

Outside Agency	Contact Numbers
Garda	02582100
Fermoy Hospital	02531300
Fire Brigade	999
Medina Medical Centre	02531929
Family First Medical Practice	02532734
The Park Clinic	02533233
N.E.P.S. Lorraine O Sullivan	087-4697437
I.N.T.O.	1850708708
Ath. Brian Boyle	085-2553787
Roinn Oideachais & Scileanna	090-6483600

Teacher contact Numbers

Tomás Ó Sé	087 6713414
Martina de Róiste	087 2117881
Fiona Mhic Ghearailt	086 8301371

Roles and Responsibilities

Leadership Role:

- Intervention
- Confirm the event
- Activate the C.I. response team
- Express sympathy to family
- Clarify facts surrounding event
- Make contact with other relevant agencies
- Decide how news will be communicated to different groups (staff, pupils, outside school)
- Postvention
- Ensure provision of ongoing support to staff and students
- Facilitate any appropriate memorial events
- Review Plan

Communication Role:

- Intervention
- With team prepare a public statement.
- Organise designated room to address media promptly
- Ensure telephone line free for outgoing and important incoming calls
- Liaise with relevant outside support agencies
- Postvention
- Review and evaluate effectiveness of communication response

Student Liaison/ Counselling Role:

- **Intervention**
- Outline specific services available in school
- Put in place clear referral procedures
- Address immediate needs of staff
- Information
- Counselling
- Postvention
- Ongoing support to vulnerable students
- Monitor class most affected
- Refer on, as appropriate
- Review and evaluate Plan

Family Liaison Role:

- Intervention
- Coordinate contact with families (following first contact by principal)
- Consult with family around involvement of school in e.g. funeral service
- Assist with all communication dealing with parents of any student affected by critical incident
- Postvention
- Provide ongoing support to bereaved family
- Involve as appropriate family in school liturgies/memorial services.
- Offer to link family with community support groups
- Review and evaluate plan.

Action plan

SHORT-TERM ACTIONS (Day 1)

- Immediate contact with family/families.
- Consult with the family regarding appropriate support from the school, e.g. funeral service.
- Ensure that a quiet place can be made for students/staff.
- Rooms will made be made available as follows:
- Individual Meetings:
- Parents: Room

Task	Name (Key and Support)
Gather Accurate Information	Relevant Staff and Witnesses (Accidents)
Contact Appropriate Agencies	Martina de Róiste/Tomás Ó Sé
Convene/Hold a staff meeting	Maria Uí Phollaird
Arrange Supervision of students	Martina de Róiste/Fiona Mhic Ghearailt and S.N.A s
Organise Timetable for the day	Tomás Ó Sé
Inform parents	Fiona Mhic Ghearailt/Richeal Nic Gearailt
Inform Students	Órla Uí Mhurchú/Tomás Ó Sé and S..N.A.s
Make contact with bereaved family	Tomás Ó Sé
Dealing With Media	Tomás Ó Sé/Martina de Róiste

Contact Appropriate Agencies

- Emergency services
- **Medical services**
- H.S.E. Psychology Departments/Community Care Services
- NEPS
- BOM
- DES/Schools Inspector.

Media Briefing

- Designate a spokesperson.
- Prepare a brief statement.
- Protect the family's privacy.
- Gather accurate information.
    1. What happened, where and when?
    2. **What is the extent of the injuries?**
    3. How many are involved and what are their names?
    4. Is there a risk of further injury?
    5. What agencies have been contacted already?

Staff Briefing

- Convene a meeting with Key Staff/Critical Management Team.
- Organize a staff meeting.
- Organize timetable/routine for the day. (Adhering to the normal school routine is important, if this is possible).
- Class teachers to take note of any absentees who might need to be contacted, list of friends etc, or any other relevant information and give to the Student Liaison person.
- Arrange supervision of students
- Liaise with the family regarding funeral arrangements/memorial service.
- The Principal will liaise with the family, to extend sympathy and clarify the family's wishes regarding the school's involvement in funeral/memorial service.
- Arrange a home visit by two staff representatives within 48 hours, if appropriate. (Student Liaison person + Class teacher)
- Have regard for different religious traditions and faiths.

MEDIUM-TERM ACTIONS (24-72 HOURS)

- Preparation of students/staff attending funeral.
- Involvement of students/staff in liturgy if agreed by bereaved family.
- Facilitation of students'/staffs' responses, eg. Sympathy cards, flowers, book of condolences, etc.
- Ritual within the school.
- Review the events of the first 24 hours
- Reconvene Key Staff/Critical Incident Management Team.(9.00 am)
- Decide arrangements for support meetings for parents/students/staff.
- Decide on mechanism for feedback from teachers on vulnerable students.
- **Have review Critical Incident Management Team meeting. (3.00 p.m.)**
- Establish contact with absent staff and pupils.

Support and Information

- **Arrange support for individual students, groups of students, and parents, if necessary.**
- Hold support/information meeting for parents/students, if necessary, in order to clarify what has happened.
- Give any teacher who feels uncomfortable with involvement in support meetings the choice of opting out.
- Arrange, in consultation, with outside agencies, individual or group debriefings or support meetings with parental permission. Permission slips to be included in enrolment forms.

Further Support

- **Plan for the re-integration of students and staff e.g. absentees, injured, siblings, close relative etc)**
- Student Liaison person to liaise with above on their return to school.
- Plan visits to injured
- Family Liaison person + Class Teacher + Principal to visit home/hospital.
- Attendance and participation at funeral/memorial service (To be decided)
- Decide this in accordance with parents' wishes and school management decisions and in consultation with close school friends.
- School closure
- Request a decision on this from school management

Task	Name/ Group
Review the events of the first 24 hours	Staff
Arrange support for individual/groups of students/parents	Orla Uí Mhurchú/Fiona Mhic Ghearailt/Richeal Nic Gearailt
Plan the reintegration of staff and students	Tomás Ó Sé
Plan visits to the injured	Tomás Ó Sé/Martina de Róiste/Fiona Mhic Ghearailt
Liaise with family re funeral. Arrange memorial service	Tomás Ó Sé/Fr. Brian Boyle.
Attendance / Participation at funeral service etc	Staff
School Closure	B.O.M.

LONGER TERM ACTIONS

Monitor students for signs of continuing distress.
If, over a prolonged period of time, a student continues to display the following, he/she may need assistance from the Health Board.

1. Uncharacteristic behaviour
2. Deterioration in academic performance
3. Physical symptoms — e.g. weight loss/gain, lack of attention to appearance, tiredness, restlessness
4. Inappropriate emotional reactions
5. Increased absenteeism.

Evaluation

- Evaluate response to incident and amend Critical Incident Management Plan appropriately.

1. What went well?
2. Where were the gaps?
3. **What was most/least helpful?**
4. Have all necessary onward referrals to support services been made?
5. Is there any unfinished business?

- **Formalise the Critical Incident Plan for the future**
- Consult with NEPS Psychologist
- Inform new staff/new school pupils affected by Critical Incidents where appropriate
- Ensure that new staff is aware of the school policy and procedures in this area.
- Ensure they are aware of which pupils were affected in any recent incident and in what way.
- When individual pupils or a class of pupils affected by an incident are transferring to a new school, it would be useful to brief the Principal of the new school.
- Decide on appropriate ways to deal with anniversaries (Be sensitive to special days and events)
- Anniversaries may trigger emotional responses in students/staff and they may need additional support at this time.
- Acknowledge the anniversary with the family
- Be sensitive to significant days like Birthdays, Christmas, Mother's Day, and Father's Day.
- Plan a school memorial service.
- Care of deceased person's possessions. What are the parent's wishes?
- Update and amend school records.

Task	Name/Group
Monitor Students for signs of continuing stress.	Class teachers and S.N.As
Evaluate response to incident and amend C.I. Plan appropriately	Staff and B.O.M.
Formalise plan for the future	Staff and B.O.M.
Inform new staff/pupils	Tomás Ó Sé
Decide on appropriate ways to deal with anniversaries.	B.O.M., Staff and Parents.

Useful Contact Numbers

Barnardos	014530355
The Samaritans	116123
Childline	1800666666
Parentline	1890927277
Nat. Suicide Bereavement Support.	
Rainbows	014734175
The Bereavement Counselling Service	018391766
Bereavement Counselling	016767727
TUSLA/HSE	072 20400
Suicide Bereavement Support Dublin	01 8484789
Solas – Bereavement Helpline	01 4732110
Bereavement counselling service	01 8391766

This school plan was formulated by the principal and staff and approved by the Board of Management on 10/11/22

Sínithe: Máire Uí Riain.

Cathaoirleach an Bhoird bainistíochta

This plan will be reviewed every two years.