

Scoil Chearbhaill Uí Dhálaigh

Critical Incident Policy and Management Plan 2010

Introductory Statement:

This plan was prepared by the staff during a planning day on 1/5/2009. It was circulated to Board of Management and parents during December 2010.

Rationale:

“The key to managing a critical incident is planning. NEPS psychologists report that schools that have developed school policy and a **Critical Incident Management Plan (CIMP)** are able to cope more effectively in the aftermath of an incident. Having a plan enables staff to react quickly and effectively and to maintain a sense of control. It may also ensure that normality returns as soon as possible and that the effects on students and staff are limited”. *Responding to Critical Incidents, Guidelines for Schools, NEPS, 2007*

Creation of a coping, supportive and caring ethos in the school:

- We strive daily to create a psychologically safe environment in our school through our vision statement and through clear statements of expected standards of behaviour being laid down in our Code of Discipline.
 - The Stay safe and Walk Tall programmes are integrated in the school’s SPHE programme.
 - Ways of addressing issues such as grief and loss, communication skills, self esteem, coping skills are given due consideration in the SPHE programme. The school has adopted Jenny Mosley’s Golden Rules as a daily guide to behaviour for all.
- A supportive, empathetic ethos which is helpful when dealing with difficulties at school is cultivated through our Anti-bullying Policy.
- The entire school population is aware of the school’s Health and Safety Policy.
- A fire drill is conducted once each term.
- External doors are locked during teaching time.

Definition of a Critical Incident

“In general it is any incident or sequence of events which overwhelms the normal coping mechanisms of the school” *Responding to Critical Incidents – Guidelines for Schools, NEPS, 2007, p.15*

Among the types of critical incident that could affect our school are :

- Sudden death of a pupil, parent or staff member as a result of illness, accident or violence.
- A fire in the school
- Floods
- School Bus accident
- Kidnap/disappearance of a member of the school
- A tragedy in the general community

Staff Development

- A copy of the Guidelines for Responding to Critical Incidents and Resource Pack in schools is available to all staff members. Notices for seminars and inservice courses will be circulated among all staff. The school psychologist will be invited to provide further staff development at staff meetings/planning days as the need arises.
- All staff and relevant personnel will be apprised of systems and procedures for the identification of students at risk by provision of R 16 of the NEPS Resources Pack within 24 hours of a Critical Incident in our school.
- Procedures to link with external agencies
- Support for teaching staff, when necessary, will be provided by NEPS and by the Employee Assistance Service (Free phone 1800 411 057)

Development and communication of the plan:

- A copy of this Incident Policy and Management Plan Critical Plan will be included in Plean Scoile[1] provided to teachers and their attention will be regularly drawn to it at staff meetings.
- Bríd Ní Sheachnasaigh will inform substitute teachers of the Policy and Plan and procedures as outlined in R 13 of the NEPS Resources for Schools regarding the reintegration of pupils following a tragic death will be followed.
- The Chairperson of the Board of Management will prepare a statement for the press and the media.
- Copies of this Policy and Plan are available from the school office.

Contact Numbers

- All class teachers keep an up-to-date list of contact numbers for parents and guardians of pupils in their class . Contact numbers for all parents/guardians and carers of all pupils is kept in the school office. Emergency contact forms for all staff members are kept by the Principal and updated each September.
- For a list of Emergency Services see Appendix 2.
- This List of Emergency Services is displayed on the notice board in the staff room, in the secretary's office and in the Principal's office.

Resources

- A ready-to-go resource pack is available for each member of the CIMT in the principal's office.
- Templates of letters to parents and statements to the press/media are stored on the principal's laptop and on the secretary's PC. The Chairperson of the Board of Management also has copies of these templates.
- The school secretary and the Principal have lists of emergency contact numbers for pupils and staff.
- A checklist for actions to be taken in the first 24 hours after a Critical Incident is included in this Plan and a map of the school is included in Plean Scoile [1].
- A fire drill is conducted once each term and emergency exits are displayed in each classroom.
- A room will be assigned for use should a critical incident arise and its location communicated to the school population as soon as possible after a critical incident.

- ***School Tours***
- The school secretary keeps a list of pupils/staff/parents attending school tours/outings along with their contact numbers.
- The teacher in charge of the tour/outing also has a copy of the list and of Emergency Contact Forms (Foirmeacha Éigeandála) which they take with them on the tour/outing.
- Up-to-date information on pupils' medical conditions is gathered each September . Parents are requested to inform the relevant class teacher immediately of any new relevant information which comes to light during the school year.

Record Keeping

- Each staff member will keep a record of phone call made/received, letters sent/received, meetings held, resources used etc
- A school-designed form will be used to record this information which will be retained securely in the principal's office for a period of two years.
- Relevant professionals and parents/guardians will have access to these records.

Review of the Plan

This Plan will be reviewed annually during the month of November. The Deputy Principal, Maebh Uí Irile, will lead the review.

Ratified by the Board of Management on xx/xx/2010.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Tara Nic Thighearnáin,
Chairperson of the Board of Management.