



ELPHIN COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Critical Incident Management Policy

1. Mission Statement:

Our school exists to serve the educational needs of the community, to enhance student self-confidence, to promote life skills and attitudes which will enable students to live fulfilling lives.

2. Definition

For the purposes of this policy a critical incident is defined as any incident or sequence of events which overwhelms the normal coping mechanisms of the school and disrupts the running of the school e.g.

- The death of a member of the school community,
- A serious accident involving pupils or staff,
- A traumatic event involving the school,
- Serious accident or tragedy in the wider community.

As each Critical Incident will require the school to respond in a manner appropriate to that particular incident at that time, this C.I.M.P. is intended to serve as a general outline of procedures to be followed in the event of a critical incident occurring.

In general, it is regarded as good practice for the school to:

(i) Form a Critical Incident Management Team to include:

- The Principal,
- The Deputy Principal,
- Guidance Counsellor,
- Representative of the Board of Management,
- Representative of Administrative Staff – School Secretary & Caretaker.

(ii) This team will meet annually.

(iii) It will maintain an up-to-date list of contact numbers for:

- Staff
- Parents/guardians of students
- Emergency support services

Copies will be kept in the Administrative office and Principal's office. These lists will be updated when necessary by administrative staff.

(iv) The team will also establish a 'loop' system among staff so that information can be conveyed one to another should a critical incident happen outside of school hours.

(v) In the case of School Tours, the Tour Leader will compile an information pack to include:

- Name of the Tour Leader,
- A list of all participating teachers and pupils,
- A list of mobile phone numbers for all participating teachers and pupils,
- Passport details and (in the case of tours outside the country),
- Photographs of participating pupils,
- Home contact numbers and mobiles of all involved,
- Relevant medical information on pupils and permission forms from parents in case of a medical emergency,
- Insurance details,
- Copy of itinerary,

A copy of this file should be left with the Principal prior to departure.

(vi) By way of protection of our staff and students, all staff will be made aware of the Health and Safety Document, Fire Evacuation Procedures, the location of the defibrillators and the names of those trained in their use and in First Aid. These lists will also be posted near the defibrillators, on the notice board in the staff room and attached to this document.

(vii) Staff will be reminded of these procedures at the initial staff meeting annually and this information will be provided to new and substitute teachers.

3. Trauma Response Plan

Procedures to be followed in the event of critical incidents:

On notification of a critical incident, the Principal will convene the Critical Incident Management Team to:

- Ascertain the facts,
- Make contact with the family/families concerned,
- Contact appropriate agencies (e.g. N.E.P.S., D.E.S),
- Inform Staff, B.O.M. and GRETB,
- Agree on a statement of the facts for staff, pupils, parents/guardians and the media and inform these parties as appropriate,
- Identify high risk pupils,

- Appoint one person to deal with phone calls,
- Organise timetable/supervision rota for the day,
- Organise support and rooms for counselling/assistance where appropriate,
- Endeavour to maintain the regular school routine if possible,
- When appropriate arrange for representatives from the school to visit the home(s) of the person(s) concerned.

In the event of death:

- Inform staff and pupils re funeral arrangements,
- Arrange involvement in liturgy if agreed with bereaved family,
- Facilitate staff and pupils' response e.g. book of condolence, school council's vote of sympathy, flowers, etc.
- Support distressed pupils and staff,
- Ensure counselling service is available,
- Care of deceased person's possessions in keeping with parental/guardians' wishes,
- Facilitate return to school of siblings and close friends,
- Monitor siblings and friends of the deceased,
- Update and amend school records and inform DES.

4. Long Term Tasks

In the aftermath of a critical incident, a death, accident, serious illness or any such incident:

Awareness of the need to:

- Keep in contact with the family/families concerned,
- Be sensitive to occasions such as anniversaries, birthdays, Christmas etc,
- Organise school services/memorial as appropriate,
- Review the support structures available,
- Provide the appropriate support,
- Review overall school response.

This policy was adopted by the Board of Management on _____.

This policy has been made available to school personnel, published on the school website and provided to the Parents' Association. A copy of this policy will be made available to the Department and the patron if requested.

This policy and its implementation will be reviewed by the Board of Management once in every three school years. Written notification that the review has been completed will be made available to school personnel, published on the school website and provided to the Parents' Association. A record of the review and its outcome will be made available, if requested, to the patron and the Department.

Signed: _____
(Chairperson of Board of Management)

Signed: _____
(Principal)

Date:

Date:

Date of next review:

Appendix 1

Critical Incident Management Team

Role	Name	Contact
Team Leader	Principal / D. Principal	087 9091093
Garda Liaison	P / D.P.	
Staff Liaison	Brian Higgins	
Student Liaison	Gráinne Brehony	
Parent Liaison	Principal / D. P.	
Community Liasion	Brian Higgins	
Media Liaison	Principal / D. P.	
Administrator		

Outlined below are some points on the key responsibilities of each role.

Team leader

- Alerts the team members to the crisis and convenes a meeting,
- Coordinates the tasks of the team,
- Liaises with the Board of Management; GRETB; NEPS; TUSLA, SEC,
- Liaises with the bereaved family,

Garda liaison

- Liaises with the Gardaí,
- Ensures that information about deaths or other developments is checked out for accuracy before being shared.

Staff liaison

- Leads briefing meetings for staff on the facts as known, gives staff members an opportunity to express their feelings and ask questions, outlines the routine for the day,
- Advises staff on the procedures for identification of vulnerable students
- Provides materials for staff (from their critical incident folder),
- Keeps staff updated as the day progresses,
- Is alert to vulnerable staff members and makes contact with them individually,
- Advises them of the availability of the EAS and gives them the contact number.

Student liaison

- Co-ordinate information from class teachers about students they are concerned about,
- Alerts other staff to vulnerable students (appropriately),
- Provides materials for students (from their critical incident folder),
- Keeps records of students seen by external agency staff,

- Looks after setting up and supervision of ‘quiet’ room where agreed.

Community liaison

- Maintains up to date lists of contact numbers of
 - Key parents, such as members of the Parents Council
 - Emergency support services and other external contacts and resources
- Liaises with agencies in the community for support and onward referral,
- Is alert to the need to check credentials of individuals offering support,
- Coordinates the involvement of these agencies,
- Reminds agency staff to wear name badges,
- Updates team members on the involvement of external agencies.

Parent liaison

- Visits the bereaved family with the team leader,
- Arranges parent meetings,
- May facilitate such meetings, and manage ‘questions and answers’,
- Manages the ‘consent’ issues in accordance with agreed school policy,
- Ensures that sample letters are typed up, on the school’s system and ready for adaptation,
- Sets up room for meetings with parents,
- Maintains a record of parents seen,
- Meets with individual parents,
- Provides appropriate materials for parents (from their critical incident folder),

Media liaison

- In advance of an incident, will consider issues that may arise and how they might be responded to (e.g. students being interviewed, photographers on the premises, etc),
- In the event of an incident, will liaise where necessary with the SEC; relevant teacher unions etc,
- Will draw up a press statement, give media briefings and interviews (as agreed by school management).

Administrator

- Maintenance of up to date telephone numbers of
 - Parents or guardians
 - Teachers
 - Emergency services
- Takes telephone calls and notes those that need to be responded to
- Ensures that templates are on the schools system in advance and ready for adaptation
- Prepares and sends out letters, emails and faxes
- Photocopies materials needed
- Maintains records

Where critical incident folders have been mentioned above, the contents can be found on the dept. of education and skills website via the following link:

http://www.education.ie/en/Schools-Colleges/Services/National-Educational-Psychological-Service-NEPS-/neps_critical_incidents_resource_material_schools.pdf

Appendix 2

Short term actions – Day 1

Task	Name
Gather accurate information	Principal /D. Principal
Who, what, when, where?	
Convene a CIMT meeting – specify time and place clearly	Brian Higgins
Contact external agencies	Principal /D. Principal
Arrange supervision for students	Brian Higgins
Hold staff meeting	All staff
Agree schedule for the day	P./ D.P./ Whole Staff
Inform students – (close friends and students with learning difficulties may need to be told separately)	CIMT
Compile a list of vulnerable students	B. Higgins & G. Brehony
Contact/visit the bereaved family	Principal / D. Principal
Prepare and agree media statement and deal with media	Principal / D. Principal
Inform parents	Principal /D. Principal
Hold end of day staff briefing	All Staff

Medium term actions - (Day 2 and following days)

Task	Name
Convene a CIMT meeting to review the events of day 1	Team Leader
Meet external agencies	
Meet whole staff	
Arrange support for students, staff, parents	
Visit the injured	
Liaise with bereaved family regarding funeral arrangements	
Agree on attendance and participation at funeral service	
Make decisions about school closure	BOM

Follow-up – beyond 72 hours

Task	Name
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Monitor students for signs of continuing distress	Class Teachers
Liase with agencies regarding referrals	Principal / D. Principal
Plan for return of bereaved student(s)	
Decide on memorials and anniversaries	BOM/Staff, parents and students

Appendix 3

Emergency Contact List

Agency	Contact Number
GARDA (BOYLE)	071-9664620
HOSPITAL	999/112
FIRE BRIGADE	999/112
LOCAL GP (Dr. Colleran)	071-9635084
HSE/Community Care Team/ Child and Family Centre/ CAMHS	090-6627090
NEPS PSYCHOLOGIST	090-6628529
DES	090-6483600
T.U.I.	01-4922588
PARISH PRIEST/CLERGY	087-2738070
STATE EXAMS COMMISSION	090-6442700
TUSLA (Boyle)	071-9662087
GRETB	090-6626151/091-874260
EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE SERVICE	1800 411 057
Duty Social Worker (Castlerea)	090-6637851

http://www.education.ie/en/Schools-Colleges/Services/National-Educational-Psychological-Service-NEPS-/neps_critical_incidents_resource_material_schools.pdf