

CRITICAL INCIDENT MANAGEMENT POLICY

St Oliver Plunkett's NS



St Oliver Plunkett's NS aims to protect the well-being of its students and staff by providing a safe and nurturing environment at all times. The Board of Management, through Ms Mairéad Murphy, has drawn up a Critical Incident Management Plan as one element of the school's policies and plans.

Define what you mean by the term 'critical incident'

The staff and management of *St Oliver Plunkett's NS* recognise a critical incident to be "an incident or sequence of events that overwhelms the normal coping mechanism of the school". Critical incidents may involve one or more students or staff members, or members of our local community. Types of incidents might include:

- *The death of a member of the school community through accident, violence, suicide or suspected suicide or other unexpected death*
- *An intrusion into the school*
- *An accident involving members of the school community*
- *An accident/tragedy in the wider community*
- *Serious damage to the school building through fire, flood, vandalism, etc*
- *The disappearance of a member of the school community*
- Covid 19 Pandemic

Aim

The aim of the CIMP is to help school management and staff to react quickly and effectively in the event of an incident, to enable us to maintain a sense of control and to ensure that appropriate support is offered to students and staff. Having a good plan should also help ensure that the effects on the students and staff will be limited. It should enable us to affect a return to normality as soon as possible.

Creation of a coping supportive and caring ethos in the school

We have put systems in place to help to build resilience in both staff and students, thus preparing them to cope with a range of life events. These include measures to address both the physical and psychological safety of the school community.

Physical safety (Safety Statement is available on our school website www.balrotheryns.com)

- Evacuation plan formulated
- Regular fire drills occur
- Fire exits and extinguishers are regularly checked
- Rules of the playground
- Yard surface is maintained
- Covid response plan, Covid statement , risk assessment Covid 19 available on our school website

Psychological safety

The management and staff aim to use available programmes and resources to address the personal and social development of students, to enhance a sense of safety and security in the school and to provide opportunities for reflection and discussion.

- Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE) is integrated into the work of the school. It is addressed in the curriculum by addressing issues such as grief and loss; communication skills; stress and anger management; resilience; conflict management; problem solving; help-seeking; bullying; decision making and prevention of alcohol and drug misuse. Promotion of mental health is an integral part of this provision.
- Staff is familiar with the Child Protection Guidelines and Procedures and details of how to proceed with suspicions or disclosures.
- Books and resources on difficulties affecting the primary school student are available.
- Information is provided on mental health in general and such specific areas as signs and symptoms of depression and anxiety
- Staff are informed in the area of suicide awareness .
- The school has developed links with a range of external agencies – Balbriggan Community Gardaí, NEPS, Balbriggan Family Resource Centre.
- Inputs to students by external providers are carefully considered in the light of criteria about student safety, the appropriateness of the content, and the expertise of the providers. See DES Circulars 0022/2010 (Primary).
- The school has a clear policy on bullying and deals with bullying in accordance with this policy
- There is a care system in place in the school using the "Continuum of Support" approach which is outlined in the NEPS documents published on 2007.
- Students who are identified as being at risk are referred to the designated staff member (DLP Mrs Murphy, DDLP Mrs Callaghan), concerns are explored and the appropriate level of assistance and support is provided. Parents are informed, and where appropriate, a referral is made to an appropriate agency.
- Staff is informed about how to access support for themselves. (Staff can contact Employee Assistance (1800 411 057 24 hrs 365 days a year, Teaching Council has a list of supports on their website)

- NEPS Well Being Toolkit available on their website

Critical Incident Management Team (CIMT)

A CIMT has been established in line with best practice. Each member of the team has a dedicated critical incident folder. This contains a copy of the policy and plan and materials particular to their role, to be used in the event of an incident.

Team leader: *(Mrs Mairéad Murphy, Deputy team Leader Mrs Joanne Callaghan, lead covid worker Eoin Callaghan and Deputy covid leader Joyce Denver)*

Role

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

Garda liaison (Mrs Murphy)

Role

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

Staff liaison(Mrs Murphy and Mrs Kennedy (BOM)

Role

- 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
- 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 Inspire and gives them the contact number.

Community/agency liaison (Mrs Murphy and Mrs Callaghan)

Role

- 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(Mrs Murphy and in her absence Mrs Callaghan) , Parents' rep on the Board of Management (currently Mrs Kennedy)

Role

- Visits the bereaved family with the team leader
- Arranges parent meetings, if held
- 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

Media liaison(Mrs Murphy/Chairperson of the Board of Management)**Role**

- 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)
- Will draw up a press statement, give media briefings and interviews (as agreed by school management)

Administrator (secretary)**Role**

- 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 texts
- Photocopies materials needed
- Maintains records
- Check daily for updates re Covid 19

Record keeping

In the event of an incident each member of the team will keep records of phone calls made and received, letters sent and received, meetings held, persons met, interventions used, material used etc.

Muriel McNamee, school secretary will have a key role in receiving and logging telephone calls, sending letters, photocopying materials, etc.

Confidentiality and good name considerations

Management and staff of *St Oliver Plunkett's NS* have a responsibility to protect the privacy and good name of people involved in any incident and will be sensitive to the consequences of public statements. Members of school staff will bear this in mind, and seek to ensure that students do so also, e.g. the term 'suicide' will not be used unless there is solid information that death was due to suicide, *and* that the family involved consents to its use. The phrases 'tragic death' or 'sudden death' may be used instead. Similarly, the word 'murder' should not be used until it is legally established that a murder was committed. The term 'violent death' may be used instead. In the event that a person is diagnosed with Covid 19 each person in *St Oliver Plunkett's NS* maintains the confidentiality in relation to the person (s) concerned.

Critical Incident Rooms

In the event of a critical incident, the following rooms are designated for the indicated purposes

In light of Covid 19 meetings may be held via Zoom

| Room Name: | Designated Purpose: |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| <i>Staffroom</i> | Main room for meeting staff |
| <i>Principal's office</i> | Meetings with students |
| <i>Principal's Office</i> | Meetings with parents |
| <i>Principal's Office</i> | Meetings with media |
| <i>Learning support Room</i> | Individual sessions with students |
| <i>Principal's office</i> | Meetings with other visitors |

Consultation and communication regarding the plan

All staff was consulted and their views canvassed in the preparation of this policy and plan. Students and parent/guardian representatives were also consulted and asked for their comments.

Our school's final policy and plan in relation to responding to critical incidents has been presented to all staff. Each member of the critical incident team has a personal copy of the plan.

All new and temporary staff will be informed of the details of the plan by Mrs Mairéad Murphy.

The plan will be updated annually.

Critical Incident Management Team

| Role | Name | Phone |
|--------------------------|---|--|
| Team leader: | <i>Mairead Murphy</i> | 0879910437 |
| Garda liaison | <i>Balbriggan Garda Station</i> | 018020510 |
| Staff liaison | <i>Mairead Murphy</i> <i>Catherine Kennedy</i> | 0879910437 0868909630 |
| Student liaison | <i>Mairead Murphy</i> <i>Joanne Callaghan</i> | 0879910437 0877822086 |
| Community liaison | <i>Mairead Murphy</i> <i>Joanne Callaghan</i> | 0879910437 0877822086 |
| Parent liaison | <i>Mairead Murphy</i> <i>Joanne Callaghan</i> <i>Chairperson Of BOM</i> <i>Parent rep of BOM</i> | 0879910437 0877822086 0861089925 |
| Media liaison | <i>Mairead Murphy</i> <i>Chairperson of the Board of</i> | 0879910437 |

| | | |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------|------------|
| | <i>Management</i> | |
| Administrator | <i>Muriel McNamee</i> | 0868102523 |
| Lead Covid Worker | <i>Eoin Callaghan</i> | 0858153169 |
| Deputy lead Covid Worker | <i>Joyce Denver</i> | 0861790674 |

Short term actions – Day 1

| Task | Name |
|---|--|
| Gather accurate information | Mairead Murphy |
| Who, what, when, where? | Mairead Murphy Joanne Callaghan Chairperson of the Board Eoin Callaghan School premises Or parish House |
| Convene a CIMT meeting – specify time and place clearly | CIMT meeting to convene as soon as possible School premises Parish House |
| Contact external agencies | Mairead Murphy |
| Arrange supervision for students | Mairead Murphy Joanne Callaghan |
| Hold staff meeting | All staff |
| Agree schedule for the day | Mairead Murphy Joanne Callaghan |
| Inform students – (close friends and students with learning difficulties may need to be told separately) | Mairead Murphy School premises |
| Compile a list of vulnerable students | Catherine Kennedy |
| Prepare and agree media statement and deal with media | Mairead Murphy Chairperson of the Board |
| Inform parents | Mairead Murphy Parent rep on the BOM |
| 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 | Mrs Murphy Mrs Callaghan |
| Meet whole staff | Mrs Murphy Mrs Callaghan Chairperson of the BOM |
| Arrange support for students, staff, parents | Mrs Murphy Mrs Kennedy |
| Visit the injured | Mrs Murphy Mrs Callaghan |
| Liaise with bereaved family regarding funeral arrangements | Mrs Murphy |
| Agree on attendance and participation at funeral service | Mrs Murphy Mrs Callaghan |
| Make decisions about school closure | BOM |

Follow-up – beyond 72 hours

| Task | Name |
|--|---------------------------------|
| Monitor students for signs of continuing distress | Class teachers |
| Liaise with agencies regarding referrals | Mrs Murphy Mrs Callaghan |
| Plan for return of bereaved student(s) | Mrs Murphy Class teacher |
| Plan for giving of 'memory box' to bereaved family | Mrs Murphy |
| Decide on memorials and anniversaries | BOM/Staff, parents and students |
| Review response to incident and amend plan | Staff/BOM |

EMERGENCY CONTACT LIST

| AGENCY | CONTACT NUMBERS |
|---|--|
| Garda | 01 8020510 |
| Hospital | Temple Street 01 8784200 Beaumont 01 8093000 Our Lady of Lourdes, Drogheda 0419837601 |
| Fire Brigade | 999 112 |
| LocalGPs | Balbriggan Medical Centre 01 8412400 Balbriggan Health Centre 01 8412188 Bracken Clinic 01 8416000 |
| HSE | 01 8164200 |
| Community Care Team | 01 8164200 |
| Child and Family Centre | Balbriggan Family Centre Unit 7 level 1 Millfield Shopping Centre 01 8414122 |
| Child and FamilyMental Health Service (CAMHS) | Swords Health centre Bridge Street, Swords,Co Dublin 01 8907152 01 8075392 camhsnorthcounty@hse.ie |
| School Inspector | Diarmuid Dullaghan Diarmuid_dullaghan@education.gov.ie |
| NEPS Psychologist | 01 889 2700 |
| DES | 09064648600 Athlone 01 8896400 Dublin |
| INTO | 01 8047700 |
| Clergy | 01 8412116 Parish office Fr John Mc Namara: 086 818 5186 |

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|---|--|
| Pat Hickey Funeral Director McNallys Balbriggan | 0868291947 01 8416779 business hours 01 8413169 out of hours |
| Employee Assistance Service | 1800 411 057 |

Signed:

Chairperson: _____ date : _____

Principal: _____ date: _____

