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| CRITICAL INCIDENTMANAGEMENT POLICY | Logo |

*Castlebridge 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 Mr Lyons*,* has drawn up a Critical Incident Management Plan as one element of the school’s policies and plans.

The Critical Incident Management Team (CIMT) has been established to steer the development and implementation of the plan.

**Review and Research**

The CIMT have consulted resource documents available to schools on www.education.ie and www.nosp.ie including:

* Responding to Critical Incidents Guidelines and Resources for Schools (NEPS 201 6)
* Suicide Prevention in Schools: Best Practice Guidelines (IAS, National Suicide Review Group (2002)
* Well-Being in Primary Schools - Guidelines for Mental Health Promotion

(DES, DOH, HSE 201 5)

**Define what you mean by the term ‘critical incident’**

The staff and management of Castlebridge NSrecognise 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*

**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 effect 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 (See also Health and Safety policy)**

* Evacuation plan formulated
* Regular fire drills occur
* Fire exits and extinguishers are regularly checked
* Pre-opening supervision in the school yard ( from 9-10am)
* Playground rules and supervision
* Front School doors locked during school hours
* Children are signed out by adults in the school office when they are leaving the premises
* CCTV Camera on 4 exits
* Castlebridge NS has a clear Code of Behaviour and implements it fully
* Adult volunteers (coaches, etc) sign in in the office

**Psychological safety**

The management and staff of Castlebridge NS 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), Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) are integrated into the work of the school. They are 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 have access to training for their role in SPHE and RSE
* Staff are familiar with the Child Protection Guidelines and Procedures and details of how to proceed with suspicions or disclosures. The Child Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment Statement are prominently displayed in the school. They are reviewed annually by the staff and the Board of Management
* Books and resources on difficulties affecting the primary/post 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 and some are trained in interventions for suicidal students
* The school has developed links with a range of external agencies – NEPS, Tusla, SENO, HSE and the local Gardai
* 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 for primary schools. These documents are available on [www.education.ie](http://www.education.ie)
* Students who are identified as being at risk are referred to the designated staff member (e.g. designated liaison person, DLP), 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. *(\*Edit\*a summary of this support is set out in R 23)*
* Staff are informed about how to access support for themselves.

**Critical Incident Management Team (CIMT)**

A CIMT has been established in line with best practice. The members of the team were selected on a voluntary basis and will retain their roles for at least one school year. The members of the team will meet annually to review and update the policy and plan. 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:** *Edward Lyons*

**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; SEC
* Liaises with the bereaved family

*(Note - It is important to consider who will take the lead in the absence of the team leader. )*

**Garda liaison** *Edward Lyons*

**Role**

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

**Staff liaison** Edward Lyons and AnnMarie Hearne.

**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 (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** *Brid Skelton and Aphra Fortune*

**Role**

* Alerts other staff to vulnerable students (appropriately)
* Provides materials for students (from their critical incident folder)
* Maintains student contact records (R1).
* Looks after setting up and supervision of ‘quiet’ room where agreed

**Community/agency liaison** Edward Lyons, Maria Higgins, Jane Grennan and Anne Murphy.

**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** Annie Hayden and Patrick Brown.

**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 (from their critical incident folder)

**Media liaison** *Edward Lyons*

**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)
* 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** *Anne Murphy*

**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

**Record keeping** *Anne Murphy*

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.

*Anne Murphy* 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 *Castlebridge 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.

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| **Critical Incident Rooms**  In the event of a critical incident, the following rooms are designated for the indicated purposes | |
| **Room Name:** | **Designated Purpose:** |
| *Staffroom* | Main room for meeting staff |
| *Senior-Hall*  *Juniors-Hub* | Meetings with students |
| *Hall* | Meetings with parents |
| *Staffroom* | Meetings with media |
| *SEN rooms* | **I**ndividual sessions with students |
| *Office* | Meetings with other visitors |

**Consultation and communication regarding the plan**

All staff were 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

The plan will be updated annually on the first Croke Park Hours every year.

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| **Critical Incident Management Team** | | |
| **Role** | **Name** | **Phone** |
| **Team leader:** | *Edward Lyons* |  |
| **Garda liaison** | *Edward Lyons* |  |
| **Staff liaison** | *Edward Lyons and AnnMarie Hearne.* |  |
| **Student liaison** | *Brid Skelton and Aphra Fortune* |  |
| **Community liaison** | *Jane Grennan, Maria Higgins, Edward Lyons and Anne Murphy* |  |
| **Parent liaison** | *Annie Hayden and Patrick Brown.* |  |
| **Media liaison** | *Edward Lyons* |  |
| **Administrator** | *Anne Murphy* |  |

**Short term actions – Day 1**

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| **Task** | **Name** |
| **Gather accurate information** | Edward Lyons |
| **Who, what, when, where?** | Edward Lyons |
| **Convene a CIMT meeting – specify time and place clearly** | Edward Lyons |
| **Contact external agencies** | Edward Lyons |
| **Arrange supervision for students** | All staff |
| **Hold staff meeting** | All staff |
| **Agree schedule for the day** | All Staff |
| **Inform students – (close friends and students with learning difficulties may need to be told separately)** | Principal, Teachers, SEN Teachers for those with learning difficulty |
| **Compile a list of vulnerable students** | All Staff |
| **Prepare and agree media statement and deal with media** | Edward Lyons |
| **Inform parents** | Edward Lyons & AnnMarie Hearne |
| **Hold end of day staff briefing** | Edward Lyons |

**Medium term actions - (Day 2 and following days)**

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

**Follow-up – beyond 72 hours**

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| **Task** | **Name** |
| Monitor students for signs of continuing distress | Class teachers |
| Liaise with agencies regarding referrals | Principal & Class Teachers |
| Plan for return of bereaved student(s) | Next of kin, Principal & Teachers |
| Plan for giving of ‘memory box’ to bereaved family | To be decided at Staff Meeting |
| Decide on memorials and anniversaries | BOM/Staff, parents and students |
| Review response to incident and amend plan | Staff/BOM |

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| EMERGENCY CONTACT LIST | |
| **AGENCY** | **CONTACT NUMBERS** |
| Garda | 053 9165200  053 9159221 |
| Hospital | 053 9153000 |
| Fire Brigade/Ambulance Service | 999 112 |
| Local GPs | On File |
| HSE | 053 9153000 |
| Community Care Team | 053 9123522 |
| IPPN |  |
| Child and Family Mental Health Service (CAMHS) | 053 9145402 |
| School Inspector | Mary Regan |
| NEPS Psychologist | Deirdre Starr 01 8892700 |
| DES | 09064 83600 |
| INTO | 1850 277377  01 8731101 |
| Clergy | 053 9137140 |
| Childline | 1800 666660 |
| Employee Assistance Service | 1800 411 057 |
| Wexford Bereavement Care | 053 9123086 |
| CPSMA | 1850 407200  01 6292462 |