



St Mary's NS

Critical Incident Policy

March 2024

Critical Incident Management Team St. Marys N.S.

Role	Name
<u>Team Leader</u>	Eoghan O'Byrne
Deputy Team Leader	Dervila Kelly
Reserve	Ann Breen
<u>Garda Liaison</u>	Dervila Kelly
Deputy Garda Liaison	Eoghan O'Byrne
Reserve	Noelle Mann
<u>Staff Liaison</u>	Deirdre Riordan
Deputy Staff Liaison	Marian Kennedy
Reserve	Eoghan O'Byrne
<u>Student Liaison</u>	Marian Kennedy
Deputy Student Liaison	Ann Breen
<u>Parent Liaison</u>	Noelle Mann
Deputy Parent Liaison	Deidre Riordan
<u>Community/Agency Liaison</u>	Deirdre Riordan
Deputy C/A Liaison	Dervila Kelly
<u>Media Liaison</u>	Ann Breen
Deputy Media Liaison	Marion Kennedy
<u>Administrator</u>	School Secretary
	Aileen Farrell

Roles and Responsibilities of the Team:

Team Leader:

- Alerts team members to the incident and convenes a meeting of the team.
- Clarifies the facts surrounding the incident.
- Co-ordinates and delegates tasks to the team members.
- Liaises with the Board of Management, with the Department of Education and Science and with any outside agencies involved as appropriate.
- In cases of bereavement liaises with the family.
- Acts as spokesperson to the media if necessary.
- Ensures provision of ongoing support to pupils and staff.
- Decides with team how news will be communicated to staff, pupils and parents.
- Ensuring telephone lines are available for important incoming and outgoing calls.
- Maintains contact with relevant outside agencies.
- Maintains up to date list of contact numbers for teachers, parents/guardians, external agencies and support services.

The D.P. will assume this role in the absence of the team leader.

Garda Liaison

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

Staff Liaison Role:

It is very important that staff members are kept informed and feel secure in handling questions and comments from both pupils and parents.

- Briefing and advising staff on the facts as known and noting their feelings and concerns/questions.
- Keeping staff updated on developments.
- Noting which staff members are missing at update and passing on the information to them
- Provides resource material for staff from folder.
- Liaising with the school chaplain.
- Arranges supervision cover for class if necessary.
- Maintains a record of staff contact with external agencies.
- Agree with staff how and what information will be given to pupils.
- Maintain links with absent staff as necessary.

Student Liaison Role:

- Gathering information from class teacher regarding child's friends, any absentees and anyone who may need to be contacted.
- Disseminating information to pupils.
- Gathering information from class teacher / SET regarding the needs of the class or particular students as a result of the incident.
- Organise an assembly or opportunity (e.g. prayer service) for the school community to congregate.
- Alerting teachers other than class teachers to vulnerable students as appropriate.
- Keeping records of pupils seen by external agency staff. (e.g. NEPS)

Chaplaincy Role:

- Visiting the classroom and providing support to the class.
- Visiting the staff and providing support.
- Conducting the funeral service if appropriate.
- Conducting a prayer service with the school community.

Parent Liaison Role:

- Visiting the bereaved family with the team leader.
- Arranging meeting for parents if necessary.
- Maintaining a record of parents seen by external agencies as appropriate.
- Providing appropriate material for parents from the incident folder.
- Checking different religious beliefs about death and funeral services if relevant.

Community/Agency liaison

- Source contact numbers -emergency support services and other external contacts and resources
- Liaise with agencies in the community for support and onward referral
- Check credentials of individuals offering support
- Co-ordinate the involvement of these agencies
- Remind agency staff to wear name badges
- Update team members on the involvement of external agencies

Staff responsibilities

At all times teaching staff have a responsibility to

- Safeguard welfare of pupils and colleagues.
- Control flow of information by pupils with mobile phones.
- Liaise with other staff to ensure safety of pupils.
- Assist in gathering information.
- Supervising their own or colleagues classes.
- Assisting in identifying and supporting students at risk or in distress.
- Maintaining normal procedures.
- Maintaining confidentiality.

Ancillary staff will also have the responsibility to maintain normal procedures. In addition, the school secretary will ensure that the reception office is staffed at all times and that phone lines are available for important ingoing and outgoing calls.

Dealing with the Media.

A critical incident may on occasion necessitate dealing with the media. Only the principal, deputy principal or chairperson of the Board of Management will communicate with the media.

Members of the media must report to the reception office, identify themselves and state their business in the school. Members of the media will not be allowed beyond the reception office except at the invitation of the Principal or Deputy Principal. The media will not be allowed to interview or photograph pupils on the school premises.

As necessary, the principal and deputy principal will prepare a brief media statement to include the following;

- Expressing sympathy for the affected /bereaved family.
- Stating that it is a difficult time for the school community.
- Positive information or comments about the deceased/ injured parties.
- The facts about the situation (following consultation with the families.)
- The term suicide will not be use. Instead the term 'tragic death' will be used.
- Outline what is being done to support pupils and staff.

Some pointers in relation to dealing with the media are included in appendix 2.

Record Keeping

All team members will keep written records of phone calls made, meetings, and interventions. Records will be compiled and kept on file in the Principal's office. All phone calls will be logged by the school secretary.

Preventative Approaches:

<i>Curriculum</i>	<i>Support</i>	<i>Physical Environment</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Anti Bullying Policy</i> • <i>Behaviour Policy</i> • <i>Circle Time</i> • <i>Stay Safe Programme</i> • <i>SPHE Policy</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Middle Management Team</i> • <i>NEPS</i> • <i>Parish Priest</i> • <i>Child and Family Services</i> • <i>Youth Service</i> • <i>HSCL & Family Support Worker</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Evacuation Drills</i> • <i>Safety Procedures</i> • <i>Supervision</i>

Emergency Contact List

Agency	Contact Numbers
Garda Community Garda	061-212400 Eoin Kelly 085-8830194
Hospitals	UHL 061-301111 St John's 061-462222
Fire Brigade	999/112
Local GP Dr. Murray	061-311811
HSE/Community Care Team/Child & Family Centre/CAMHS	061-483388/061-412247
Roxtown Health Centre	061-483060/061-417622
School Inspector Niamh Quinn	087-7208370

NEPS Psychologist Claire Casey	087-7674429
HSE Child Psychology	061-483692
DES	01-8896400
INTO	01-8047700
Parish Priest/Clergy	Fr. Richie Davern PP 087-2977500 Fr. Gerard O'Leary CC 087-9378685
Chairperson	Fr. Gerard O'Leary (see above)
Employee Assistance Service	1800 411 057
CPSMA	1850 407200
Education Welfare Officer (NEWB) Freda Jones	086-4117876
Martin McKeogh Allianz Insurance	087-9203992

St Marys National School CIMT Action Plan Short-term Actions - Day 1

Task	Name
Gather accurate information	CIMT
Who, what, when, where?	The Team, in school convene together as soon as all members can be contacted.
Convene a CIMT meeting - specify time and place clearly	As soon as possible on school premises or nearby as appropriate
Contact external agencies	Gardaí, NEPS, Emergency Services Garda Liaison Officer, Agency Liaison Officer
Arrange supervision for students	Adjoining CT or appropriate member of staff to supervise other students if needed, Student Liaison Officer

Hold staff meeting	All staff
Agree schedule for the day	CIMT
Inform students (close friends and students with learning difficulties may need to be told separately)	Student Liaison Officer, Class Teacher
Compile a list of vulnerable students	Principal, Class Teacher, Whole Staff
Contact/visit the bereaved family	Principal and Deputy Principal, Class Teacher where appropriate, Chairperson, BoM
Prepare and agree media statement and deal with media	Media Officer with CIMT and Chairperson statement
Inform parents	Principal, HSCL, Chairperson
Hold end of day staff briefing	Principal, CIMT, whole staff

Immediate/Short Term Actions

Every incident will require a different response. A critical incident may occur on or off site and will consequently require a different response. However the following will serve as a guide to the types of response necessary. Evacuate the building if necessary.

- Inform emergency services.
- Take emergency action to ensure safety at onsite incidents.
- Limit further injury at on site incidents.
- Account for all pupils, personnel and visitors.
- Care for the injured parties.
- Gather accurate information
- Inform Chairperson of Board of Management
- Inform solicitors and insurance company as appropriate.
- Convene a meeting of the CIMT.
- Organise a timetable for the day.
- Inform staff and update on any arrangements as necessary.
- Contact appropriate agencies and organize support.
- Arrange for supervision of pupils.
- Inform pupils and parents.
- Make contact with the affected /bereaved family.
- Respond to the media.
- Report to the health and safety authority if necessary.
- Arrange visit to the affected /bereaved family.
- Identify high risk students.

- Designate particular areas for parents, media, friends etc to avoid large groups congregating in particular areas; blocking entrances ...etc.

Medium-term Actions- Day 2 and Subsequent Days

Task	Name
Convene a CIMT meeting to review the events of day 1 before school	Team leader – Principal, staff
Meet external agencies	Agency Liaison Officer, Principal
Meet whole staff	With CIMT before school
Arrange support for students, staff, parents	NEPS, Employee Assistance, HSCL, Student and staff Liaison Officers
Visit the injured	Principal, members of CIMT or Class Teacher, or members BoM
Liaise with bereaved family regarding funeral arrangements	Staff, CT, Principal, DP, Chairperson, HSCL
Agree on attendance and participation at funeral service	Staff
Make decisions about school closures	B.O.M.

Medium Term Actions (24-72 hours)

- Meeting of the CIMT to decide on the following
- Arrangements for support for staff /pupils.
- Decide on mechanism for getting feedback from teachers on vulnerable pupils.
- If relevant plan visits to the injured.
- School closure if appropriate following agreement from the Board of Management.
- If relevant, prepare staff/students for attending funeral.
- If appropriate and if agreed by the affected family, involve the pupils or staff in funeral.
- Maintain contact with absent staff and pupils.
- Plan for the re-integration of pupils and staff e.g. those injured, those who were directly affected, absentees ... etc.
- Hold a prayer service for the pupils and staff.
- Arrange for pupil and staff response to those affected. e.g. cards, flowers etc.
- Maintain the normal timetables/school day to make sure pupils are unsettled as little as possible.
- Organise support for staff

- Provide information to families on the kind of support available to them and to their children.

Follow-up-beyond 72 hours

Monitor students for signs of continuing distress	Class teachers
Liaise with agencies regarding referrals	Principal and DP, Agency Liaison Officer
Plan for return of bereaved student(s)	Principal, Class Teacher, Parents, Appropriate agency
Plan for giving of 'memory box' to bereaved family	Principal, staff, CIMT < students as appropriate
Decide on memorials and anniversaries	BoM/staff, parents and students
Evaluate and review response to incident and amend plan appropriately, formalise plan for future	Staff/BoM
Inform new Staff / pupils	Student and Staff Liaison Officers

Long Term Actions

- Monitor pupils for signs of anxiety.
- Liaise with parents re vulnerable pupils.
- Liaise with external agencies regarding referrals.
- Arrange for school memorial service / anniversary if relevant.
- Review plan in light of incident.
- Update and amend school records.
- Ensure new staff are aware of policy and which pupils / staff affected by an incident.
- Evaluate legal and insurance consequences.
- Written report for the DES and the Board of Management.

