

CRITICAL INCIDENT MANAGEMENT POLICY

Christ The King BNS



Christ the King BNS aims to protect the well-being of its students and staff by providing a safe and nurturing environment at all times. *In Christ the King BNS we aim to protect the well-being of our pupils and staff by providing a safe, tolerant and well catered for environment as outlined in our School Mission Statement.* The Board of Management, through Donald O'Brien, has drawn up a Critical Incident Management Plan as one element of the school's policies and plans.

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)
- Suicide Prevention in the Community - A Practical Guide (HSE 2011)
- Well-Being in Post-Primary Schools Guidelines for Mental Health Promotion and Suicide Prevention (DES, DOH, HSE 2013)
- 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 Christ the King BNS 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*

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

- Evacuation plan formulated – we would use similar procedure to fire drill evacuation
- Regular fire drills occur
- Fire exits and extinguishers are regularly checked
- Pre-opening supervision in the school yard – Principal and breakfast Club SNA monitor children's behaviour prior to school opening.
- Front gates are closed but not locked during school hours
- School doors to street are locked during class time and entry to school is beside the Principal's office.
- Rules of the playground – are understood by all staff and reviewed periodically. Rotas for supervision are clearly discussed, agreed upon and on display in the staff room. Unexpected absences of supervisory personnel are monitored and covered.

Psychological safety

The management and staff of Christ the King BNS 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 have access to training for their role in SPHE
- Staff are 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 – advice received from school support worker (SCP intervention initiative)
- The school has developed links with a range of external agencies; SCP, EWO, TUSLA, NEPS, CAHMS, Daughters of Charity, Vincent De Paul, Early Intervention and School Age teams.

- 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) or 0023/2010 (Post-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 in 2007 for primary schools. See also Student Support Teams in Post Primary Schools (2014). These documents are available on www.education.ie
- Students who are identified as being at risk are referred to the designated staff member (SEN team), 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 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: *Clodagh Vahey (Deputy Principal will fill this role in the absence of the Principal)*

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

Garda liaison *Kate O' Malley*

Role

*(*Edit* May be seen as part of the team leader's role)*

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

Staff liaison *Adelene McWeeney*

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 *Ciara McNamara*

Role

- At post-primary level, may co-ordinate information from tutors and year heads about students they are concerned about
- 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 *Natalie Harford (HSCL Teacher)***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 *Natalie Harford (HSCL Teacher)***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 *Kate O' Malley***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 *Ciara McNamara***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

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.

Same as above 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 *Christ the King BNS* 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.

Critical Incident Rooms	
In the event of a critical incident, the following rooms are designated for the indicated purposes	
Room Name:	Designated Purpose:
<i>School Kitchen/General Purpose Room</i>	Main room for meeting staff
<i>School Kitchen/General Purpose Room</i>	Meetings with students
<i>School Kitchen/Office</i>	Meetings with parents
<i>School Kitchen/office</i>	Meetings with media
<i>School Kitchen/General Purpose Room</i>	Individual sessions with students
<i>School Kitchen/General Purpose Room</i>	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 Clodagh Vahey

The plan will be updated annually in October.

Critical Incident Management Team		
Role	Name	Phone
Team leader:	<i>Clodagh Vahey</i>	Contact via office
Garda liaison	<i>Clodagh Vahey</i>	
Staff liaison	<i>Ciara McNamara</i>	
Student liaison	<i>Adelene McWeeney</i>	
Community liaison	<i>Natalie Harford</i>	
Parent liaison	<i>Natalie Harford</i>	
Media liaison	<i>Kate O' Malley</i>	
Administrator	<i>Ciara McNamara</i>	

Short term actions - Day 1

Task	Name
Gather accurate information	Kate O' Malley
Who, what, when, where?	Kate O' Malley
Convene a CIMT meeting - specify time and place clearly	Clodagh Vahey
Contact external agencies	Natalie Harford
Arrange supervision for students	Ciara McNamara
Hold staff meeting	All staff
Agree schedule for the day	Adelene McWeeney
Inform students - (close friends and students with learning difficulties may need to be told separately)	Ciara McNamara
Compile a list of vulnerable students	Jim
Prepare and agree media statement and deal with media	Kate O' Malley
Inform parents	Natalie Harford
Hold end of day staff briefing	Adelene McWeeney

Medium term actions - (Day 2 and following days)

Task	Name
Convene a CIMT meeting to review the events of day 1	Ciara McNamara
Meet external agencies	Clodagh Vahey
Meet whole staff	Clodagh Vahey/Ciara McNamara
Arrange support for students, staff, parents	Clodagh Vahey
Visit the injured	Clodagh Vahey Natalie Harford
Liaise with bereaved family regarding funeral arrangements	Clodagh Vahey Natalie Harford
Agree on attendance and participation at funeral service	CIMT
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	Natalie Harford
Plan for return of bereaved student(s)	Clodagh Vahey
Plan for giving of 'memory box' to bereaved family	Natalie Harford
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: Mountjoy Garda Station Cabra Garda Station Community Garda - Ciaran	999 or 01 6668600 016667400 0872536798
Hospital: Mater James Connolly Memorial (Blanchardstown) Temple Street Children's Hospital	999 or 01 8032000 01 6465000 01 8784200
Fire Brigade: Phibsborough Fire Station	999 or 01 6734000
Local GPs: Dr. McVeigh (Sirona Medical Centre)	018680242
HSE: Tusla (Wellmount Park, Finglas,) Park House Crisis Intervention Service	01 8567704 01 8387122
Community Care Team (Quarry Road)	01 8693700
Connaught Street Child and Family Centre	01 8388077
Child and Family Mental Health Service (CAMHS): Mater Hospital catchment Area	01 8681400
School Inspector: Catherine King	087 7378202 018896523
NEPS Psychologist: Rhona Larney	076 1108667 076 1108666 01 8896400
DES: Marlborough Street Athlone-Employee Assistance & Wellbeing Prog.	01 8896400 1800411057
INTO:	01 8047700/1850708708
Clergy: Fr. Paul Thornton	087 7404729
Chairperson: Anne Dollard	086 3055070
Employee Assistance Service	1800 411 057

REVIEW AND RATIFICATION:

This school plan was formulated by the principal and staff and approved by the Board of Management of Christ The King BNS on 23rd February 2020

Reviewed and ratified by BOM of CTK BNS on Dec 8th 2022

Chairperson of Board of Management: Anne Doherty

Date: 8/12/22

Secretary Board of Management Clodagh Vorhey

Date: 8/12/22

This plan will be reviewed every two years.