



Dungarvan CBS

CRITICAL INCIDENT MANAGEMENT PLAN

Dungarvan CBS aims to protect the well-being of its students and staff by providing a safe and nurturing environment at all times. We, as a school, concern ourselves self with the overall well-being of the student and care for the spiritual, intellectual, social, physical and emotional well-being of each student. The Board of Management, through Principal, Mr. Paul Sheehan, 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 2015)

Define what you mean by the term 'critical incident'

The staff and management of *Dungarvan CBS* 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
- Regular fire drills occur
- Fire exits and extinguishers are regularly checked
- Pre-opening supervision in the school yard from 8:35 to 8:55
- Supervision rota for break periods in place
- Barriers on both school entrances with access restricted to authorised persons only

Psychological safety

The management and staff of *Dungarvan CBS* 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 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; Barnardos, Community Based Drugs Initiative, Squashy Couch.
- 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.
- The school has a clear policy on bullying and deals with bullying in accordance with this policy.
- There is a Pastoral Care Team established in the school.
- Students who are identified as being at risk are referred to the designated staff member (e.g. guidance counsellor), 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.
- Assemblies with their Year Head and class tutors are held weekly for first year students.
- Staff are informed about how to access support for themselves if requested.
- There is a Guidance Counsellor established in the school who provides one to one counselling.
- Fr. Harris is our school chaplain.

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: *Mr. Paul Sheehan, 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 Gardaí.
- Ensures that information about deaths or other developments is checked out for accuracy before being shared.
- 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.

In the event of the Principal being absent, Deputy Principal, Brenda Kirwan, will assume team leader role.

Staff liaison *Ms. Brenda Kirwan, Deputy Principal*

Role

- Liaises with the bereaved family.
- 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 the staff of the availability of the Employee Agency Service and gives them the contact number.

Student liaison *Ms. Brenda Kirwan, Deputy Principal & Ms. Tara Whelan, Guidance Counsellor*

Role

- 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.

- Provides supports to the school community & looks after setting up and supervision of 'quiet' room where agreed – Fr. Harris

Community/agency liaison *Ms. Geraldine Power, Admin & Ms. Tara Whelan, Guidance Counsellor*

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 *Mr. Paul Sheehan, Principal & Ms. Brenda Kirwan, Deputy Principal*

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 *Mr. Paul Sheehan, Principal*

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 *Ms. Geraldine Power, Admin*

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 school's system in advance and ready for adaptation.
- Prepares and sends out letters, emails and texts.
- Photocopies materials needed.
- Maintains records.

Record keeping *Ms. Geraldine Power, Admin*

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.

Ms. Geraldine Power 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 *Dungarvan CBS* 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>Staff Room</i>	Main room for meeting staff
<i>Classrooms/Main Assembly</i>	Meetings with students
<i>Meeting Room/Principal's Office</i>	Meetings with parents
<i>Principal's Office</i>	Meetings with media
<i>Guidance Counsellors Room</i>	Individual sessions with students
<i>Principal's Office</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 Mr. Paul Sheehan, Principal. The plan will be updated annually

Critical Incident Management Team		
Role	Name	Phone
Team leader:	<i>Mr. Paul Sheehan</i>	(058) 41185
Garda liaison	<i>Mr. Paul Sheehan</i>	(058) 41185
Staff liaison	<i>Ms. Brenda Kirwan</i>	(058) 41185
Student liaison	<i>Ms. Brenda Kirwan</i>	(058) 41185
Community liaison	<i>Ms. Tara Whelan</i> <i>Ms. Geraldine Power</i>	(058) 41185
Parent liaison	<i>Mr. Paul Sheehan</i> <i>Ms. Brenda Kirwan</i>	(058) 41185
Media liaison	<i>Mr. Paul Sheehan</i>	(058) 41185
Administrator	<i>Ms. Geraldine Power</i>	(058) 41185

Short Term Actions – Day 1

Task	Name
Gather accurate information	Critical Incident Team
Who, what, when, where?	Team Leader / Office
Convene a CIMT meeting – specify time and place clearly	Team Leader
Contact external agencies	Admin
Arrange supervision for students	Team Leader
Hold staff meeting	All staff
Agree schedule for the day	Critical Incident Team
Inform students – (close friends and students with learning difficulties may need to be told separately)	Class Teacher/Year Head
Compile a list of vulnerable students	Class Teacher/Office
Prepare and agree media statement and deal with media	Critical Incident Team
Inform parents/guardians	Administrator
Hold end of day staff briefing	Team Leader

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	Principal / Deputy Principal / Guidance Counsellor
Meet whole staff	Principal / Deputy Principal
Arrange support for students, staff, parents	Guidance Counsellor
Visit the injured	Principal / Deputy Principal / Teacher as appropriate
Liaise with bereaved family regarding funeral arrangements	Principal / Deputy Principal / Office
Agree on attendance and participation at funeral service	Principal / Deputy Principal
Make decisions about school closure	BOM

Follow-up – Beyond 72 Hours

Task	Name
Monitor students for signs of continuing distress	Class teachers / Guidance Counsellor
Liaise with agencies regarding referrals	Principal / Deputy Principal / Guidance Counsellor
Plan for return of bereaved student(s)	Guidance Counsellor
Plan for giving of 'memory box' to bereaved family	Year Head / Class Teacher
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 Garda Liaison Officer – Aidan McCarthy	058-42370 087-0601733
Hospital	UHW 051-848000
Fire Brigade	058-44506
Local GPs	Shandon Med. Centre 058-42210 High St. Med. Centre 058-41162 Strandside Med. Centre 058-41227
HSE	HSE Community Care: 051-842908
Chairperson BOM	Betty Tutty 087-6737220
Local Counselling Services	Barnardos 058-45331 Community Based Drugs Initiative: 058-48946 Squashy Couch 051-859000
Inspectorate	01-8896553
NEPS Psychologist Waterford	Shirley Murphy: 087-6501975 / 051-310031
DES	0906-483814
ASTI	01-6040160 1850 418400
Clergy	Fr. Harris 087-6217672
State Exams Commission	0906-442700
Employee Assistance Service	1800 411 057