**2020-2021 CRITICAL INCIDENT POLICY\***

**What is a Critical Incident?**

NEPs defines a critical incident as follows; “A critical incident is any incident or sequence of events which overwhelms the normal coping mechanism of the school and disrupts the running of the school”.

**\*As the Covid 19 pandemic has had substantial effects on the school, all aspects of the response to to Covid related incidents, including class/school closure will be Covid-19 School Response Plan. This plan continues to cover non-Covid-19 related critical incidents that may occur.**

Examples:

* Death, major illness (outbreak of disease (Foot/Mouth), Pandemics
* Criminal incidents (e.g. school shooting,)
* Major accidents, serious injury (e.g. ' bus crash’)
* Suicide
* Civil unrest, war (refugees may be traumatised by events that happened elsewhere)
* Fire, natural and technological disaster (e.g. school ceiling collapsing in Cork)
* Disappearance of student from home or school (e.g. Middleton incident in Cork)
* Unauthorised removal of student from school or home
* Global Pandemic ie closure due to covid-19

**Critical  Incidents  Management  Team**

Leadership Role:                          -                       Principal:  Mr. Patrick O’Rourke

Communication Role:                -                        Deputy Principal: Miss Julie Barry

Student Liaison/Counselling Role:  - SCP (coordinator Niall Weldon)

Chaplaincy Role:                          -                       Assigned from Holy Redeemer  Parish

Family Liaison Role:                   -                       HSCL

Parents Association Rep:          -                      Chair of Parents Association

B.O.M. Rep:                               -                       Assigned from the Board of Management

N.E.P.S.:                                      -                      NEPs Psychologist  ( as assigned by NEPS)

**Roles and Responsibilities**

**Leadership Role:**

Intervention

* Confirm the event, the details of event, and whether it comes under C.I.P.
* Activate the C.I. response team, review any relevant policy.
* Express sympathy to family
* Clarify facts surrounding event
* Make contact with other relevant agencies
* Decide how news will be communicated to different groups (staff, pupils, outside school)

Postvention

* Ensure provision of on-going support to staff and students
* Facilitate any appropriate anniversary events
* Review Plan and evaluate actions and plan

Critical Incident Management Plan

**Short  Term  Action  Plan  (1st 24 hours)**

* Confirm the event and the details of the event as accurately as possible
* Convene a meeting with Key Staff/C.I.T.
* Decide on actions for next 48 hours assign responsibilities.
* Immediate contact with family/families.
* Consult with the family regarding appropriate support from the school, e.g. funeral service, counselling.
* Ensure that a quiet place can be made for students/staff.
* Rooms will be made available as needed e.g.  prayer room, parents room..
* Box containing  – white tablecloth, white candle, cross, bible, matches  to be stored in locked cupboard and used as needed.

**Media  Briefing**

* Designate a spokesperson. (Leader)
* Prepare a brief statement. (Team) Sample available
* Protect the family’s privacy.
* Gather Accurate information
* It is important to obtain accurate information about the incident.

1. What happened, where and when?

2. What is the extent of the injuries?

3. How many are involved and what are their names?

4. Is there a risk of  further injury?

5. What agencies have been contacted already?

**Contact  appropriate  agencies**

1.     Emergency services

2.     Medical services

3.     H.S.E. Psychology /  TUSLA

4.     NEPS

5.     BOM

6.     DES/Schools Inspector.

7.      Gardaí

**Convene  a  meeting of  Key  Staff/Critical  Management  Team**

1. Organize a staff meeting, if appropriate

2. Organize timetable/routine for the day. (Adhering to the normal school routine is important, if this is possible)

3. Class teachers to take note of any absentees who might need to be contacted, list of friends etc., or any other relevant information and give to the Student Liaison person.

4. Arrange supervision of students

**Liaise with the family regarding funeral arrangements**

1.The Chaplain/Principal will liaise with the family, to extend sympathy and clarify the family’s wishes regarding the school’s involvement in funeral.

2.Arrange a home visit by staff representatives within 24 hours, if appropriate.

3.Have regard for different religious traditions and faiths.

**MEDIUM-TERM ACTION (24-72 hours)**

* Preparation of students/staff attending funeral.
* Involvement of students/staff in liturgy if agreed by bereaved family.
* Facilitation of student’s/staff responses, e.g. Sympathy cards, flowers, book of condolences, etc.

**Review the events of the first 24 hours**

1. Reconvene Key Staff/ Critical Incident Management Team.
2. Decide arrangements for support meetings for parents/student.
3. Decide on mechanism for feedback from teachers on vulnerable students.
4. Have review Critical Incident Management Team meeting
5. Establish contact with absent staff and pupils.

**Arrange support for individual students, groups of students, parents and staff if necessary.**

1. Hold support/information meeting for parents/students, and staff if necessary, in order to clarify what has happened.
2. Give any teacher who feels uncomfortable with involvement in support meetings the choice of opting out.
3. Arrange, in consultation, with outside agencies, individual or group debriefings or support meetings with parental permission.  Permission slips to be added to the back page of the policy and to be photocopied when needed.

**Plan for the re-integration of students and staff (e.g. absentees, injured, siblings, close relative etc.)**

1. Student Liaison person to liaise with above on their return to school

2. Principal and Staff representatives to visit home/hospital if appropriate.

3. Attendance and participation at hospital visit or funeral will be decided in accordance with parents’ wishes, school management decisions and in consultation with close school friends.

4. Board of Management approval will be sought for any school closure in this matter.

**LONGER TERM ACTIONS**

* Monitor students and staff for signs of continuing distress
* If, over a prolonged period of time, a student or staff member continues to display the following he/she may need assistance from the Health Board which will be sought and provided.

1.  Uncharacteristic behaviour

2.  Deterioration in academic performance

3.  Physical symptoms e.g. weight loss/gain, lack of attention to appearance, tiredness, restlessness.

4.  Inappropriate emotional reactions

5.  Increased absenteeism.

**Evaluate response to incident and amend Critical Incident Management Plan appropriately**.

1. What went well?

2. Where were the gaps?

3. What was most/least helpful?

4. Have all necessary onward referrals to support services been made?

5. Is there any unfinished business?

**Formalize the Critical Incident Plan for the future**

1.     Consult with NEPS Psychologist.

2.    Inform new staff/new school pupils affected by Critical Incidents where appropriate

3.      Ensure that new staff are aware of the school policy and procedures in this area.

4.      Ensure they are aware of which pupils were affected in any recent incident and in what way.

5.    Decide on appropriate ways to deal with anniversaries (be sensitive to special days and events such as Birthdays, Christmas, Mother’s Day, Father’s Day etc.)

6.      When individual pupils or a class of pupils are affected by an incident and are transferring to a new school, the Principal should brief the Principal of the new school.

7.   Care of deceased person’s possessions. What are the parent’s wishes?

8.     Update and amend school records such as roll books, text books, school reports, personal files.

**Ratified by the Board of Management on\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

Updated \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Signed\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Signed\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

            Eamonn P. O’Boyle                                        Patrick O’Rourke

            CHAIRPERSON                                           PRINCIPAL