



Newport College,

Newport,

Co. Tipperary

CRITICAL INCIDENT POLICY.

Newport College aims to protect the well-being of its students by providing a safe and nurturing environment at all times. As stated in the Mission Statement “Newport College aims to develop among students, parents, staff and community a trusting, caring atmosphere which enhances the dignity and self-esteem of all”. The school has taken a number of measures to create a coping, supportive and caring ethos in the school. The school has also formulated a number of policies and procedures to be followed with a view to ensuring the physical and psychological safety of both students and staff during the normal course of the school day and in the event of a critical incident.

Such policies and procedures would include

- Health and Safety Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Code of Behaviour
- Guidance Policy.
- S.P.H.E Programme & RSE Programme
- Class tutor system
- Student Support Team

Context for development of this Policy and Plan:

In drawing up this policy and plan the Critical Incident Management Team (CIMT) consulted the following resource documents available to the school:

- Responding to Critical Incidents: Guidelines for Schools (NEPS 2007)
- HSE Training documents

Definition of Critical Incident:

Newport College recognises a critical incident to be “an incident or sequence of events that overwhelms the normal coping mechanisms of the school, and disrupts the normal running of the school”.

Critical incidents may involve students, staff, the school or the local community.

Examples of a critical incident might be;

- The death of a member of the school community, through sudden death, accident, suicide or terminal illness
- A serious accident or tragedy in the school community
- Serious damage to the school through fire, flooding vandalism etc.
- The disappearance of a member of the school community
- A physical attack on a staff member or student
- Intrusion into the school.

Aim of Plan:

The aim of the Critical Incident Plan is that in the event of such an incident as outlined above, the plan will help staff and management to react quickly and effectively and to maintain control of the situation. The plan will also help the school to return to normality as soon as possible and limit the effects of the incident on staff and students.

Critical Incident Management Team:

Newport College has set up a Critical Incident Management Team consisting of the following personnel:

- The Principal
- The Deputy Principal
- The HSCL Coordinator
- The School Guidance Counsellor

The Critical Incident Management Team may co-opt other members of staff to assist them, should they deem it necessary.

The Principal will act as Team Leader or in his/her absence the Deputy Principal.

Role of Team Leader:

- The team leader alerts team members to the crisis and convenes a meeting of the team
- Co-ordinates/delegates tasks of the other team members.
- Liaises with the Board of Management and the Department of Education and Skills
- In case of bereavement, liaises with the bereaved family

Other areas of responsibilities, which may be delegated by the Team Leader to other members of the team would include:

- Contacting Emergency support services
- Briefing and advising the staff and noting their feelings and concerns.
- Organising the supervision of students in the school
- Keeping staff updated on information/developments /progress
- Meeting students to brief them on the situation
- Taking care of “Vulnerable students/vulnerable teachers”
- Liaising with external agencies for support or referrals
- Liaising with school organizations such as Parents’ Council & Students’ Council.
- Meeting with individual parents or groups of parents.
- Visiting bereaved families or families closely associated with the incident
- Preparing a Press release and liaising with the media.
- Preparation of an “Incident Room”

Record Keeping:

All team members will keep written records of phone calls, letters, meetings interventions etc.

Confidentiality:

The school is conscious of its responsibility to protect the privacy and good name of people involved in any incident and will be sensitive to the consequences of any public statements.

CRITICAL INCIDENT MANAGEMENT PLAN

MANAGEMENT TEAM

School Principal

School Deputy Principal

HSCL Coordinator

School Guidance Counsellor

The Critical Incident Management Team may co-opt other members of staff to assist them, should they deem it necessary.

KEYROLES ASSIGNED BY TEAM LEADER

| NAME OF TEAM MEMBER | Role |
|----------------------------|---------------------------|
| Principal | Team Leader; Media Leader |
| Deputy Principal | Staff Liaison |
| Guidance Counsellor | Student Liaison |
| HSCL Coordinator | Parent Liaison |

Emergency Contact Details

| | | |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Principal | Clodagh Kelly | (087) 9832190 |
| Deputy – Principal | James Williams | (087) 9927513 |
| Caretaker | Seamus Coffey | (087) 1271532 |
| Hospital | Nenagh General | (067) 34901 |
| | Limerick Regional | (061) 301111 |
| | St John's | (061) 462222 |
| Doctor | Dr Pat Moroney | (061) 378241 |
| Fire Brigade/Ambulance | | 999 / 112 |
| Garda Station | Newport | (061) 378102 |
| | Nenagh | (067) 31333 |
| | Castleconnell | (061) 377105 |
| ESB | Supply Failure/Emergencies | (1850) 372999 |
| Priest | Fr. Delaney/Fr John O'Keefe | (061) 378126 (061) 378761 – church |
| | | |
| Bord Gais | Emergency Number | (1850) 205050 |
| Health & Safety Authority | Contact Number | 1890 289 389 |
| NEPS Psychologist | Irene Timmons | (061) 430021 |
| State Examinations Commission | | (090) 6442793 |
| | | |

SHORT TERM ACTIONS AND ROLES ASSIGNED

1st Day

| Task | Name |
|--|--|
| GATHER ACCURATE INFORMATION | Principal and CIMT |
| CONTACT APPROPRIATE AGENCIES | Principal and CIMT |
| CONVENE A MEETING WITH KEY STAFF | Principal |
| ARRANGE SUPERVISION OF STUDENTS | Deputy Principal |
| HOLD STAFF MEETING | Principal and CIMT |
| ORGANISE TIME TABLE FOR THE DAY | Principal and CIMT |
| INFORM PARENTS | HSCL coordinator |
| INFORM STUDENTS | Guidance Counsellor |
| MAKE CONTACT WITH THE BEREAVED FAMILY | Principal and staff member deemed most suitable |
| DEALING WITH THE MEDIA | Principal |

MEDIUM TERM ACTIONS AND ROLES ASSIGNED

24 – 72 HOURS

| Task | Name |
|--|---|
| REVIEW THE EVENTS OF THE FIRST 24 HOURS | CIMT |
| ARRANGE SUPPORT FOR TEACHERS | Deputy Principal and Guidance Counsellor |
| ARRANGE SUPPORT FOR STUDENTS | Guidance Counsellor and Class Tutors |
| ARRANGE SUPPORT FOR PARENTS | Principal and HSCL Coordinator |
| PLAN THE RE-INTEGRATION OF STAFF AND STUDENTS | CIMT and all staff |
| PLAN VISITS TO INJURED/FAMILY OF BEREAVED | Coordinated through CIMT |
| LIAISE WITH FAMILY REGARDING FUNERAL ARRANGEMENTS | Principal |
| ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION AT FUNERAL SERVICE | CIMT to decide |

BEYOND 72 HOURS

| Task | Name |
|--|--------------------------|
| MONITOR STUDENTS FOR CONTINUING SIGNS OF STRESS | All staff |
| EVALUATE RESPONSE TO INCIDENT AND AMEND CRITICAL INCIDENT PLAN APPROPRIATELY. | CIMT |
| FORMALISE PLAN FOR THE FUTURE | CIMT |
| INFORM NEW STAFF AND PUPILS | Senior Management |
| DECIDE ON APPROPRIATE WAY TO DEAL WITH ANNIVERSARIES | CIMT |

SAMPLE LETTER TO PARENTS/GUARDIANS

Dear Parents/Guardians

The school has experienced (the sudden death/injury) to one of our students/staff. We are deeply saddened by this death/injury, *(Brief details of the incident, and in the case of death, perhaps some positive remembrances of persons lost)*

We have support structures in place to help your child cope with this tragedy. *(Elaborate)*

It is possible that your child may have some feelings that he may like to discuss with you. You can help your child by taking time to listen to him and encouraging him/her to express his/her feelings. It is important to give truthful information that is appropriate to his/her age.

If you would like any advice or support you may contact the following people at school
(Details)

Yours sincerely

Principal.

Sample letter requesting consent for involvement of outside professionals.

Dear Parents/Guardians,

Following the recent (tragedy/ death of x) we have arranged specialist support for students in the school who need particular help. (X) is available to help us with this work. The support will usually consist of talking to students either in small groups or on a one to one basis, and offering reassurance and advice as appropriate

Your child has been identified as one of the students who would benefit from meeting with (X). If you would like your child to receive this support, please sign the attached permission slip and return it to the school by

If you would like further information on the above or if you would like to talk to the psychologist, please indicate this on the slip, or contact the school.

Yours sincerely

Principal.

I/We consent to having our child meet with

I understand that my child may meet x in an individual or group session, depending on the arrangements that are thought most appropriate.

Name of Student:

Class:

Date of Birth:

Signed:

(Parents /Guardians)