

Critical Incident Management Policy

Introduction:

All those who attend Mountrath Community School are encouraged to reach their full potential, mentally, physically, spiritually and emotionally and socially, in an atmosphere in which all feel safe, valued, and secure and in which respect for self and others is our custom. Mountrath Community School aims to protect the wellbeing of staff and students providing a safe and nurturing environment at all times. In keeping with our school Mission Statement, the Board of Management is committed to the care of staff and students in our school.

This policy refers to the response to be taken by this school should a critical incident occur.

Definition:

For the purposes of this policy a critical incident is defined as any incident or sequence of events which overwhelms the normal coping mechanisms of the school and disrupts the running of the school e.g.

- The death of a member of the school community
- A serious accident involving students or staff
- A traumatic event involving the school
- Serious accident or tragedy of the wider school community

This policy has been developed in line with:

- Responding to Critical Incidents – Guidelines for Schools, NEPS 2007
- Responding to Critical Incidents – resource materials for School, NEPS 2007

As each Critical Incident will require the school to respond in a manner appropriate to that particular incident at that time, this C.I.M.P. is intended to serve as a general outline of procedures to be followed in the event of a critical incident occurring.

Aims

Recognising that the key of managing critical incidents is planning, Mountrath Community School has developed this critical incident management policy and accompanying plan. Our hope is that in the event of an incident these will help staff react quickly and effectively and to maintain a sense of control. They should also help us to achieve a return to normality as soon as possible and ensure that the effects on the students and staff will be limited.

In general it is regarded as good practice for the school to form a Critical incident Management team to include:

- The Principal
- The Deputy Principals
- Year Heads
- Student Supports and Guidance Counsellors
- Representative of the Board of Management
- Representative of the Administrative staff – School Secretary & Caretaker

The team will meet annually.

It will maintain an up-to-date list of contact numbers for:

- Staff
- Parents/guardians of students
- Emergency Support Services

Copies will be kept in the Administrative office and Principal's office. These lists will be updated when necessary by administrative staff.

Roles

Key roles have been identified and assigned as follows.

Role	Name
Team Leader	Principal/Deputy Principals
Staff Liaison	Principal/Deputy Principals
Student Liaison	Principal/Deputy Principals, Year Heads Co-ordinators, Guidance Counsellor/Chaplain School Completion Officer
Community Liaison	Principal, Deputy Principals
Administration	Office Staff
Media Liaison	Principal/ Deputy Principals
School Support officer	Chaplain/Guidance Counsellors

Outlined below are some points on the key responsibilities of each role:

Team Leader

- Ascertains the facts
- Alerts the team members on the crisis and convenes a meeting
- Co-ordinates the tasks of the team
- Liaises with Board of Management and Department of Education Science & Skills, NEPS.
- Liaises with the family of those involved directly.

Staff Liaison

- Leads meetings to brief staff on the facts as known, gives staff members an opportunity to express their feelings and organises timetable/supervision for the day and keeps staff updated.
- Advises on the identification of vulnerable students.
- Is alert to vulnerable staff members and makes contact with them individually.
- Endeavours to maintain a regular school routine, if possible.
- Where appropriate, arrange for representatives from the school to visit the home(s) of the person(s) concerned

Student Liaison

- Liaises with other team members to keep them updated with information and progress.
- Alerts staff to vulnerable students.
- Organises support and rooms for counselling/assistance where appropriate

Community Liaison

- Liaise with Garda – ensure that information about event is as accurate as possible before being shared.
- Liaises with agencies in the community for support and onward referral.
- Update team members of the involvement of external agencies.

Media Liaison

- 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)
- Will draw up press statement; give media briefings and interviews (as agreed by school management).

Administrative Tasks

- Maintenance of up to date lists of contact numbers of
 1. Parents/guardians/Next of Kin
 2. Teachers/Staff
 3. Key parent such as members of the parent's council.
 4. Emergency support services and other external contacts and resources
- May respond to calls from a prepared written statement from C.I.M.T.(Critical Incident Management Team)
- Telephone Calls need to be responded to, letters sent and materials photocopied.

In the event of death:

School Support officer:

- Inform staff and students re funeral arrangements
- Arrange involvement in liturgy if agreed with bereaved family
- Facilitate staff and students response e.g. book of condolence, flowers
- Support distressed students and staff
- Ensure counselling service is available
- Care of deceased person's possessions
- Facilitate return of siblings and friends of the deceased
- Monitor of siblings and friends of the deceased
- Update and amend school records and inform DES

Long Term Tasks:

In the aftermath of a critical incident, a death, accident, serious illness or any such incident, it is respectful to:

- Keep in contact with the family/families concerned
- Be sensitive to occasions such as anniversaries, birthdays, Christmas etc.
- Organise school services/memorials as appropriate
- Review the support structures available
- Provide ongoing support
- Review overall school response

Critical Incident Rooms

In the event of a critical incident the following rooms will be used for the following:

Room	People
Board Room	Administration/Information
Staffroom	Staff
Student Tutor Groups	Base Rooms
Sports Hall	Students
Canteen	Students
Room 27A	Media
Prayer room	Time Out - Students
Offices	Individual sessions students/staff
Classrooms	If required

Short-Term Actions and Roles Assigned

Task	Name(Key Support)
Gather Accurate Information	Principal/Deputy Principals
Send text message to staff	Admin Staff
Convene a meeting with key staff	Principal/Deputy Principals

Contact appropriate agencies e.g. NEPS, DESS	Principal/Deputy Principals
Inform B.O.M. & LOETB	Principal/Deputy Principals
Preparation of Administration/Incident room	Admin Staff
Preparation of support rooms	Pastoral Care Team
Arrange supervision/support of students	Principal/Deputy Principals/Year Head/ Co-ordinator/chaplain
Hold staff meeting	Principal/Deputy Principals
Organise timetable for the day	Deputy Principals
Inform Parents by text	Admin Staff
Inform Students	Year Head/Class Tutor/Coordinator
Make contact with bereaved family	Principal/Deputy Principal/Year Head/ Co-ordinator/Chaplain
Dealing with the media	Principal/Deputy Principals
Endeavour to maintain the regular school routine if possible	Principal/Deputy Principals/Year heads/ Staff
Close school if appropriate	Principal/Deputy Principals
Open up school to students	Principal/Deputy Principals

Medium Term Actions and Roles Assigned

Task	Name/Group
Review the events of the first 24 hours	Principal/Deputy Principals/CIMT
Arrange support for individual/groups of students, parents, staff	Chaplain, Guidance Counsellor
Plan the reintegration of students and staff	Chaplain, Guidance counsellors
Plan to visit injured	Principal/Deputy Principals/Year Head/ Chaplain/HSL
Meet the whole staff	Principal/Deputy Principals
Meet external agencies	Principal/Deputy Principals/Guidance Counsellor/HSL/School Completion/
In the event of death:	
Liaise with the family re: funeral arrangements/memorial service	Principal/Deputy Principals/HSL/ Chaplain
Inform staff and pupils re funeral arrangements	Principal/Deputy Principals/Chaplain/Admin Staff
Arrange involvement in liturgy if agreed with bereaved family	Chaplain, Religion Department
Attendance /participation at funeral service etc.	Principal/Deputy Principals/Year Head/ Co-ordinator/Class Tutor
Monitor siblings and friends of the deceased.	Year Head/ Chaplain/Class Tutor/ Guidance Counsellor
Facilitate staff and student's response e.g. book of condolence, flowers.	Chaplain, Principal/Deputy Principals/Student Council
Support distressed students and staff	Principal/Deputy Principals

Ensure counselling service is available	Principal/Deputy Principals/Guidance Counsellor
Care of deceased person's possessions in keeping with parental/guardians' wishes	Year Head/ Staff/Class Tutor
Facilitate return to school of siblings and close friends	Year Head/ Class Tutor/Chaplain
Update and amend school records and inform DESS	Admin Staff

Longer Term Actions and roles Assigned

Task	Name/Group
Monitor students for signs of continuing stress	Year Head/Class Tutor/ Guidance Counsellor/ Chaplain/Staff
Decide on appropriate ways of dealing with anniversaries	Principal/Deputy Principals/ Year Head/ Chaplain
Liaise with agencies regarding referrals	Principal/Deputy Principals/Guidance Counsellor
Plan for return of bereaved	Year Head/ Chaplain/ Class Tutor/ Guidance Counsellor
Review response to incident and amend plan	C.I.M.T., Staff, B.O.M

Consultation and Communication of this Policy and Plan

The staff, Students Council, the Parents' Association have been in the formulation of this policy and their recommendations will be included in this document.

Review

This plan will be reviewed annually in August of each year.

Ratification

This plan was ratified by the Mountrath Community School Board of Management on the 11th September 2018.

Signed by the Chairperson of the Board of Management