**Critical Incident Policy**

**Introduction:**

In Glencastle N.S. we aim to protect the wellbeing of our pupils and staff by providing a safe, tolerant and well catered for environment.

The BOM through the principal and the staff have drawn up a critical incident management plan. They have established a Critical Incident Management Team to steer the development and implementation of the plan.

**What is a critical incident?**

In a school context, NEPS suggests the following definition: A critical incident is any incident or sequence of events which overwhelms the normal coping mechanisms of the school. Examples:

* Death, major illness/ outbreaks of disease
* Major accidents, serious injury (e.g. Bus/car Crash)
* Suicide
* Fire, natural and technological disaster (e.g. school ceiling collapsing)
* Disappearance of student from school or home

**Critical Incident Management Team:**

**Leadership Role:** Catherine McIntyre (Principal)

**Communication Role:** Roseleen Ruddy (Deputy Principal)

**Student Liaison / Counselling Role:** Lisa Carolan

**Chaplaincy Role:** Fr Tommy Doherty

**B.O.M. Rep:** Tom McAndrew

The first named person has the responsibility as defined.  
The second named person assists and only assumes responsibility on the absence of the first named.

**Team Leadership Role:**

Intervention

* Confirms the event
* Alerts Team Members to the crisis and coordinates tasks of the team.
* Liaise with Gardaí – ensures information about deaths or other is checked out for accuracy before being shared
* Liaises with the B. O. M; DES; NEPS; SEC
* Decide how news will be communicated to different groups (staff, pupils, parents)
* Lead briefing meetings for staff on the facts known, give staff members opportunity to express their feelings and ask questions. Outline routine for the day.
* Liaises with the bereaved family/ Expresses sympathy. Discuss involvement of school in e.g. funeral service
* Clarify facts surrounding the event.

Postvention

* Ensure provision of ongoing support to staff and students
* Facilitate any appropriate memorial events & involve family if appropriate.
* Offer to link family with community support groups
* Review Plan

**Communication Role:**

Intervention

* With team, prepare a public statement (See Folder for examples)
* Ensure telephone lines are free for outgoing and important incoming calls.
* Designate phone numbers for contact (see folder)
* Liaise with outside support agencies.

Postvention:

* Review and evaluate effectiveness of communication response.

**Student Liaison / Counselling Role:**

Intervention

* Advise staff on the procedures for identification of vulnerable pupils (see folder)
* Alert staff to vulnerable students (appropriately)
* Provide materials for staff & students (see folder)
* Address immediate needs of staff
* Outline specific services available in the school
* Keep records of students seen by external agency staff
* Seek parental consent for a child to be seen in a group or individually by a NEPS psychologist. (See Folder)

Postvention

* Provide ongoing support to vulnerable students
* Monitor class most affected
* Refer as appropriate

**Chaplaincy Role:**

Intervention

* Visit Home(s) if appropriate
* Assist with prayer services
* Make contact with other local clergy
* Be available as personal and spiritual support to staff

Postvention

* Provide follow – up support to families in conjunction with Home School Community Liaison
* Work in partnership with Critical Incident Team
* Review and evaluate plan with team.

**Short Term Actions – Day 1**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Task** | **Name** |
| Gather accurate information – Liaise with Gardaí | Leader |
| Immediate contact with family to express sympathy | Leader |
| Convene a CIMT meeting | Leader |
| Contact external agencies (See List ) | Communication Role |
| Arrange supervision for students | Leader |
| Hold staff meeting | Leader/All staff |
| Agree schedule for day (Normal if possible) | Leader |
| Inform students (Appropriately) | Leader/ SLP |
| Compile a list of vulnerable students | SLP |
| Take note of absentees who may need to be contacted. Give to SLP. | Class Teacher |
| Arrange a home visit by 2 staff reps within 24 hours if appropriate. | Principal/SLP/Teacher |
| Prepare and agree media statement if necessary(See Folder) | Communication Role |
| Inform Parents (See Folder for letters & FAQ’s) | Communication Role |
| Hold end of day staff meeting | Leader/ All staff |

**Medium Term Actions – Day 2 and following days**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Task** | **Name** |
| Convene CIMT meeting to review day 1 | Leader |
| Meet external agencies & arrange individual or group debriefing or support meetings | Communication Role |
| Seek parental consent for support groups | SLP |
| Meet Whole staff | Leader/ All staff |
| Arrange support for students, staff, parents | SLP |
| Visit the family | Principal/ SLP/ Teacher |
| Liaise with bereaved regarding funeral arrangements | Leader |
| Agree on attendance and participation at funeral service | Leader |
| Make decisions about school closure | BOM |
| Facilitation of student/ staff responses eg. Flowers | BOM |
| Plan for reintegration of student/staff (Close relative) | SLP |

**Long Term Actions**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Task** | **Name** |
| Monitor students for signs of continuing distress – See Folder | Class Teacher/ SLP |
| Liaise with agencies regarding referrals | SLP/ Communicator |
| Plan for return of bereaved student/ staff | Leader/ All staff |
| Review response to incident and amend plan | CIMT |
| Decide on memorials/ anniversary (Consult with family) | Principal/ SLP |
| If affected pupil/ class transfer new school, inform principal | Principal |

**Implication / Ratification and Review**

This policy has been updated in October 2022. It will be reviewed again in light of a critical incident or in October 2024.

**Signed: Tom Mc Andrew Date:17th October 2022  
 Chairperson**

**Signed: Catherine Mc Intyre Date: 17th October 2022  
 Principal**