



Critical Incident Policy and Plan Corpus Christi Primary School

In Corpus Christi Primary School, we aim to protect the well being of students and staff, by providing a safe and nurturing environment as defined in our Mission Statement. The Board of Management through the Principal, has drawn up the following Critical Incident Management Plan, as one element of the school's policies and plans.

A Critical Incident Management Team has been established, to steer the development and implementation of the plan. Members of the Critical Incident Management team include the Chairperson of the Board of Management, the Principal, the Deputy Principal, the HSCL teacher, the in school psychologist(s) and the school administrator.

The aim of the Critical Incident Management Team (CIMT) is to help school management and staff, to react quickly and effectively in the event of a critical incident, in order to maintain a sense of control and ensure appropriate support is offered to students and staff. A good plan will help ensure the effects on students and staff will be dealt with appropriately and will enable the school to return to normality as soon as possible.

'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.'

Examples:

- The death of a member of the school community through accident, violence, suicide, 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.

Corpus Christi Primary School has put systems in place, to help build resilience in both staff and students, through SPHE/RSE/Mindfulness/Drama/ After schools clubs etc. These programmes help to prepare individuals to cope with a range of life events.

The management and staff of Corpus Christi Primary School use available resources and programmes to address the personal and social developments of students, to enhance a sense of safety and security in the school and to provide opportunities for reflection and discussion.

Dr. Declan Aherne (Clinical Psychologist) and the in school assistant psychologist(s) are available to provide support to staff, pupils and the wider community.

In the area of physical safety, the following has been put in place in Corpus Christi School:

- Evacuation plan formulated.
- Regular fire drills.
- Fire doors and extinguishers are regularly checked.
- Secure doors accessed by bell during school hours.
- Behaviour Policy to ensure a safe environment.
- Supervision policy to ensure a safe environment.
- Health and Safety statement to ensure a safe environment.

In the area of emotional wellbeing, the following has been put in place in Corpus Christi School:

- Well Being Policy.
- SPHE Curriculum.
- Mindfulness Clubs.
- Behaviour Policy.
- Stay Safe Policy.
- Anti Bullying Policy.
- RSE Policy.
- Religion Policy.
- Child Safeguarding Statement.
- Care Team and referral pathway.

The following are the key responsibilities of each role:

Principal:

- Confirm the event.
- Clarify facts surrounding the event.
- Activate the Critical Incident response team.
- Liaise with the Gardaí/Emergency services.
- Liaise with the BOM and relevant outside support agencies.
- Express sympathy to the family.
- Make contact with other relevant agencies.
- Decide how news will be communicated to different groups (staff, pupils, community, media etc.).
- Ensure provision of on going support to staff and students.
- Facilitate any appropriate memorial events.
- Review Plan.

Deputy Principal

- Lead briefing meeting for staff on facts as known.
- Allow staff express their feelings and ask questions.
- Outline the routine for the day.
- Alert and advise staff on vulnerable students.
- Ensure records are kept of students seen by external agency staff.
- Provide materials for staff.
- Ensure provision of on going support to staff and students.
- Facilitate any appropriate memorial events.
- Ensure absent staff members are kept informed.
- Review Plan.

Chaplaincy Role

- Visit home(s), if appropriate and provide support.
- Assist with prayer services.
- Make contact with other local clergy.
- Be available as personal and spiritual support to staff.

Administrator

- Update emergency contact numbers for staff and pupils annually.
- Maintain up to date numbers of emergency services.
- Take calls and those that need to be responded to.
- Prepare and send out message, letters and emails.
- Photocopy materials needed.
- Maintain records.

HSCL teacher Role:

- Co-ordinate contact with families (following first contact by Principal).
- Consult with family around involvement of school in e.g. funeral service.
- Assist with all communication dealing with parents of any student affected by critical incident.
- Provide on going support to families affected by the incident.
- Involve as appropriate the family in school liturgies/memorial services.
- Offer to link family with community support groups.
- Ensure clear communication between the school and student body.
- Review and evaluate plan.

Dr. Declan Aherne and in school psychologist(s)

- Provide information and advice to management and staff, as they come to terms with the situation.
- Available for consultation to school staff, as they support the students.
- Working with teachers to identify students, who are most in need of support and developing procedures for reviewing their needs.

Care Team

- Arrange support for individual students, groups of students, staff and parents.
- Arrange onward referral to outside agencies, if necessary.
- Evaluate response to incident and amend Critical Incident Management Plan appropriately.

Responding to Critical Incidents.

Guidelines and Resource Materials for Schools.

<https://www.education.ie/en/Schools-Colleges/Services/National-Educational-Psychological-Service-NEPS-/Responding%20to%20Critical%20Incidents.pdf>

Ratification

The policy was adopted by the Board of Management on _____ (date).

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Chairperson of the Board of Management

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Principal