

St Daigh's N S Critical Incident Policy & Plan

St Daigh's N S
The Glebe, Inniskeen
A91 DW 66

(042) 9378256/(042) 9378526
E mail: stdaigs@hotmail.com
Website: www.stdaighs.com

Introduction:

St Daigh's N S aims to protect the well-being of students and staff by providing a safe and nurturing environment at all times. The Board of Management, along with the Principal, Tomás MacGiollaíocháin, has drawn up a critical incident management plan as one element of the school's policies and plans. Our aim is to establish a Critical Incident Management Team to steer the implementation of the plan.

Definition:

A critical incident is any accident or sequence of events which overwhelms the normal coping mechanisms of the school. Critical incidents may involve one or more students or staff members, or members of the local community.

Such incidents might include;

- The death of a member of the school community through accident, violence, suicide or suspected suicide or other unexpected death.
- An intrusion into the school involving violence against staff personnel and/or members of the student body.
- An accident/tragedy 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.

Aim:

The aim of the C.I.M.P. (Critical Incident Management Plan) is to help school management and staff to react quickly and effectively in the event of an incident, to enable us to maintain a sense of control and to ensure that appropriate support is offered to students and staff.

Creation of a coping, supportive and caring ethos in the school:

We have put systems in place to help to build resilience in both staff and students, thus preparing them to cope with a range of life events. These include measures to address both the physical and psychological safety of the school community.

Physical Safety:

- A Health and Safety statement was formulated and ratified by the Board of Management on the 20/10/2021
- Evacuation plan formulated
- Regular Fire Drills occur
- Fire exits and extinguishers are regularly checked
- Fire Alarm system is serviced at appropriate times
- Lift system is serviced at appropriate times
- Before and after school supervision
- Exit doors locked/under code during school time
- Playground is supervised at break times by teachers and SNAs
- Playground divided into areas for different age-groups

Psychological Safety:

The management and staff of St Daigh's NS aim to use available programmes and resources to address the personal and social development of students, to enhance a sense of safety and security in the school and to provide opportunities for reflection and discussion.

The following programmes are in use: -

- SPHE (Social, Personal and Health Education) supports the physical, mental, social and spiritual development and wellbeing of all members of the school community. Where well implemented, it has a significant role to play in the creation of healthy, nurturing and safe environments. It is a "universal" intervention, targeting all pupils, and thus enhancing the health of the whole school population. It should be integrated with the academic, social, emotional, recreational and artistic life of the school. It is critical to the whole school strategy that encourages students to develop their values and attitudes and helps provide the life skills they need to live healthy lives in the wider community. Programmes used include: R.S.E., Walk Tall and Stay Safe programmes, Weaving Wellbeing, Friends for Life, Time to Talk, and the Religious Education programme, Grow In Love.
- Staff have access to training for their role in SPHE.

- Staff are familiar with the Child Protection Guidelines and Procedures and details of how to proceed with concerns or disclosures.
- The school has a clear policy on bullying and deals with bullying in accordance with this policy, the school's Code of Behaviour and Anti-Bullying Policy which complies with the requirements of the Anti Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post - Primary Schools 2013.
- The KiVa anti bullying programme is used at our school.
- NEPS Continuum of Support may be used as part of a care system for students who are identified as in need of support. Such students are referred to the designated staff member (e.g. support teachers, Deputy Principal or Principal), concerns are explored and the appropriate level of assistance and support is provided. Parents/Guardians are informed, and where appropriate, a referral is made to an appropriate agency.
- If staff have immediate concerns about a pupil under the Critical Incident definition, the pupil/s will be referred to the C.I.M.T (Critical Incident Management Team) who will seek assistance and support for them. Parents/Guardians are informed, and where appropriate, a referral is made to the appropriate agency.
- St Daigh's N S is part of the Farney School Completion Programme whose team is available to support any students who are identified in need of support.
- Other school policies which may have relevance to this policy include:
 - Substance Use Policy
 - Acceptable Use Policy
 - Attendance Policy

NOTE: *The DES and NEPS Document: Responding to Critical Incidents: Guidelines and Resource Materials for Schools (2016)* is the primary resource on which this policy is based. This resource is available online and a copy is available in the school.

Critical Incident Management Team (CIMT)

A C.I.M.T. has been established in line with best practice. The members of the team were selected on a voluntary basis and will retain their roles for the life of the current Board of Management. The members of the team will meet once during the life of the board to review and update the policy and plan. Each member of the team has a dedicated critical incident folder. This contains a copy of the policy and plan and materials particular to their role, to be used in the event of an incident.

Critical Incident Management Plan (CIMP) An outline of the duties of each member of the CIMT is included later in this document.

Roles:

- Team Leader, Garda, Family and agency Liaison:** Principal/Deputy Principal
- Overall management of response

- Alerts team members to the crisis and convenes a meeting
- Coordinates tasks.
- Liaises with the Gardai and the relevant family.
- Liaises with BOM, DES, NEPS, SCP, HSE, TUSLA, METC (Monaghan Education Centre) legal professionals etc.
- Ensures that any information is checked out for accuracy before being shared.
- Visits family with member of In School Management/BOM as appropriate

Communication: Denise/Seodhna

- Liaises with agencies in the community for support and onward referral and co-ordinates the involvement of these agencies
- Is alert to the need to check the credentials of individuals offering support
- Updates team members on the involvement of external agencies

Media Liaison: Tomás/Margaret

- 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.,)
- In the event of an incident, will liaise where necessary with the METC, relevant teacher unions etc.,
 - Will draw up a press statement, organise media briefings and interviews (as agreed by school management)

Administrator: Margaret/Denise

- Maintenance of up-to-date telephone numbers of
 - Parents or guardians
 - Teachers
 - Emergency Services
- Takes telephone calls and notes those that need to be responded to
- Ensures that templates are on the school's system in advance and ready for adaptation
- Prepares and sends out letters, emails
- Photocopies materials needed
- Maintains records
- Provides resources – DES, INTO etc.,

Record Keeping: Margaret/Denise

An emergency pack containing a number of key documents will be available for members of the CIMT in the event of an emergency, e.g. emergency contact lists, checklists, etc. Each member of the team will keep records of phone calls made and received, letters sent and received, persons met, meetings held, interventions used etc.

Parent Liaison: Geraldine/Aisling

- Arranges parent meetings, if held and may facilitate such meetings and manages “questions and answers”
- Sets up room for meetings with parents
- Maintains a record of parents/guardians seen
- Provides appropriate materials for parents/guardians (from their critical incident folder)
- Assist with other tasks as deemed necessary

Student and Staff Liaison/Supervision: Sandra/Seodhna/SET/Josephine

- Alerts other staff to vulnerable students appropriately
 - Provides materials for students (from their critical incident folder)
 - Keeps records of students seen by external agencies
 - Arrange supervision of students
 - Looks after setting up and supervision of “quiet” room where agreed
 - Visits family concerned with the team leader, as appropriate
 - Manages the “consent “issues in accordance with agreed school policy
 - Ensures that sample letters are typed up, on the school’s system and ready for adaptation
 - Leads briefings for staff on facts as known, gives staff opportunities to ask questions, outlines routine for the day
 - Is alert to vulnerable staff members, contacts them individually
 - Provides material for staff (from Critical Incident Folder)
 - Advises staff of availability of Employee Assistance Service provided by Spectrum Life. (01) 5180356
- The EAS is accessible through the dedicated Free-phone Confidential Helpline at 1800 411 057/01 5180356 and is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Alternatively, text ‘HI’ to 087 369 0010 to avail of EAS support on SMS & WhatsApp.
- Plan the reintegration of students
 - Monitor students for signs of continuing stress

Community Liaison Sandra/Niamh/Aisling

- Maintains up to date lists of contact numbers

- key parents such as members of the Parent's Council
- Emergency support services and other external contacts and resources

School Chaplain: Fr Martin

- Make contact with bereaved family, Liaise with family re: funeral, Arrange memorial service, plan school memorial service, Memory box

Confidentiality and Good Name Considerations

The management and staff of ST Daigh's N S have a responsibility to protect the privacy and good name of the people involved in any incident and will be sensitive to the consequences of any public statement.

Critical Incident Room

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

- The staff room/GP Hall will be used to meet with staff
- Inniskeen Community Centre, classrooms or Astro Pitch for meetings with student body, depending on weather
- The Principal's Office for meetings with parents/guardians, the media, relevant others
- Special Education Teaching Rooms as quiet rooms which can be used by the students
- The office lobby to be used for other visitors, as a waiting area

Consultation and Communication Regarding the Plan

All staff were consulted and their views canvassed in the preparation of this policy and plan. Parents representatives were also consulted and asked for their comments. A copy of our school's final policy and plan has been presented to all staff and is available in the school office for all interested parties to view. Each member of the C.I.M.T. has a personal copy of the CIM plan. All new and temporary staff will be informed of the details of the plan by the Principal, Team Leader.

Review: This policy will be reviewed as deemed necessary or in 2024.

Ratification:

This policy was ratified by the B.O.M. at a meeting held on 14th December 2022.

Signed  Signed 

Critical Incident Management Team Outline of Duties:

Critical Incident Management Team:		SHORT TERM ACTIONS – DAY 1		MEDIUM TERM ACTIONS 24 – 72 HRS		LONG TERM ACTIONS	
TASK	NAME	TASK	NAME (Key and Support)	TASK	NAME/GROUP	TASK	NAME/GROUP
Overall Management of Response	Tomas/Sandra	Gather Accurate Information Make contact with bereaved family Convene CIMT meeting Hold end of day staff meeting	Tomas/Sandra and Witnesses (Accidents)	Review the events of the first 24 hours Liaise with family re: funeral. Arrange memorial service Meet with whole staff.	Critical Incident TEAM	Evaluate response to incident and amend C.I. Plan appropriately. Formalise C.I. Plan for the future.	Critical Incident TEAM
Communication	Denise/Seodhna	Contact Appropriate & External Agencies	Denise/Seodhna	Meet external agencies Arrange support for individual/groups of students/parents/guardians	Denise/Seodhna	Liaise with agencies regarding referrals	
Media Liaison	Tomas/Margaret	Dealing with Media (prepare and agree media statement)	Tomas/Margaret			Update and amend school records.	Margaret/Denise
Administration Tasks	Margaret/Denise	Organise Timetable for the day	Denise/Margaret			Plan school memorial service.	Fr. Martin Teanor/Sandra/Niamh
Parent Liaison	Geraldine/Aisling	Inform parents/guardians	Geraldine/Aisling	Attendance/Participation at funeral service etc. Plan visits to the injured	CIMT Tomas/Sandra/Staff	Inform new staff/pupils. Care of deceased person's possessions. Decide on appropriate ways to deal with anniversaries/memorials. Plan for return of bereaved student(s)	Class teacher/ All Staff
Student & Staff Liaison	Sandra/Geraldine /SET	Inform students (close friends and students with learning difficulties may need to be told separately) Compile a list of vulnerable students (SET) Arrange Supervision of students Convene a staff meeting	Sandra/Geraldine	School Closure Plan the reintegration of staff and students	Tomas/Sandra		

		Hold Staff Meeting				Monitor Students for signs of continuing stress	
Community Liaison	Sandra/Niamh						
School Chaplain	Fr Martin Treanor/Tomás	Make contact with bereaved family	Fr Martin Treanor/Tomás	Liaise with family re:funeral. Arrange memorial service	Fr Martin Treanor//Sandra /Niamh	Plan school memorial service. Plan for giving "Memory Box" or similar to bereaved family	Fr Martin/Sandra/Niamh

Tomás, Sandra, Denise, Seodhna, Geraldine, Margaret, Josephine, Niamh M, Fr Martin, Aisling McKenna P A (10)

Cf.

Appendix A Critical Incident Management Team

Appendix B Emergency Contact List & Useful Contacts

Appendix C First Aid Trained Members of St Daigh's Staff

Appendix D Templates for use during Critical Incident (4)

NOTE: All contact details for St Daigh's N S pupils and staff are available on Aladdin and in folders/phone book on office desk beside PC.

Appendix A

Critical Incident Management Team (10)

Tomás MacGiollaíochomáin - Principal
 Sandra Cumiskey – Deputy Principal
 Denise McMahon AP II Post Holder
 Geraldine Connor- AP II Post Holder
 Seodhna Flanagan – AP II Post Holder
 Niamh Monahan
 Fr Martin Treanor
 Margaret McGeough
 Josephine Murphy
 Aisling McKenna Parent’s Association

Board of Management

Michael McArdle
 Margaret Conlon
 Fr Martin Treanor
 Fiona Kelly
 Tomás MacGiollaíochomáin
 Sandra Cumiskey
 Gráinne McKeown (Parent Nominee)
 Richard Nash (Parent Nominee)

Aladdin

Sign in details for administration of Aladdin are available from:

Tomás MacGiollaíochomáin
 Sandra Cumiskey
 Denise McMahon
 Gráinne Madden

Appendix B

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A91 DW 66

Critical Incident Policy

(042) 9378256/Fax (042) 9378526

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Emergency Contact List

OUTSIDE AGENCY	CONTACT NUMBERS
GARDA <i>Louth County Hospital Minor Injuries Unit (DUNDALK) (9am – 8pm) 5 years +</i>	(042) 9662222 (042) 9690190 (042) 9385424 (042) 9334701 (042) 9385400
<i>Our Lady of Lourdes Hospital, (DROGHEDA)</i>	(041) 9837601
EMERGENCY	999 OR 112
<i>DOCTOR'S SURGERY Group Practice, Cloughvalley, Carrickmacross A81N627</i>	(042) 9663233
HSE PRIMARY CARE CENTRE, Oriel Rd., Carrickmacross A81 C 642	(042) 9674800
DR. MOBILE IN EMERGENCY	1850 777911
<i>Dr Paschal Larney, Farney St., Carrickmacross</i> <i>Dr Laura Breen, 47 O'Neill St., Carrickmacross</i>	(042) 9661274 (042) 9690222
HSE MONAGHAN	(047) 30400
N.E.P.S. PSYCHOLOGIST Róisín West 087 4498613	NEPS Cavan 01 8650780 NEPS Drogheda 01 8650801

SENO: <i>Maureen Smith</i> 087 6949489 <i>Office</i> 01 6033426	NEPS <i>Navan</i> 01 8650635
<i>I.N.T.O.</i>	1850 708708
<i>FR. MARTIN TREANOR</i>	(042) 9378105/ 087 9199004
<i>SCHOOL INSPECTOR Diarmuid Ó Dúllacháin</i>	(042) 9386929
<i>DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION</i>	(0906) 483600 <i>Athlone</i> (057) 9324300 <i>Tullamore</i> (01) 8896400 <i>Dublin</i>
<i>SPRECTRUM.LIFE Employee Assistance Service</i>	1800 411 057
<i>CAHMS Monaghan</i>	(047) 74220

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Useful Contact Numbers

<i>Barnardos Dublin</i>	1850 222 300 01-4530355
<i>The Samaritans Drogheda</i>	<i>Freefone</i> 116 123
<i>Childline</i>	1800 66 66 66 Text TALK to 50101
<i>Parentline</i>	1890 927 277 01-8733500
<i>Nat. Suicide Bereavement Support</i>	024 95561
<i>Rainbows</i> <i>rainbowsireland.ie</i>	<i>Armagh Pastoral Centre Dundalk 042- 9336393</i> <i>Playgroup Project Dundalk</i> 042 - 9337202
<i>The Bereavement Counselling Service</i>	01 8391766 01 6768882
<i>TUSLA Louth</i>	042 - 9392200
<i>TUSLA Monaghan</i>	047 - 30426
<i>SOSAD</i>	1800-901-909 <i>Dundalk (042) 9327311</i>

Appendix C

First Aid Training St Daigh's N S

The following staff members have completed a Paediatric First Aid Course held at St Daigh's N S:

Sandra Cumiskey (also Occupational First Aid)
 Rachel McCluskey (also Occupational First Aid)
 Denise McMahon (also Occupational First Aid)
 Niamh Monahan (also Occupational First Aid)
 Amy O'Brien (also Occupational First Aid)
 Natasha McGeeney (also Occupational First Aid)
 Sínead Brennan (also Occupational First Aid)
 Anne Connolly (also Occupational First Aid)
 Margaret McGeough (also Occupational First Aid)
 Linda Carey (Trained Nurse) (also Occupational First Aid)
 Josephine Murphy (also Occupational First Aid)
 Holly Lynch (also Occupational First Aid)
 Maria Duff (also Occupational First Aid)
 Seodhna Flanagan
 Karen Maguire
 Gráinne Madden
 Jean Magee
 Ruth Duffy
 Ciana Hughes

Location of Defibrillators

Inniskeen Credit Union, outside front door
Church of Mary, Mother of Mercy, left side front door
Grattans Football Field (only when premises is open)
Blackstaff School Shelter to rear of school
Mathews Conches, Callanberg, Bus Shelter
McArdiskeath Front Gate
Coolderry Coach Hire Thomas Gernon (carried on coach)
Kavanagh Centre (on wall to left of main entrance door)

Persons Trained to use the defibrillators:

All staff trained in Occupational First Aid PHECC
 Ambulance: 999 or 112

Appendix D

TEMPLATES FOR LETTERS AND COMMUNICATIONS

Templates for use during Critical Incident (4)

1. *Parental/Guardian Consent for child to meet NEPS psychologist (Group or individual)*

This letter can be used as a template for schools when they are seeking parental consent for a child to be seen in a group or individually by a NEPS psychologist.

Dear parents/guardians,

You may already know that our teachers and staff have been providing support to our students following (specific reference to incident) Additional support is also being provided to our school by psychologists from the National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS) The psychologist will be available, where necessary, to meet with individuals or with groups of students to help them during this difficult time.

The aim of such sessions will be to:

- (a) Provide information about dealing with grief and loss in a healthy way
 - (b) Allow students the opportunity to express their thoughts and feelings in a safe environment
 - (c) Allow students time to comfort and support each other, under the guidance of experienced staff from
 - (d) Help students resume their normal routines as soon as possible.
- If you would like for your son/daughter to participate in such a session and any follow-up meetings that might be scheduled, please give your consent by signing below.

You should return it to the school immediately:
If you have any questions, please contact
(Name and phone number of contact person).

I give my consent for _____ to participate in a Group/Individual Session

Student Name

Parent or Legal Guardian _____ Date _____

Yours sincerely

Principal _____

Templates for use during Critical Incident

2. *Inform parents/guardians of a tragedy*

This letter can be used as a template for schools when they are informing parents of a tragedy, offering some advice and outlining what the school's response involves.

Dear parents/guardians,

The school has experienced (the sudden death, an accidental injury, etc.) of (Name of student(s)). We are deeply saddened by the death/s/vents. (Brief details of the incident, and in the event of death, perhaps some positive remembrances of the person lost)

Our thoughts are with (family name).

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 and questions that he/she may like to discuss with you.

It is important to give factual information that is appropriate to their age.

You can help your child by taking time to listen and by encouraging them to express their feelings.

All children are different and will express their feelings in different ways.

It is not uncommon for children to have difficulty concentrating or to be fearful, anxious, or irritable. They may become withdrawn, cry, complain of physical aches and

pains, have difficulty sleeping or have nightmares.

Some may not want to eat.

These are generally short-term reactions. Over the course of the days to come, please keep an eye on your child and allow him/her to express their feelings without criticism.

Although classes will continue as usual, I anticipate that the next few days will be difficult for everyone.

(Optional) An information night for parents is planned for (date, time and place).

At that time, further information about how to help children in grief will be given.

We have enclosed some information, which you may find useful in helping your child through this difficult time.

If you would like advice you may contact the following people at the school (details)

Kind regards

School Principal

Templates for use during Critical Incident **3. Inform parents/guardians of a violent death**

This letter may be used as a template for schools when they are informing parents of a violent death, offering some advice and outlining what the school response involves.

Dear Parents/Guardians

I need to inform you about a very sad event that has happened.

(Give accurate information about the incident, but avoid using the word murder as this will not be established until the court case is completed).

A child/young person from the neighbourhood, who is the brother of _____.

A student here at school, was killed as a result of (a violent attack, violent incident in the street etc.) earlier this week.

We are profoundly saddened by his death.

We have shared this information and have had discussions with all of our students so that they know what has happened.

School staff members have been available for students on an on-going basis today. Other support personnel (including psychologists etc., according to the actual arrangements) are available to advise staff and, where necessary, to talk to students.

This support will continue to be available for (if appropriate insert how long).

The death of any young person is tragic, but a violent death is even more difficult.

It is hard to have to teach our children about the violence in our world and to accept that sometimes we do not have the power to prevent it.

This death may cause a variety of reactions in your child.

Some children/young people may be afraid for their own life and for the lives of those they love.

Take time to listen to their fears and reassure them that what has happened is rare.

We have enclosed some additional information that may be useful during this time.

The media are in the vicinity of the school and may approach you or your children.

You need not respond to their questions if you are approached.

We will not allow the media to interview your child at school and our general advice is that you should not let your children be interviewed.

They are not mature enough to judge what to say and may say something they will regret later.

(If planned) a support meeting for parents/guardians is planned for (date, time and place).

At that time, we can talk further about how to help ourselves and our children.

Our thoughts are with (family name) and with each of you.

Yours sincerely

School Principal

Templates for use during Critical Incident **4. Sample announcement to the media**

This can be used as a template by schools to be emailed, faxed, or given to the media. It may help to decrease the number of media calls and callers to the school. In some instances, it is not appropriate to provide names or information that might identify individuals. This announcement will need to be changed based upon confidentiality issues, the wishes of the victim's family and the nature of the incident.

My name is _____ and I am the Principal of (name school).

We learned this morning of the death of (one of our students or Name of student).

This is a terrible tragedy for _____ family(ies), our school and our community.

We are deeply saddened by these events.

Our sympathy and thoughts are with (Name) family and friends.

Name of student/students was a (5th year boy) and will be greatly missed by all those who knew him.

We have been in contact with his/her parents and they have requested that we all understand their need for privacy at this difficult time.

Offers of support have been pouring in and are greatly appreciated.

Our school has implemented our Critical Incident Management Plan.

Psychologists for the National Education Psychological Services (NEPS) and (insert other information if relevant) have been with us all day supporting and advising teachers in their efforts to assist our students at this time.

The teachers have been helping students to deal with the tragic event.

The school is open to parents/guardians, to support them and to offer them advice and guidance.

We would ask you to respect our privacy at this time.

Thank you.