

Critical Incident Management Plan

At An Mhodhscoil we aim to protect the wellbeing of our pupils and staff by providing a safe, tolerant and well catered for environment.

We have many procedures in place to protect the health, safety and welfare of our school community and to cater for accidents or emergencies.

These include the following:

- A clear health and safety policy, regularly reviewed and updated, with fire drills and constant risk assessment by teachers is in place at An Mhodhscoil.
- An up-to-date list of contact numbers, including parents, guardians and next of kin of staff is maintained electronically on Aladdin.
- At the start of each school year, the Deputy Principal furnishes each class teacher with a paper copy of the list of the pupils in his or her class for use during fire drills/evacuation procedures etc.
- Up-to date medical information on pupils with allergies, epilepsy and other conditions is furnished to each staff member by the Deputy Principal at the beginning of each school year. This list is updated, as necessary, throughout the school year.
- Each class teacher is responsible for maintaining a list of all pupils involved in a school trip/tour. The names of accompanying staff are made available to the secretary.
- A copy of the plan of the school building is displayed in each classroom, highlighting exits appropriate to that room.
- All staff members are familiar with the guidelines 'Responding to Critical Incidents' by the National Educational Psychological Service and in particular with the procedures to be followed in the event of a C.I. (section 3).

Further to the school's many Health and Safety procedures, the BoM through the Principal and the staff has drawn up a critical incident management plan. They have established a Critical Incidents Management Team (CIM Team) to steer the development and implementation of the plan.

This team will meet annually in the month of September as part of a management meeting or in the absence of same, at a specially convened meeting. All members of this team will be familiar with their roles in the event of there being a C.I. in the school.

What is a Critical Incident?

‘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:

- Death, major illness/outbreak of disease (Foot & Mouth, Covid 19)
- Criminal incidents (e.g. Dunblane shooting, Shooting at first communion in Ballymun.)
- Major accidents, serious injury (e.g. ‘Navan bus crash’)
- Suicide
- Fire, natural and technological disaster (e.g. school ceiling collapsing in Cork)
- Disappearance of student from home or school (e.g. Midleton incident in Cork)
- Unauthorised removal of student from school or home.
- World events that may affect the student body and/or staff. e.g. 9/11, Covid 19

Role	Name
Team Leader	Éibhear Ó Deághaidh
Co-ordinators	Máire Uí Mhaoláin Carol Ní Mhaoldomhnaigh Sandra Uí Fhinn Annette Tuite
Parent Liaison (if many families need to be contacted)	Éibhear/Marie Carol Ní Mhaoldomhnaigh
Secretary	Sandra Finn
Media Liaison	Éibhear
Staff Liaison	Marie

Task	Name
Gather Accurate Information	Éibhear/Marie
Who, what, when, where?	
Convene a CIMT meeting – specify time and place clearly	
Contact External Agencies	Sandra Finn
Arrange supervision for pupils	Marie
Hold Staff Meeting	All Staff
Agree schedule for the day	
Inform students	Class Teacher
Close friends and students with learning difficulties may need to be told separately	Resource Teacher

Compile a list of vulnerable students	Marie
Contact/visit the bereaved family	Éibhear and Marie
Prepare and agree media statement and deal with media	CIM Team & Éibhear
Inform Parents - Set up parents room if necessary (coffee etc)	Annette Sandra Marie
Hold End of Day Staff Briefing	All Staff
Record Keeping	Sandra/ Eibhear/Marie

Medium term actions (Day 2 and following days)

Convene a CIMT meeting to review the events of Day 1	Éibhear
Meet external agencies	Éibhear/ Marie
Meet whole staff	
Arrange support for students, staff & parents	CIM Team
Visit the injured	Éibhear/ Marie
Liaise with the bereaved family regarding funeral arrangements	Éibhear/ Marie
Agree on attendance and participation at funeral service	CIM Team
Make decisions about school closure	BOM

Follow-up-beyond 72 hours

Monitor students for signs of continuing distress	Class teachers
Liaise with agencies regarding referrals	Marie
Plan for return of bereaved student (s)	Éibhear/ Marie & Class teacher(s)
Plan for giving of 'memory box' to bereaved family	Marie and Class Teacher(s)
Decide on Memorials and anniversaries	BOM/Staff, parents and students
Review response to incident and amend plan	Staff/BOM

Practicalities of a school day in case of a Critical Incident.

- CIMT convened at earliest opportunity i.e evening of incident or 7:15 in the morning.
- CIMT Team comprises of Éibhear, Marie, Carol, Annette, Sandra (administrator).
- Initial CIMT meeting will involve ascertaining 'known facts', putting together press statement, deciding on information to be distributed to staff, pupils and parents.
- Staff Meeting will be arranged for 8:00 in the morning. (staff will be notified via Aladdin text) or as a split staff or class level should an incident occur during the school day.
- Facts shared, advice offered, etc.
- School will continue as normal in every way possible
- Follow on meeting at end of day to debrief staff and get feedback on how the day went and areas that need addressing and pupils/ staff that may require extra support.

Consent Letter - Individual or Group Support Session

Dear Parents/Guardians,

You may already know that our teachers and staff have been providing support to our students following (specific reference to the incident).

Additional support is also being provided to our school by psychologist/s 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:

- Provide information about dealing with grief and loss in a healthy way
- Allow students the opportunity to express their thoughts and feelings in a safe environment
- Allow students time to comfort and support each other, under the guidance of experienced staff of An Mhodscoil.
- Help students resume their normal routines as soon as possible

If you would like for your child 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 do not hesitate to contact us.

Is mise le meas,

Éibhear Ó Deághaidh

Príomhoide



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

Parent or Legal Guardian: _____

Date: _____

SAMPLE LETTER TO PARENTS – SUDDEN DEATH

Dear Parents/Guardians,

The school has experienced (the sudden death, accidental injury, etc.) of student(s). We are deeply saddened by the deaths/events.

(Brief details of the incident, and in the event of a death, perhaps some 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 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 tearful, anxious or irritable. They may become withdrawn, cry, complain of psychical aches and pains, have difficulty sleeping or have nightmares. Some may not want to eat. These are general short-term reactions. Over the course of the days to come, please keep an eye on your child and allow him/her to express his/her feelings without criticism.

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

If you would like advice, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Is mise le meas,

Éibhear Ó Deághaidh

Príomhoide

SAMPLE ANNOUNCEMENT TO THE MEDIA

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 Éibhear Ó Deághaidh and I am the Principal of An Mhodhscoil. We learned this morning of the death of (one of our students or Name of student dep, depending on the family's wishes). This is a terrible tragedy for _____ family(ies), and our school community. We are deeply saddened by these events. Our sympathy and thoughts are with (Name) family and friends.

Name of student/students was a (boy in 5th class) and will be greatly missed by all 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 have implemented our Critical Incident Management Plan.

Our staff have been helping students to deal with the tragic event.

Psychologists from the National Educational Psychological Service (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 school has been open to parents, to support them and to offer them advice and guidance.

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

Go raibh míle maith agaibh,

Éibhear Ó Deághaidh

Príomhoide