



*Scoil Náisiúnta Baile Chaisleáin an Róistigh*

**Critical Incident Management Policy**  
*Reviewed in April 2021 by staff members*

*Castletownroche National School* aims to protect the well-being of its students and staff by providing a safe and nurturing environment at all times (*see school's Mission Statement as reviewed in 2020*). The Board of Management, through the Principal and Deputy Principal, has drawn up a Critical Incident Management Plan as one element of the school's policies and plans.

**Review and Research**

The CIMT have consulted resource documents available to schools on [www.education.ie](http://www.education.ie) and [www.nosp.ie](http://www.nosp.ie) including:

- Responding to Critical Incidents Guidelines and Resources for Schools (NEPS 2016)
- Suicide Prevention in Schools: Best Practice Guidelines (IAS, National Suicide Review Group (2002))
- Suicide Prevention in the Community - A Practical Guide (HSE 2011)
- Well-Being in Post-Primary Schools Guidelines for Mental Health Promotion and Suicide Prevention (DES, DOH, HSE 2013)
- Well-Being in Primary Schools - Guidelines for Mental Health Promotion (DES, DOH, HSE 2015)

**What is a critical incident?**

The staff and management of Castletownroche National School recognise a critical incident to be "an incident or sequence of events that overwhelms the normal coping mechanism of the school". Critical incidents may involve one or more students or staff members, or members of our local community. Types of 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*
- *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*

**Aim**

The aim of the CIMP 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. Having a good plan should also help ensure that the effects on the students and staff will be limited. It should enable us to return to normality as soon as possible.

## **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. (Stay Safe, Anti-bullying policy, staff events and wellbeing programmes)

### **Physical safety**

- Evacuation plan
- Regular fire drills
- Fire exits and extinguishers are regularly checked
- School front door usually locked during class time
- Playtime rules

### **Playtime rules**

1. We run on the grass & the yards. We walk in the corridors
2. We do not climb on the fence, trees or walls (2 x 6<sup>th</sup> class volunteers are allowed to get the balls)
3. We clean up after ourselves and put rubbish in the right place
4. We are helpful to our friends. We treat each other with kindness & respect
5. We take turns
6. We do not play rough games - no pushing or shoving. Safety first!
7. We stay in our class groups
8. Once the bell rings, all play stops & we collect and put away all equipment
9. We use the toilets responsibly
10. We use 'Kelso's Choices' to solve small problems first and ask the teacher to help us solve bigger problems.

*If we do not follow the rules, we have a time-out & our teacher will be informed.*

*Time-out for 5<sup>th</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup> class - they are sent immediately in to Mr. Bracken*

### **YARD SUPERVISION/ BEHAVIOUR**

Teacher & SNAs supervise the yards at break and lunchtime. The teacher has a clipboard with a behavioural observation chart. Any incidences of misbehaviour are recorded on this. This allows staff to identify any patterns in behaviour or repeated misbehaviour.

*List of behaviours:*

- Not listening to a teacher/SNA- ignoring instructions
- Physical (rough play, hitting etc.)
- Vocal (saying nasty comments, name calling, not being inclusive)
- Line- not lining up when the bell goes or not behaving in the line

*Consequences include:*

1<sup>st</sup> Offense: Verbal warning - green card

2<sup>nd</sup> Offense- Time out on the wall - amber card

3<sup>rd</sup> Offense- Send into teacher & child loses a privilege - red card

P- Send straight to principal - red card - any incident with 5<sup>th</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup>. For the younger classes, anything excessively physical or bad language is a straight red card.

For 5<sup>th</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup>, they are sent immediately to their teacher and not given a time out on the wall. They will complete their time out inside.

### **Psychological safety**

The management and staff of Castletownroche N. S 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.

- Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE) is integrated into the work of the school. It is addressed in the curriculum by addressing issues such as grief and loss; communication skills; stress and anger management; resilience; conflict management; problem solving; help-seeking; bullying; decision making and prevention of alcohol and drug misuse. Promotion of mental health is an integral part of this provision
- Staff have access to training for their role in SPHE through CESC/PDST
- Staff are familiar with the Child Protection Guidelines and Procedures and details of how to proceed with suspicions or disclosures
- Books and resources on difficulties affecting students-  
<https://childbereavementuk.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/Waterbugs-and-Butterflies.pdf>
- School has developed links with a range of external agencies such as NEPS, HSE, local Garda and Tusla
- School has a clear policy on bullying and deals with bullying in accordance with this policy
- There is a care system in place in the school using the "Continuum of Support" approach which is outlined in the NEPS documents .These documents are available on [www.education.ie](http://www.education.ie)
- Students who are identified as being at risk are referred to the designated staff members, concerns are explored and the appropriate level of assistance and support is provided. Parents are informed, and where appropriate, a referral is made to an appropriate agency.
- Staff are informed about how to access support for themselves. INTO Inspire wellbeing 0800 389 5362 or email [hello@inspirewellbeing.org](mailto:hello@inspirewellbeing.org). Website: [www.inspirewellbeing.org](http://www.inspirewellbeing.org)

### **Critical Incident Management Team (CIMT)**

A CIMT has been established. The members will meet annually to review and update the policy and plan. The team has a dedicated critical incident folder in the filing cabinet. This contains a copy of the policy and plan and materials particular to their role, to be used in the event of an incident. Add to filing cabinet

**Team leader:** *Principal*

#### **Role**

- Alerts the team members to the crisis and convenes a meeting
- Coordinates the tasks of the team
- Liaises with the Board of Management; DES; NEPS;
- Liaises with the bereaved family

**Garda liaison:** *Principal/Deputy Principal*

#### **Role**

- Liaise with the Gardaí
- Ensure that information about deaths or other developments is checked out for accuracy before being shared

**Staff liaison:** *Principal/Deputy Principal*

#### **Role**

- Leads briefing meetings for staff on the facts as known, gives staff members an opportunity to express their feelings and ask questions, outlines the routine for the day
- Advises staff on the procedures for identification of vulnerable students

- Provides materials for staff
- Keeps staff updated as the day progresses
- Is aware of vulnerable staff members and makes contact with them individually
- Advises them of the availability of the assistance and gives them the contact number.

#### **Student liaison:** *Deputy Principal*

##### **Role**

- Alerts other staff to vulnerable students (appropriately)
- Provides materials for students
- Maintains student contact records.
- Looks after setting up and supervision of 'quiet' room where agreed

#### **Community/agency liaison** *Principal*

##### **Role**

- Maintains up to date lists of contact numbers of
  - Key parents
  - Emergency support services and other external contacts and resources
- Liaises with agencies in the community for support and onward referral
- Is alert to the need to check credentials of individuals offering support
- Coordinates the involvement of these agencies
- Reminds agency staff to wear name badges
- Updates team members on the involvement of external agencies

#### **Parent liaison** *Principal/Deputy Principal*

##### **Role**

- Visit the bereaved family
- Arrange parent meetings, if held
- May facilitate such meetings and manage 'questions and answers'
- Manage the 'consent' issues in accordance with agreed school policy
- Ensure that sample letters are typed up, on the school's system and ready for adaptation
- Set up room for meetings with parents
- Maintain a record of parents seen
- Meet with individual parents
- Provide appropriate materials for parents

#### **Media liaison** *Principal*

##### **Role**

- 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 relevant agencies etc.
- Will draw up a press statement, give media briefings and interviews (as agreed by school management)

#### **Administrator** *Deputy Principal*

##### **Role**

- 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 schools system in advance and ready for adaptation
- Prepares and sends out letters, emails and texts

- Photocopies materials needed
- Maintains records

If for any reason the Principal, Eóin Bracken, is absent his role is automatically taken up by the Deputy Principal, Marcia Howard, and her role taken up by the Assistant Principal 2 AP2 Elaine O' Regan

**Record keeping Deputy Principal**

In the event of an incident, each member of the team will keep records of phone calls made and received, letters sent and received, meetings held, persons met, interventions used, material used etc.

Ms. Alma O' Keefe (Secretary) will have a key role in receiving and logging telephone calls, sending letters, photocopying materials, etc.

**Confidentiality and good name considerations**

Management and staff of Castletownroche National School have a responsibility to protect the privacy and good name of people involved in any incident and will be sensitive to the consequences of public statements. Members of school staff will bear this in mind, and seek to ensure that students do so also, e.g. the term 'suicide' will not be used unless there is solid information that death was due to suicide, and that the family involved consents to its use. The phrases 'tragic death' or 'sudden death' may be used instead. Similarly, the word 'murder' should not be used until it is legally established that a murder was committed. The term 'violent death' may be used instead.

<b>Critical Incident Rooms</b>	
In the event of a critical incident, the following rooms are designated for the indicated purposes	
<b>Room Name:</b>	<b>Designated Purpose:</b>
<i>Kitchen/ staffroom</i>	Main room for meeting staff. (Classroom 3 during Covid 19)
<i>SET room</i>	Meetings with students
<i>Principal's Office</i>	Meetings with parents
<i>SET room</i>	Meetings with media
<i>SET room</i>	Individual sessions with students
<i>SET room</i>	Meetings with other visitors

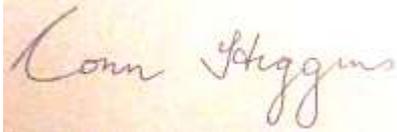
**Ratification of Policy:**

This policy was adopted by the Board of Management on 15<sup>th</sup> April, 2021

**Policy review:**

In accordance with the systematic review of policies in Castletownroche N.S., this policy will be reviewed annually or immediately following any serious incidences or if a need arises.

Staff will be informed that the review has been completed. The updated policy will be readily accessible to all members of the school community; a policy folder will be available in all classrooms, it will be published on the school website & will also be provided to the Parent's Association. A record of the review and its outcome will be made available, if requested, to the patron and the Department.



Signed:

(Chairperson of Board of Management)



Signed:

(Principal)

Date: 17<sup>th</sup> April 2021

<b>Critical Incident Management Team</b>		
<b>Role</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Phone or email the school Castletownrochens@gmail.com</b>
<b>Team leader:</b>	<i>Principal: Mr. Eoin Bracken</i>	02226024
<b>Garda liaison</b>	<i>Principal: Mr. Eoin Bracken and Deputy Principal Marcia Howard</i>	02226024
<b>Staff liaison</b>	<i>Principal: Mr. Eoin Bracken and Deputy Principal Marcia Howard</i>	02226024
<b>Student liaison</b>	<i>Deputy Principal: Ms Marcia Howard</i>	02226024
<b>Community liaison</b>	<i>Principal: Mr. Eoin Bracken</i>	02226024
<b>Parent liaison</b>	<i>Principal: Mr. Eoin Bracken and Deputy Principal Marcia Howard</i>	02226024
<b>Media liaison</b>	<i>Principal: Mr. Eoin Bracken</i>	02226024
<b>Administrator</b>	<i>Deputy Principal: Ms Marcia Howard School Secretary Alma O'Keefe</i>	02226024

### Short term actions - Day 1

Task	Name
Gather accurate information Who, what, when, where?	Principal/Deputy Principal/AP2
Convene a CIMT meeting - specify time and place clearly	Principal/Deputy Principal/AP2
Contact external agencies	Deputy Principal
Arrange supervision for students	All staff
Hold staff meeting	All staff
Agree schedule for the day	All staff
Inform students - (close friends and students with learning difficulties may need to be told separately)	All staff
Compile a list of vulnerable students	All staff
Prepare and agree media statement and deal with media	Principal
Inform parents	Principal
Hold end of day staff briefing	All staff

### Medium term actions - (Day 2 and following days)

Task	Name
Convene a CIMT meeting to review the events of day 1	Principal/Deputy Principal/AP2
Meet external agencies	Principal/Deputy Principal
Meet whole staff	All staff
Arrange support for students, staff, parents	All staff
Visit the injured	Principal/Deputy Principal
Liaise with bereaved family regarding funeral arrangements	Principal
Agree on attendance and participation at funeral service	Principal/Deputy Principal/AP2
Make decisions about school closure	BOM

### Follow-up - beyond 72 hours

Task	Name
Monitor students for signs of continuing distress	All staff
Liaise with agencies regarding referrals	Principal/Deputy Principal
Plan for return of bereaved student(s)	All staff
Plan for giving of 'memory box' to bereaved family	Principal/Deputy Principal/AP2
Decide on memorials and anniversaries	BOM/Staff, parents and students
Review response to incident and amend plan	Staff/BOM

**EMERGENCY CONTACT LIST**

<b>AGENCY</b>	<b>CONTACT NUMBERS</b>
Garda	Castletownroche Garda Station <u>(022) 26161</u> Fermoy Garda Station <u>(025) 82100</u>
Hospital	Mallow General Hospital <u>(022) 21251</u> 999
Fire Brigade	Mallow Fire Station 02252700 999
Local GPs	Dr Lydia Huisman <u>(022) 26410</u>
HSE	St. Finbarr's Hospital, Douglas Road, Cork. <u>(021) 496 5511</u>
Child and Family Centre	Tusla. Child and Family Agency , Referrals Section, Floor 2, Blackpool, Cork. 021 4927190
Child and Family Mental Health Service (CAMHS)	HSE South, 31/32 Fair Street, Mallow, Co. Cork. 022- 44970
School Inspector	Department of Education and Skills, Inspectorate Secretariat, Marlborough Street, Dublin 1. D01 RC96  (01) 889 6553
NEPS Psychologist	NEPS, Block C, Heritage Business Park, Mahon, Cork, Co. Cork, T12 XK5R. Tel: (0761) 108450
DES	(01) 889 6400
INTO	Irish National Teachers' Organisation 35 Parnell Square Dublin 1 Telephone: +353 1 804 7700 LoCall: 1850 708 708
Clergy	V. Rev. Patrick Scanlan 022-26188 0868381377
Employee Assistance Service	1800 411 057