

**CRITICAL INCIDENT
INFORMATION
POLICY**

**St. Conleth's Community College
Newbridge
Co. Kildare**

2017-2018

How Do We Decide What Constitutes A Critical Incident?

The adoption of the Critical Incident Plan will depend on the severity of the incident and whether it occurs during or outside of school term.

A small team of four people:

- Principal
- Deputy Principal
- Guidance Counsellors
- Assistant Principal

will meet in advance of its implementation to decide whether all or part of the plan needs to be put into action.

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DAY 1

- 1) POB to contact members of CIMT.
- 2) CIMT to meet and be given an information pack. Appoint a quiet room (JD, AM, LH and YH)
- 3) Relevant agencies to be contacted: NEPs, other Guidance Counsellors, BOM, CEO and Parent's Association (POB).
- 4) Contact all staff and arrange a meeting in the school (POB and GM))
- 5) Visit and liaise with family at the centre of the incident (Principal and Deputy Principal)
- 6) Tutors brief tutor groups and distribute relevant handouts. Inform students of quiet room (Room 1).
- 7) Reflection and support of classmates of students involved (HSCL, Tutors, RE teachers etc.).
- 8) POB and SMCG to deal with the media.
- 9) JD, AM, GH and YH to draw up a plan for one to one counselling on day 2.
- 10) Letter of information/advice plus handout to be sent to all parents (MMX).
- 11) PLC students may be sent home (POB, DOL).

DAY 2

- 1) Hold a short staff meeting at 8.20 am with NEPs psychologists to update all staff.
- 2) Make contact with families of students on list to seek permission for support/counselling (JD, AM, and GH).
- 3) One to one counselling sessions begin (JD, AM, LH). YH to remain with group.
- 4) Update staff on any further developments (POB)
- 5) Maintain normal timetable as far as possible.
- 6) A speaker from relevant organisation to be organised to speak to parents at an appropriate time after the incident. (MMX and GH).
- 7) A NEPs speaker to be organised to speak to staff (POB).
- 8) Contact immediate family of the deceased re. school input for funeral arrangements (Parent Liaison Team). Official attendance at the funeral will only include the class of the student affected. Other students need written permission from their parents to attend and should be collected from school by them. The choir will attend only on request by or consultation with the family.
- 9) Meet all students attending the funeral in the Assembly Area and explain that the funeral is a solemn occasion and it is the family's day. Gently explain the importance of appropriate behaviour at the funeral. (POB).
- 10) Organise a school guard of honour (GM and YH).

DAY 3

- 1) Organise post funeral refreshments for students who attended funeral and staff (MKN and YS).
- 2) Request mental health literature from HSE/NEPS psychologists for all staff and students (POB).
- 3) Issue counselling referral sheets to tutors who identify students in need of one to one counselling (AM, GH and JD)

The Critical Incident Management Team St. Conleth's C.C., Newbridge, Co.Kildare

The key roles which need to be covered are as follows

1. Team Leader
2. Garda Liaison
3. Staff Liaison
4. Student Liaison
5. Parent Liaison
6. Community Liaison
7. Media Liaison
8. Administrator

1. **Role: Team Leader**

Name: P. O'Brien

Telephone Number: 087 2387774

- Alerts the team members to the crisis and sets up a meeting. Liaises with the BOM, NEPS, the bereaved family, the Parent's Association etc.

2. **Role: Garda Liaison (This may be seen as part of the team leader's role)**

Name: P. O'Brien

Telephone Number: 087 2387774

- Liaises with the Gardai, confirms the accuracy of information about deaths etc.

3. **Role: Staff Liaison**

Name: P.O'Brien

Telephone Number: 087 2387774

Name: G. Miller

Telephone Number: 087 9551582

~ 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.
- Advise staff on the procedures for identification of vulnerable students.
- Provide relevant material for staff etc.
- Provide support to vulnerable staff members.

4. **Role: Student Liaison**

Name: Jo Doyle

Telephone Number: 087 9663971

Name: Anne Molloy

Telephone Number: 086 1782643

Name: Ronan Coleman

Telephone Number: 087 9275082

Name: Gillian Hipwell

Telephone Number: 087 6403068

- Alert staff to vulnerable students
- Provide materials for students

- Keep records of students seen by external agency staff
 - Looks after setting up and supervision of ‘quiet’ room where agreed etc.
5. **Role: Community/Agency liaison**
Name: A. Ni Riain
Telephone Number: 087 2379945
- Maintains up to date lists of contact numbers of emergency support services and other external contacts and resources etc.
 - Liaises with agencies in the community for support and onward referral etc.
6. **Role: Parent Liaison**
Name: M. Maxwell
Telephone Number: 086 0517284
Name: G. Hipwell
Telephone Number: 087 6403068
Name: Year Head of affected group
Telephone Number:
- Visits the bereaved family with the team leader.
 - Arranges parent meetings if held.
 - Ensures that sample letters are typed up, on the school’s system and ready for adaptation.
 - Provides appropriate materials for parents etc.
7. **Role: Media Liaison**
Name: S. McGovern / P. O’Brien
Telephone Number: 085 7300860 (SMcG) 087 2387774 (POB)
- Will draw up a press statement, give media briefings and interviews (as agreed by school management) etc.
8. **Role: Administrator**
Name: K. Canniffe
Telephone Number: 087 6734919
Name: Lorna O’Brien
Telephone Number: 085 7190740
Name: D. O’Loughlin & A. Bolger
Telephone Number: 087 9820420 (DOL) 087 2718812 (ABL)
- Maintenance of up to date telephone numbers of 1. Parents or guardians 2. Teachers 3. 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 where appropriate
 - Photocopies materials needed.
 - Maintains records etc.

EMERGENCY CONTACT LIST

| <u>AGENCY</u> | <u>CONTACT NUMBERS</u> |
|--|--------------------------------|
| GARDA | 999 OR 045 431212 |
| NAAS HOSPITAL | 999 OR 045 897221 |
| FIRE BRIGADE | 999 OR 112 |
| LOCAL GPs | See Page 9 |
| HSE/COMMUNITY CARE TEAM/CHILD & FAMILY CENTRE/CAMHS | 045 882400 / 045 873880 |
| OFFICE OF THE SCHOOL INSPECTORATE | 01 8896553 |
| NEPS PSYCHOLOGIST | 045 848504 |
| DES | 090 6483600 |
| TUI | 01 4922588 |
| PARISH PRIEST/CLERGY | 045 431741 |
| STATE EXAMS COMMISSION | 090 6442700 |

Useful Emergency Contact Numbers

| Name | Address | Town | Telephone |
|--|---|-------------|------------------|
| Dr Brendan O'Shea & Dr. Seoighe Ni Rua | The Bridge Medical Centre Station Rd. | Newbridge | 045-432999 |
| Dr. Ramadam | 923 The Crescent | Newbridge | 045-449765 |
| Dr Noel Caffrey | Mc Elwain Tce. | Newbridge | 045-433374 |
| Dr Michael McDonnell & Mary O'Doherty, | Newbridge Family Practice, Moorefield | Newbridge | 045-434885 |
| Dr. Adrian McGoldrick Dr. Bernard Healy | Moorefield Medical Centre | Newbridge | 045-486633 |
| Dr. Linda Norton | Curragh Grange S.C. | Newbridge | 045-435499 |
| Dr. Michael O'Connell Dr. Graham Gordon | Primary Care Centre | Newbridge | 045-491700 |
| Dr. Donal Deeny | Roseberry Clinic 2 The Bungalow Roseberry | Newbridge | 045-449516 |
| Dr. Eamonn Dillon | The Medical Centre 1 Canning Place | Newbridge | 045-432464 |
| Dr. Denis O'Dwyer | The Cottage Newtown | Kildare | 045-521419 |
| KDOC Doctors | | Newbridge | 1 890 599362 |
| Roseberry Clinic | Roseberry | Newbridge | 045-449516 |
| CAMHS | Athy Health Centre Woodstock St. | Athy | 059-8633522 |
| KDOC Doctors | | Naas | 1890599362 |

SAMPLE LETTER TO PARENTS — SUDDEN DEATH/ACCIDENT

Resource for schools: R4

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 schools response involves.

Dear Parents

The school has experienced (*the sudden death, accidental injury, etc.*) of (*Name 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 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 on the details*).

It is possible that your child may have some feelings and questions that s/he 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*).

Signed:

Principal

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Parents:

The following is a summary of questions frequently asked by parents after a critical incident.

Q. This incident has upset my daughter/son. As there are many rumours circulating, I would like to know what really happened. How can I find that information?

A. The school will inform students and parents of the core details of the incident insofar as they are known. It sometimes takes some time for the true facts to emerge. In the meantime, it is important to stick to the facts as known. Discourage rumour or gossip as it is often incorrect and can be distressing for the families and friends of those involved.

Q. Will help be available to the students in the school?

A. This will depend on the particular situation. The school will usually put a plan in place for supporting students. This support may include classroom discussion, small group discussion or individual support for students who need it. This support may be offered by school staff themselves, or by staff of other agencies. If there is particular concern about your son or daughter, you will be informed.

Q. How can I help my child?

A. You are the natural support for your child. He/she may want to discuss their feelings and thoughts with you. You can help by listening carefully. You should tell them it is ok to feel the way they do, that people react in many different ways and that they should talk rather than bottle things up.

Q. How long will the grief last?

A. There is no quick answer to this. It varies from individual to individual and according to circumstances. It will also be affected by the closeness of the child to the event or to the person who died. Memories of other bereavements may also be brought up by the incident. Be patient and understanding. It can take time.

Q. Since the incident occurred my child has difficulty in sleeping, complains of headaches etc. Can I be sure these are related to the incident?

A. Grief can affect one physically as well as emotionally and these and other symptoms may be part of a grief reaction. If they persist, consult a doctor for a check up.

Q. If my child remains very upset what should I do?

A. If your child remains distressed after a period of six weeks or so, s/he may need additional support, but there is no fixed rule about the length of the grieving process. If you are very concerned at any point, it is best to seek more help through your GP/Child and Family Centre/CAMHS.

Q. In what ways are adolescents different from other children?

A. During adolescence there are a lot of changes going on for young people and some may feel confused about themselves and the world around them. Grief tends to heighten these feelings and increase the confusion. At this time, too, the individual

may look more to friends than to family for support and comfort. Don't feel rejected by this.

SAMPLE CONSENT LETTER - INDIVIDUAL OR GROUP SUPPORT SESSION

Resource for schools: R2

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

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 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
- h) 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**).

Yours sincerely,

Signed:

Principal

I/we understand that our son/daughter may meet the psychologist in an individual or group session depending on the arrangements considered to be most appropriate.

Student Name: _____

Class: _____

Parent or Legal Guardian

A CLASSROOM SESSION FOLLOWING NEWS OF A CRITICAL INCIDENT

Handout for teachers -R7

Normally, the class teacher, class tutor or other teacher who knows the students should be the person to inform them of the events and lead the classroom session. Students generally feel safe and secure with someone they know. If the teacher feels uncomfortable with this role another staff member or the psychologist may work with them and share the task. Teachers should have the opportunity to opt out of this work if they feel unable to handle it and other arrangements should be made for that class group.

The aim of the session is to break the news to give the students an opportunity to discuss what has happened and to express their thoughts and feelings in a secure environment. The teacher needs to listen and be empathic.

The session needs to be tailored to the age and developmental level of the class group.

The outline of the session is as follows:

Step 1: Giving the facts and dispelling rumours

Step 2: Sharing stories and allowing and encouraging the sharing of thoughts and the expression of feelings

Step 3: Normalising the reactions

Step 4: Worries (for younger children)

Step 5: Empowerment – Help them to help themselves

Step 6: Closure

Step 7: Free Time

Step 8: Recovery

Step 1: Giving the facts and dispelling rumours.

Tell the students in a calm, low key and factual voice

- What has happened
- Who was involved
- When it happened
- The plan for the day
- Instruct students **not** to speak to strangers, the media etc about the incident as the facts may be misinterpreted leading to distress for the family of the deceased/injured party

Sample Script

I have something very sad I want to share with you. The factual information agreed upon by the staff e.g (Name of student), who attends our school and was missing, has been found. He is dead. Yesterday, the Gardai found his body. They are investigating what has happened and will let us know as soon as they find out more information.

I am feeling very sad about what's happened. Let's spend some time together now helping each other to talk about how we feel about what has happened.

Step 2: Sharing stories

Take some time for discussion. Students may wish to tell their story of the event. As a result they will feel less alone because of their common shared experiences. Assisting them to verbalise their experiences helps their recovery. For those students who find it difficult to verbalise their experiences, or for students with learning difficulties, it may be helpful to allow them to express their feelings and recount their experiences in other ways. Writing stories or using art can be particularly helpful, especially for younger students. A number of materials that can be used are suggested in 'Resources for Schools' pg 45. Give the students a choice as to how they want to represent their experiences. Have a box of tissues at hand.

Sample script

To help us today, we are going to make a memory box for (name of deceased). You can draw a picture of a time you remember with (name of the deceased) or write a poem or a letter to him. If you like we can put these in a nice box and give it to (name of deceased) family sometime soon. This will help them to see how important (name of deceased) was.

Step 3: Normalising the reactions

Tell the students that they will all react differently to what has happened and that there is no right or wrong way. List some possible feelings and reactions (see R11). Explain that their reactions are normal responses to abnormal circumstances. Let the students know that the reactions or symptoms will go away in time. Tell them that if the symptoms haven't gone after a few weeks, they should let you or their parents know. They may need to talk to someone about how they are feeling. Depending on the incident and the age of the students distribute handouts R9, R10, R11, R12.

Step 4: Worries (for younger children)

Sample script

You may be worried about (name of the deceased) - that they might be sad or lonely or hungry or cold. When someone dies they don't feel cold or hungry or feelings like that anymore.

You may be worried that the same thing could happen to you or someone in your family. What happened to (name of deceased) doesn't happen very often.

If the classmate has been ill, you could say. *He was very sick and the chances of this happening to someone else you know are low.*

Step 5: Empowerment

Help the students to identify strategies that they might use to help manage their reactions. For example, talking to family and friends, getting enough sleep, exercise may all help. If appropriate, students can share strategies that worked for them in other stressful situations or brainstorm ideas as to what might help. Overall, it is important to help the students regain a sense of control.

Step 6: Closure

End the session by focussing on the future. Depending on the nature of the incident, help the class/group decide what they would like to do about various issues, e.g., what to do about the person's empty chair, about writing cards or letters. Reiterate the message that their reactions are normal responses to abnormal circumstances.

Step 7: Free Time

After the discussion the teacher may want to allow the student's some play time in the playground or free time in the classroom or an agreed area, depending on the age.

Step 8: Recovery

It may be useful to continue to do these activities at intervals during the days following and to intersperse them throughout the curriculum in the coming days.

- Normal routines should generally be returned to as soon as possible.
- Students should be encouraged to resume sports and other extra-curricular activities
- Help students to identify or establish some supports; help them to identify who they go to for different kinds of help
- It is appropriate that the class curriculum is adjusted or adapted. For example, teachers should avoid presenting new learning material for a while following an incident as concentration may be impaired
- Use opportunities which arise within ordinary class work, where coping and support can be reinforced
- Students could be encouraged to discuss how to avoid future crises and lessons learnt from their experiences. There will also be opportunities for structured discussion within the school's social, personal~ and health education programmes. Where Circle Time is in use, this is an ideal context in which to offer support

HOW TO COPE WHEN SOMETHING TERRIBLE HAPPENS

Hand-out for Students: R10

- Reach out — people do care
- Talk to your friends, family and teachers - talking is the most healing medicine
- Remember you are normal and having normal reactions — don't label yourself as crazy or mad
- It is ok to cry
- It is ok to smile
- If your feelings and reactions seem different from those of your friends, remember everyone reacts differently
- When the stress level is high there is a temptation to try to numb the feelings with alcohol and drugs. This complicates the problems, rather than relieving them
- Some people find that writing or drawing is helpful. What about writing a note or letter to the family of the person who died or the person themselves?
- Spend time with people who have a positive influence on you
- Make as many daily decisions as possible. This will give you a feeling of control over your life, e.g. if someone asks you what you want to eat — answer them, even if you're not sure
- Recurring thoughts, dreams or flashbacks are normal — don't try to fight them they'll decrease over time and become less painful
Make a special effort to take care of yourself during this time. Try to get some extra sleep, eat nutritious foods and get some exercise, even if it is just a walk
- Sticking to your "normal" routine helps. Structure your time — keep busy
- Take time out— go for a walk or kick a football
- Provide some balance to the negative things that have gone on by doing something special or fun for yourself. Think about something that makes you feel good. Then make it happen — like going to the cinema, listening to music, calling a friend, etc. Laughter is good medicine. Watch a funny movie or play a silly game with younger children to lighten your spirits
- Useful websites: www.spunout.ie; www.youth.ie; www.reachout.com.au

Above all, realise that what you are experiencing is normal following a traumatic event. Be understanding of yourself and others.

REACTIONS TO A CRITICAL INCIDENT

Handout for Students: R11

Following the recent sad event, you may now be experiencing some strong emotional or physical reactions. There is no 'right' or 'wrong way to feel but here is a list of difficulties that people sometimes experience following such an event.

FEELINGS

Fear
Guilt
Shame
Regret
Anger
Tearfulness
Loneliness
Anxiety
Nightmares
Social withdrawal
Irritability
Loss of concentration
Forgetfulness
Physical/Verbal aggression
Misuse of drugs, including alcohol
Mood swings
Shock
Yearning
Numbness
Confusion
Isolation
Insecurity

BEHAVIOURAL

Nightmares
Social Withdrawal
Irritability
Loss of concentration
Forgetfulness
Physical/Verbal aggression
Misuse of drugs including alcohol

PHYSICAL

Tiredness
Sleeplessness
Headaches
Stomach Problems

Bowel/Bladder problems
Loss or increase in appetite

THOUGHTS

Disbelief
Denial
Sense of unreality
Preoccupation with images of the
Event/person

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Teachers: R19

The following is a summary of questions often asked by teachers in the aftermath of a critical incident.

Q. I would like to opt out of support type work for personal reasons, Is this OK?

A. It has been found that their teachers are the best people to support students in school in times of distress because they need to be with people they know and trust. Accordingly, all teachers and other school staff members are encouraged to help the students at these times. However, nobody should be obliged to do this work and people should be able to opt out of it if they feel they need to. This may be for a number of reasons, including recent personal bereavement, experience of a loss similar to that occurring in the particular incident or other circumstances. However, in order to stay in touch, they would need to be in attendance at staff meetings where information is disseminated in relation to the incident.

Q. I have no qualifications to help out in this area. Shouldn't the job be left to the experts?

A. You probably have more skills here than you realise. Your experience, competence and skills as a teacher and as an expert in dealing with children and young people are invaluable. Most importantly, the students know you. Students need a safe environment in which to come to terms with what has happened. This security is often enhanced by being able to discuss the events with a familiar teacher in the first instance.

Q. What should I do in the classroom to be helpful?

A. You should acknowledge the situation and clarify the facts, as they are known. Honesty is essential. Encourage questions so that the students have a clear understanding. You should try to establish normal routines as soon as possible — but balance this with allowing students opportunities to discuss the incident and to express their thoughts and feelings. Encourage them to resume extra-curricular activities and help them to identify where they can go to for support. Encourage them to be supportive of one another.

Q. What are the signs of grief that I may notice in students seen?

A. After bereavement students may have a wide range of different reactions — some may become quiet and withdrawn, while others may seem to be aggressive, irritable or angry. They may have mood swings or lack concentration. Try to handle all these 'normal' reactions with patience, do not seem surprised by them and do not get cross (see R8, R9 and R11). If students come from a background where there is

family breakdown, serious illness, alcohol or drug related or other difficulties, then you need to take extra note of any behavioural changes.

Q. What if I think that some students are not grieving normally?

A. There is no such thing as a ‘correct’ way to grieve. Some people cry, some may laugh or become giddy, some show no reaction. The important thing is that all these different ways are natural and normal and you should try to help the student understand this.

Q. What skills do I have that are important?

A. Listening skills are probably the most important. People who have experienced loss or trauma generally feel that talking helps them to cope with their feelings. When you sense a student wants to talk, try to make the time. Be reassuring and patient while gently encouraging them to talk about the loss. Reassure the student that you are there to help.

Q. Is there any one important thing I should say?

A. Yes, emphasise that grieving is a normal healthy process following a traumatic incident. It is the person’s way of coping with the event. It is also normal for people to react in different ways — there is no ‘right’ way to grieve.

Q. Is it a good idea to organise a classroom session following a critical incident?

A. Some schools do and they have found this to be very effective. You will find notes on leading a class session after news of an incident in R7. An advantage here is that students may feel safer and more secure with their regular classroom teacher rather than being with an adult they do not know.

Q. What should I do if I feel that a student needs more professional support?

A. Discuss the issue with the Principal or guidance counsellor. They, in turn, may wish to discuss it with the NEPS psychologist or other support services and with the student’s parents. The outcome may be a referral through the GP to the appropriate service.

Q. What is the overall message in helping bereaved children?

A. “You will get through this difficult time and we are here to help if you need support. Take care of yourself and look out for each other. Talk to us if you need help or if you think a friend is in difficulty”.

Q. When should I get back to a normal teaching routine with a class?

A It is important to give students sufficient time and space to share their feelings and to come to terms with what has happened. However, it is also important to move towards a normal routine as soon as possible. Getting on with the regular and familiar pattern of school life helps reduce stress. Avoid introducing new material in the immediate aftermath of an incident or bereavement, as grief and shock can interfere with concentration and motivation. It is often a good idea to consult the students themselves about returning to the normal routine.

Q. What do I do about the empty chair/a student's belongings etc?

A A helpful strategy might be to involve students in a discussion about what to do about the chair. This might also present an opportunity to move to a new phase in the process. With regard to the student's belongings, it might be useful to put together a folder or a 'memory box' of the student's work for the parents. This can be given to them at an appropriate time.

Q. Is there a danger that by talking about suicide you make it appear to be an option for others?

A Talking about the death helps people to make sense of what has happened. People can cope with the truth, but **suicide must never be represented as a valid option.** There should be no criticism of the person who has died. Separate the person from the behaviour. It is important to talk about how a person can get to the point where suicide may *seem* to be the only option but **emphasise that it is not a good option.** Feeling low is usually a temporary thing, whereas suicide is permanent. With suicide the intention may have been to change life circumstances rather than end life. There is always help available if a person can take the step of reaching out for it. Encourage students to seek help if they need it.

SAMPLE ANNOUNCEMENT TO THE MEDIA

Resource for schools: R6

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 *(Name)* and I am the Principal of *(Name of 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/were *(in Xth year in the school)* and will be greatly missed by all who knew him/her/them.

We have been in contact with his/her/their 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.

The school has implemented our Critical Incident Management Plan. Psychologists from the National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS) and *(insert other relevant information)* 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 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.

Thank you.

Signed:

Principal

STUDENT CONTACT RECORD

Resource for schools: R1

This form can be used by school staff or external agency staff to record the details of students seen following a critical incident. This information should be collated centrally.

| Date | Student Name | Class/Year | Outcome (Include need for follow-up) |
|-------------|---------------------|-------------------|---|
| | | | |
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Dealing With Tragedy – Useful Publications & Websites

Responding to Critical Incidents – Guidelines for Schools

NEPS document available at www.education.ie

Responding to Critical Incidents – Resource Materials for Schools

NEPS document available at www.education.ie

Guidelines for Schools on How to Respond to the Sudden Unexpected Death of a Student

Available from ASTI, Winetavern Street, Dublin 8

Wish Before the Event – Coping with Crises in Schools

William Yule and Anne Gould

Available from major bookshops

When Someone Close Dies

Erna O'Connor, Siobhan Driscoll, Annette Winston

Available at <http://lenus.ie/hse/handle/10147/46318>

Death – Helping Children Understand

Available from Solas, Barnardo's, Christchurch Square, Dublin 8 or

www.barnados.ie

Suicide, Bereavement and Loss – Perspectives and Responses

Luke Monaghan

Available from Irish Association of Pastoral Care in Education

The Chaplain: A Faith Presence in the School Community

Luke Monaghan and Caroline Renahan. Published by Columba Press

At the Heart of Education – School Chaplaincy and Pastoral Care

Edited by James Norman. Published by Veritas Publications, 2004

Suicide Prevention in Schools – Best Practice Guidelines

Available from the Irish Association of Suicidology (IAS)

Youtube 'Fighting Anxiety and Panic Attacks' Dr. Harry Barry

Youtube 'Meditation for Beginners'

Relevant 'Positive Mental Health' Apps – available free of charge

This policy was adopted by the Board of Management on

Date of next review: _____

Signed: _____

Chairperson
Board of Management

Date: _____

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Principal