



Critical Incident Management Plan

December 2025



An Roinn Oideachais
agus Óige
Department of Education
and Youth



Version	Date	Description	Authors
1.0	April, 2023	First Version of Policy	Board of Management
2.0	December, 2025	Review of Policy • Table of Contents added • New sections incorporated throughout the policy • Section 1: Introduction added • Section 2: Definition included • Section 3: Policy aim outlined • Section 4: Focus added on fostering a supportive, caring, and coping-oriented school ethos • Section 5: Updated list of relevant team members and their roles/responsibilities • Sections 6, 7, and 8: Newly added	Board of Management

Contents

1. Introduction	4
2. Definition of a Critical Incident:	4
3. Aims:.....	4
4. Creation of a coping supportive and caring ethos in the school.....	5
5. Critical Incident Management Team (CIMT)	6
6. Record keeping.....	9
7. Confidentiality and good name considerations	9
8. Critical Incident Rooms	9
9. Short Term Actions and Roles Assigned (1 st Day).....	9
10. Medium Term Actions and Roles Assigned (24-72 Hours)	10
11. Long Term Actions and Roles Assigned (Beyond 72 Hours)	12
12. Emergency Contact List (to be displayed in main office, principal's office, etc.)	13
13. Useful Contact Numbers (to be displayed in main office, principal's office etc.)	14
14. Ratification of Policy	16

1. Introduction

Mercy Convent Primary School aims to protect the wellbeing of its students and staff by providing a safe and nurturing environment at all times. The Board of Management has drawn up a critical incident management plan (CIMP) as one element of the school's policies and plans. Our aim is to establish a Critical Incident Management Team (CIMT) to steer the development and implementation of the CIMP.

2. Definition of a Critical Incident:

The staff and management of Mercy Convent 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 may include:

- The death of a member of the school community through accident, violence, suicide or suspected suicide or other unexpected death
- Major illness/outbreak of disease
- An accident involving a member/members of the school community
- Major accident/tragedy in the wider community
- Sexual, physical and psychological abuse
- Civil unrest, war
- Fire, natural and technological disaster
- Disappearance of student from home or school
- Unauthorised removal of student from home or school
- A physical attack or an intrusion into the school

3. Aims:

The aims of the CIMP is:

- to help school management and staff to react quickly and effectively in the event of an incident
- to help us to maintain a sense of order and to ensure that appropriate support is offered to students, staff and families
- to help us identify risks and to have a communication plan in place should an incident occur
- to ensure that the effects on the students and staff will be minimized.
- to facilitate a return to normality as soon as possible.
- to provide support to students from the teachers, in partnership with parents.
- to provide clear guidelines to all staff to ensure that they feel supported and part of a team.

4. 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.

4.1 Physical safety

- Evacuation plan formulated
- Regular fire drills occur
- Fire exits and extinguishers are regularly checked
- Front door and side gate locked during school hours
- Trained First Aid responders on staff
- Key code on entrance to school office area
- Garda Vetting legislation complied with
- Updated contact details for staff, and in case of emergency numbers
- Updated contact details for parents/guardians

4.2 Psychological safety

The management and staff of Mercy Convent Primary aim to use available programmes and resources to address the personal and social development of pupils, 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; resilience; personal safety; substance abuse; bullying; are addressed as of the SPHE curriculum.
- Staff have access to training in skills which support pupil well-being, e.g. Zones of Regulation
- Staff are familiar with the Child Protection Guidelines and Procedures and the names of the Designated Liaison Person (DLP) and Deputy Designated Liaison Person (DDLDP)
- Books and resources on difficulties affecting the primary school student are available
- The school has developed links with a range of external agencies – NEPS, PDST, NCCE, TUSLA
- Inputs to students by external providers are carefully considered in the light of criteria about student safety, the appropriateness of the content, and the expertise of the providers.
- The school has a clear Bí Cineálta Policy and deals with incidents of bullying in accordance with this policy
- There is a care system in place in the school using the "Continuum of Support" approach.

5. Critical Incident Management Team (CIMT)

A CIMT has been established in line with best practice. The members of the team will meet periodically 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.

- Cathal Ruane (Principal)
- Brian Corkery (Deputy Principal)
- Hilary Grant
- Jacinta Dunphy
- Sinéad Buckley
- Edel Woulfe
- Patricia Kelly
- Sarah Madigan
- Maria Keogh
- Trevor McNamara

5.1 Key Roles Assigned

Task	Name
Overall Management of Response • 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	Cathal Ruane/ Brian Corkery
Administration Tasks • Maintenance of up to date telephone numbers of 1. Parents or guardians 2. Teachers 3. Emergency Staff • 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	Hilary Grant/ Jacinta Dunphy

• Photocopies materials needed • Maintains records	
Media Liaison • 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 teacher unions etc. • Will draw up a press statement, give media briefings (as agreed by school management)	Cathal Ruane/ Brian Corkery / Trevor McNamara
Parent Liaison • Visits the bereaved family with the team leader • Arranges parents meetings, if held • 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 • Sets up room for meetings with parents • Maintains a record of parents seen • Meets with individual parents • Provides appropriate materials for parents (from their critical incident folder)	Sinéad Buckley
Community Liaison • Maintains up to date lists of contact numbers of Key parents, such as members of the Parents Council • 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 • Updates team members on the involvement of external agencies	Trevor McNamara Brian Corkery

Student Liaison • Alerts other staff to vulnerable students (appropriately) • Provides materials for students (from their critical incident folder) • Keeps records of students seen by external agency staff • Looks after setting up and supervision of 'quiet' room where agreed	Edel Woulfe / Patricia Kelly
Staff Liaison • Leads briefing meetings for staff on the facts as known and 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 (from the critical incident folder) • Keeps staff updated as the day progresses • Is alert to vulnerable staff members and makes contact with them individually • Advises them of the availability of the Employee Assistance Service (EAS) and gives them the contact number	Maria Keogh Sarah Madigan
Garda Liaison • Liaises with the Gardaí • Ensures that information about deaths or other developments is checked out for accuracy before being shared	Trevor Macnamara

6. Record keeping

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

The school secretaries will have a key role in receiving and logging telephone calls, sending letters, photocopying materials etc.

7. Confidentiality and good name considerations

The management and staff of name of school 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 statements. The members of the school staff will bear this in mind, and will seek to ensure that students do so also. For instance, the term 'suicide' will not be used unless there is confirmed 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.

8. Critical Incident Rooms

In the event of a critical incident,

- The Old School Halla will be the main room used to meet the staff
- Classrooms will be used for meetings with students
- Meeting room and the principal's office will be used for meetings with parents, media, individual sessions with students and for meetings with other visitors.

9. Short Term Actions and Roles Assigned (1st Day)

Task	Name (Key & Support)
Gather accurate information	Relevant staff and witnesses (accidents)
Contact appropriate agencies	Trevor McNamara/ Cathal Ruane/ Brian Corkery

Convene a meeting with key staff	Cathal Ruane/ Brian Corkery
Arrange supervision of students	Sinéad Buckley /Edel Woulfe
Hold Staff Meeting	All staff
Organise timetable for the day	Patricia Kelly/ Sarah Madigan/ Maria Keogh
Inform parents	Sinéad Buckley
Inform students	Edel Woulfe/ Patricia Kelly
Make contact with the bereaved family	Cathal Ruane/ Brian Corkery/ Sinéad Buckley
Dealing with media	Cathal Ruane/ Brian Corkery / Trevor McNamara

10. Medium Term Actions and Roles Assigned (24-72 Hours)

Task	Name / Group
Review events of the first 24 hrs	Staff
Arrange support for individual / groups of students, parents, etc.	Trevor McNamara

Plan the reintegration of students and staff	Sinéad Buckley / Edel Woulfe/ Patricia Kelly/ Sarah Madigan/ Maria Keogh
Plan visits to injured	Cathal Ruane/ Brian Corkery
Liaise with family re funeral arrangements / memorial service	Cathal Ruane/ Brian Corkery/ Sinéad Buckley
Attendance / participation at funeral service etc.	Staff
School closure	Board of Management

11. Long Term Actions and Roles Assigned (Beyond 72 Hours)

Task	Name / Group
Monitor students for signs of continuing stress	Class teachers
Evaluate response to incident and amend CI plan appropriately	Staff/Board of management
Formalise plan for future	Staff/Board of management
Inform new staff / pupils	Sinéad Buckley/ Edel Woulfe
Decide on appropriate ways to deal with anniversaries	Board of Management

12. Emergency Contact List (to be displayed in main office, principal's office, etc.)

Outside Agency	Contact Number
Garda	045 884300
Hospital	045 849500
FIRE BRIGADE NAAS / NEWBRIDGE	045 980200 / 045 431370
Local GPs	Dr Aherne 045 897977
	Mydoc 085 8734084
	Dr Kavanagh 045 898875 (Vista Family Practice)
	Naas General Practice 045 876129
	Dr Kehoe 045 876129
	Dr Purcell 045 898417 (Tara Clinic Naas)
	Dr Devine 045 897372
	Fay Family Medical Practice 045 897301
National Ambulance Service (based in Tallaght)	01 4631623
Health Service Executive (HSE)	045 880400
Inspectorate	01 8896553
NEPS Psychologist Naas Head Office Dublin	076 108620 (linked to Head Office Dun Laoghaire) 01 8892700
DES Communications	01 8896400

INTO	01 8047700
Parish Priests / Clergy	Priest on call 085 7088407 Parish office 045 879730

13. Useful Contact Numbers (to be displayed in main office, principal's office etc.)

Outside Agency	Contact Number
Barnardos	1850 222300 (call save helpline) 01 4539355 (Dublin HQ) 046 9732463 (Edenderry)
Child and Family Agency Naas	045 920000
Linn Dara Mid Kildare, CAMHS	045 873880
The Samaritans	116 123 (free phone) 045 435299 (Newbridge)
Childline	1800 666666
Parent Line	1890 927277
Aware	01 6617211 1800 804848
Pieta House	1800 247247 (free phone)
Barnardos Bereavement Service	01 4732110 (Dublin)
Turas le Chéile Bereavement Counselling (Adults and Children) Naas	086 0566819

Rainbows

01 4734175 (Dublin)

Employee Assistance Service

1800 411057

14. Ratification of Policy

This policy was adopted by the Board of Management on 3rd December 2025.

This policy has been made available to school personnel, published on the school website and provided to the Parents' Association. A copy of this policy will be made available to the Department and the patron if requested.

This policy and its implementation will be reviewed by the Board of Management every three years or as the need arises. Written notification that the review has been completed will be made available to school personnel, published on the school website and provided to the Parents' Association. A record of the review and its outcome will be made available, if requested, to the patron and the Department

Signed: 

Chairperson Board of Management

Signed: 

Principal

Date: 3rd December 2025

Date: 3rd December 2025

Date of next review: December 2028