

**St. Molua's N.S.**  
**Ardagh,**  
**Co. Limerick.**



### **Critical Incident Policy**

At all times, St. Molua's N.S. aims to protect the well being of its students and staff by providing a safe and nurturing environment as defined in our Mission statement. The Board of Management, through the Principal, has drawn up the following Critical Incident Management Plan as one element of the school's policies and plans.

#### **Aim**

The aim is to establish a Critical Incident Management Team (CITM) is "to help school management and staff to react quickly and effectively in the event of an incident, to enable them to maintain a sense of control and to ensure that appropriate support is offered to students and staff". Having a good plan will also help ensure that the effects on the students and staff will be limited. It will enable the school to return to normality as soon as possible.

#### **Definition of Critical Incident**

The staff and management of St. Molua's N.S. recognize 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, their family members or members of the local community e.g.

- The death of a member of the school community through sudden death, accident, terminal illness or suicide.
- A physical attack on staff member(s) or student(s) or intrusion into the school
- An accident involving members of the school community on or off the school premises
- 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

### **Creation of a Coping Supportive and Caring Ethos in the School**

St. Molua's N.S. has put systems in place to help to build resilience in both staff and students through our SPHE/RSE programmes, 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**

In the area of physical safety the school has put in place the following:

- Evacuation plan formulated
- Regular fire drills occur
- Fire extinguishers are regularly checked
- Pre-opening supervision in the school on days of inclement weather e.g. frost, rain, snow
- General school rules under the school's behavior policy to ensure all pupils have a safe environment

#### **Psychological Safety**

The management and staff of St. Molua's N.S. also 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)**

- It is integrated into the work of the school. It is addressed in the curriculum by including 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
- Staffs have access for their training for their role in SPHE
- Staffs 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 the primary school student are available

- The school has developed links with a range of external agencies e.g. HSE/NEPS
- Inputs of students by external providers are carefully considered in the light of criteria about students safety, the appropriateness of the content, and the expertise of the providers
- The school has a clear policy on bullying and deals with bullying in accordance with this policy
- Staffs are informed about how to access support themselves

### **Emergency Information for School Trips**

- List of all pupils/staff involved and teacher in charge
- List of mobile phone numbers for accompanying teacher(s)
- Up to date medical information on pupils with allergies, epilepsy, etc.

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

A CITM 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 at least one school year. The members of the team will meet annually to review and update the policy and plan. Each member of the team has access to the schools Critical Incident Management Folder which include all of the following:

- A copy of the Critical Incident Management Team/ and the Key Roles
- An emergency contact list/school staff contact list
- A copy of the duties of each team member
- A copy of the Board of Management members and contacts
- An Action Plan Template

### **Key Roles and Responsibilities of the CIMT**

- Team Leader-Ger Kelleher
- Garda liaison - Maura Crowley
- Staff liaison - Marie Ruddle
- Student liaison- Ger Kelleher
- Parent liaison - Ger Kelleher / Joan O' Callaghan

- Community liaison - Eileen Ambrose
- Media liaison - Ger Kelleher
- Administrator - Ger Kelleher

### **The Following are the Key Responsibilities of Each Role**

**(A more definitive list is available in the Critical Incident Folder)**

#### **Team Leader**

- Alert the team members to the crises and convenes a meeting
- Co-ordinate the task of the team
- Liaise with the Board of Management: DES: NEPS:
- Liaise with the bereaved family

The Deputy Principal will assume this role in the absence of the team leader.

#### **Garda Liaison**

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

#### **Staff Liaison**

- Lead briefing meetings for staff on facts as known, give staff members an opportunity to express their feelings and ask questions and outline the routine for the day
- Advise staff on the procedures for identification of vulnerable students
- Provide materials for staff (from the Critical Incident Folder)
- Keep records of students seen by external agency staff
- Look after setting up and supervision of 'quiet' room where agreed

#### **Community/ Agency liaison**

- Maintain up to date lists of contact numbers - members of the Parents Council, emergency support services and other external contacts and resources
- Liaise with agencies in the community for support and onward referral

- Check credentials of individuals offering support
- Co-ordinate the involvement of these agencies
- Remind agency staff to wear name badges
- Update team members on the involvement of external agencies

### **Parent Liaison**

- Visit the bereaved family with the team leader
- Arrange parent meetings if held - Facilitate such meetings, and manage 'questions and answers'
- Set up room for meetings with parents
- Meet with individual parents
- Maintain a record of parents
- Manage the consent issues in accordance with agreed school policy
- Ensure that sample letters are typed up, on the school's systems and ready for adaptation
- Provide appropriate materials for parents (from the Critical Incident Folder)

### **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 and interviews (as agreed by school management)

### **Administrator**

- Maintenance up to date telephone numbers of:
- Parents or guardians
- Emergency services

- Take telephone calls and note those that need to be responded to
- Ensure that templates are on the school's system in advance and ready for adaptation
- Prepare to send out letters, emails and faxes
- Photocopies materials needed
- Maintains records
- Ensures Emergency contact details are displayed in the staff room and office

### **Record Keeping**

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

### **Confidentiality and Good Name Considerations**

The management and staff of St. Molua'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. 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 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 not be used until it is legally established that a murder was committed. The term 'violent death' may be used instead.

### **Critical Incident Rooms**

In the event of a critical incident:

- Staff room used to meet the staff
- Computer room or classrooms for meetings with students
- Junior Infant classroom for parents
- Principals office for media

- Mrs. Crowley's room for other visitors

### **Consultation and Communication Regarding the Plan**

All staff were consulted and regard was given to their views in the preparation of this policy and plan. Our school's final policy and plan in relation to responding to critical incidents has been presented to all staff. Each member of the critical incident team has access to a personal copy of the plan. All new and temporary staff will be informed of the details of the plan by the school principal.

Date of ratification\_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Chairperson of Board of Management \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Principal \_\_\_\_\_

Date of next review:

## **CRITICAL INCIDENT MANAGEMENT TEMPLATE FOR SCHOOL PLAN**

## **CRITICAL INCIDENT MANAGEMENT TEAM**

<b>ROLE</b>	<b>NAME</b>	<b>TELEPHONE NUMBER (HOME AND MOBILE)</b>
<b>Team Leader</b>	<b>Ger Kelleher</b>	<b>087 9022135</b>
<b>Garda Liaison</b>	<b>Maura Crowley</b>	
<b>Staff Liaison</b>	<b>Marie Ruddle</b>	
<b>Student Liaison</b>	<b>Ger Kelleher</b>	
<b>Parent Liaison</b>	<b>Ger Kelleher</b>	
<b>Community Liaison</b>	<b>Eileen Ambrose</b>	
<b>Media Liaison</b>	<b>Ger Kelleher</b>	
<b>Administrator</b>	<b>Ger Kelleher</b>	

## **Short term actions - Day 1**

<b>Task</b>	<b>Name</b>
<b>Gather accurate information</b>	<b>Ger Kelleher</b>
<b>Who, what, when, where?</b>	<b>Ger Kelleher</b>
<b>Convene a CIMT meeting - specify time and place</b>	<b>Marie Ruddle</b>
<b>Contact external agencies</b>	<b>Ger Kelleher</b>
<b>Arrange supervision for students</b>	<b>Ger Kelleher</b>
<b>Hold Staff meeting</b>	<b>All Staff</b>
<b>Agree schedule for the day</b>	<b>Ger Kelleher</b>



<b>Inform students - (close friends and students with learning difficulties may need to be told separately)</b>	<b>Ger Kelleher</b>
<b>Compile a list of vulnerable students</b>	<b>Ger Kelleher</b>
<b>Contact/visit the bereaved family</b>	<b>Ger Kelleher/Joan O' Callaghan</b>
<b>Prepare and agree media statement and deal with media</b>	<b>Ger Kelleher</b>
<b>Inform Parents</b>	<b>Ger Kelleher / Joan O' Callaghan</b>
<b>Hold end of day staff briefing</b>	<b>Marie Ruddle / Ger Kelleher</b>

### **Medium Term actions - (Day 2 and followings days)**

<b>Convene a CIMT meeting to review the events of day 1</b>	<b>Team Leader</b>
<b>Meet external agencies</b>	<b>Ger Kelleher</b>
<b>Meet whole staff</b>	<b>Ger Kelleher</b>
<b>Arrange support for students, staff, parents</b>	<b>Ger Kelleher</b>
<b>Visit the injured</b>	<b>Joan O' Callaghan</b>
<b>Liaise with bereaved family regarding funeral arrangements</b>	<b>Joan O' Callaghan</b>
<b>Agree on attendance and participation at funeral service</b>	<b>All Staff</b>
<b>Make decisions about school closure</b>	<b>B.O.M.</b>

## Follow-up- beyond 72 hours

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

## Emergency Contact List

(To be displayed in staff-room, school office and Principal's office etc)

<b>AGENCY</b>	
<b>GARDA</b>	<b>Newcastlewest 069 20650</b>

<b>HOSPITAL</b>	<b>Regional Limerick 061 301111</b>
<b>FIRE BRIGADE</b>	<b>Newcastlewest 069 62262</b>
<b>LOCAL GPS</b>	<b>Dr. Loughnane 069 61220</b> <b>Dr. Leonard 069 77040</b> <b>Dr. Mel Fullam 069 62800</b> <b>Dr. McCoy 069 62386</b> <b>Dr. Miriam Murphy 069 77040</b> <b>Dr. Mgt Murphy 069 77166</b> <b>Dr. Tom Curtin 069 64304</b>
<b>NEPS PSYCHOLOGIST</b>	<b>Gerard Dore 087 7790737</b>
<b>DES</b>	<b>090 6483600</b>
<b>INTO/ASTE/TUI</b>	<b>01 8047700 or Lo call 1850708708</b>
<b>PARISH PRIEST/CLERGY</b>	<b>Fr. Madden 087 2286450</b>
<b>STATE EXAMS CONNISSION</b>	
<b>EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE SERVICE</b>	<b>1800411057</b>

**BOARD OF MANAGEMENT  
CHAIRPERSON**

**Gerardine Liston  
086 3711451**