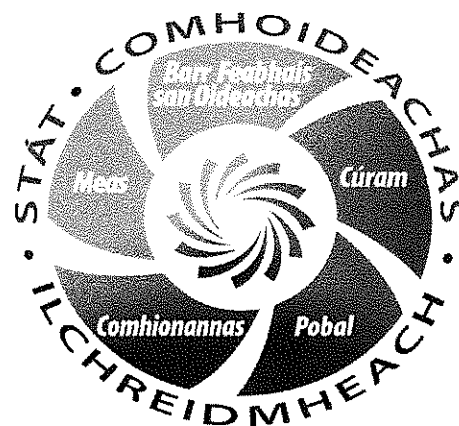


Critical Incident Management Plan (CIMP) 2023-2024



Core Team: Principal, Deputy Principals, Education Officer LMETB

Critical Incident Team	Role	Contact No. 1	Contact No. 2
Kevin Joyce	Principal		042 9376246
Rosanna Hart	Deputy Principal		042 9321126
Sinéad McDonnell	Deputy Principal		042 9321126
Deborah McMahon	Guidance Counsellor		042 9376246
Sandra Woods	Guidance Counsellor		042 9376246
Sharon Boyle	Assistant Principal		042 9376246
Shane Brennan	Assistant Principal		042 9376246
Sinéad Brennan	Assistant Principal/SEN		042 9376246
Joe Corcoran	Assistant Principal		042 9376246
Olivia Cosgrove	Assistant Principal HSCL Officer		042 9376246
Sheena Gartland	Assistant Principal		042 9376246
Paul Malone	Assistant Principal		042 9376246
Jessica McCartney	Assistant Principal		042 9376246
Sheila McDonald	Assistant Principal		042 9376246
Amanda McDonnell	SEN / Learning Support		042 9376246
Siobhan McGorry	SEN / Learning Support		042 9376246
Geraldine Guerin	SEN / Learning Support		042 9376246
SPHE	Grace Byrne		042 9376246
Paul Harkin	Health & Safety Officer		042 9376246
Additional Supports			
Chairperson of BOM	Siobhán Greer		042 9376246
Niki Heatley & Lauren McKeown	School Administration		042 9376246
Gerard McEneaney	Caretaker	086 0689541	042 9376246
Eamonn Sheridan	Caretaker		042 9376246
Anchor Buses Seamus Keenan	Buses	087 2536077	042 9371893

Contacting Bush Post Primary Staff

A Staff group email and a whole staff group text will be set up in school to enable all members of staff to be informed if a critical incident occurs. Text to parent may also be used in a critical incident if it can be of assistance in the event of a critical incident.

Introduction

In Bush Post Primary we are a learning community committed to the development of the whole person within a context which values each of its members. In Bush Post Primary we have a vision that all of our students will develop a love of learning and a keen sense of social responsibility through a positive and happy school experience. We hope they will develop as caring, well-adjusted individuals, who will succeed in life and contribute positively to the wider community. Our caring and dedicated staff is committed to helping each student achieve his/her potential.

In keeping with our School Mission Statement and the *Education and Training Board of Ireland, (ETBI)*, 'Core Values' of 'Care, Community, Equality, Respect and Excellence in Education', the Board of Management is committed to the care of staff and students in our school. This policy refers to the response taken by this school should a Critical Incident occur. As each Critical Incident will require the school to respond in a manner appropriate to that particular incident at that time, this CIMP is intended to serve as a general outline of procedures to be followed in the event of a Critical Incident occurring.

Definition

For the purposes of this policy, a critical incident is defined as any incident or sequence of events which overwhelms the normal coping mechanisms of the school and/or disrupts the running of the school and/or attracts public/media attention on the school e.g.

- The death of a member of the school community through natural causes such as illness, an accident, by a deliberate act of violence or by suicide
- A serious accident involving pupils or staff either onsite or offsite
- The disappearance of a member of the school community
- A fire or explosion in the school
- Serious damage to the school through flooding or vandalism
- An intrusion into the school
- Threats of harm to students, personnel and/or facilities

- Outbreak of a communicable illness or disease
- Serious accident or tragedy in the wider community
- Use of weapons or explosives in or near the school
- Civil disturbances including terrorism

Critical incidents may involve one or more students or staff members, or members of the local community

Aim of the CIMP

The aim of this 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 effect a return to normality as soon as possible. This CIMP aims to help Bush Post Primary's school management, staff and students manage the crisis and its aftermath by providing a clear set of procedures that unify the best response to any critical incident.

Creation of a coping supportive and caring ethos in the school

At Bush Post Primary we have put systems in place to help 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.

Physical Safety:

Bush Post Primary has developed a Health and Safety Policy and the following are examples of other measures taken regarding ensuring physical safety of members of the school community:

- Evacuation plan developed
- Regular fire drills occur followed up by review and evaluation
- Regular Health and Safety audits
- Fire exits and extinguishers regularly checked
- Supervision in the early morning, break time, lunch time and after school
- Sign in/Sign out systems for students at main reception area

School Educational and Sporting outings & School Tours

- It is the responsibility of the teachers taking Bush Post Primary students on any trip to send home a letter home to parents and guardians for outlining the details and

activities involved in the educational outing and seeking permission for the student to travel. The reply slip on the letter must provide a space for any medical conditions to be highlighted, written down, and returned to the teacher organizing the trip

- It is the responsibility of parents and guardians to make tour teachers aware of any medical conditionals before their child travels on a school trip by returning the reply slip
- As there are a large number of sports outings each year, the teachers coaching each team must select their panel at the start of the school year and send a permission letter, as above, which seeks permission for the student to attend all matches, throughout the academic year, with the teachers coaching that particular team.
- If a teacher takes a student or a number of students away from timetabled classes on an education or sporting outing, they must inform all staff of the list of students involved by email and post the list of students leaving school on the notice board in the Staff Room. (As per our fire safety procedures).

Psychological Safety:

The management and staff at Bush Post Primary aim to use available 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. Examples at Bush Post Primary include:

- Pastoral Care Team at the school which meets on a weekly basis and more often if required. The Care Team members are: Mr. Kevin Joyce (Principal), Ms. Rosanna Hart, (Deputy Principal), Mrs. Sinéad McDonnell (Deputy Principal), Ms. Sinéad Brennan, (SEN Department), Ms. Olivia Cosgrove (HSCL), Mrs. Deborah McMahon & Ms Sandra Woods (Student Support & Career Guidance Counsellor)
- Full time Guidance Counsellors
- Year Head & Class Tutor System
- Social Skills Development groups organised by the SEN Department
- Timetabled SPHE classes for all Junior student
- Timetabled Guidance classes for all Senior students
- Anti-Bullying Policy, Anti-Bullying Week, Anti-Bullying Co-Ordinator & Anti-Bullying Team
- Staff access to training for SPHE
- Staff training and awareness of the Child Protection Procedures and details of how to proceed with suspicions or disclosures

- Range of themed weeks over the course of the school year including Positive Mental Health Week and Anti-Bullying Week
- Staff training around positive mental health, suicide awareness, eating disorders and depression etc.
- Availability of booklets, resources and information on difficulties affecting post primary students available within the school
- Development of links with a range of external agencies, for example, Dundalk Positive Mental Health Forum, Men's Development Network
- Regular updates and reminders to students and staff regarding accessing support for themselves
- School Wellbeing Policy and Co-Ordinator.

Critical Incident Management Team (CIMT)

A CIMT has been established in line with best practice. The members of the team will meet annually to review and update the policy and plan.

Best Practice in Managing Critical Incidents

The key to managing a critical incident is planning. NEPS Psychologists report that schools that have developed school policy and a CIMP are able to cope more effectively in the aftermath of an incident. Having a plan enables staff to react quickly and effectively to maintain a sense of control. It may also ensure that normality returns as soon as possible and that the effects on the students and staff are limited.

Research suggests that an effective response by the school during the first 48 hours is crucial.

To ensure this occurs Bush Post Primary will carry out the following on an annual basis:

1. Form a CIM Team to include: the Principal, Deputy Principals, Assistant Principals, Guidance Counsellor, Home School Community Liaison Officer, SEN Co-Ordinator, SPHE Co-Ordinator, Representative of the Board of Management (Chairperson), and Representative of Administrative Staff (School Secretary & Caretaker). (See front cover of policy for Bush Post Primary's CIM Team and contact details).
2. Maintain an up-to-date list of contact numbers for Staff, parents/guardians of students and the emergency support services
3. Maintain a texting system for staff and parents/guardians so that information can

- be conveyed should a CI happen outside of normal school hours
4. Copies of the CIMP and the Database of Contact Numbers will be kept in the Administrative Officer and the Principal's Office
 5. Copy of School Layout will be retained in the Administrative Office and in the Principal's Office
 6. In the case of school tours, the tour leader will compile an information pack to include:
 - *Name of the tour leader,*
 - *A list of all participating teachers and pupils*
 - *Contact numbers for teachers and pupils*
 - *Relevant medical information on pupils and permission forms from parents in case of a medical emergency*
 - *Insurance details and copy of itinerary.*
 - *A copy of this file will be left with the Principal and in the Administrative Office prior to departure.*
 - *A school mobile phone will also be made available to staff for international outings and trips.*
 7. All staff will be made aware of the Health and Safety Policy, the Fire Evacuation Procedures, the location of defibrillators and the names of those trained in their use and in First Aid. These lists will be posted near the defibrillators, in the staffroom, in the Administrative Office and attached to this document.
 8. Staff will be reminded of these procedures at the initial staff meeting annually and this information will be included in the staff manual which is available on the teachers' drive of the school server.

Procedures to be followed in the event of a Critical Incident

On notification of a Critical Incident, the Principal will contact the Core Team and convene a meeting of the CIMT to plan school management's approach for dealing with the specifics of the critical incident. The CIMT meeting will:

- Ascertain the facts
- Make contact with the families concerned
- Consider which agencies need to be contacted and contact appropriate agencies (e.g., NEPS, DES)
- Agree on a statement of facts for staff, pupils, parents/guardians and the media and inform these parties as appropriate and ensure that these will be delivered to

staff and students in a clear, appropriate and consistent manner

- Inform Staff, students, BOM, Parents Association, LMETB. Regarding students, class groups are better than larger assemblies
- Plan a whole staff briefing considering supervision arrangements
- Consult staff and students if there is an event scheduled such as educational outing, sports competition etc.
- Identify high risk pupils
- Agree the text of a letter/text message to be sent to parents
- Discuss how to deal with the Media. **The Principal will deliver all statements to the news and media**
- Appoint one/two persons to deal with phone calls if necessary
- Delegate appropriate responsibilities to the CIMT members and organise timetable/supervision rota for the day
- Organise support and rooms for counselling and assistance where appropriate. Consider which room will be allocated to school personnel, which room will be allocated to external agencies and which room will be allocated to students as a 'quiet room'. Organise supervision for the 'quiet room' and set up sign in/sign out procedures for same. A similar room may be set up for staff
- Consider letters of consent/phone calls to parents for students to access the services of the school psychologist
- Appoint a member of the CIMT to compile a list of all students who access the services of the school psychologist/external agencies
- Endeavour to maintain the regular school routine, if possible
- When appropriate arrange for representatives from the school to visit the home(s) of the person(s) concerned
- Agree the next meeting time for the CIMT/key staff
- Arrange a follow up staff meeting at the end of the day

In the event of death:

- Inform staff and pupils of the funeral arrangements
- Arrange involvement in the liturgy if agreed with the bereaved family. Consider different religions in the school when deciding which students should attend etc.
- Facilitate staff and pupils' response e.g., book of condolence, BOM, LMETB, Parents Association, Student Council vote of sympathy, flowers

- Support distressed pupils and staff
- Ensure counselling service is available
- Care of the deceased person's possessions in keeping with parents/guardians' wishes
- Facilitate return to school of siblings and close friends
- Monitor siblings and friends of the deceased
- Update and amend school records and inform the DES.

Key Organisations and Key Personnel Contact Details

Name	Details	Contact Number
Emergencies dial	999	-
Louth County Hospital	042 9334701	042 9385400
LOL Hospital Drogheda	041 9837601	-
Daisy Hill Hospital Newry	048 30835000 ext2347	048 3985 5000 main hospital
Dundalk Fire Station	1890 202303	999
Carlingford Medical Centre	042 9373617	Local GP
Dr John McKeown	042 9373110	Local GP
Carlingford Garda Station	042 9373102	-
Omeath Garda Station	042 9375175	-
Dundalk Garda Station	042 9335577	-
Anchor Buses	087 2536077	042 9371893
Fr Malachy Conlon PP	087 2385940	-
LMFM	041 9832000	1850 715958
Dundalk FM	042 9395100	info@dundalkfm
Martin G O'Brien	046 9068200	CE LMETB
Fiona Kindlon	042 9334047	Director of Schools
LMETB Chapel St Dundalk	042 9334047	-

Appendix

Please find attached a printed copy of the Department of Education & NEPS's publication 'Responding to Critical Incidents Resource Materials for Schools', which includes draft press releases and media templates which can be adapted by Bush Post Primary School for use in any critical incident.

Follow Up Actions

The Principal and the CIMT will engage in follow-up work in the weeks, months and years following a critical incident. The purpose of this follow-up will be to help the school community cope with the impact of the event in the longer term and to monitor those individuals with ongoing difficulties. The school will also take decisions regarding reviewing the Critical Incident Policy and plan memorials where appropriate.

Following a Critical Incident, it is expected that there will be 'normal' distress among a number of students, especially close friends or relatives. Within approximately six weeks most students will have returned to normal functioning. However, if students continue to show significant signs of distress a number of weeks after the incident, they may need to be referred on to other external agencies. The CIMT will decide on the appropriate steps that need to be taken for particular students on an individual basis.

Medium Term Actions regarding a CI

It may sometimes be the case that that first day following a critical incident is quite calm as people may be in shock. In Bush Post Primary we realise that day two may be a day when more support is needed as the news begins to sink in. The CIMT will continue to meet each day until the school returns to normal functioning

The CIMT will also consider the following:

- Preparation for the return of a bereaved student
- Discussions around a memorial for a particular student. A representative from the school will liaise with the relevant family in this regard
- Discussion around upcoming events that the deceased student would have been part of including: awards ceremonies, how to manage exam results, Graduation and Debs nights etc.
- Discuss the management of exam results and the return of practical work submitted to the SEC. The SEC will be notified of the need to attend to the issuing of results of a deceased student
- Return personal belongings to the family or families
- Mark the school's calendar in advance with the anniversary date. Anniversaries may trigger emotional responses in students or staff, and they may need additional support at this time. The school may decide to acknowledge the anniversary and will link with the family on any proposed commemoration
- Sensitivity around birthdays, Christmas, Mother's Day, Father's Day

Review & Evaluation of the CIMP

Following a Critical Incident, the CIMP will evaluate the school's response to the Critical Incident and will amend the CIMP where appropriate. A selection of review and evaluation questions which will be utilised include:

- What went well?
- Where were the gaps?
- What was most helpful?
- What was least helpful?
- Have all unnecessary onward referrals to support services been made?
- Is there anything outstanding that requires follow up or review?

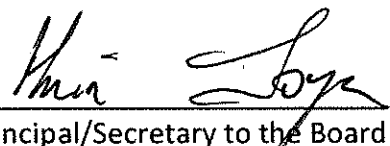
Consultation and Communication regarding the Plan

All staff were consulted, and their views canvassed in the preparation of this policy and plan. Students and parents' representatives were also consulted and asked for their comments. 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 a personal copy of the plan. All new and temporary staff will be informed of the details of the plan by the Principal.

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management on 20th September 2023

Signed: 
(Chairperson of Board of Management)

Date: 20.9.2023

Signed: 
(Principal/Secretary to the Board of Management)

Date: 20/09/2023

Date of next review: September 2024