

ROCKBROOK PARK SCHOOL CRITICAL INCIDENT POLICY 2020-21

05 February 2021

Terms and abbreviations used

Board of Management [BOM]
 Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services [CAMHS]
 Critical Incident Management [CIM]
 Critical Incident Management Policy [CIMP]
 Critical Incident Management Team [CIMT]
 Department of Education and Skills [DES]
 Department of Health [DOH]
 Health Service Executive [HSE]
 Irish Association of Suicidology [IAS]
 National Educational Psychological Service [NEPS]
 Special Education Consultant [SEC]

Rockbrook Park School aims to protect the well-being of its students and staff by providing a safe and nurturing environment at all times, in keeping with the school's mission.

The Board of Management, through the principal, Mr Jude Mulligan, has drawn up a critical incident management plan as one element of the school's policies and plans.

A critical incident is defined as an incident or sequence of events that overwhelms the normal coping mechanism of the school. Types of incidents might include the death or disappearance of a member of the school community through accident, violence, or other unexpected death; a serious accident involving members of the school community or the wider community; serious damage to the school.

The aim of the critical incident management policy (CIMP) is to help school management and staff to react quickly and effectively in the event of such 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 also helps ensure a return to normality as soon as possible.

A CIM Team has been established in line with best practice. The members of the team are members ex-officio. The team comprises **Principal, Deputy Principal, Year Heads, Chaplain, School Secretary**. 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. Members of the team are assigned roles (in brackets below), which will always be reviewed in the light of the specific incident to hand. The chaplain will normally play a vital pastoral role at all levels, which will vary according to the circumstances.

The responsibilities associated with each role are as follows:

Team leader (usually the Principal or Deputy Principal, if Principal absent)

- 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; SEC

- Liaises with the bereaved family
- Liaises with the Gardaí
- Ensures that information about deaths or other developments are checked for accuracy before being shared

Liaison with Staff (usually the Deputy Principal)

- 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 (from their 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 and gives them the contact number.

Liaison with students (usually a Year Head)

- May co-ordinate information about students they are concerned about
- 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
- Sets up and supervises a 'quiet room', where this is agreed.

Liaison with Community or Agencies (usually Secretary)

- Maintains up-to-date lists of contact numbers of
 - Key parents, such as members of the Parents Association
 - Emergency support services and other external contacts & 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

Liaison with parents (usually Deputy Principal)

- Visits the bereaved family with the team leader
- Arranges parent meetings, if held
- May facilitate such meetings, and manage 'questions and answers'
- 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)

Liaison with the media (usually Principal)

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

Administrator (usually Secretary)

- 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 school's system in advance and ready for adaptation
- Prepares and sends out letters, emails and faxes
- Photocopies materials needed
- Maintains records

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, material used etc.

The 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 Rockbrook Park 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 also do so.

For instance, the terms 'tragic death' or 'sudden death' are more appropriate than 'suicide' unless there is solid information that death was due to suicide, *and* that the family involved consents to its use. 'Violent death' may be used in other circumstances, rather than the term 'murder'.

Critical Incident Rooms

In the event of a critical incident, the conference rooms (rooms 8 and 9 on the second floor) will be used for meetings.

Consultation and communication regarding the plan

All staff were consulted and their views canvassed in the preparation of this policy and plan. Students and parent 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 Secretary and details of the plan are in the Staff Handbook. The plan will be reviewed and updated every two years.

Useful resources (2021)

- Responding to Critical Incidents: Guidelines & Resources for Schools (NEPS 2016)
- Suicide Prevention in Schools: Best Practice Guidelines (IAS, National Suicide Review Group (2002)
- Best Practice Guidance for Suicide Prevention Services (HSE 2019)
- 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)

Critical Incident Management Team

Role	Name	Telephone number (home and mobile)
Team Leader	Jude Mulligan	087-9568751
Garda Liaison	Jude Mulligan	087-9568751
Staff Liaison	Paul Whinnery	085-7404648
Student Liaison	William O'Brien	086-3693880
Parent Liaison	Paul Whinnery	085-7404648
Community Liaison	Jude Mulligan	087-9568751
Media Liaison	Jude Mulligan	087-9568751
Administrator	Paul Whinnery	085-7404648
(Chaplain)	Fr Donncha O hAodha	086-3105248

Short-term actions – Day 1**Task****Name****Gather accurate information****Who, what, when, where?****Convene a CIMT meeting – specify time and place clearly****Contact external agencies****Arrange supervision for students****Hold staff meeting****Agree schedule for the day****Inform students – (close friends and students with learning difficulties may need to be told separately)****Compile a list of vulnerable students****Contact/visit the bereaved family****Prepare and agree media statement and deal with media****Inform parents****Hold end of day staff briefing**

Medium-term actions -(Day 2 and following days)**Task****Name****Convene a CIMT meeting to review the events of day****Meet external agencies****Meet whole staff****Arrange support for students, staff, parents****Visit the injured****Liaise with bereaved family regarding funeral arrangements****Agree on attendance and participation at funeral service****Make decisions about school closure****Follow-up – beyond 72 hours****Task****Name****Monitor students for signs of continuing distress****Class teachers****Liaise with agencies regarding referrals****Plan for return of bereaved student(s)****Plan for giving of 'memory box' to bereaved family****Decide on memorials and anniversaries****BOM/Staff, parents
and students****Review response to incident and amend plan****Staff/BOM**

**EMERGENCY CONTACT LIST Resource for schools:
(To be displayed in staff-room, school office and Principal's office etc)**

AGENCY	CONTACT NUMBERS
GARDA	Rathfarnham 01-6666500
HOSPITAL	Tallaght 01-4142000
FIRE BRIGADE	01-6734000 (Townsend St)

HSE/Community Care Team/ Child and Family Centre/ CAMHS

Can't find what you're looking for? Call us on 1850 24 1850

DUBLIN SOUTH EAST	Social Work Department, Vergemount Hall, Clonskeagh, Dublin 6	(01) 268 0320 (01) 268 0333
DUBLIN SOUTH CITY	Duty Social Work Carnegie Centre, 21-25 Lord Edward Street, Dublin 2 Public Health Nursing, 21-25 Lord Edward Street, Dublin 2 Family Support Service, 78B Church House, Donore Avenue, Dublin 8	(01) 648 6555 (01) 648 6730 (01) 416 4441
DUBLIN SOUTH WEST	Milbrook Lawn, Tallaght, Dublin 24	(01) 452 0666 (01) 427 5000

NEPS PSYCHOLOGIST Dublin Region Regional Director: Margaret Grogan NEPS, Floor4, Metropolitan Building, James Joyce St. Dublin 1, D01 KOY8 Tel. (0761) 108660

Dublin Mid-Leinster Region Regional Director: Mary Mullany NEPS, Floor 1, BIM Building, 12 Crofton Road, Dun Laoghaire, Co. Dublin, A96 E5AO Tel. (0761) 108400

DES

01-8734700

ASTI

01-6040160

CLERGY

Fr James Hurley

086-1072930

Fr Donncha O hAodha

086-3105248

STATE EXAMINATION COMMISSION

Exams 0906442700

EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE SERVICE

1800 411 057