

## Critical Incident Management Plan (CIMP)

### **Aim**

The aim of the 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 the school to effect a return to normality as soon as possible.

### **Identification of Potential Incident**

- The death of a member of the school community through accident, violence,
- suicide or suspected suicide or other unexpected death
- An intrusion into the school
- An accident involving members of the school community including school outings
- 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**

The School has 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.

### **Examples of measures to address physical safety**

- Evacuation plan.
- Regular fire drills.
- Fire exits and extinguishers regularly checked.
- Pre-opening/Post school supervision at the front gate.
- Rules of the yard and supervision of all break times.

## **Examples of measures to address psychological safety**

The management and staff of Moate Community School aim to 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.

For example:

1. Staff have access to training for their role in SPHE
2. Staff are familiar with the Child Protection Guidelines and Procedures and details of how to proceed with suspicions or disclosures
3. Books and resources on difficulties affecting the student are available
4. Information is provided on mental health in general and such specific areas as signs and symptoms of depression and anxiety
5. Staff are informed in the area of suicide awareness and some are trained in interventions for suicidal students
6. The school has developed links with a range of external agencies.
7. The school has a clear policy on bullying and deals with bullying in accordance with this policy
8. There is a Pastoral Care Committee and Policy in place in the school
9. Students who are identified as being at risk are referred to the designated staff member (e.g. guidance counsellor or support teacher), concerns are explored and the appropriate level of assistance and support is provided. Parents are informed, and where appropriate, a referral is made to an appropriate outside agency
10. Staff are informed about how to access support for themselves.

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

A CIMT 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 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. A template of these documents will be available on each team members computer as well as in the main office.

### **The CIMT of Moate Community School are as follows:**

The Principal (Team Leader)  
The Deputy Principals  
The Chaplain  
The Home School Community Liaison Officer

The Principal is the Team Leader. In his absence the Deputy Principals shall fulfil this role and if all three are unavailable the designated assistant principal shall fulfill that role. Each member of the team is assigned areas of focus but will work with all staff in implementing various aspects of the Crisis Management Plan depending on the actual incident.

### **Team leader (The Principal )**

- 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, HSE
- Liaises with the bereaved family

- Liaises with the Gardaí
- Ensures that information about deaths or other developments is checked out for accuracy before being shared
- 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
- Is alert to vulnerable staff members and makes contact with them individually
- Advises them of the availability of the Employment Assistance Service(EAS) and gives them the contact number
- Is alert to the need to check credentials of individuals offering support
- Coordinates the involvement of these agencies

### **Deputy Principals**

- Provide materials for staff (from their critical incident folder)
- Keeps staff updated as the day progresses
- Will co-ordinate information from tutors and year heads 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
- Looks after setting up and supervision of ‘quiet’ room where agreed (*Chaplain will liaise with Deputy Principal*)

### **Community/Agency liaison(Deputy Principals/Pastoral Care co-ordinator)**

- Maintains up to date lists of contact numbers of and ensure that the members of the CIMT have immediate numbers in their mobile phones and that an extended list is posted in the Staff room and in the office.
- Liaises with agencies in the community for support and onward Referral.
- Updates team members on the involvement of external agencies

### **Parent liaison (Principal/Deputy Principal/Chaplain/HSCLO)**

- 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 each individual member of the team ready for adaptation (*Pastoral Care co-ordinator*)
- 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)

### **Media liaison (Principal/Deputy Principal/PRO)**

- A press release will be issued on behalf of the school and there will be no interviews about the incident.
- In the event of an incident, will liaise where necessary with

the SEC; relevant teacher unions etc.

### **Administrator (Principal/Secretarial Staff/Pastoral Care co-ordinator)**

- 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 schools 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.

*Moate Community School* 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 *Moate Community 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 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 be used instead.

### **Critical incident rooms**

In the event of a critical incident:

- *Staff Room* will be the main room used to meet the staff
- *Gym/Oratory/Study Hall/HSCLO room/Meeting room* for meetings with students
- *Meeting room/HSCLO room/Study Hall* for parents
- *Schools offices* individual sessions with students
- *Meeting room/HSCLO room* for other visitors

### **Participation in funeral rite**

- involvement of students/staff if agreed by family
- appropriate representation at funeral service
- request a decision from Principal and Board of Management re school closure

### **Medium term tasks**

- providing long-term counselling
- disposing of deceased student's possessions
- close monitoring of students

### **Medium/long-term tasks**

- facilitating the return of deceased siblings to school
- keeping in contact with family of deceased
- being aware of certain occasions such as, months mind, anniversaries, Christmas
- ensure new staff are aware of schools policies and procedures and ensure they are aware of which students were affected and in which way
- review of overall school response

### **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 Team Leader*

The plan will be updated annually through Pastoral Care – February 2009

## **CRITICAL INCIDENT MANAGEMENT**

### **Critical Incident Management Team**

| <b>Role</b>              | <b>Name</b>                                                                                         |
|--------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Team Leader</b>       | Kevin Duffy                                                                                         |
| <b>Garda Liaison</b>     | Kevin Duffy                                                                                         |
| <b>Staff Liaison</b>     | Kevin Duffy<br>Maura Murray<br>Tom Lowry                                                            |
| <b>Parent Liaison</b>    | Kevin Duffy<br>Maura Murray<br>Tom Lowry<br>Carmel Mc Cormack                                       |
| <b>Student Liaison</b>   | Kevin Duffy<br>Maura Murray<br>Tom Lowry<br>Carmel Mc Cormack                                       |
| <b>Community Liaison</b> | Kevin Duffy<br>Maura Murray<br>Tom Lowry<br>Carmel Mc Cormack                                       |
| <b>Media Liaison</b>     | Kevin Duffy<br>Maura Murray<br>Tom Lowry<br>Nessa Lawlor                                            |
| <b>Administrator</b>     | Kevin Duffy<br>Maura Murray<br>Tom Lowry<br>Carmel Mc Cormack<br>Margaret King<br>Fionnuala Bracken |

## Short term actions – Day 1

| <b>Task</b>                                                                                                     | <b>Name</b>                                                   |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Gather accurate information</b>                                                                              | Kevin Duffy                                                   |
| <b>Who, what, when, where?</b>                                                                                  | Kevin Duffy                                                   |
| <b>Convene a CIMT meeting – specify time and place clearly</b>                                                  | Kevin Duffy                                                   |
| <b>Contact external agencies</b>                                                                                | Kevin Duffy<br>Maura Murray<br>Tom Lowry<br>Carmel McCormack  |
| <b>Arrange supervision for students</b>                                                                         | Kevin Duffy<br>Maura Murray<br>Tom Lowry<br>Carmel McCormack  |
| <b>Hold staff meeting All staff</b>                                                                             | Kevin Duffy<br>Maura Murray<br>Tom Lowry                      |
| <b>Agree schedule for the day</b>                                                                               | Kevin Duffy<br>Maura Murray<br>Tom Lowry                      |
| <b>Inform students – (close friends and students with learning difficulties may need to be told separately)</b> | Kevin Duffy<br>Maura Murray<br>Tom Lowry                      |
| <b>Compile a list of vulnerable students</b>                                                                    | Kevin Duffy<br>Maura Murray<br>Tom Lowry<br>Carmel McCormack  |
| <b>Contact/visit the bereaved family</b>                                                                        | Kevin Duffy<br>Maura Murray<br>Tom Lowry<br>Carmel Mc Cormack |
| <b>Prepare and agree media statement and deal with media</b>                                                    | Kevin Duffy<br>Maura Murray<br>Tom Lowry<br>Nessa Lawlor      |
| <b>Inform parents</b>                                                                                           | Kevin Duffy<br>Maura Murray<br>Tom Lowry                      |
| <b>Hold end of day staff briefing</b>                                                                           | Kevin Duffy<br>Maura Murray<br>Tom Lowry                      |

## Medium term actions - (Day 2 and following days)

| Task                                                                    | Name                                                         |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Convene a CIMT meeting to review the Team leader events of day 1</b> | Kevin Duffy                                                  |
| <b>Meet external agencies</b>                                           | Kevin Duffy<br>Maura Murray<br>Tom Lowry<br>Carmel McCormack |
| <b>Meet whole staff</b>                                                 | Kevin Duffy<br>Maura Murray<br>Tom Lowry                     |
| <b>Arrange support for students, staff, parents</b>                     | The Whole Team                                               |
| <b>Visit the injured</b>                                                | Kevin Duffy<br>Maura Murray<br>Tom Lowry                     |
| <b>Liaise with bereaved family regarding funeral arrangements</b>       | Kevin Duffy<br>Carmel McCormack                              |
| <b>Agree on attendance and participation at funeral service</b>         | Kevin Duffy<br>Carmel McCormack                              |
| <b>Make decisions about school closure</b>                              | <b>BOM</b>                                                   |

## Follow-up – beyond 72 hours

| <b>Task</b>                                               | <b>Name</b>                      |
|-----------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| <b>Monitor students for signs of continuing distress</b>  | Class Teachers                   |
| <b>Liaise with agencies regarding referrals</b>           | Tom Lowry<br>Carmel McCormack    |
| <b>Plan for return of bereaved student(s)</b>             | Carmel McCormack                 |
| <b>Plan for giving of 'memory box' to bereaved family</b> | Carmel McCormack/Tutor/Year head |
| <b>Decide on memorials and anniversaries</b>              | BOM/Staff, parents and students  |
| <b>Review response to incident and amend plan</b>         | Staff/BOM                        |

## CONTACT DETAILS

As part of the contingency plan the following list of contacts has been compiled. Other numbers are available in the Personal and Community Support Directory (A midlands resource guide – statutory and voluntary organisations supporting those in crisis or distress). A copy of this directory is attached to the pastoral care notice board. Office support staff also have such a list readily available.

|                                  |             |                                         |
|----------------------------------|-------------|-----------------------------------------|
| DOCTOR (MEDICAL CENTRE)          | Moate       | 090 64 81444<br>086 8316601             |
| HOSPITALS                        | Mullingar   | 044 9340221                             |
|                                  | Tullamore   | 057 9321868                             |
|                                  | Ballinasloe | 090 648200                              |
| CHEMIST                          | Dolan's     | 090 64 81115                            |
|                                  | Cooney's    | 090 64 81622                            |
| GARDA STATION                    | Moate       | 090 64 81106                            |
| ASSOCIATION OF COMMUNITY SCHOOLS |             | 01 4601150                              |
| DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION          | Tullamore   | 057 93 24300                            |
|                                  | Athlone     | 090 64 83600                            |
| MIDLAND HEALTH BOARD             |             | 057 93 21868                            |
| JOE WHELAN                       |             | 057 9346732<br>086 8157303              |
| FIRE BRIGADE                     |             | 999 or 112                              |
| NEPS PSYCHOLOGIST                |             | 087 2578815                             |
| SCHOOL INSPECTORATE              |             | 01 8896400                              |
| DES                              |             | 01 8896400                              |
| INTO<br>ASTI<br>TUI              |             | 01 84047713<br>01 6719144<br>01 4922588 |
| PARISH PRIEST/CLERGY             |             |                                         |
| STATE EXAMS COMMISSION           |             | 090 6442700                             |
| EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE SERVICE      |             | 1800 411 057                            |

