

MONEYSTOWN NATIONAL SCHOOL

CRITICAL INCIDENT POLICY

2022

Introduction:

This policy was reviewed and redrafted by the staff of Moneystown National School on 26th March 2020 and updated again on 25th 2021 August following a change of staff. This policy –

- provides a clear framework of actions, roles and responsibilities for the school staff to implement in the event of a critical incident.
- will facilitate a cohesive, calm and planned response to a critical incident.
- will be communicated to all staff to enable a professional, measured and appropriate response to any critical incident.

Definition of a Critical Incident - *‘A critical incident is any incident or sequence of events which overwhelms the normal coping mechanism of the school and disrupts the running of the school.’* A critical incident may include the following -

- Death, major illness/outbreak of disease
- Extreme staff absence due to a singular or variety of reasons
- Criminal incidents
- Major accidents, serious injury
- Suicide
- Civil unrest, war, acts of terrorism
- Fire, natural and technological disaster
- Disappearance of student from home, school or during school activity
- Unauthorised removal of student from school or home.
- World events that may affect the student body and/or staff. May be a need for provisions of discussion and involvement in ceremonies (e.g.9/11, tsunami, COVID19 etc.)

Definition of the School Community

The school community comprises all

- Pupils
- Staff members
- Member of the Board of Management,
- Parents and Guardians

Critical Incidents’ Management Team

Leadership Role: Anne – Marie Morris (Principal)

Communication Role: (Máire Hynes Assistant Principal)

Student Liaison/Counselling Role: Maebhe Durston (Deputy Principal)

Chaplaincy Role: Fr. John Greene, Roundwood (or Locum Priest in the Parish)

Family Liaison Role: Ruth Wolohan (Assistant Principal)

Parents Association Rep: Chairperson of the PA

Board of Management Rep: John Byrne (Chairperson of the Board of Management)

The first-named person has the responsibility as defined. A second-named person assists and only assumes responsibility on the absence of first-named. The second named person will be decided by the Principal and / or Chairperson of the Board of Management as appropriate.

Roles and Responsibilities

1. Leadership Role: Anne – Marie Morris

Intervention

- Confirm the event and the known facts pertaining to the event
- Activate the Critical Incident Response Team and agree short / medium term responses using Action Plan
- Liaise with the Gardai/Emergency services or other relevant authorities
- Lead briefing meetings for all members of staff on the facts as known, give staff members an opportunity to express their feelings and ask questions, outline the routine for the day
- Liaise with wider school community (e.g. confirm event, outline response and interventions, express sympathy or any other appropriate action for the specific critical incident).
- Clarify facts surrounding events using reputable sources only (e.g. DES, HSE, NEPS, Emergency Services etc)
- Make contact with other relevant agencies and implement recommendations with immediate effect (e.g. insurance company, Patron body etc)
- Decide on an agreed approach regarding how information will be communicated to different groups (staff, pupils, parents and wider school community)
- Organise the supervision of students on the school premises using staff and garda vetted adults as required.
- Organise the continuity of teaching and learning using redeployment of staff, digital technology, distance learning platforms etc.
- Organise staff to respond to the critical incident and allocate any additional roles and responsibilities as required.
- Maintain the school routines in as far as possible and limit anxiety levels among the pupil cohort.
- Manage short, medium and long-term responses to the critical incident

- Maintain records of the incident, interventions and responses

Postvention

- Ensure provision of ongoing support to staff and students and parents as appropriate
- Facilitate any appropriate post incident actions (e.g. support services for those affected, access to NEPS, memorial events, CPD for staff, staff meeting and review of plan, report to Board of Management etc)
- Review and revise plan with Critical Incident Team and submit for ratification by the Board of Management.

2 Communication Role: Máire Hynes

Intervention

- Provide relevant contact details for the Critical Incident Team (ICE Cards see Appendix 1)
- In consultation with the Critical Incident Team prepare a public statement
- Organise a designated room to respond to the critical incident (e.g. meeting room, medical room, media room etc)
- Secure any scene central to the critical incident if required by emergency services
- Record scene (photo, eye witness accounts, evidence) and submit to Principal / relevant emergency services
- Ensure telephone lines are free for outgoing and important incoming calls
- Designate mobile numbers for contact
- Liaise with relevant outside support agencies

Postvention

- Review and evaluate effectiveness of communication response
- Update any contact details required
- Maintain the ICE Cards and circulate to staff

3. Student Liaison/ Counselling Role: Maebhe Durston (Deputy Principal)

Intervention

- Advise the staff on the procedure for identification of vulnerable pupils
- Communicate with staff regarding vulnerable pupils and agreed strategies / interventions to support pupils
- Outline specific services available to the school (e.g. NEPS, Lucena Clinic, HSE, Middletown Centre etc)
- Put in place clear referral procedure for parents, pupils and staff
- Address immediate needs of staff and provide support as required

Postvention

- Provide ongoing support and interventions to support vulnerable students
- Monitor class most affected and liaise with class teachers and parents as required
- In consultation with parents and teachers refer pupils to support services as appropriate
- Review and evaluate the plan with the Critical Incident Team

4.Chaplain's Role: Fr John Greene

Intervention

- Liaise with parents and school management regarding appropriate supports and interventions if required
- Assist with prayer services
- Be available as a personal and spiritual support to staff, pupils and wider school community as required

Postvention

- Work in partnership with Critical Incident team to review plan

5. Family Liaison Role: Ruth Wolohan, Assistant Principal

Intervention

- In consultation with the Principal co-ordinate individual contact with families where required
- Manage family supports and work in liaison with Student Liaison Officer, Maebhe Durston, to provide on-going support in school and at home (e.g. access to services, information and resources etc).
- Assist with all communication dealing with parents of any student affected by critical incident

Postvention

- Provide ongoing support to families affected by the incident (e.g. referral to support services within the community, HSE, NEPS, Lucena Clinic etc.)

- Liaise with families regarding post incident services (e.g. mass, memorials, meetings etc) as appropriate
- Review and revise plan with Critical Incident Team

Action Plan see Appendix 2

Success Criteria

- This policy provides a clear framework of actions, roles and responsibilities for the school staff to implement in the event of a critical incident.
- This policy will facilitate a cohesive, calm and planned response to a critical incident.
- This policy will be communicated to all staff to enable a swift and appropriate response to any critical incident.

Review

This policy will be reviewed by the staff of Moneystown National School in April 2022 (unless otherwise required by the Critical Incident Team)

Ratification

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management on 8th of December 2022.

John Byrne

Chairperson of the Board of Management

Anne-Marie Morris

Principal

Appendix 1 Critical Incident Policy 2020



ICE CARD
MONEYSTOWN NS
13246G 0404 45477

Ambulance Service 112 / 999
Fire Service 112/ 999
An Garda Síochana 0404 67107
Child Protection Services (01)9213400
HSE Primary Care (medical & dental) 0404 30401
DES Inspectorate
NEPS 0761108400
Principal 0876284848
Parish Office (01)2818149



Moneystown National School

CRITICAL INCIDENT POLICY

Appendix 1

INDIVIDUAL ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES



LEADERSHIP ROLE – Principal

Anne-Marie Morris

Intervention

- Confirm the event
- Activate the Critical Incident response team
- Liaise with the Gardai/ Emergency services
- Lead briefing meetings for all members of staff on the facts as known, give staff members an opportunity to express their feelings and ask questions., outline the routine for the day
- Express sympathy to family
- Clarify facts surrounding event
- Make contact with other relevant agencies
- Decide on an agreed approach regarding how news will be communicated to different groups(staff, pupils, outside school)
- Organise the supervision of students (list of responsible adults, living in the immediate locality, who have agreed to supervise in an emergency appended. They must also be vetted. Organise timetable for the day

As far as possible maintain normal school routines

Postvention

- Ensure provision of ongoing support to staff and students
- Facilitate any appropriate memorial events
- Review Plan



2. Communication Role – Assistant Principal, Máire Hynes

Intervention

With Team, prepare a public statement

Organise a designated room to address media promptly

Ensure telephone lines are free for outgoing and important incoming calls

Designate mobile numbers for contact (card for all BOM/ Staff circulated)

Liaise with relevant outside support agencies

Postvention

- **Review and evaluate effectiveness of communication response**



3 STUDENT LIASON/COUNSELLING ROLE – Deputy Principal, Maebhe Durston

Intervention

- Advise the staff on the procedures for identification of vulnerable pupils
- Alert staff to vulnerable pupils
- Outline specific services available to the school
- Put in place clear referral procedures
- Address immediate needs to staff
- Provide materials for staff (from critical incident folder)
- Provide information
- Provide counselling

Postvention

- Provide ongoing support to vulnerable students
- Monitor class most affected
- Refer as appropriate
- Review and evaluate Plan



4 CHAPLAIN'S ROLE

Fr. John Greene

Intervention

- Visit home(s), if appropriate
- Assist with prayer services
- Make contact with other local clergy
- Be available as personal and spiritual support to staff

Postvention

- Work in partnership with Critical Incident team
- Review and Evaluate Plan



5 FAMILY LIASON ROLE – Assistant Principal , Ruth Wolohan

Intervention

- Co-ordinate contact with families (following first contact by Principal)
- Consult with family around involvement of school in e.g funeral services
- Assist with all communication dealing with parent of any student affected by critical incident

Postvention

- Provide ongoing support to families by the incident
- Involve as appropriate the family in school liturgies/ memorial services
- Offer to link with community support groups
- Review and evaluate plan

Appendix 2 : Staff Absence action plan for covering Classrooms



In the situation where one or more members of staff are absent from the school, the In School Management team, staff and Board of Management of Moneystown NS have agreed the following plan to ensure that the best possible teaching and learning continues in the school, while being mindful of the Health and Safety of all the children and staff in the school. This plan is being put in place with the aim of trying to ensure continuity of teaching and learning and support for those children with additional educational needs.

When one teacher contacts the principal to inform that he/she will be absent, the Principal will proceed through the following steps;

1. Try to find a substitute teacher through the school's substitute list.
2. Try to find substitute cover through Educationposts.ie
If no substitute is found the principal will go to step 3.
3. A Special Education Teacher (SET) will cover for Day 1 of the absence.
4. On day 2,3 and 4 of an absence, the class will be split among the remaining four classrooms
5. On day 5 of an absence the class will return to their main classroom and the SET will cover the class for the day.

Where a second teacher is absent at the same time, the principal will;

6. Try to find a substitute teacher through the school's substitute list.
7. Try to find substitute cover through Educationposts.ie
If no substitute is found the principal will go to step 8.
8. A Special Education Teacher (SET) will cover the class until a teacher returns to school from their absence or a substitute is found.

Where a third teacher is absent at the same time, the principal will:

9. Try to find a substitute teacher through the school's substitute list.
10. Try to find substitute cover through Educationposts.ie
If no substitute is found the principal will go to step 11.
11. The Special Class teacher will cover until a teacher returns from to school from their absence or a substitute teacher is found..

In the event that a fourth teacher is absent, the principal will contact families of affected classes to inform them to keep their child at home.

Junior and Senior Infant classes will not be split in any of the above scenarios. In addition classes will be split among other rooms where there is capacity available for the room to take the additional capacity.

Notwithstanding the above arrangements, the principal at his/her discretion may take whatever decisions are deemed necessary on a given day to maintain health and safety of the staff and pupils.