**Critical Incident Policy**

**Ratified by BOM: 26/03/2015**

**Signed: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (Chairperson)**

This Policy was initiated to respond to any potential critical incidents which may impact on the school community, in a professional, organised and appropriate manner. This policy will be reviewed in March 2017.

**Aims:**

St Brigid’s National School aims to protect the wellbeing of the students and staff by providing a safe and nurturing environment at all times.

**Mission Statement:**

St Brigid’s National school, under the patronage of the Catholic Archbishop of Dublin, is a caring community where the uniqueness of each child is valued and celebrated. We aim to provide a happy and safe environment with a positive approach where a sense of pride is encouraged in ourselves, our school and the local area.

**Process:**

The Board of Management, through the Principal Darina Burke, have drawn up this plan as one element of the school’s policy and plan. The staff and management of St Brigid’s school have formulated a number of policies and procedures to be followed with a view to ensuring the psychological safety of both pupils and staff and the creation of a supportive and caring ethos in the school in ordinary time and in the event of a critical incident. We have established a **Critical Incident Team** to steer the development and implementation of the plan.

**Definition of the term “Critical Incident”:**

The staff and management of St Brigid’s National school recognise 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, or members of our local community. Types of incidents might include:

* The death of a member of the school community through accident, violence, suicide or suspected suicide or unexpected death.
* An intrusion into the school and/or serious damage to the building through fire, flood or vandalism.
* Serious incidents in other educational centres or in the locality- e.g. Dunblane.
* Disappearance of a child or adult in Ireland or abroad.
* Asthmatic attack/serious injury to child or adult.

See pages 34 and 35 “Responding to Critical Incidents Resource Materials for Schools” (Copy available in staffroom/office)

**Aim:**

The aim of the CIMT is to help school management and staff to react quickly and effectively in the event of a critical incident.

**Creation of a coping, supportive and caring ethos in the school- Page 35**

We have put systems in place to help build resilience in both staff and students. These include measures to address both the psychological safety of the school community.

**Physical Safety:**

* See Health & Safety Policy
* Regular Fire Drills
* Evacuation plan formulated and displayed
* “Text-a-Parent” service (Aladdin) to communicate urgent messages to parents
* Access note in the case of custody issues
* Children are always supervised
* Permission slip when going on school tours
* Basic maintenance of the building in as far as is practicable subject to DES grants
* Code of Behaviour

**Critical Incident Room**

In the event of a critical incident Room 19 will be the main room used to meet the staff, students, parents and visitors involved. Classes will be addressed in individual classrooms or in the hall, as appropriate. In the event that the school is not accessible a room will be made available in the church to serve as a Critical Incident Room.

**Psychological Safety:**

The management and staff aim to use all 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 wider community e.g.-

* S.P.H.E. to include Circle Time, Walk Tall, Stay Safe
* Child Protection and Procedures training for staff
* N.E.P.S., CAMHS, Bernardos, Gardaí, Rainbows, Councillors
* S.E.N. Team

**Critical Incident Management Team:**

In the event of an incident each member of the team will keep detailed records of phone calls made and received, meetings held, persons met, interventions made, materials used etc.

**Confidentiality & Good Name Considerations:**

The school has 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 pupils do so also.

**Critical Incident Management Team Members.**

**Role Name**

Team Leader Darina Burke

 Principal

Garda Liaison Darina Burke

 Principal

 Toni O’Byrne

 Deputy Principal

Staff Liaison Helen Keane

 ISM Team

Parent Liaison Darina Burke

 Principal

Community Liaison Fr. Richard Sheehy

 Chairperson

 Darina Burke

 Principal

Media Liaison Darina Burke

 Principal

Administrator Sheila Mulhair

 (School Secretary)

**Short Term Actions- Day 1**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Task** | **Name** |
| Gather accurate information | Garda Liaison – Principal/Deputy Principal |
| Who? What? When? Where? | Garda Liaison – Principal/Deputy Principal |
| Convene a C.I.M.T. meeting – specify time and place clearly. | Garda Liaison – Principal/Deputy Principal |
| Contact external agencies- e.g. N.E.P.S. | Principal/Deputy Principal |
| Arrange supervision of students | Helen Keane |
| Hold Staff Meetings | All Staff |
| Agree schedule for the day | At Staff Meeting |
| Inform students- (close friends and students with learning difficulties may need to be told separately). | Relevant Class Teacher |
| Compile a list of vulnerable students | Principal, Administrator |
|  |  |
| Contact/ Visit the bereaved family | Principal/Chairperson/Class Teacher |
| Prepare and agree media statement and deal with media | Chairperson/Principal |
| Inform Parents | Principal |
| Hold end of day Staff Briefing | All Staff |
| Contact School Insurers (if necessary) |  |

**Medium Term Actions- (Day 2 and following days)**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Convene a CIMT meeting to review the events of the day | Team Leader/Principal/Deputy Principal |
| Meet external agencies | Principal (e.g. N.E.P.S.) |
| Meet whole staff | All staff |
| Arrange support for students, staff, parents | Principal/Deputy Principal |
| Visit the injured | Relevant school Personnel |
| Liaise with bereaved family regarding funeral arrangements | C.I.M.T. – Chairperson |
| Agree on attendance and participation at funeral service | C.I.M.T. |
| Make decisions about school closure | Board of Management |

**Follow –up – Beyond 72 hours**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Monitor students for signs of continuing distress | Class Teacher |
| Liaise with Agencies regarding referrals | Class Teacher/Principal |
| Plan for return of bereaved student(s) | Contact with Parent/Guardian |
| Plan for giving of “memory box” to bereaved family | In case of student death- All staff and local community |
| Decide on Memorials and Anniversaries | B.O.M./ Staff, Parents and students |
| Review response to incident and amend plan | Staff/B.O.M. |