

Kilcleagh N. S.

Critical Incident Policy

Kilcleagh N.S. aims to protect the well being of its pupils and staff by providing a safe and nurturing environment at all times.

Kilcleagh N.S has taken a number of measures to create a coping, supportive, and caring ethos in the school. The school has also formulated a number of policies and procedures to be followed with a view to ensuring the physical and psychological safety of staff and students, both in ordinary time and in the event of a critical incident.

What is a critical incident?

Kilcleagh N.S recognises a critical incident to be “an incident or sequence of events that overwhelms the normal coping mechanism of the school and disrupts the running of the school.”

Critical incidents may involve one or more pupils, staff, the school, or our local community. Types of incidents might include:

- The death of a member of the school community through sudden death, accident, terminal illness or suicide.
- An intrusion into the school
- An accident/tragedy in the wider school community
- Serious damage to the school building through fire, flood, vandalism etc.
- The disappearance of a member of the school community.
- An accident involving members of the school community.

Aim

Recognise that the key to managing critical incidents is planning. Kilcleagh N. S. Board of Management has developed this critical incident management policy. Our hope is that, in the event of an incident, this will help staff to react quickly and effectively and to maintain a sense of control. This should also help us to achieve a return to normality as soon as possible and ensure that the effects on the pupils and staff will be limited.

Creation of a coping supportive and caring ethos in the school.

We have put systems in place to lessen the probability of the occurrence of an incident. These include measures to address both the physical and psychological safety of both staff and pupils.

Key roles have been identified and assigned as follows:

Key Roles	Name
Team Leader	Mary O'Connell
Staff Liaison	Mary O'Connell
Pupils Liaison	Class Teachers
Parent Liaison	Class Teachers/Principal
Community Liaison	Mary O'Connell
Media Liaison	Mary O'Connell
Communication between staff	Maureen O'Neill/Helga Leslie
Administration tasks	Claire Farrell

In the event of a critical incident the responsibilities of each role-holder will be as follows. In the event of the Team Leader being absent the Deputy Principal will assume that role.

Team Leader

Alerts the team members to the crisis and convenes a meeting
 CO-ordinates the tasks of the team
 Liaises with the B.O.M. and the Department of Education & Science
 Liaises with the bereaved family.

Staff Liaison

Leads meetings to brief staff on the facts as known, gives staff members an opportunity to express their feelings and outlines the routine for the day.
 Advises staff on the identification of vulnerable students.
 Is alert to vulnerable staff members and makes contact with them individually.
 Provides materials to staff from the Ready To Go Pack.

Student Liaison

Liaises with other team members to keep them up-dated with information and progress.
 Alerts staff to vulnerable students.
 Provide materials for students from the Ready to Go Pack.

Community Liaison.

Liaises with agencies in the community for support and onward referral.
 Updated team members on the involvements of external agencies.
 Coordinates the involvement of these agencies.
 Maintains up to date list of contact numbers of:

- Key Parents, such as members of parents council
- Emergency support services and other external contacts and resources.

 Facilitates 'question and answers' meetings.
 Meets with individual parents.
 Provides materials for parents from the Ready To Go Pack.
 Visits the bereaved family with the team leader.

Media Liaison.

In preparing for the role, she will consider issues that may arise during an incident 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 Communications Section in the DES.

Administrative Tasks.

Maintenance of up-to-date lists of contact numbers of

- Parents or Guardians
- Teachers

Emergency Support Services.

Telephone calls need to be responded to, letters sent, and materials photocopied.

Record Keeping

In the event of an incident each member of the team will keep detailed records of phone calls made and received, letters sent and received, meetings held, persons met, interventions used, materials used etc. the school secretary will have a key role in receiving and logging telephone calls, sending letters, photocopying materials etc.

Letter to Parents.

The B.O.M. will prepare a brief, written statement to include:

The sympathy of the school community for the affected/bereaved family.

Positive information or comments about the deceased/injured person(s).

The facts of the incident.

What has been done.

What is going to be done.

Confidentiality and 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 see to ensure that pupils do so also. (For instance, the term 'suicide' will not be used without the consent of the family involved or until it has been established categorically that the person's death was a result of suicide. The phrases 'tragic death' or 'sudden death' may be used instead.

Critical Incident Room.

In the event of a critical incident, the Staff Room and/or the Learning Support Room will be the main room used to meet the staff, students, parents and visitors involved.

Development and communications of this policy and plan.

All staff were consulted and their views canvassed in the preparation of the draft plan. Parent representatives were also consulted and asked for their comments. Our school's final policy and procedures in relation to responding to critical incidents has been presented to all staff.

Each member of the critical incident team has a personal copy.

All new and temporary staff will be informed of the details of the plan by the school principal.

Critical Incident Team

Liam Farrell – Chairperson

Mary O'Connell – School Principal

Helga Leslie - Deputy School Principal

Parent's Representatives – Lorraine Farrell & Patrick Henson

N.E.P.S - Graham Shimmons

Ready To Go Pack contents.

1 Responding to Critical Incidents

2 When Tragedy Strikes

(Both of these books are kept on the shelf in the Staff Room).

**Counselling Services.
Convent of Mercy,
Rochfortbridge,
Co. Westmeath.**

Catchment Areas: Co. Westmeath.

Services Provided:

Individual Counselling

Office Hours: 087 9219525

Opening Hours; By appointment

Is there a charge: Yes

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**Bethany St. Camillus Bereavement Support Group
Griffinstown
Kinnegad
Co. Westmeath.**

Catchment Area: Co. Westmeath

Services Provided:

Services include a drop in centre at St. Camillus' Killucan Westmeath and a bereavement meeting on the last Thursday of the month or on request.

Office Phone: 01 8157320

Is there a charge: No

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**Midland Suicide Bereavement Support Services
St. Vincent's Hospital
Athlone.**

Catchment Area: Athlone and surrounds

Services Provided: Bereavement Support

Contact Phone: 086 8157320

Opening Hours: Appointments arranged to suit clients

Is there a charge: No

**Rainbows -Westmeath
Gallstown
Rockfortbridge
Co. Westmeath.**

Catchment Area: Westmeath

Services Provided: Safe setting in which children can talk through their feeling with other children who are experiencing similar situation

Contact Phone: 044 22074

Email: ask@rainbowsireland.com

Website: www.rainbowsireland.com

Is there a charge: No

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**Suicide Bereavement Support Mullingar,
Community Mental Health Centre
Grace Road,
Mullingar,
Co. Westmeath.**

Catchment Area: Co. Westmeath

Services Provided:

Individual counselling for the suicide bereaved

Is there a charge: No

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Solas - Bereavement Counselling for Children
Barnardo's
Christchurch Square,
Dublin 8, Ireland
Tel: 01 - 453 03 55.