



Maryfield College Critical Incident Management Policy

Ratified by the BOM – December 13th, 2021

Maryfield College aims to protect the well-being of its students and staff by always providing a safe and nurturing environment. The Pastoral Care and Guidance Services aim to create a coping, supportive and caring ethos in the school. Our Mission Statement acknowledges that it is through our relationships with others that we grow to our full potential. Therefore, we aspire to create an educational environment where pupils come to learn and to understand themselves, their abilities, and their world. In this environment they are taught to take responsibility for themselves and for their behaviour.

We, in the school community, are guided by the teaching of Jesus, who urged us to love God and one another as oneself, as a way of life that would bring us to self-fulfilment.

We teach and learn respect for one another and our world, accept our differences and acknowledge our interdependence. In doing so, particular attention is paid to those in most need of our help.

Maryfield College as a teaching and learning community recognises the interdependence of management, teachers, pupils, and parents in the process of forming happy, secure, well-educated, and productive young people. The school endeavours to ensure that it provides: a healthy balance between academic, social, and spiritual development in an environment that is welcoming and friendly, where a caring relationship is evident between staff, parents, and pupils, where each one is accepted, respected, and appreciated through a value system that embodies the teachings of Christ, based on the Christian ideals of freedom, truth, love, justice, and self-discipline

The Board of Management, through Ms. Maree O'Rourke, has drawn up a Critical Incident Management Plan as one element of the school's policies and plans.

Review and Research

The Critical Incident Management Team (CIMT) have consulted resource documents available to schools on www.education.ie and www.nosp.ie including:

- Responding to Critical Incidents Guidelines and Resources for Schools (NEPS 2016)
- Suicide Prevention in Schools: Best Practice Guidelines (IAS, National Suicide Review Group (2002)
- Suicide Prevention in the Community - A Practical Guide (HSE 2011)
- Well-Being in Post-Primary Schools Guidelines for Mental Health Promotion and Suicide Prevention (DES, DOH, HSE 2013)

Definition of critical Incident

The staff and management of Maryfield College 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 other unexpected death
- An intrusion into the school
- An accident involving members of the school community

- 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

The term 'suicide' will not be used when conveying news or referring to such a death. The phrases 'tragic death' or 'sudden death' may be used instead.

Aim of Critical Incident Management Policy

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 us to affect a return to normality as soon as possible.

Creation of a coping supportive and caring ethos in the school

We have 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 as follows.

1. Physical safety

- Evacuation plan formulated
- Regular fire drills occur
- Fire exits and extinguishers are regularly checked
- Health & Safety Policy in place
- COVID -19 Response Plans in place
- Pre-opening supervision throughout the school building incl. locker areas and corridors.
- Supervision of students at the end of the school day to provide order when students are at lockers areas and exits.
- Supervision of students at break time and lunchtime
- School doors locked during class time – main school entrance in use only.
- Procedures for students who must leave school early or who arrive to school late.
- Procedures for students who become unwell during the school day and must be collected by a parent or guardian.
- The Role of the Student outlined in the Code of Behaviour including Personal Conduct.

2. Psychological safety

The management and staff of Maryfield College 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.

- Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE) is integrated into the work of the school. It is addressed in the curriculum by addressing issues such as grief and loss; communication skills; stress and anger management; resilience; conflict management; problem solving; help-seeking; bullying; decision making and prevention of alcohol and drug misuse. Promotion of mental health is an integral part of this provision
- Staff have access to training for their role in SPHE through PSDT
- Staff are familiar with the Child Protection Guidelines and Procedures and details of how to proceed with suspicions or disclosures.
- Staff have completed Child First E- learning training through PDST and TUSLA.
- Information is provided on mental health in general and such specific areas as signs and symptoms of depression and anxiety by the Guidance Department.
- Whole School CPD on Adolescent Psychology and Anxiety with Joann Fortune.
- Key staff are informed in suicide awareness, and some are trained in interventions for suicidal students.
- The school operate a red and amber list which confidentially identifies students who are either at risk or experiencing difficulties which warrant staff to be vigilant and understanding.

- The school has developed links with a range of external agencies – NEPS, Pieta House, Zeeko, CAMHS, TUSLA.
- Inputs to students by external providers are carefully considered in the light of criteria about student safety, the appropriateness of the content, and the expertise of the providers. See DES Circulars 0022/2010 (Primary) or 0023/2010 (post-Primary)
- The school has a clear policy on bullying and deals with bullying in accordance with this policy.
- The school uses the SSE process as a mechanism for implementing the Wellbeing Policy Statement and framework for Practice 2019.
- There is a care system in place in the school using the "Continuum of Support" approach which is outlined in the NEPS documents published in 2010 for post primary schools. See also Student Support Teams in Post Primary Schools (2014). These documents are available on www.education.ie
- Students who are identified as being at risk are referred to the designated staff member as appropriate, year head, guidance counsellor, SET Team, 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 agency.
- Staff are informed about how to access support for themselves through the Employee Assistance Scheme at every staff meeting and through staff notice boards.

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.

Team leader: A member of SMT

Role

- 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

Note: The SMT is the Principal and Deputy Principal in the absence of one the other will take the lead.

Garda liaison: A member of SMT

Role

- Liaises with the Gardaí
- Ensures that information about deaths or other developments is checked out for accuracy before being shared

Staff liaison: Dympna McCoy & Stephen Duignan

Role

- 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 contacts them individually.
- Advises them of the availability of the Employee Assistance Scheme and gives them the contact number.

Student liaison: Guidance Counsellor Finola Ryan/ RE Team/ Year Heads/Form Tutors all as necessary

Role

- Co-ordinates information from tutors and year heads about students they are concerned about
- Alerts other staff to vulnerable students as appropriate.
- Provides materials for students (from their critical incident folder)
- Maintains student contact records (R1).
- Looks after setting up and supervision of 'quiet' room where agreed.

Community/agency liaison: A member of SMT

Role

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

Parent liaison: Guidance Counsellor or Year Heads

Role

- 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)

Media liaison: Chairperson of BOM and A member of SMT only

Role

- 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 SEC; relevant teacher unions etc.
- Will draw up a press statement, give media briefings and interviews

Administrator: Hazel Boylan and June Maguire

Role

- 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 texts
- 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. Hazel Boylan will have a key role in receiving and logging telephone calls, sending letters, photocopying materials, etc.

Confidentiality and good name considerations

Management and staff of Maryfield College have a responsibility to protect the privacy and good name of people involved in any incident and will be sensitive to the consequences of public statements. Members of school staff will bear this in mind, and seek to ensure that students do so also, e.g. 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, the following rooms are designated for the indicated purposes	
Room Name:	Designated Purpose:
Staff Room	Main room for meeting staff
Year Head Meeting Room	Meetings with students
Front of School Meeting Room	Meetings with parents
Front of School Meeting Room	Meetings with media
Guidance Counselling Room or Year Head Meeting Room	Individual sessions with students
Front of School Meeting Room	Meetings with other visitors

If the incident occurs at weekends, or during school closure periods the CIMT should be informed and may be requested to meet.

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/guardian 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 Ms Valerie Coleman New Staff Induction Co-Ordinator

The plan will be updated annually in December.

Critical Incident Management Team		
Role	Name	Phone
Team leader:	Principal/Deputy Principal	01 8373573
Garda liaison	Principal /Deputy Principal	01 8373573
Staff liaison	Dympna McCoy & Stephen Duignan	01 8373573
Student liaison	Guidance Counsellor RE Team	01 8373573

	AP 1 Year Heads & Form Tutors	
Community liaison	Principal/Deputy Principal	01 8373573
Parent liaison	Guidance Counsellor/ Year Heads	01 8373573
Media liaison	Principal/Chairperson/Deputy Principal	01 8373573
Administrator	School Secretary	01 8373573

Short term actions – Day 1

Task	Name
Gather accurate information	Member of SMT Year Heads
Who, what, when, where?	Member of SMT Year Heads
Convene a CIMT meeting – specify time and place clearly	Member of SMT
Contact external agencies	Member of SMT
Arrange supervision for students	Deputy Principal
Hold staff meeting	All staff
Agree schedule for the day	Member of SMT – Team Leader
Inform students – (close friends and students with learning difficulties may need to be told separately)	Year Heads/Form Tutors/ RE Team
Compile a list of vulnerable students	Guidance Counsellor/Year Heads/ SET Team
Prepare and agree media statement and deal with media	Principal
Inform parents	Member of SMT through Administration
Hold end of day staff briefing	Member of SMT

Medium term actions - (Day 2 and following days)

Task	Name
Convene a CIMT meeting to review the events of day 1	Member of SMT - Team leader
Meet external agencies	Member of SMT
Meet whole staff	All staff
Arrange support for students, staff, parents	Guidance Counsellor/ RE Team/ Year Heads/ SMT
Visit the injured	Year Head
Liaise with bereaved family regarding funeral arrangements	Member of SMT/ RE Team
Agree on attendance and participation at funeral service	Member of SMT/ Year Heads/ RE Team
Make decisions about school closure	BOM

Follow-up – beyond 72 hours

Task	Name
Monitor students for signs of continuing distress	Class teachers and Year Heads
Liaise with agencies regarding referrals	Guidance Counsellor
Plan for return of bereaved student(s)	Member of SMT and Year Head
Plan for giving of 'memory box' to bereaved family	Member of SMT and RE Team
Decide on memorials and anniversaries	BOM/Staff, parents and students
Review response to incident and amend plan	Staff/BOM

EMERGENCY CONTACT LIST

AGENCY	CONTACT NUMBERS
Garda	112 01 6664000 Santry Garda Station
Hospital Temple Street Children's Hospital Beaumont Hospital	01 8784200 01 8093000
Fire Brigade	112
Local GPs Calderwood Clinic	01 5079500
HSE – Dublin North Local Health Office	01 8164200
TUSLA	01 7718500
Child and Family Mental Health Service (CAMHS)	1800 111 88
DES Inspectorate	01 8896553
NEPS Psychologist	Dr Jacqueline Horan
DES	01 8896400
ASTI and TUI	ASTI – 01 6040160 TUI – 01 4922588
Fr Tom Noone Marino Parish Church	01 8332772
State Exams Commission	090 6442700
Employee Assistance Service	1800 411 057