



CRITICAL INCIDENT POLICY

**Coláiste Mhuire
Policy Document**

CRITICAL INCIDENT POLICY 2025

Mission Statement

Coláiste Mhuire is committed to excellence. We provide a caring and disciplined environment in which all students are challenged to reach their academic and personal potential.

What is a Critical Incident?

A critical Incident is any incident or sequence of events which overwhelms the normal coping mechanisms of the school and disrupts the running of the school.

Examples:

- Death of a student or member of staff
- Major accident
- Criminal accident
- Natural disaster
- Disappearance of a student
- Suicide of a student or a member of staff
- Civil unrest
- Fire in the school

The list is not exhaustive

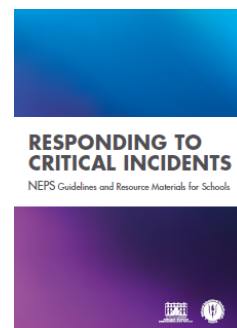
At all times, reference is to be made to *Responding to Critical Incidents: Guidelines for Schools* and *Responding to Critical Incidents: Resource Materials for Schools*.

An understanding of the role of NEPS is essential to the strategic response to any critical incident. NEPS provide a supportive role in any incident in which their services are called upon by the School Principal.

The Critical Incident Management Team is listed overleaf. Each team member is supplied with a Critical Incident Pack including an outline of steps that they should be carried by them in the event of a critical incident. These packs are available in the Principal's Office.

Critical Incident Management Team (CIMT)

The team is made up of an initial in-house team of six persons, with other team members employed at the discretion of the Team Leader. The names and roles are available in Appendix 1 attached to this document.



Roles and Responsibilities:

Team Leader and Staff Liaison Tasks:

- Gather accurate information and confirm the event
- Convene the CIMT meeting
- Express sympathy to the family where relevant
- Contact external agencies as relevant, including NEPS
- Arrange supervision for students if appropriate
- Hold a staff meeting/contact staff via SMS messaging with a general message
- Decide how the news will be communicated
- Inform students, parents and outside agencies if appropriate
- Plan for a memorial event if appropriate

Communication Role:

- Prepare a public statement with Team
- Ensure that telephone lines are available for incoming and outgoing calls
- Deal with calls
- Liaise with outside agencies

Counselling Role

- Provide a safe and secure place for students to stay in and talk
- Provide information
- Provide counselling – within reason, as often it is not the most appropriate
- Arrange the basic needs of students
- Access to telephone, email, etc.
- Address the needs of staff
- Referral procedures

Chaplaincy Role

- Visit homes if necessary
- Organise chapel services
- Contact families' clergy
- Consult with family about school involvement
- Support staff personally and spiritually
- Provide space for pupils to meet and talk
- Provide ongoing support for families

Medical Liaison/Counselling Team:

- Provide any necessary medical care – injuries, shock, etc
- Provide information for staff and students
- Liaise with emergency services, hospitals, and doctors
- Provide a place for rest and respite
- Provide necessary emergency telephone numbers

Health and Safety Liaison

- Ensure the area is secured
- Contact Insurance Company
- Contact HSA
- Contact any necessary outside agencies

Action Plan

Short-Term Actions – Day 1 (initial 24 hours)

- Gather accurate information – who, what, where, when?
- Contact appropriate agencies (Emergency services, NEPS, BOM)
- Organise supervision for students
- Contact with family/families
- Consult with the family about what the school can do to help
- Convene a CIMT meeting, specifying time and place and delegate tasks
- Compile all pertinent information for dissemination amongst the school community
- Reinforce that social media restrictions apply to all information circulated amongst the school community, i.e. use of Facebook, Twitter, and WhatsApp. This list is not exhaustive
- Hold a staff meeting and agree schedule for the day, as close to normal as possible
- Inform students – under the guidance of NEPS
- Compile a list of vulnerable students
- Arrange for the GP area, Chaplain's Office and Guidance Office to be available for students with tea, etc.
- Liaise with family, Chaplain and other relevant personnel to visit home if possible
- With family, clarify their wishes regarding the school's involvement in any arrangements
- Prepare media statement
- Inform the parent body – via SMS service or a letter given to students to bring home
- End of day debriefing, where possible
- Medium-Term Actions – Two subsequent days (24 – 72 hours)
- Review events of Day 1

- Convene an early meeting of CIMT
- Request the permission of the Board of Management should a school closure be deemed necessary
- Meet external agencies
- Meet the whole staff
- Arrange support for students, staff and parents
- Visit the injured – hospital or home
- Liaise with the bereaved family regarding funeral arrangements and school participation
- Prepare students attending the funeral
- Arrange a Chapel service for the school
- Counselling, if appropriate to be arranged
- Support to be provided for staff and students
- Plan to reintegrate any staff or pupils involved or related

Longer-Term Actions – Beyond the 72 hours

- Monitor students for signs of continued distress – if behaviour is worrying, seek referrals
- Liaise with agencies regarding referrals
- Consult with NEPS Psychologist re-evaluation of our CIMT plan
- Decide on memorials and anniversaries
- Keep in touch with the family/families
- Evaluate the response to the incident and amend the plan appropriately
- Be aware of extra support needed at anniversaries or special days
- Plan a school memorial service, memory book, tree planting ceremony, etc.
- Update records – names, addresses, etc.



Critical Incident Policy

The Board of Management reviewed and ratified this policy on December 10th 2025.

Signed: _____

Mr Joe O'Meara

Chairperson of the Board of Management



Iontaobhas Scoileanna Éamainn Rís
Edmund Rice Schools Trust