



Le Chéile Secondary School

## Draft Critical Incident Management Policy Le Chéile Secondary School

In keeping with our animating principle that '*God is Love and Love is here*' the Board of Management is committed to the care of staff and students in our school. This policy refers to the care given and response taken by this school should a critical incident occur. For the purpose of this policy a critical incident is defined as *any incident or sequence of events which overwhelms the normal coping mechanisms of the school and disrupts the running of the school.*

This could include:

- The death of a member of the school community
- A serious accident involving pupils or staff
- A traumatic event involving the school
- A serious accident or tragedy in the wider community

In the event of a critical incident occurring, the Critical Incident Team is convened to plan and implement an appropriate response.

The Critical Incident Team consists of:

- Principal
- Deputy Principal
- Chaplain + RE team
- Year Head (relevant)
- Class Tutor(relevant)
- Other volunteer teachers

The team will meet annually.

(See Appendix 1)

Depending on the nature of the critical incident, the school may access professional support from agencies such as:

- Department of Education Psychological services
- National Suicide Bereavement Support Network
- Rainbows
- Parish Priest
- Gardai
- Counsellors

Key administrative tasks in planning for a critical incident:

Maintaining an up-to-date list of contact numbers for

- a) Staff
- b) Pupils, parents / guardians
- c) Emergency support services

In the case of School Tours, the Tour Leader will compile an information pack to include:

- Name of the Tour Leader
- A list of all participating teachers and pupils
- A list of mobile phone numbers for all participating teachers and pupils
- Passport details and (in the case of tours outside the country)
- Photographs of participating pupils
- Home contact numbers and mobiles of all involved
- Relevant medical information on pupils and permission forms from parents in case of a medical emergency
- Insurance details
- Copy of itinerary

A copy of this file should be left with the Principal prior to departure.

The School mobile phone will be made available to staff for outings, trips etc.

Procedures to be followed in the event of critical incidents:

On notification of a critical incident **the Principal** will convene the Critical Incident Management Team to carry out the following:

- Ascertain the facts.
- Contact appropriate agencies
- Organise for the supervision of pupils
- Inform Staff , BOM and Le Chéile Schools Trust Office
- Prepare a statement of the facts
- Identify high risk pupils
- Appoint someone to deal with phone calls
- Organise timetable for the day
- Inform parents and guardians
- Inform pupils
- Make contact with the bereaved family
- Organise support
- Respond to the media through a nominated spokesperson  
decided by the Board
- Contact school solicitors if required

**The team** should draw up a short written statement of the facts for staff, pupils, parents and the media.

Media:

A spokesperson will be designated to brief the media where necessary. All communication with the media should be simple, factual and brief. The school will at all times endeavour to protect the privacy of the family.

The statement should include:

- The facts about the incident
- The school's response
- Support available for the pupils
- Positive information or comment about the deceased person
- Condolences extended to the family

#### Administrative requirements:

- organise supervision or substitution
- make necessary phone calls
- reserve rooms for meetings / counselling
- record events, letters to parents, telephone calls made and received.
- deal with normal school business
- organise practical requirements (snacks/ drinks/ tissues)
- maintain the normal school routine where possible

#### Medium Term Tasks:

- Prepare staff and pupils for attending the funeral
- Involve the bereaved family in a school liturgy if they are agreeable
- Facilitate staff and pupils' responses e.g. book of condolence, school council's vote of sympathy, flowers
- Support distressed staff and pupils
- Ensure counselling service is available
- Deal with deceased person's possessions in keeping with parental wishes
- Facilitate the return to school of siblings and close friends
- Monitor siblings and friends of the deceased carefully
- Update and amend school records and inform the DES

### Long Term Tasks:

- Keep in contact with the parents of the deceased
- Be sensitive to occasions such as anniversaries, birthdays, Christmas etc
- Organise a school service and memorial
- Help staff and pupils to acknowledge bereavement
- Provide appropriate support for the primary carers
- Review overall school response
- Review the support structures available

### APPENDIX 1

#### Critical Incident Management Team

Principal: Áine Moran

Deputy Principal: Leona Harrington

Chaplain: Margaret O'Shea

RE team representatives: Eoin Walsh

Volunteer Teachers:

Board of Management Liaison Person: