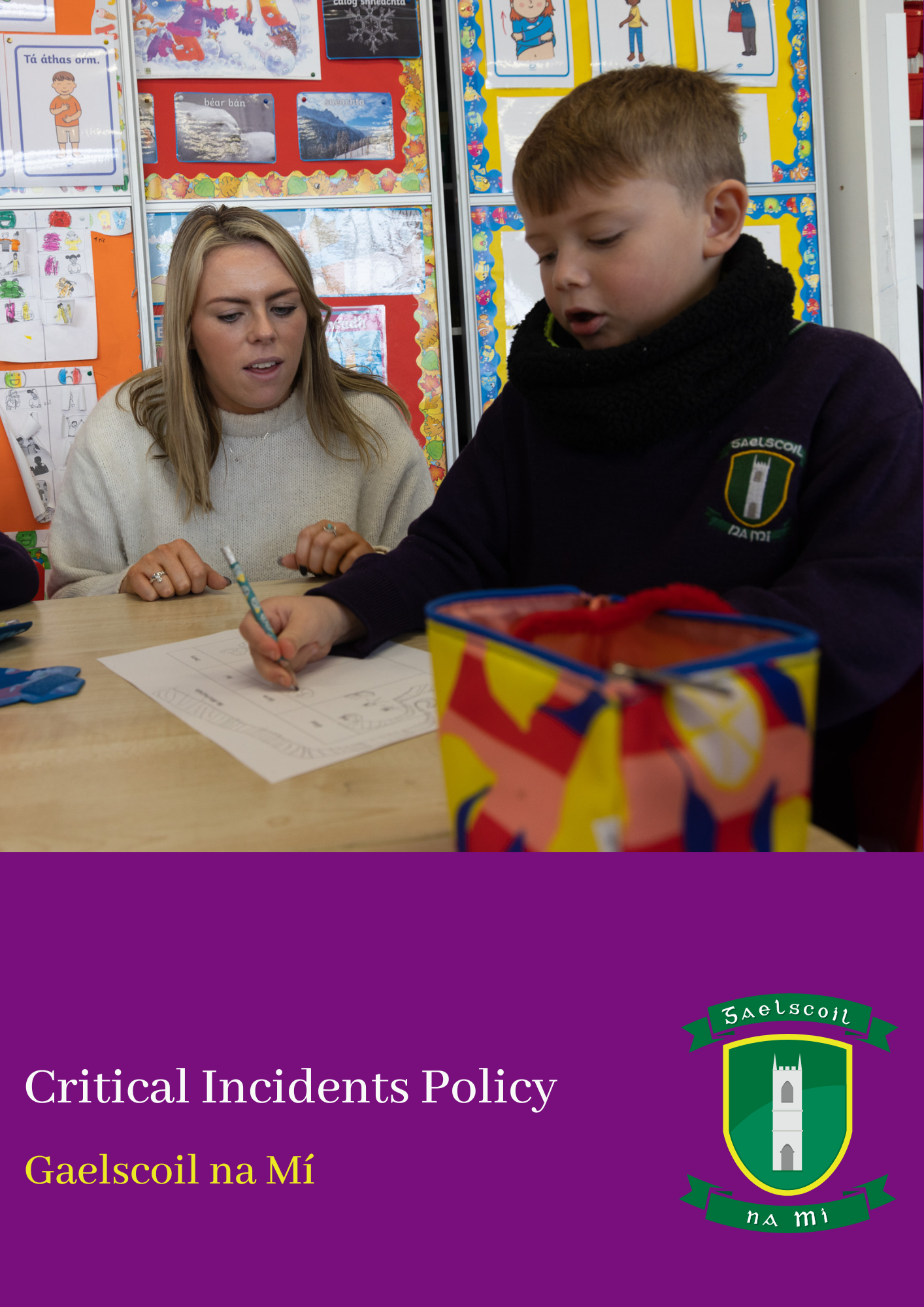
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**Critical Incident Management Policy & Plan**

**Gaelscoil na Mí**

1. **Introduction**

Traumatic incidents can happen in schools at anytime. Because of this, we have established a Critical Incident Management Team (CIMT) which takes responsibility for developing a policy and putting a Critical Incident Management Plan (CIMP) in place. Gaelscoil na Mí aims to protect the wellbeing of all its students and staff by providing a safe and nurturing environment at all times. The Board of Management, through the Principal, has drawn up this Critical Incident Management Plan (CIMP) as one element of the school’s policies and plans. Our Critical Incident Management Team (CIMT) steers the development and implementation of this plan.

1. **Definition**

We recognise a critical incident as an incident or sequence of events which overwhelms the normal coping mechanism and disrupts the running of the school. Critical incidents may involve one or more students or staff members, or members of our local community. The plan to be put in place will depend on the type of critical incident in question. The following are examples:

* Death of a member of school community through unexpected death, violence, accident or suicide
* An intrusion into the school
* An accident involving a member(s) of the school community
* Serious damage to the school building through fire, flood or vandalism
* The disappearance of a member of the school community
* An accident/tragedy in the wider community

1. **Aim**

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 an effective plan should also help ensure that the impact on students and staff will be limited. It should enable us to effect a return to normality as soon as possible.

1. **Creation of a coping supportive & caring ethos in the school**

We have put systems in place to help 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.

1. **Physical Safety**

As a school, we endeavour to provide a school environment where each member of staff and students are kept as safe as possible. All procedures relating to Health & Safety are outlined in our *Health and Safety Statement* and the following are the most pertinent in the case of Critical Incidents.

* Evacuation plan formulated
* Emergency Evacuation drill carried out at least once a term according to Health and Safety Policy
* Fire exits and extinguishers checked regularly
* Main doors closed during school hours
* General school rules under the school’s behaviour policy to ensure all schools have a safe environment. See *Behaviour Policy* for further details.

1. **Psychological Safety**

The management and staff of Gaelscoil na Mí also 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 including 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
* Staffs have access to training for their role in SPHE
* Staffs are familiar with the Child Protection Guidelines and Procedures and the name of the Designated Person (DP)
* Books and resources on difficulties affecting the primary school student are available
* Information is provided on mental health in general and such specific areas as signs and symptoms of depression and anxiety. Some members of staff have completed *Friends for Life* training in relation to this.
* The school has developed links with a range of external agencies e.g. HSE/Community Care/NEPS/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
* The school has a clear anti-bullying policy and deals with bullying in accordance with this policy
* There is a care system in place in the school using the “Continuum of Support” approach
* Students who are identified as being at risk are referred to the designated staff member (e.g. support teacher). Concerns are explored and the appropriate level of assistance and support is provided. Parents/guardians are informed, and where appropriate, a referral is made to an appropriate agency
* Staffs are informed about how to access support themselves e.g. Carecall

1. **Critical Incident Management Team**

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 Management Folder which includes all of the following: a copy of the critical incident policy, suitable plans and resources suitable to their roles and a list of relevant contacts.

1. **Roles**

* Team Leader
* Garda liaison
* Staff liaison
* Student liaison
* Community/agency liaison
* Parent/guardian liaison
* Media liaison
* Administrator

1. *Team Leader*

This is a person who carries authority and can make decisions during a crisis e.g. school closure, attendance at memorial service etc.

The team leader will:

* alert the team members to the crisis and convenes a meeting
* co-ordinate the tasks of the team
* liaise with the Board of Management; DES; NEPS;FSS
* liaise with the bereaved family.

*The Deputy Principal will adopt this role if the Principal is unavailable.*

1. *Garda Liaison*

This may be seen as part of the team leader’s role.

The Garda liaison will:

* liaise with the Gardaí
* ensure that information about deaths or other developments is checked out for accuracy before being shared

1. *Staff Liaison*

This will be a staff member known and trusted by all.

The staff liaison:

* leads briefing meetings for staff on facts as known, give staff members an opportunity to express their feelings and ask questions and outline 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 throughout the day
* is alert to vulnerable staff members and makes contact with them individually
* advises staff of the availability of the EAS (Employee Assistance Service) and gives them the contact details

1. *Student Liaison*

This is a trusted and familiar figure to the students.

The Student Liaison will:

* alert staff to vulnerable pupils
* provide materials to students (from their Critical Incident Folder)
* maintain Student Contact Records (R1)
* look after setting up and supervision of ‘quiet’ room where agreed

1. *Community/Agency Liaison*

This is someone with good contacts with agencies and relevant individual in the community.

The Community Liaison will:

* maintain up to date lists of contact numbers - members of the Parents Council, emergency support services and other external contacts and resources
* liaise with agencies in the community for support and onward referral
* be alert to the need to check credentials of individuals offering support
* co-ordinate the involvement of these agencies
* remind agency staff to wear name badges and verify Garda Vetting
* update CIMT members on the involvement of external agencies

1. *Parent/Guardian Liaison*

Someone who is known to parents, this person should be comfortable speaking before a large group and have skills to manage emotional reactions of individual or groups of parents.

The Parent/Guardian Liaison will:

* visit the bereaved family with the team leader
* arrange parent meetings if held
* facilitate such meetings, and manage ‘questions and answers’ sessions
* manage the ‘consent’ issues in accordance with agreed school policy
* ensure that sample letters are prepared and available on the school’s system and ready for adaptation
* set up room for meetings with parents
* maintain a record of parents seen
* meet with individual parents
* provide appropriate materials for parents (from their Critical Incident Folder)

1. *Media Liaison*

Someone with good interpersonal skills who would be comfortable talking to the media by phone or in person. A person who is able to set limits without being offensive.

The Media Liaison:

* 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 relevant teacher unions etc.
* will draw up a press statement, give media briefings and interviews (as agreed by school management)

1. *Administrator*

The administrator is responsible for:

* maintenance up to date telephone numbers of:
  + Parents or guardians
  + Teachers
  + Emergency services
* taking telephone calls and note those that need to be responded to
* ensuring that templates are available on the school’s IT system and ready for adaptation
* preparing and sending out letters, emails and faxes
* photocopying materials needed
* maintaining records

1. **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. The school secretary will have a key role in receiving and logging telephone calls, sending letters, photocopying materials, etc.

1. **Confidentiality & Good Name**

The management and staff of Gaelscoil na Mí have 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 students do so also. For instance, the term “suicide” will not be used unless there is confirmed 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.

1. **Critical Incident Rooms**

In the event of a critical incident the following rooms will be used:

* Staff room for meeting with staff
* Classrooms for meeting with pupils
* School hall for meeting with parent body or staffroom for smaller groups
* Principal’s office for meeting with the media
* Learning Support room (downstairs) for meeting with individual pupils
* Resource room for other visitors.

1. **Consultation & Communication regarding the Plan**

All staff were consulted and their views sought in the preparation of this policy and plan. 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 Management Team (CIMT) has a personal copy of the plan. All new and temporary staff will be informed of the plan by the Principal.

Resources for dealing with Critical Incidents are detailed on the next page.

This plan will be updated annually and ratified by the Board of Management.

**SÍNITHE**

Cormac Mc Cashin Clár Ní Mhaoláin

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

*Cathaoirleach Príomhoide*

**Dáta: 10.05.23**

**School Resources for Dealing with Critical Incidents**

**Books for Children**

1. Rosie: Coming to Terms with the Death of a Sibling (Aois 4-7) Stephanie Jeffs, Sue Doggett &

Jacqui Thomas (2005)

1. Josh: Coming to Terms with the Death of a friend (Aois 4-7) Stephamie Jeffs & Jacqui

Thomas (2006)

1. Gentle Willow. A Story for Children about Dying (Aois 4-7) J.C.Mills (1993)
2. Remembering Mum (Aois 4-11) Ginny Perkins & Leon Morris

(1996)

1. What on Earth do you do when Someone Dies? (Aois 7-11) Trevor Romain & Elizabeth

Verdick (1999)

1. The Little Flower Bulb- helping children bereaved by suicide Eleanor Gormally (2011)

**Workbooks for Children**

1. When Someone very special dies: Marge Heegard (1991)

Children can learn to cope with grief (Aois 6-12)

2. Talking with Children and Young People about Death & Dying: Mary Turner (1998) A Workbook

* + 1. Good Grief: Exploring Feelings, Loss and Death with Under Barbara Ward & Associates

Elevens. A Holistic Approach (1996)

**Resources for Parents**

1. How do we tell the Children: A Step-by-Step Guide for Helping Dan Schafer & Christine Lyons

Children Cope when Someone Dies (2002)

1. When Parents Separate: Helping your Children Cope Sharry, John & Reid, Peter &

Donoghue, Eugene (2001)

1. The resolving Bereavement-Grief with your child book Fiona McAuslan & Peter Nicholson(2010)

**School Resources**

1. Wise before the Event: Coping with Crises in Schools Anne Gold, William Yule (1993)

**Resources for Psychologists etc.**

1. Helping Children cope with Separation and Loss Claudia L. Jewitt (1997)

2. The Forgotten Mourners: Guidelines for working with Susan C. Smith (1999)

Bereaved Children

3. Someone Very Important has just Died: Immediate Help for Mary Turner (2005)

People Caring for Children of all ages at the time of a close

Bereavement

**Gaelscoil na Mí**

**Critical Incident Policy & Plan**

**Appendices**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Appendix 1:** | Critical Incident Management Team |
| **Appendix 2:** | Critical Incident Action Plan |
| **Appendix 3:** | Emergency Contacts |
| **Appendix 4:** | Contact Details – Staff, BoM, Parents’ Association |
| **Appendix 5:** | Resource Materials |

***The completed version of the below appendices are available internally only.***

***Appendix 1***

**Critical Incident Management Team**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Role** | **Name** | **Phone & Email** |
| Team Leader |  |  |
| Garda Liaison |  |  |
| Staff Liaison |  |  |
| Student Liaison |  |  |
| Parent/Guardian Liaison |  |  |
| Community Liaison |  |  |
| Media Liaison |  |  |
| Administrator |  |  |

***Appendix 2***

**Critical Incident Action Plan**

***Short-Term Actions – Day 1***

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Task** | **Name** |
| Gather accurate information |  |
| Who, what, when where? |  |
| Convene a CIMT meeting |  |
| Contact external agencies |  |
| Arrange for supervision of pupils |  |
| Hold staff meeting |  |
| Agree schedule for the day | **All staff** |
| Inform students *(close friends and student with learning difficulties may need to be told separately)* |  |
| Compile a list of vulnerable students |  |
| Contact/visit the bereaved family |  |
| Prepare and agree media statement and deal with the media |  |
| Inform parents/guardians |  |
| Hold end-of-day staff briefing |  |

***Medium-Term Actions – Day 2 and Following Days***

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Task** | **Name** |
| Convene CIMT meeting to review the events of Day 1 | **Team leader** |
| Meet external agencies |  |
| Meet whole staff |  |
| Arrange support for students, staff, parents / guardians |  |
| Visit the injured |  |
| Liaise with the bereaved family regarding funeral arrangements |  |
| Agree on attendance and participation at funeral service |  |
| Make decisions about school closure | **BOM** |

***Follow-Up Actions – Beyond 72 hours***

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Task** | **Name** |
| Monitor students for signs of continuing distress | **Class teachers** |
| Liaise with agencies regarding referrals |  |
| Plan for return of bereaved students |  |
| Plan for giving of “memory box” to bereaved family |  |
| Decide on memorials and anniversaries | **BOM/Staff, parents, students** |
| Review response to incident and amend plan if necessary | **Staff/BOM** |

***Appendix 3***

**Emergency Contacts (as per internal document as Gaeilge)**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **GNÍOMHAIREACHT** | **UIMHREACHA TEAGMHÁLA** |
| Gardaí |  |
| Ospidéil |  |
| Briogáid Dóiteáin | 112 |
| Dochtúirí áitiúla |  |
| Community Care Team |  |
| Cigire Scoile |  |
| Siceolaí NEPS |  |
| Roinn Oideachais |  |
| INTO |  |
| Riarthóir Paróiste |  |
| Seirbhís Chabhrach d’Oibrithe: Inspire Wellbeing |  |

***Appendix 4***

**Staff Contact Details**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Ainm** | **Uimhir ghutháin** | **Ríomhphost** |
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***Appendix 4***

**Contact Details: Board of Management, Other Schools, Parents Association**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Ról & Ainm** | **Ríomhphost** | **Uimhir Ghutháin** |
| *Cathaoirleach* |  |  |
| *Príomhoide* |  |  |
| *Ionadaí an Phátrúin* |  |  |
| *Ionadaí na Múinteoirí* |  |  |
| *Ionadaí na dTuismitheoirí* |  |  |
| *Ionadaí na dTuismitheoirí* |  |  |
| *Ionadaí an Phobail* |  |  |
| *Ionadaí an Phobail* |  |  |

**Scoileanna eile**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Scoil & Ainm an Phríomhoide** | **Uimhir Ghutháin** | **Seoladh ríomhphoist** |
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**Cumann na dTuismitheoirí**

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| --- | --- | --- |
| **Ainm & ról** | **Ríomhphost** | **Uimhir Ghutháin** |
| *Cathaoirleach* |  |  |
| *Rúnaí* |  |  |
| *Eile* |  |  |

***Appendix 5***

**Resource Materials**

**Account of Contact with Students**

**Acmhainn do scoileanna: R1**

**School staff or staff from external agencies can use this form to record the details of students who they met subsequent to the registration of a critical incident. This information should be kept together in one place.**

**Ainm an Bhaill Foirne / Name of staff member: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Ainm an Dalta /**  **Student Name** | **Rang / Class** | **Fothoradh (Cuir isteach más gá cabhair leantach)**  **Outcome (Add if ongoing support needed)** |
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**SAMPLE CONSENT LETTER - INDIVIDUAL OR GROUP SUPPORT SESSION**

**Resource for schools: R2**

This letter can be used as a template for the school when we are seeking parental consent for a child

to be seen in a group or individually by a NEPS psychologist.

Dear Parents,

You may already know that our teachers and staff have been providing support to our

students following \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

Additional support is also being provided to our school by psychologist/s from the National

Educational Psychological Service (NEPS).

The psychologist will be available, where necessary, to meet with individuals or with groups of

students to help them during this difficult time.

The aim of such sessions will be to:

a) Provide information about dealing with grief and loss in a healthy way

b) Allow students the opportunity to express their thoughts and feelings in a safe

environment

c) Allow students time to comfort and support each other, under the guidance of

experienced staff from \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

d) Help students resume their normal routines as soon as possible

If you would like for your son/daughter to participate in such a session and any follow-up meetings

that might be scheduled, please give your consent by signing below.

**You should return it to the school immediately.**

If you have any questions, please contact **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

I give my consent for \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ to participate in a Group/Individual Session

Student Name

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Parent or Legal Guardian Date

Is mise le meas,

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

XXXXXXXXXXXX, Príomhoide

**SAMPLE LETTER - SEEKING ADVANCE PARENTAL AGREEMENT TO CHILD BEING SEEN (PRIOR)**

**Resource for schools: R3**

This letter can be used as a template for the school if we decide to seek advance parental consent so

that a child may be seen by a NEPS psychologist (in a group or individually) in the aftermath of a

critical incident. It is to cater for the situation where parents cannot be immediately contacted.

Dear Parent,

Gaelscoil \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ has developed a plan for responding when a tragedy occurs.

When such an event happens, schools are offered support by psychologists from the National

Educational Psychological Service (NEPS), an agency of the Department of Education and Science.

If we feel it is necessary, we would like to be in a position to have your child seen by the psychologist who can offer advice and support.

Before any child is seen by a NEPS psychologist parental consent is usually required. We will make every effort to obtain this. However, in the unlikely event of being unable to contact you, we are writing to seek your consent to your child being seen by a member of NEPS as part of our school’s immediate response. This is to allow us to support your child in the best way possible.

Your child may be seen individually, in a small group or as part of a class group.

If you wish to discuss this, please contact me at your convenience.

Is mise le meas,

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

XXXXXXXXXXXX

Príomhoide

**­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­**

Please fill in the form below confirming that you have read this letter and stating whether **you wish** or **do not wish** to have your child seen by a NEPS psychologist and return to the class teacher.

I have read this letter and:

I wish to have \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ seen by the NEPS psychologist.

I do not wish to have \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ seen by the NEPS psychologist.

Parents/carers: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Date:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**SAMPLE LETTER TO PARENTS – SUDDEN DEATH/ACCIDENT**

**Resource for schools: R4**

This letter can be used as a template by the school when we are informing parents of a tragedy, offering

some advice and outlining what the schools response involves.

Dear Parents,

The school has experienced (the sudden death, accidental injury, etc.) of Name of student(s). We are deeply saddened by the deaths/events.

(Brief details of the incident, and in the event of a death, perhaps some positive remembrances of

the person lost).

Our thoughts are with (family name).

We have support structures in place to help your child cope with this tragedy. (Elaborate).

It is possible that your child may have some feelings and questions that he/she may like to discuss

with you. It is important to give factual information that is appropriate to their age.

You can help your child by taking time to listen and by encouraging them to express their feelings.

All children are different and will express their feelings in different ways. It is not uncommon for

children to have difficulty concentrating or to be fearful, anxious, or irritable. They may become

withdrawn, cry, complain of physical aches and pains, have difficulty sleeping or have nightmares.

Some may not want to eat. These are generally short term reactions. Over the course of the days

to come, please keep an eye on your child and allow him/her to express their feelings without

criticism.

Although classes will continue as usual, I anticipate that the next few days will be difficult for

everyone.

**(Optional)** An information night for parents is planned for (date, time and place). At that time, further

information about how to help children in grief will be given.

We have enclosed some information which you may find useful in helping your child through this

difficult time.

If you would like advice you may contact the following people at the school. **(Details).**

Is mise le meas,

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

XXXXXXXXXXXX, Príomhoide

**SAMPLE LETTER TO PARENTS - VIOLENT DEATH**

**Resource for Schools: R5**

This letter can be used as a template for the schools if we are informing parents of a violent death,

offering some advice and outlining what the schools response involves.

Dear Parents,

I need to inform you about a very sad event that has happened.

(Give accurate information about the incident, but avoid using the word murder as this will

not be established until the court case is completed).

A child/young person from the neighbourhood, who is the brother of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, a

student here at school, was killed as a result of (a violent attack, violent incident

in the street etc.) earlier this week. We are all profoundly saddened by his death.

We have shared this information and have had discussions with all of our students so that

they know what has happened. School staff members have been available for students on an

on-going basis today. Other support personnel (including psychologists etc, according to

actual arrangements) are available to advise staff and, where necessary, to talk to students.

This support will continue to be available for (if appropriate insert how long).

The death of any young person is tragic, but a violent death is even more difficult. It is hard

to have to teach our children about the violence in our world and to accept that sometimes

we do not have the power to prevent it.

This death may cause a variety of reactions in your child. Some children/young people may

be afraid for their own life and for the lives of those they love. Take time to listen to their fears

and reassure them that what has happened is rare.

We have enclosed some additional information that may be useful during this time.

The media are in the vicinity of the school and may approach you or your children. You need

not respond to their questions if you are approached. We will not allow the media to

interview your child at school and our general advice is that you should not let your children

be interviewed. They are not mature enough to judge what to say and may say something

they will regret later.

(If planned) A support meeting for parents is planned for (date, time and place). At that time

we can talk further about how to help ourselves and our children.

Our thoughts are with (family name) and with each of you.

Is mise le meas,

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

XXXXXXXXXXXXX, Príomhoide

**SAMPLE ANNOUNCEMENT TO THE MEDIA**

**Resource for schools: R6**

This can be used as a template by the school to be e-mailed, faxed or given to the media. It may help

to decrease the number of media calls and callers to the school. In some instances it is not appropriate to provide names or information that might identify individuals. This announcement will need to be changed based upon confidentiality issues, the wishes of the victim’s family and the nature of the incident.

My name is XXXXXXXXXXX and I am the Principal of Gaelscoil \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ . We learned this morning of the death of (one of our students or Name of student). This is a terrible tragedy for

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ family(ies), our school and our community. We are deeply saddened by these

events. Our sympathy and thoughts are with (Name) family and friends.

Name of student/students was a (5th class boy) and will be greatly missed by all who knew

him**.**

We have been in contact with his/her parents and they have requested that we all understand

their need for privacy at this difficult time.

Offers of support have been pouring in and are greatly appreciated. Our school have

implemented our Critical Incident Management Plan.

Psychologists from the National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS) and (insert other

information if relevant) have been with us all day supporting and advising teachers in their

efforts to assist our students at this time.

The teachers have been helping students to deal with the tragic event.

The school has been open to parents, to support them and to offer them advice and guidance.

We would ask you to respect our privacy at this time.

Thank you.

**CHECKLIST - STUDENTS AT RISK**

**Handout for schools: R16**

This checklist may be used by the psychologist or may be offered as an aid to school staff who are

concerned about a student. It should be remembered that the checking of a number of items for any

one student may point to other problems. Indication of a number of these factors in any one student

should always be followed up.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Unexpected reduction of academic performance |  |
| Talking about suicide |  |
| Ideas and themes of depression, death and suicide in their work |  |
| Making statements about hopelessness, helplessness or worthlessness |  |
| Change in mood and marked emotionally instability |  |
| Significant grief or stress |  |
| Withdrawal from relationships |  |
| Break up of an important relationship |  |
| Discipline problems, being in trouble in school |  |
| Withdrawal from extra-curricular activities |  |
| Giving personal belongings away |  |
| Loss of interest in things one cares about |  |
| Neglect of physical appearance |  |
| Physical symptoms with emotional cause |  |
| High risk behaviours |  |
| Alcohol or drug abuse |  |
| Bullying or victimization |  |
| History of suicidal behaviour e.g. cutting or overdose risk behaviours |  |
| Family history of suicide/attempted suicide |  |