



Critical Incident Management Plan

Castletroy College

February 2025

Castletroy College aims to protect the well-being of its students and staff by providing a safe and nurturing environment at all times. The Board of Management, through Mr. Brian O'Donoghue, has drawn up a Critical Incident Management Plan as one element of the school's policies and plans.

Review and Research

The 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)
- Well-Being in Primary Schools - Guidelines for Mental Health Promotion (DES, DOH, HSE 2015)

Define what you mean by the term 'critical incident'

The staff and management of *Castletroy 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*

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 a good plan should also help ensure that the effects on the students and staff will be limited. It should enable us to effect 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.

Physical safety

Procedures are in place to do our best to ensure physical safety in the school community including but not limited to the following:

- Evacuation plan formulated
- Regular fire drills occur
- Fire exits and extinguishers are regularly checked
- Pre-opening supervision in the school environment
- Annual Risk Assessment
- Annual LCETB plant inspection by engineering services

Psychological safety

The management and staff of Castletroy 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
- Staff are familiar with the Child Protection Guidelines and Procedures and details of how to proceed with suspicions or disclosures (annual staff presentation and staff handbook to update staff accordingly)
- Books and online resources on difficulties affecting the primary/post 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
- Staff are informed in the area of suicide awareness and some are trained in interventions for suicidal students
- The school has developed links with a range of external agencies:
 - ❖ Jigsaw
 - ❖ CAMHS
 - ❖ TUSLA
 - ❖ Limerick CYPSC
 - ❖ HSE Midwest
 - ❖ Connecting for Life Midwest
 - ❖ Barnardos
 - ❖ Pieta House
 - ❖ Primary Care (HSE team) - East Limerick
 - ❖ The Suicide Prevention Office - Resource Officer for Suicide Prevention,HSE Mid West Mental Health Services,Floor 1, Room 2, Roselawn House, University Business Complex, National Technology Park Limerick V94 6K65.
 - ❖ Suicide Prevention in the Community ([link here](#))
 - ❖ Pieta Suicide Bereavement Liaison Officer
- 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 policy on bullying 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 which is

outlined in the NEPS documents.

- Students who are identified as being at risk are referred to the designated staff member (e.g. guidance counsellor), 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. e.g [gov.ie - Employee Assistance Service for school staff in recognised primary and post-primary schools](#)

Critical Incident Management Team (CIMT)

A CIMT has been established in line with best practice. The CIMT has been in place in Castletroy College since 2003. The CIMT are also the Student Support Team in the school and meet weekly to discuss students at risk and a plan is put in place to support the individual student and their families as appropriate.

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 access to 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.

Critical Incident Management Team (CIMT)

- Principal – Brian O'Donoghue
- Deputy Principal - Majella Hanrahan
- Guidance Counsellor – Aedin O Leary
- Guidance Counsellor – Donal O Riordain
- Guidance Counsellor - Trevor Griffin
- AEN co ordinator - Veronica Callinan
- Student Wellbeing co ordinator - Edel O'Brien

Team leader: *Brian O Donoghue*

Role

- Alerts the team members to the crisis and convenes a meeting
- Coordinates the tasks of the team
- Liaises with Limerick and Clare ETB, the Board of Management; DES; NEPS; SEC
- Liaises with the bereaved family
 - The school does not provide a guard of honour (NEPs advice)
- Consideration to review extra curricular activities and/or other school events

Garda liaison: *Brian O Donoghue*

Role

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

Staff liaison: *Brian O Donoghue*

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 makes contact with them individually
- Advises them of the availability of the EAS and gives them the contact number

Student liaison: *Majella Hanrahan*

Role

- At post-primary level, may coordinate information from tutors and year heads about students they are concerned about
- Alerts other staff to vulnerable students (appropriately)
- Provides materials for students (from their critical incident folder)
- Maintains student contact records (VShare)
- Looks after setting up and supervision of 'quiet' room where agreed
- Consider and respond to the needs of the individual student
- Coordinate the attendance by students at any funeral / remembrance service. When a funeral or remembrance service arises, students attending in representation of the school community, such as members of a student's base class, may do so in full school uniform. Other students who wish to attend these services must remain under the supervision and care of their parents/ guardians. These students should not wear school uniform and are not expected to return to school for the remainder of the day following the service.

Community/agency liaison: *Aedin O'Leary / Majella Hanrahan*

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: *Majella Hanrahan*

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) and may include:
[Wellbeing Information | Castletroy College](#)
[Parental Support Services | Castletroy College](#)

Media liaison: *Brian O Donoghue*

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 (as agreed by school management)
- Post on school social media platforms will not normally take place

Administration Liaison: - Majella Hanrahan and office team

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 schools system in advance and ready for adaptation
- 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.

Confidentiality and good name considerations

Management and staff of Castletroy 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
Senior GPA	Meetings with students
Board Room	Meetings with parents
Room 5	Meetings with media
Chaplains Office / Guidance Offices	Individual sessions with students
SENCO Office	Meetings with other visitors
Quiet Room	Prayer Room

Consultation and communication regarding the plan

The relevant 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 access to a copy of the plan. The plan will be updated annually following a critical incident.

Critical Incident Management Team		
Role	Name	Phone
Team leader:	Brian O Donoghue	
Garda liaison	Brian O Donoghue	
Staff liaison	Brian O Donoghue	
Student liaison	Majella Hanrahan	
Community liaison	Aedin O'Leary / Majella Hanrahan	
Parent liaison	Majella Hanrahan	
Media liaison	Brian O Donoghue	
Administrator	Majella Hanrahan	

Short term actions – Day 1

Task	Name
Gather accurate information	CIMT
Who, what, when, where?	CIMT
Convene a CIMT meeting – specify time and place clearly	Brian O Donoghue
Contact external agencies	CIMT - as above
Arrange supervision for students	Senior Leadership Team
Hold staff meeting	All staff
Agree schedule for the day	Senior Leadership Team
Inform students – (close friends and students with additional needs may need to be told separately)	Year Heads, Chaplain, Assistant Year Head, Class teacher, relevant co ordinator
Compile a list of vulnerable students	SST
Prepare and agree media statement and deal with media	Brian O Donoghue
Inform parents	Brian O Donoghue
Hold end of day staff briefing	Senior Leadership Team

Medium term actions - (Day 2 and following days)

Task	Name
Convene a CIMT meeting to review the events of day 1	Brian O Donoghue
Meet external agencies	CIMT
Meet whole staff	Senior Leadership Team
Arrange support for students, staff, parents	CIMT
Visit the injured and/or bereaved	Senior Leadership Team only (2 members) - This may take place on day 1 or not at all
Liaise with bereaved family regarding funeral arrangements	Brian O Donoghue
Agree on attendance and participation at funeral service	Senior Leadership Team
Make decisions about school closure	LCETB

Follow-up – beyond 72 hours

Task	Name
Monitor students for signs of continuing distress	Class teachers, class tutors, Year Heads , Pastoral Care Team , SST
Liaise with agencies regarding referrals	Majella Hanrahan
Plan for return of bereaved student(s)	SST
Plan for giving of 'memory box' to bereaved family	SST
Decide on memorials and anniversaries	Senior Leadership Team
Review response to incident and amend plan	Staff/CMIT/BOM

EMERGENCY CONTACT LIST

AGENCY	CONTACT NUMBERS	ADDRESS
Garda	(061) 377105 / 999 / 112	Station Road, Castleconnell, Limerick, V94 E7P1
Hospital	Limerick University Hospital: (061) 301 111	St Nessans Road, Dooradoyle, Limerick, V94 F858
	St Johns Hospital: (061) 462 222	St, John's Square, New Rd, Irishtown, Limerick, V94 H272
Fire Brigade	999 / 112 (061) 407 100	Mulgrave St, Irishtown, Limerick
Local GPs		
Child and Family Mental Health Service (CAMHS)		
School Inspector		
NEPS Psychologist		
Department of Education		
Clergy (Catholic)		
State Exams Commission		
Employee Assistance Service		

USEFUL WEBSITES and HELPLINES

- The National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS) works with both primary and post-primary schools and work in partnership with teachers, parents and children in identifying

educational needs. They offer a range of services aimed at meeting these needs, for example, supporting individual students (through consultation and assessment), special projects and research. For more details on NEPS, see www.education.ie/

- Barnardos provide resources and advice on www.barnardos.ie/resources, www.barnardos.ie/teenhelp (01 473 2110)
- The Childhood Bereavement Network (CBN) is a multi-professional federation of organisations and individuals working with bereaved children and young people. www.irishchildhoodbereavementnetwork.ie
- Rainbows: Rainbows is a free, voluntary service for children and young people experiencing loss following bereavement and parental separation. The Rainbows service is an inclusive service, supporting children and young people experiencing grief and loss resulting from bereavement/parental separation/parental relationship breakdown /divorce. ask@rainbowsireland.ie
- The Professional Development for Teachers (PDST) Health and Wellbeing Team provide support for teachers at primary and post-primary level in physical education, social personal and health education (SPHE) which includes anti-bullying, child protection, mental health and wellbeing, relationships and sexuality education (RSE) and other SPHE related areas. Supports offered to schools include in-service for Principal, co-ordinators, teachers of SPHE, whole staff groups; programme planning; school policy development; schools visits. www.pdst.ie. The former SPHE Support Service has been integrated into the Health and Wellbeing team of the PDST. Visit www.sphe.ie for further information and to book post-primary SPHE courses.
- Resource Officer for Suicide Prevention – Mary Kennedy, St Joseph’s Hospital Mulgrave Street, Limerick. 061 461454 / 061 461143
- The National Office for Suicide Prevention (NOSP) was established to oversee the implementation of ‘Reach Out’ the National Strategy for Action on Suicide Prevention, and to co-ordinate suicide prevention efforts around the country. The NOSP works closely with the HSE Suicide Prevention Officers. Up-to-date contact details for suicide prevention officers can be found on the NOSP website www.nosp.ie 1850 24 1850/ 041 6850300
- The Irish Association for Suicidology (IAS) sets out to be a forum for all individuals and voluntary groups involved in any aspect of suicidology for the exchange of knowledge gained from differing perspectives and experiences www.ias.ie
- The Irish Hospice Foundation promotes discussion of issues related to dying, death and bereavement in order to identify concerns about these matters and consider how they might be addressed www.hospicefoundation.ie

- Lifelines supports all people who are affected in any way by self-injury within the United Kingdom and beyond. It supports people who self-injure, and their family and friends. www.selfharm.org
- Winston's Wish Foundation, help for grieving children and their families. www.winstonswish.org.uk
- Resources and support for those dealing with suicide, depression or emotional distress, particularly teenagers and young adults. www.papyrus-uk.org
- A national charity committed to improving the mental health of all children and young people. www.youngminds.org.uk
- An Irish website covering all aspects of health, lifestyle, and culture relating to youth. www.spunout.ie
- A site that focuses on issues relating to youth in Ireland today. www.youth.ie
- An Australian site that helps young people through tough times. www.reachout.com.au
- Mental Health Ireland aims to promote positive mental health and to actively support persons with a mental illness, their families and guardians by identifying their needs and advocating their rights. The pro teen matters web magazine, which is created by young people for young people, has information about physical and mental health, and frequently asked questions. www.mentalhelathireland.ie
- The Gay Switchboard Ireland offers non-judgemental information and confidential support for the LGBT community. www.gayswitchboard.ie

HELPLINES

Remind students that if they need someone to talk to, at any time of the day or night, they can ring either:

- Counselling Service for Teaching Staff and Special Needs Assistants: Freephone: 1800 411 057
eas@vhics.ie
- Childline: 1800 666 666 (free calls)
- The Samaritans: 1850 60 90 90 (Local call cost)
- Parentline: LoCall 1890 927277 or 01 8733500
- AWARE: 1800 80 48 48
- National Suicide Helpline (Pieta House) 1800 247 247 · www.pieta.ie. Tel: 01 623 5606
- Bereavement Counselling Service: 01 8391766

This policy was adopted by the Board of Management on: 11/02/2025

Signed: *Trevor Griffin*
Chairperson of Board of Management

Signed: *Brian O Donoghue*
Principal

Appendix 1: Checklist for phases

The Principal in collaboration with the CIMT will oversee the following and allocate responsibilities accordingly. It should be noted that the following actions are not necessarily carried out sequentially.

Checklist of Actions in First 12 Hours	
Summary List of Actions in the First 12 Hours	Who Coordinates?
Assess the incident / Gather the facts (as above)	The Principal
Determine what level of response is needed	The Principal
Contact external agencies as appropriate e.g. LCETB, NEPS, Gardaí, TUSLA, CAMHS, HSE, etc.	The Principal
Take Immediate Safety Actions /Convene the SST	The Principal
Convene and request administrative staff to print /photocopy/post relevant letters and handouts	Administrative Liaison
Ensure Emergency Packs are available and distribute	Administrative Liaison
Identify the phone line/mobile phone to be kept open for outgoing and incoming emergency calls. Identify a staff member to deal with phone queries and provide him/her with guidance and written information for responses and logging calls	Administrative Liaison
Identify high-risk students / staff and organise support as appropriate	Student Liaison/ Staff Liaison
Consult teachers/students if there are any events scheduled such as a trip, concert, match, etc. and whether these should be cancelled or re-scheduled	Student Liaison / Staff Liaison
Disseminate the list of rooms that will be used for individual and group support sessions, for meetings parents/ guardians, the quiet room for students, the quiet room for staff, the room for meeting agencies	Administrative Liaison
Arrange to inform staff / plan for supervision of students in the event that staff group is met in two separate groups	The Principal / Staff Liaison
Prepare the rooms for meeting parents/ guardians and for meetings with agencies	Administrative Liaison
Prepare the quiet room for students and arrange to have the room supervised to ensure their safety and/or to offer support.	Student Liaison
Arrange to inform students either as a group in classrooms or individually in the room allocated for them.	Student Liaison
Withdraw siblings (where a student has been seriously or critically injured) and organise support	Student Liaison
Prepare the quiet room for staff	Staff Liaison
Arrange to inform parents/ guardians, relatives or friends as appropriate. Remember that each must always be told separately	Parent Liaison
In the event of a bereavement, make contact with the bereaved family, including a home visit if appropriate	Parent Liaison
Where relevant, issue media statement on the school's website, emailing or phoning media representatives, etc.	The Principal
Designate a safe place to maintain a log of events / telephone calls made and received/offers of help from agencies	Administrative Liaison / Media/Community Liaison
Convene End of Day Sessions/De-briefings with staff and with SST; Agree schedule for next day	SLT

Checklist of actions 12 - 72 Hours

Summary List of Actions in the First 12- 72 Hours	Who Coordinates?
Plan a whole staff briefing (including ancillary staff). The briefing may be arranged in two groups depending on the requirements for the supervision of students	SLT
Arrange support for students or staff, individually or in groups	Student Liaison/ Staff Liaison
Develop a plan for monitoring and supporting students over the coming weeks, especially for those identified as vulnerable Staff should link with parents/ guardians when they are concerned about students	SST/ Staff Liaison/ Student Liaison/Parent Liaison
Liaise with and arrange support for parents/ guardians whose children were directly involved in the CI. A briefing may be relevant for parents/ guardians if a number of students from the same class group are involved in the CI	Principal/Coordinator/ Parent Liaison
Ensure all information has been communicated to parents/ guardians in general and to the wider school community as relevant	Principal
In the event of a student or staff member being injured in the CI, arrange visits to those who were injured, if considered appropriate and in consultation with the family /relatives	Principal / SLT
Plan for the re-integration of students and staff who were directly affected by the CI	Principal / SST
In the event of a death of a student or staff member, consideration should be given to any special arrangements in organising prayer services, or attendance at funerals, etc. if students are from different nationalities or religious backgrounds. It may be necessary for two staff representatives to arrange a home visit to meet with parents/ guardians (within 24 hours) in these circumstances.	Principal / SST
As far as possible, the school should remain open and follow the normal timetable and routines as this gives structure to the students and provides a safe place for them to be in. However, it may be necessary to consider a school closure. Students and parents/ guardians should be kept apprised of decisions regarding any school closures.	Principal

Checklist of actions 72 Hours Plus (Long Term)

Summary List of Actions in 72 Hours Plus	Who Coordinates?
Provide recovery support and advice for students/staff/parents/guardians about the normal cycle of recovery and indicators that extra support may be required.	SST
Prepare for the return of bereaved students. Identify and offer more specialised personal support to vulnerable and/or most affected staff and students. Monitor and arrange support for students of concern. Make referrals to the school Counsellor or to external services (as above)	SST
Acknowledge people who have supported the school	Principal
Return personal belongings to the family where the CI involved the death of a student. Bereaved parents/ guardians often find it helpful or comforting to visit the school at a later date. This offers the school an opportunity to return the student's personal belongings and schoolwork. 'Memory folders' could be used for the deceased student's work books or products along with letters, poems and pictures, composed or drawn by their peers.	Principal
Discuss what to do about events in which the deceased student would have participated, e.g. award ceremonies, trips away, etc.	Principal/SST
Mark the anniversary date on the school's calendar as anniversaries may trigger emotional responses and staff and students may need additional support at these times.	SST
Evaluate the school's response to the CI and arrange the Operational debrief, amend the CIMP if necessary, and review the CI policy in the light of the CI.	Principal /SST
Keep all new staff, students and parents/ guardians informed of the SST policy	Principal
Review school records/ mailing lists and amend as appropriate	Administrative Liaison

Appendix 2

Responding to Critical Incident: NEPS Guidelines and Resource Materials for Schools ([please see here](#))