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Nenagh College Critical Incident Policy

Definition of a critical incident:

A critical incident is defined as any incident or sequence of events which significantly impacts the normal mechanisms of Nenagh College and disrupts the running of the school.

Examples:

- The death of a member of the school community through sudden death, terminal illness or suicide.
- A serious accident involving pupils or staff, on or off the school premises.
- An accident / tragedy in the wider community.

Critical Incident Management Team (CIT)

Damien Kennedy (Principal, DLP)
Ann Melley (Deputy Principal, DDLP)
Lucinda Dillon
Rochelle Maharaj
Bríd Fitzgerald
Paula Madden
Class Director(s)
Year Head(s)

In the event of a Critical Incident the following will be actioned:

If the event occurs during the school day the following action is required:

- The emergency services will be contacted.
- Parent(s) / Guardian(s) of student(s) / Next of kin of staff member will be contacted.
- Students will be placed in classrooms as per school time table to ensure stability.
- Year Heads / Directors will check on their class / year group.
- Those who are particularly traumatized by the event will be identified and referred to CIT.
- In case of student(s) / Staff member who require additional support Parent(s) / Guardian(s) / Next of kin will be asked to collect them and bring them to their GP.

Once the situation has stabilized the following action is required:

SCHOOL:

1. Convene the CIT.
2. Agree a statement of facts for staff, students, parents and the media.
3. School Office will handle all phone enquiries and ensure that a phone line remains open and available for enquiries.
4. Principal to deal with the media to confirm facts only.
5. Deputy Principal to organise the timetable to respond to the incident.

CIT will contact appropriate agencies:

- ETB
- Emergency services
- Medical services
- NEPS
- Board of Management
- DES

This list is not exhaustive

Staff Briefing:

- o Give an account of the facts.
- o Give an opportunity for staff to express their views and feelings.
- o Discuss how the facts will be shared with the students (There must be an agreed approach).
- o Outline the routine for the day.
- o Inform staff about which outside agencies have been contacted.
- o Identify vulnerable students / staff who may need additional support.

Inform Students:

- Inform students of a critical incident in class groups.
- Give facts to help avoid speculation.
- Ask students to ask questions and express feelings.
- Help students to realize that emotions are natural and normal following a critical incident.

PARENTS/GUARDIANS:

- The Principal or Deputy Principal will contact parents as soon as possible.
- Make a list of parents/guardians who have been contacted and those who still need to be told.
- Give parents/guardians relevant and factual information.
- Make meeting room available to students to meet their parent(s)/guardian(s).
- Text parent service to be used to state the facts and brief details of the incident.
- Message on school website, acknowledging that a critical incident has occurred.

First 24 Hours:

- o Review the events of the first 24 hours.
- o Reconvene CIT
- o Decide arrangements for support meetings for parents/students/staff.
- o Decide on mechanisms for feedback from teachers on vulnerable students.

- Have review staff meeting with all staff, if necessary.
- Ensure all staff are kept up to date on any developments.
- Establish contact with absent staff and pupils.

In the event of death:

- a. Liaise with the family regarding funeral arrangements.
- b. Clarify the family's wishes regarding the school's involvement in funeral service.
- c. Arrange a home visit by two staff representatives within 24 hours, if appropriate.
- d. Have regard for different religious traditions and faiths.
- e. Attendance and participation at funeral service, if requested.

School closure:

Request a decision from the Patron

Long Term Reflection:

All staff to monitor students for signs of continuing distress.
CIT will evaluate response to incident.
Whole school review of Critical Incident Policy in light of experience.

Staff: 7th December 2017

Parents: 4th December 2017

Students: 7th December 2017

Board of Management: 14th December 2017

Patron: 6th February 2018