


Critical Incident Policy



St. Michael's House SNS Baldoyle 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 the Principal and teaching staff has drawn up a critical incident management plan as one element of the school's policies and plans. This policy has been written following department guidelines "Responding to critical Incidents" and "wellbeing in Primary schools".

Our aim is to establish a Critical Incident Management Team (CIMT) to steer the development and implementation of the plan.

Definition of a Critical Incident:

The staff and management of St. Michael's House Special NS consider a critical incident to be –

'An incident or sequence of events that can overwhelm the normal coping mechanism of the school.'

Critical incidents may involve one or more students or staff members, or members of our local community. For example:

- The unexpected death of a member of the school community
- 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
- An intrusion into the school

Aim of the Critical Incident Management Plan:

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, parents 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 affect 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 build the resilience in both staff and students. These include measures to address both the physical and psychological safety of the school community.

Physical Safety

Measures to address the physical safety of the school community include the following:

- An Evacuation Plan has been formulated and is displayed in each classroom. This plan is brought to the attention of all staff and students during the school year
- Fire drills are held at least once a term
- Fire exits and extinguishers are regularly inspected and on display
- In the event that the school must be evacuated for an extended period of time, staff will be instructed to walk the children to the nearby **Baldoyle Community Centre** for shelter. Tel: (01) 839 5338 and Eircode: **D13 KK55**
- Health and safety checklists and risk assessments are completed on an bi-annual basis and are discussed and reviewed during staff/team class meetings
- Staff are familiar with the Child Protection Guidelines and Procedures and details of how to proceed with suspicions or disclosures. The Designated Liaison Person (DLP) is Anna Lombard Perito and the Deputy Designated Liaison Person (DDLp) is Stephanie Wall. Risk assessments have been carried out in this area (see Child Protection Policy)
- Students who are identified as being at risk are referred to the Designated Liaison Person, 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. (See Child Protection Safeguarding Policy)
- Staff members accept their role in the care of pupils and colleagues and follow our Dignity at work policy and the Human Values Ethical Curriculum.
- The door into the school is secured with a key pad and the code is changed annually
- Visitors are required to sign into the school office and all staff have been requested to stop anyone they don't recognise as regular staff/ parents and inquire as to their business in school
- See other policies such as Child Protection Policy; Fire Safety Policy; Health & Safety Policy. All school policies are kept in a policy folder in each classroom.

Psychological Safety

Measures to address the psychological safety of the school community include the following:

- The establishment of close, supportive relationships between pupils, families and staff through approaches such as intensive interaction addressing students sensory needs; working closely with parents; high staff to pupil ratio; sharing news/photos on a daily basis via seesaw and communication books; etc.
- Nurturing a supportive environment for staff through incorporating sessions relating to topics such as 'Wellbeing' into CPD training
- Informing staff of how to access support for themselves (e.g. through Employee Assistance Services)

Critical Incident Management Team (CIMT)

A CIMT has been established in line with best practice. The members of the team are members of the In-School Management Team and will retain their roles for the duration of their time as part of this team. The members of the team meet annually (first ISM meeting) to review and update the policy and plan. Each member of the team has a copy of the critical incident policy in their class folder.

Critical Incident Management Plan (CIMP)

A school Critical Incident Management Team has been put in place, with key responsibilities as follows:

Day 1 – Immediate Response

Roles	Members	Key responsibilities
Team Leader Garda liaison Media Liaison	Anna Lombard Perito Anna Lombard Perito / Stephanie Wall	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Alerts the team members to the crisis and convenes a meeting - Coordinates the tasks of the team - Liaises with the Board of Management; DES; NEPS; - Liaises with the family - Liaises with the Gardaí - Liaises with NEPS (0)1 8650401 - Ensures that information about deaths or other developments is checked out for accuracy before being shared (In the absence of the Team Leader, this role will be taken by the Deputy Principal) - In preparation of an incident, the team leader will consider issues that may arise and how they might be responded to (e.g. students/staff being interviewed, photographers on the premises, etc) - In the event of an incident, will liaise where necessary with the relevant teacher unions and legal teams etc. - Will draw up a press statement in conjunction with the support of the SMH media department, relevant bodies, give media briefings once directed that it is appropriate and interviews Coordinates the involvement of other / additional agencies - Evidence may need to be preserved at the scene or on someone's person so the team will seek advice from Gardai before engaging with the scene/situation
Staff liaison Officers: ISM Team	Susan Harpur Jessica Hinksman Louise Durkin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Leads briefing meetings for staff on the facts as known, - with the support of the ISMT- 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 and with the team leader outlines the information that will be passed to the students - Allocates specialist teachers to classrooms to assist with supervision - Provides where possible additional resources for staff - Keeps staff updated as the day progresses - Along with the team leader are alert to vulnerable staff members and makes contact with them individually. Informs the team leader if certain staff members require additional support - Advises them of the availability of the EAS and gives them the contact number. - Updates team members on the involvement of external agencies

<i>Parent liaison</i>	Anna Lombard Perito/ Stephanie Wall	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visits the family with the team leader • Arranges parent meetings, if necessary for staff members to meet with the family • 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
<i>Transport Liaison:</i> <i>ISM Team</i>	Susan Harpur Jessica Hinksman Louise Durkin	<i>Maintains an up to date contact list for transport providers (link Jen/Karen)</i> <i>Makes phone calls to drivers and escorts to inform them of situation/ arrange transport if possible.</i> <i>Maintains record of emergency arrangements and list of students who have returned home.</i>
<i>Administrator:</i>	Jennifer Coogan Karen Delaney	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintenance of up to date telephone numbers of <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 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 • Prepares and sends out letters, emails, text alerts and social media statements in conjunction with the team leader • 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. Timelines will be completed daily by the senior management team and the middle management team.

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

Any intervention from the nursing staff will be recorded on the nursing notes and copies will be given to the school office for filing.

Confidentiality and good name considerations

The management and staff of St. Michael's House Special NS 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.

Arrangements for Classes & Students

In the event of a critical incident, classes will 'team up' with their neighbour and the Critical Incident Management Team will meet in the Principal's Office.

Critical incident rooms

In the event of a critical incident, the following room allocation will be in place:

PE hall	Meetings with Staff / Parents (depending on number)
Office/ Resource Room	Media (depending on number)
Office	Other visitors

Where possible, a short staff meeting will be held at the end of the school day to debrief staff and ensure staff have recovered sufficiently to return home and to deal with the next day in school.

Information about support services for staff will be provided.
CI team will get advice from NEPS and BOM when planning for day 2.

Day 2 – The Aftermath

8.45 Short Staff Meeting to plan the day

9.00 All staff in areas to greet and support students if the school is open for pupils.

Classes will resume according to timetable.

Some classes may be closed to facilitate debriefing/access to support services.

2.45 Principal liaises with staff with details of funeral/ school response/ future actions necessary

Note:

- *All members of ISM will have access to 'Textaparent' online and will have an updated list of parents/ guardian's names and numbers. If personal phone call is required the names on the list will be allocated to members of ISM by the Principal/ Deputy Principal. The log in details for 'Textaparent' are all stored in the school office in the OLCS book which is located on the secretaries' desk.*

Critical Incident procedures:

In the event of a Critical Incident, our school has adopted the following procedures which all staff members have read and signed. These procedures are on display in each classroom.

1. Inform school nurse.
2. Contact school office
3. Inform the principal and deputy principal
4. If necessary vacate the area and make staff/student comfortable protecting their dignity at all times. Students may have to spend an extended period of time in another room so please bring everything they may require with them.
5. If an ambulance has been called, please ensure a text is sent into the school group informing staff that an ambulance has been called and the name of the destination class so everyone can keep the area clear.
6. A staff member is to go to the front of the school gate to direct the ambulance.
7. The school office will notify main reception of SMH that an ambulance has been called.
8. Please pack up all necessary bags etc. that the student/staff may require if they are leaving by ambulance.
9. If possible, the classroom/area should be calm with low lighting and soft familiar music playing.
10. After the student/staff member has been attended to, please ensure everyone involved has time to debrief and also if necessary has some time in our wellbeing debrief room.

Important Numbers:

EIRCODE: D13 W9R0

Office: 01 8323043 or dial ext. 243

Nurses Mobile: 0874053352

This Critical Incidents Policy was adopted by the Board of Management on the 3rd of December 2025

Signed:

Nuala Molina
Chairperson of BoM

Signed:

A. Lombard Perito
Principal/Secretary to the BoM

Date: 03rd December 2025