



**COOLMINE
COMMUNITY
SCHOOL**

**CRITICAL
INCIDENT
POLICY**

**SCOIL
PHOBAIL
CHÚIL MHÍN**

**POLASAÍ UM
THEAGMHAS
CRITICIÚIL**

**CLONSILLA, DUBLIN 15.
CLUAIN SAILEACH, BAC 15.**

OUR MISSION STATEMENT

WE STRIVE TO CREATE AN
ATMOSPHERE OF MUTUAL
RESPECT WHICH PROMOTES
EXCELLENCE IN ALL
ASPECTS OF SCHOOL LIFE
AND ALLOWS INDIVIDUALS
TO REALISE THEIR FULL
POTENTIAL.

Coolmine Community School – Critical Incident Policy

The Critical Incident Policy supports our school mission statement in striving to maintain a secure and peaceful working environment.

Rationale

The policy is necessary to provide a framework for response actions and follow-up procedures in cases of a critical incident that involves the whole school community. It will help to clarify what our responsibilities are in fulfilling our duty of care to all.

Goals / Objectives

- To define clearly what is meant by a critical incident
- To provide guidelines for dealing with incidents
- To provide guidelines for a response to an emotionally-charged situation
- To identify those most affected at risk

Definition of a Critical Incident

“An incident or sequence of events which overwhelms the normal coping mechanism of the school and disrupts the running of the school”
Critical Incident may involve one or more students or members of staff.
For example:

- The death of a member of the school community
- A serious accident or tragedy in the school or wider community
- The disappearance of a member of the school community
- An intrusion into the school
- Serious damage to the school building through fire, flood, vandalism, etc.
- A physical attack on a staff member or student

This list is not exhaustive

Short Term Actions (1st Day)

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The procedures to be followed will depend on the particular incident that has occurred.

1. INFORMATION / EOLAS

Every effort will be made to obtain accurate information about the incident; otherwise rumours could take over and add to the distress of those involved

2. KEY STAFF / CRITICAL INCIDENT RESPONSE TEAM / FOIREANN (IS TÁBHACHTAÍ) / FOIREANN FHREAGARTHA DO THEAGMHAS CRITICIÚIL

A meeting will be convened to discuss some or all of the following issues:

- Agreeing a statement of the facts for staff, students, parents and media. If possible there should be a written version of this
- Delegating responsibilities to the Critical Incident Response Team.
- Organising the timetable / routine for the day.) Adhering to the normal school routine is important if this is possible)
- Organising a staff meeting, if appropriate
- Organising the supervision of students during any staff meetings
- Deciding whether an outsider professional will be invited to the staff meeting
- Arranging supervision of students who are unable to attend class

3. CONTRACT APPROVED AGENCIES / GNÍOMHAIREACHTAÍ CEADAITHE CONARTHAÍ

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- Contact made be made with some of the agencies listed below:
- Emergency Services
- Medical Services
- Health Board Psychology
- Department / Community Care Services
- NEPS
- BOM
- DES /School Inspectorate

(See appendix 2 for further details)

4. INFORMATION STAFF / FOIREANN EOLAIS

In the event of a critical incident occurring during the term time, it may be necessary to call a meeting of the Critical Response Team. To facilitate this meeting, supervision will be required to cover staff and full assistance and co-operation will be sought from available staff

Normal School Day

- Student may be requested to attend a meeting during the course of the day

Weekend Events

- Staff will be notified and may be requested to attend a meeting scheduled between 8.00 and 8.30am on Monday morning
- Out of Term Incidents

Best efforts will be made to inform staff as soon as possible. Each member of staff is responsible for ensuring that his/her contract details are up to date

5. MEETING OF STAFF / CRUINHIU FOIRNE

All staff will be asked to attend. Some or all of the following matters may be addressed.

- An account of the facts as known
- An opportunity for staff to express their views and their feelings
- Discussion with the staff about how the facts will be shared with the students (there should be an agreed approach to this if possible)
- An outline of the routine for the day
- Information for staff about which outside agencies have been contacted, or are involved and the supports that will be put in place for both students and staff
- A procedure for identifying vulnerable persons (see Appendix 3 4)

6. ORGANISE TIMETABLE FOR THE DAY

- In so far as possible normal routines will be maintained

7. INFORMATION FOR PARENTS/GUARDIANS AND STUDENTS / EOLAS DO THUISMITHEOIRÍ / DO CHAOMHNÓIRÍ

- Children directly involved:
 - Parents / guardians will be contacted as soon as possible
 - Parents / guardians will be given relevant and factual information
 - Every effort will be made to provide support to parents / guardians
- Children not directly involved:

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- The parents of other children in the school may be informed of the incident and that their child may be upset

- Informing students:
 - Students will be informed of a critical incident in a sensitive and understanding manner. When an incident occurs outside term time the relevant Ceann Ti may be required to initiate contact with the students (groups of students)

Medium Term Actions (24 – 72 Hours)

1. The management team will review the events of the first 24 hours
2. Support will be arranged for individual students, groups of students and parents, if necessary
3. Consultation between a bereaved family and school management will take place to discuss attendance at and/or participation in the funeral/memorial service
4. Where it is necessary to consider closing the school, the matter will be brought to the attention of the B.O.M

Long Term Actions

1. As critical incidents in school affect all staff, the policy should be discussed at whole staff level at the beginning of each year
2. Anniversaries may trigger emotional responses in students and staff and they may need additional support at this time
3. Students will be monitored for signs of distress
 - Deterioration in academic performance
 - Physical symptoms – e.g. weight loss/gain: lack of attention to appearance; tiredness; restlessness
 - Inappropriate emotional reactions
 - Increased absenteeism

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4. If over a prolonged period of time, a student continues to display some or all of the above, a referral may be to the HSE
5. This policy will be monitored on an ongoing basis and reviewed as necessary
6. New staff members will be made aware of the policy as part of their induction
7. If an individual pupil who has been affected by a critical incident is transferring to a new school, management will endeavour to brief relevant personnel in the new school

Appendices:

Appendix 1 Critical Incident Response

Appendix 2 Emergency Contact Numbers

Appendix 3 Guidelines for Teachers

Appendix 4 Additional Resources (Readings/Prayers)

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MY NOTES:



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