

**RAPHAEL INDEPENDENT SCHOOL
CRITICAL INCIDENT POLICY
SEPTEMBER 2018/2019**



Raphael Independent School aims to protect the well-being of its students and staff by providing a safe and nurturing environment at all times. A member of the SLT team (*Anita Hargrove*), 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 201 6)
- 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 201 5)

Define what you mean by the term 'critical incident'

The staff and management of *Raphael Independent School* 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.

Our mission statement is

Delivering outstanding lessons based on expert subject knowledge delivered by passionate, nurturing teachers. Ensure all the school community, aspire to embed the values and ethos of the school within our vision in all everybody does at the school.

Strive to continually safeguard the welfare of the students , improve their academic and extra-curricular, experiences, by providing learning opportunities that develop life skills and widen student's horizons through career education and other first-hand life and teaching opportunities, so we achieve excellence.

Physical safety

- Evacuation plan formulated
- Regular fire drills occur
 - Fire exits and extinguishers are regularly checked
- Front gate locked during school hours
- School doors locked during class time
- Rules of the playground –
- We play without disrupting the children and their games or equipment.
- We share equipment fairly and only use it when it is our turn.
- We treat each other in the way we would like to be treated.
- We never use bad language.
- We take care of our environment and always put rubbish in the bin.
- We only play in places where we can be clearly seen by supervising adults and keep to the correct pathways.
- We never push children or use the equipment in the wrong way.
 - We treat the supervising adults with respect and tell them if we are concerned about someone or something in the playground.

Psychological safety

The management and staff of *Raphael Independent School* 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.

- Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) 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 PSHE
- Staff are familiar with the Child Protection Guidelines and Procedures and details of how to proceed with suspicions or disclosures

- 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 – list these agencies Havering Prevent Team, Havering Child Protection, NSPCC, CEOP, Childline.
- 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. See DES Circulars 0022/2010 (Primary) or 0023/2010 (Post-Primary)
- 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 published on 2007 for primary schools and 2010 for post primary schools. See also Student Support Teams in Post Primary Schools (2014). These documents are available on www.education.ie
- Students who are identified as being at risk are referred to the designated safeguarding Lead , 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.

Critical Incident Management Team (CIMT)

A CIMT has been established in line with best practice. The members of the team are the DSL, DDSL and Headteacher. 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 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.

Team leader: *Lisa Skyers*

Role DSL

- Alerts the team members to the crisis and convenes a meeting
- Coordinates the tasks of the team
- Liaises with the Board of Directors
- Liaises with the bereaved family
- Co-ordinate 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 .
- Looks after setting up and supervision of 'quiet' room where agreed

Deputy leader : Anita Hargrove

Role DDSL

*(*Edit*May be seen as part of the team leader's role)*

- Liaises with Mrs Skyers
- Ensures that information about deaths or other developments is checked out for accuracy before being shared
- Visits the bereaved family with the team leader
- Arranges parent meetings.
- 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)
-

Staff liaison *Claudette Salmon*

Role Headteacher

- 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. 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)
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Office *(Jo Stleger and Anita Hargrove)*

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
- Prepares and sends out letters, emails and texts
- 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.

(Jo St Leger and Anita Hargrove) will have a key role in receiving and logging telephone calls, sending letters, photocopying materials, etc.

Confidentiality and good name considerations

Management and staff of *Raphael Independent School* 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: |
|-------------------|-----------------------------------|
| | Main room for meeting staff |
| | Meetings with students |
| | Meetings with parents |
| | Meetings with media |
| | Individual sessions with students |
| | Meetings with other visitors |

Consultation and communication regarding the plan

All 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 a personal copy of the plan.

All new and temporary staff will be informed of the details of the plan by DSL or DDSL

The plan will be updated annually next review September 2019

| Critical Incident Management Team | | |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------------|--------------|
| Role | Name | Phone |
| Team leader: | <i>Lisa Skyers</i> | 01708 744735 |
| Deputy leader: | <i>Anita Hargrove</i> | 01708 744735 |
| Staff liaison | <i>Claudette Salmon</i> | 01708 744735 |
| Administrator | <i>Jo St Leger and Anita Hargrove</i> | 01708 744735 |

Short term actions – Day 1

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

Medium term actions - (Day 2 and following days)

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

Follow-up – beyond 72 hours

| Task | Name |
|--|-----------|
| Monitor students for signs of continuing distress | |
| Liaise with agencies regarding referrals | |
| Plan for return of bereaved student(s) | |
| Plan for giving of 'memory box' to bereaved family | |
| Decide on memorials and anniversaries | DIRECTORS |
| Review response to incident and amend plan | CIMT TEAM |

EMERGENCY CONTACT LIST

| AGENCY | CONTACT NUMBERS |
|--|---|
| Hospital | 0330 400 4333 QUEENS HOSPITAL ROMFORD |
| Fire Brigade | 999 |
| Child and Family Mental Health Service (CAMHS) | 03003001888 |
| Prevent Team | 0203 276 1100 |
| Child Protection Team | 01708 433222 Out of hours 01708 433999 |

| Version control | |
|---------------------|----------------|
| Implementation date | September 2018 |
| Signed off by | |
| Review date | September 2019 |