

**Presentation Primary School,  
Station Road,  
Portarlinton,  
Co. Laois**



**Presentation Primary School Mission Statement**

We endeavour to provide a holistic Catholic education for each child, where respect and care for all, are central values.

**Critical Incident Procedures**

(When Tragedy Strikes Guidelines for Effective Critical Incident Management in School)( book in Principals office)

**Definition of a Critical Incident**

- 1) Sudden death
- 2) Missing student
- 3) Assault on staff or student
- 4) Suicide
- 5) Road traffic accident involving students and/or staff or close friends or relatives
- 6) Fire in school building

**Why a Critical Incident Plan**

- 1) Because a crisis may happen at any time
- 2) Staff are prepared for managing impact issues
- 3) Support can be accessed immediately

### **Critical Incident Team**

- Each team member will have a list of the home addresses and phone numbers of all the other members of staff in order to make immediate contact if a crisis occurs.
- This key list of contact numbers will include contact numbers of the emergency services
- Lists will also be displayed in the staff room and office
- Regular updating of the list will be the responsibility of the Deputy Principal.

### ***Critical Incident Team***

- Cathal Ruane
- Mairead Terry
- Mary Kieran
- Martina Fenlon
- Alison Flanagan

### ***Day 1 Procedures***

As news of a crisis comes to light the team will first get confirmation of the facts. Each member of the team will contact each other and make arrangements to meet in school. If the crisis occurs during week-ends, evenings or holidays we will contact the key holders (Principal & Caretaker) to open the school.

### ***Contact appropriate agencies***

#### ***Appropriate Agencies***

- Emergency Services (Fire Department/Ambulance Service)
- Health Board Psychology Departments
- N.E.P.S.
- Board of Management
- Department of Education and Skills

1. At our first coming together each member of the team will be delegated responsibility. The Principal/Deputy Principal will become the spokesperson to deal with the media. Another member of the team will arrange to contact emergency services and support agencies e.g Health Board, Department of Education and Skills. Team will contact parents if necessary. The Principal/Deputy Principal will prepare a brief statement for (a) school students (b) media (c) parents. Designated team members will prepare school if required. In the case of a death a shrine will be erected with flowers, photos etc. Teaching staff will be informed of the events by the Principal/Deputy Principal. Two members of the team will visit family/families or those students involved in the crisis. They will discuss their wishes regarding the school's involvement in the funeral etc. They will consult re; rituals, readings, returning locker possessions etc. The school will support family if required in the area of catering for wake or after the funeral. Designate a person to answer the phone.
2. Organise the timetable/routine for the day. We will adhere to the normal school routine if possible. Hold staff meetings and inform them of the facts as known. Discuss with them how the facts will be conveyed to students or outline the routine for the day.

### ***Meeting the students***

If children are directly involved the team will contact their parents/guardians immediately. A list will be drawn up of the parents who have been contacted. The information given to the parents will be relevant and factual and handled with great sensitivity. The team will arrange for a room to be set aside for distressed students to meet their parents.

The nature of the event will influence how students are informed. The team will consider the age of the pupils number in the group and the suitability of the "message" to be imparted. The S.P.H.E. team will provide resource material to be available for teachers to use in the classroom if necessary. We will provide specific support for vulnerable students. The team will organise the re-union of students with their parents if necessary. Where appropriate, team will organise transport. Towards the end of the day a ceremony of remembrance for the school community will take place.

### ***Day 2***

- The team will review the events of the first 24 hours
- Team will decide on support meetings for parents/students/staff
- They will check on feedback from teachers or vulnerable students
- Media will be updated if necessary
- Team will liaise with family regarding funeral arrangements/memorial service. A team member will clarify the family's wishes regarding the school's involvement in the funeral.
- Contact will be made with the Department of Education requesting school closure if required
- Decisions will be made regarding (a) who will attend funeral? (b) will the school close? (c) will the school community participate in a ritual? (d) wreaths.

- Students will prepare for the funeral (a) choir (b) readers if required (c) guard of honour.

***Day 3***

- Team will arrange facilities for supports
- Team will check on staff who may need to air their feelings
- Team will endeavour to create an atmosphere where it is okay to talk about the experience
- Team themselves will seek support for each other
- Team will check and give support to students and families involved in the incident.