



Coláiste Iósaef Community College

Roll No. 76070A

Draft Critical Incident Policy

School Community:	Consultation Timeframe:	Action:
Staff		
Parents		
Student Council		
Board of Management		

Ratified by Board of Management:

Date:

Date of Review/Amendments:

Date:

Date of Next Review:

Date:

Signed: *Rev. William Fitzmaurice*

Signed: *Noel Kelly*

Chairperson of Board of Management

Principal

Date:

Date:



Aim of the policy

Coláiste Iósaef Community College 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 established a student support team (SST) which is responsible for the prevention, intervention and postvention in relation to students whose welfare is deemed to be 'at risk' and in the event of a critical incident. A critical incident management plan is included in this document.

Mission Statement

The Board of Management and staff of Coláiste Iósaef are committed to addressing, in a creative and consultative manner, the educational needs of the college catchment population.

Our college ethos fosters the development of the whole person through the provision of a broad education tailored to individual needs within a Christian community.

The school has taken a number of measures to create a coping, supportive and caring ethos in the school. The school has also formulated a number of policies and procedures to be followed with a view to ensuring the physical and psychological safety of both students and staff during the normal course of the school day and in the event of a critical incident.

Such policies include:

- Student support/critical incident policy and plan
- Health and Safety Policy
- Pastoral Care Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Mentoring Programme
- Code of Behaviour
- Guidance and Counselling Policy and plan
- S.P.H.E Programme
- Restorative practice.
- Peer mediation
- Child Protection Policy and Procedures



- Substance Misuse Policy
- Campus Security Policy
- After Hours Policy – evening Study
- Special Education Needs Policy
- Medical Intervention Policy

Underpinning Principles and Goals to promote school wellbeing

- a) Personal attention to the value and development of every student as reflected in our school ethos/characteristic spirit and mission statement.
- b) Acknowledgement of, and support for each person's role in the school community
- c) Promoting an environment which meets student physical, social and emotional needs
- d) Priority given to the nurturing of teaching and learning relationships
- e) Recognition of competences, talents and abilities
- f) Clear values that promote a student centred ethos
- g) Strong collaborative leaderships between students, staff and parents.
- h) Clarity of policies, roles, responsibilities and tasks
- i) Support for an engaging curriculum
- j) On-going monitoring of progress at every level for the student/learner
- k) Accountability, support and evaluation at every level
- l) Involving all concerned in the life of the centre

In relation to responding to critical incident, the school will seek to:

- a) Provide a range of supports for members of the school community to call upon in a time of crisis and in the longer term.
- b) Have in place a policy for dealing with critical incidents in the context of the school
- c) Regularly review the structures of support and referral available in the school

Creation of a coping supportive and caring ethos in the school

Systems are 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.

Physical safety

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

- a) An Evacuation Plan has been formulated and is displayed in the entrance foyer. This plan is brought to the attention of all staff and students during the school year.
- b) Fire drills are held at least once a term.
- c) Fire exits and extinguishers are regularly inspected.
- d) CI drills take place annually
- e) Parents are informed of the pre-opening supervision arrangements, whereby supervision begins at 8:45am in the school.
- f) Expectations of general student behaviour, as laid out in the Code of Behaviour which encourage positive relations and promote the wellbeing of the whole school community and prohibit bullying in any form.

Psychological safety

The management and staff of Coláiste Iósaef 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.

- a) Guidance and Counselling is a key resource available to all student/learners in the school/centre.
- b) Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE) (students under 18) and adult specific programmes are 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; wellbeing, conflict management; problem solving; help-seeking; bullying, /cyber bullying and decision making. Promotion of mental health is an integral part of this provision.
- c) Staff have access to training for their role through training e.g. SST/SPHE



- d) A care team is in place in the school/ to respond to day to day challenges of a psychological nature.
- e) Relationships and Sexuality Education is timetabled for all Senior Cycle Student in the school
- f) Staff receive annual training on the Child Protection/Safeguarding Procedures and details of how to proceed with suspicions or disclosures. The Designated Liaison Person (DLP) is Noel Kelly and the Deputy Designated Liaison Person (DDL) is Marita Herbert.
- g) Students who are identified as being at increased risk are referred to the Designated Liaison Person/designated member of staff and or to the Student Support Team where concerns are explored and the appropriate level of assistance and support is provided. Parents may be informed and where appropriate, a referral is made to an appropriate agency.
- h) Staff members are informed about how to access support for themselves through employee assistance provision
- i) The school has a clear policy on anti-bullying and deals with bullying in accordance with this policy including cyber bullying.
- j) Staff members accept their role in the care of students and colleagues.
- k) The school has in place a staff wellbeing policy and plan which recognises that staff is a key resource in promoting our ethos.
- l) Resources on supporting those in difficulty in the school will be accessed when required.
- m) Information is provided on mental health in general and specifically issues such as depression and anxiety.
- n) Suicide awareness training and interventions are available
- o) The school has links with a range of external agencies, (NEPS, Garda Síochána, emergency services, See Emergency contacts list, LCETB, Duty Social Worker, CAMHS, HSE Mental health, Safeguarding Adult Services, local GPs, etc.

Inputs by external providers are considered carefully taking account of young people's safety, the appropriateness of the content, the level of expertise and vetting biographical details of the providers including references

Student Support Team

The school has established a Student Support Team (SST) comprised of a group of staff who have volunteered to:

- a) Develop a structure to work in a preventative way with students experiencing intense stress including child/vulnerable adult welfare/protection, self-harm, suicide, mental health, substance misuse etc.
- b) Deal with any significant trauma that may occur in the life of the school
- c) Lead the response of the school in the event of a critical incident e.g. attempted suicide, sudden death, major event, fire, crash etc.

The team is selected based on competencies including counselling skills, prior expertise and interest in student/learner wellbeing and welfare. Each member of the team has a dedicated role and is responsible for the development and maintenance of an up to date SST list and folder.

The SST members are required to avail of specific training for their role in the team:

- a) Principal/Manager/Deputy/Manager/Director
- b) Coordinator
- c) Student/Learner and Students/Learners liaison
- d) Family/Parents liaison
- e) Staff liaison
- f) Network, media and the community liaison

The purpose, role and responsibility of the SST:

- a) To provide support within the school to students experiencing critical stress.
- b) To act as a second tier referral within the school to the Guidance Counsellor and other key front line staff engaged in student support matters.
- c) To conduct evidence based planned observations and risk assessments on critical student support issues.

- d) To design, implement and review a plan of intervention to direct work with students in difficulty.
- e) To recommend that all interventions are carried out. This may include partnership with students, parents/guardians, school community and external support agencies.
- f) To maintain records of all interventions which have clear indicators and outcome data.
- g) To liaise with in school management on an ongoing basis.
- h) To engage in team supervision/support once a term as a means of tracking plans and providing support to the team on its work.
- i) In the event of a critical incident in the school the Student Support Team will implement the protocol on critical incidents. These protocols will be reviewed/evaluated annually.

Role of the Principal

- a) The Principal/Deputy Principal oversees the remit of the team. The Principal/Deputy Principal will attend scheduled SST meeting.

Role of the Coordinator

- a) Liaises with the Principal/Deputy Principal on the outcome of each meeting and on an ongoing basis to review the critical incident plan, in the absence of Management from the meeting.
- b) Liaise with Principal to ensure that all students and staff profiles are up to date e.g. current telephone numbers, next of kin, parent/guardians contact details etc. on an annual basis.
- c) Responsible for the organisation of the SST meeting on a weekly basis.
- d) Agrees the agenda and ensures all minutes of team meetings are recorded
- e) Follow up with team members to support any actions
- f) Ensures that all files are stored securely (hard and soft copy) and comply with data protection requirements
- g) Liaise at an interagency level with the LCETB and other agencies as required.

- h) Facilitates annual induction and review of the SST and the Critical Incident Management Plan and checklist
- i) Prepares annual report for the LCETB
- j) In the event of an unforeseen significant event e.g. a student is missing from the school and the Principal/Deputy Principal is unavailable the coordinator shall convene a Student Support Team meeting. It is recommended that a minimum of three members can form a quorum to commence the CIMP. Other team members may be released throughout the day if required. A review meeting is convened at the end of the day and a full report will be made available to the Principal/Deputy Principal on the event, plan and outcome.
- k) Support the Principal to ensure that members of the school community are aware of the evacuation and lock down procedures in the CI plan eg alternate warning signals for different circumstances to normal drills such as pulse to notify 'shelter in place' or air horn to move to a place of safety. Identify evacuation routes, assembly points including an alternative in event of a 'bomb' threat, access to registers to account for all persons in the building

Role of Student Liaison

- a) Liaise with Coordinator/Principal to ensure student records are up to date annually, mobile numbers, addresses of 3rd person contact
- b) Maintain link between staff and student/learners (take updates from vulnerable students)
- c) Alerts other staff to vulnerable students observing confidentiality and boundaries
- d) Recommend referrals to Guidance Counsellor as appropriate
- e) Have student handouts ready in the event of critical incident
- f) Provides material as appropriate to colleagues
- g) Liaise with Principal/Deputy Principal
- h) Identifies a designated room for students to receive support in the event of a CI
- i) Where appropriate, has access arranged to a 'buddy' establishment i.e. a place of safety in the community.

Role of Staff Liaison

- a) Ensure staff records up to date annually, mobile numbers and 3rd party/Next of kin contact etc.
- b) Have staff handouts ready on handling a classroom session and common reactions after an incident
- c) Prepare a sample statement for Administrative staff for use when answering phone calls.
- d) Advises staff on the procedures for identifying high-risk student/learners and outline what supports are available
- e) Outline relevant contacts/supports available to staff, including details of Employee Assistance Programme
- f) Monitor/Support vulnerable staff
- g) Ensure that the 'Grab bag is ready (Copy of emergency plan, first aid kit, high vis vests for SST team, back up of all persons contact details, map of school, mobile phone and charger, remote access to the school system by at least two members of staff, log sheets etc.)
- h) Key holder/s identified when the school is closed and staff contact cascade plan developed with SST to inform all staff promptly and uniformly. Have caretakers number for when school is closed. details for staff

Role of Parent Liaison in General*

- a) Identifies him/her self as the named contact for parents/guardians (groups)
- b) Is available to meet with parents/guardians (groups)
- c) Ensures that sample letters are typed up on the school/centre's system and ready to for adaptation
- d) Have literature on potential reactions, coping with loss etc.
- e) Compile support information, contacts etc. to parents/guardians
- f) Have room designated for meeting parents/guardians in a critical incident
- g) Meets with individual parents/guardians as required
- h) Keeps a record/log of parents/guardians seen



* Parents will be liaised with where appropriate when the Student/learner is over 18 years.

Role of Media/Community Liaison

- a) Sets up annual meeting and maintains an up-to-date list of contacts including (NEPS, Garda Siochána, emergency services, See Emergency contacts list, LCETB, Duty Social Worker, CAMHS, HSE Mental health, Safeguarding Adult Services, local GPs)
- b) Makes contacts list readily available to staff, SST/LST, administrative staff, parents
- c) Maintains an up-to-date list of Parents' Council members
- d) Prepares a sample press statement on system
- e) Updates SST/LST and staff on external agencies
- f) Retains copy of Media Protocol Reporting a Critical Incident, NUJ

Role of the Administrative Liaison

- a) Maintains up-to-date telephone records of parents/guardians, teachers/tutors, emergency services
- b) With coordinator of SST has prepared statement ready for telephone calls from parents/guardians and takes telephone calls recording any significant interaction.
- c) Ensures that templates of letters etc. are on the school system in advance of a CI and are ready for adaptation
- d) Organises photocopying of materials needed
- e) Prepares and sends out letters, texts, e-mails and other social media formats and details with support from staff.
- f) Ensures that incident log's are distributed and recorded by all , isolation room identified in event of a pandemic, prompt card with key questions for admin staff in event of a telephone call issuing an external threat are ready

Team Supervision

Supervision is a process whereby an external supervisor is available daily by telephone and to visit the school if required to support the SST in fulfilling its role and responsibility. The Supervisor will meet with the SST once a term to review the student plans including the assessment of risk, referral pathways, records and team support. Individual supervision is available on request to any member of the STT.

Aims of supervision:

- To equip team members with the knowledge and skills to intervene effectively with students on a range of critical student support matters.
- To assist the team to identify signs of risk.
- To develop and implement evidence based plans of intervention using reflective practice and problem-solving techniques.
- To attend to individual and/or team support and development issues.
- To clarify the SST roles and responsibilities
- To ensure accountability for the work undertaken by the team
- To provide regular and constructive feedback and review to the team on its assessments, student support plans and outcome of intervention.
- To ensure that records are maintained as per LCETB standards.
- To review the supervision contract annually

The Critical Incident Management Plan (CIMP):

Aim:

The aim of the CIMP is to help school management and staff to respond 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.

Definition of a Critical Incident

The staff and management of Cóláiste Íosaef Community College consider a critical incident to be defined as the following:

‘An incident or sequence of events which overwhelms the normal coping mechanism of the school and disrupts the running of the school.’

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

- a) The death of a member of the school community through accident, violence, suicide or suspected suicide or other unexpected death
- b) An intrusion into the school
- c) An accident involving members of the school community
- d) An accident/tragedy in the wider community
- e) A physical attack on a staff member, student or school community
- f) Serious damage to the school building through fire, flood, vandalism, etc
- g) The disappearance of a member of the school community
- h) A serious accident involving cars, machines or equipment;
- i) Robbery;
- j) A phone call or notice of imminent danger;
- k) A serious issue involving other public or private facilities within close proximity;
- l) An accident/incident on near-by access roads.

Critical Incident Management Team

It is the duty of all staff to promote and safeguard the welfare of students and staff, following the occurrence of a critical incident.

In order to ensure the programme is in a position to respond effectively to any crisis that it may encounter, the SST Coordinator will review the CIMP at the beginning of each year, reviewing roles and responsibilities, including training on CI procedures.

Other staff should have a critical incident plan folder containing the school/centre's policy, plan, and materials particular to their role, to be used in the event of an incident.

Following an incident deemed to be of a critical nature, the SST will be contacted by the Principal/Deputy Principal to meet at a designated location. The notification will inform them of the type of incident and the exact location of the incident. When the SST arrive at the scene they need to:

- Manage the incident scene where appropriate;
- Remove people at risk;
- Call the emergency services and alert first aiders etc.;
- Follow the instruction of competent personnel – Gardaí, Fire Personnel etc.;
- Cooperate with the external services if they assume control of the incident;
- Liaise with the media.

If an incident happens during the night or at the weekends or during holiday periods, the SST needs to respond to it in an appropriate manner. A judgement needs to be made of how best to deal with the event at the school and in the wider community. The Team Members may be contacted on mobile phone etc. The SST may need to initiate actions to allow the school carry on its work. A decision will be made by management in conjunction with the SST as to which protocols/procedures to implement depending on the incident.

Critical Incident (CI) Procedures

Immediate Response: Short Term up to 12 hours

Hearing the News

Once a critical incident comes to the attention of a member of the school s/he should, where possible and practical, inform the senior management of the school. However, where it is apparent that an emergency situation exists, it may be necessary to call one or other of the emergency services in the first instance.

Establish the Facts

Before taking any action, it is crucial that the school has the correct information regarding the crisis. Therefore, it is important that senior and involved staff gather to establish the facts- this may involve contacting Hospitals, Gardaí, Emergency/medical Services, Parents etc.

Summary Checklist for Principal and Coordinator/available members of the Critical Incident Team:

- a) The Principal/Senior Management Team has overall responsibility in the event of a critical incident and will facilitate the operation of the CI plan
- b) It is crucial that the programme has the correct information regarding the crisis.
- c) Consult appropriate agencies (e.g. LCETB, NEPS, Garda Síochána, emergency services, See Emergency contacts list, LCETB, DES, SEC)
- d) Gather together the SST/Critical Incident Team
- e) Inform staff and students. Where feasible staff should be informed in the first instance.
- f) Organise the supervision of students
- g) Have administrative staff photocopy appropriate literature.
- h) Convene a staff meeting and inform of immediate plan. Deciding whether or not an outside professional will be invited to that meeting. Where students are going to be in the school, it is critical that appropriate supervision be put in place for all students whose teachers may be involved in the meetings.
- i) Identify high-risk students and staff
- j) Appoint someone to deal with phone queries and /or to deal with the media

- k) Organise timetable for the programme/service to respond to the crisis- wherever possible adhering to normal timetables and routines- while avoiding any signs of insensitivity to those touched most intimately by the crisis
- l) Inform students
- m) Inform parents/guardians
- n) Make contact with bereaved family, including a visit to the family
- o) Withdraw siblings
- p) Organise support
- q) Prepare a statement/respond to the media
- r) Draft a letter for parents
- s) Meet with SST to review the day

Staff Meeting

All staff (including support staff) should be invited to the meeting. The following matters should be addressed by the meeting:

- A sensitive account of the facts as known, having regard for the privacy of those involved in the incident. Information needs to be provided on a need-to-know basis.
- The views and feelings of staff.
- How, by whom and in what setting students and other members of the school should be informed of the incident
- An outline of the time table that the Team has drawn up for responding to the CI- the timetable may, if necessary and feasible, be amended at this meeting.
- Details regarding the outside agencies that have been contacted and the support programme that will be put in place for staff/ students and other members of the school community.
- Procedure for identifying vulnerable students.

Informing Students

It is important that all those needing to be informed of the incident receive necessary information as soon as is practicable.

Guidelines for Funeral Arrangements/Procedure

- In consultation with the family inform family of the school policy in relation to arrangements
- In the event of a sudden death, including a death by suicide it is not recommended by NEPS that the school/centre host a guard of honour or in any way give undue attention to the cause as this may initiate copycat suicides and glamorise the tragedy.
- The school in consultation with the family may participate in the service e.g. choir, reading etc.
- In the event of the death of a staff member, the school may decide to close the school/centre for the funeral
- In the event of a death of a student it is recommended that the school remains open as normal routine assist students to cope. However, school management may decide to take the base class/group to the funeral
- Other students under the age of 18 who wish to attend may attend accompanied by their parents/guardians.
- The parents/guardians should accompany the student under the age of 18 to and from the funeral.
- The parents/guardians will have to sign the student/learner under the age of 18 in and out according to school rules.
- In the event of the school taking the base class to the funeral the school will brief students in advance about the funeral plan and the appropriate etiquette required.
- Students and parents/guardians may be invited to come back to the school after the funeral to debrief if necessary.



CI Procedures in detail

Role of Principal/Senior Manager/Coordinator in a CI

Agenda for the first meeting with the SST/LST, chaired by Principal and facilitated on an ongoing basis by the Coordinator

- a) A meeting of the SST and other key staff members will be convened to clarify **accurate** information. In the case of sudden death of a student, the information must not make reference to cause.
- b) Agree a statement of facts for staff, student, parents/guardians and the media.
- c) Delegation of responsibilities of the SST as per designated roles and responsibilities
- d) Discussion of what support services to contact
- e) Preparation (possibly written) of what to say to staff
- f) Preparation (possibly written) of what to say to student/learners
- g) Preparation of a statement/letter/text/notice on Social media for parents when under 18years. In case of vulnerable adults carers/guardians may be contacted where appropriate either by phone or through usual means letters etc.
- h) Preparation (possibly written) of what to say to media. Only the Media Liaison member of the SST or another nominated person will talk to the media at a pre-arranged time and place.
- i) Make a decision about school closure
- j) Organise the schedule/timetable for the day
- k) Ensure that a phone line remains open for the day and available for enquiries
- l) Appoint someone to handle phone enquiries and deal with the media
- m) Organise a staff meeting
- n) Organise the supervision of students during any staff meetings
- o) Copying and printing of letters for parents/guardians (where appropriate)
- p) Deciding which external agencies should be involved
- q) Time will be allocated for students/learners to reflect/talk about the incident with key staff.

- r) Any member of staff will be given the opportunity to withdraw from the process if they feel unable to offer support at this time.
- s) The LCETB Psychological Services Officer should be briefed and advice and guidance sought, where necessary.
- t) Other relevant LCETB Staff may need to be notified – see contact list.

Medium Term Actions 24-72 hours

- a) Review events of first 24 hours
- b) Arrange support for individual student, groups of student/parents/guardians etc.
- c) Plan for the reintegration of student and staff
- d) Liaise with family regarding arrangements/participation at the service, and with their consent arrange a place in the school with a photograph and book of condolences for students/staff to pay their respects.
- e) Decide on school closure
- f) The SST will establish the need for outside services and contact them as required
- g) The timetable will operate as normal to maintain routine and re-integrate students/learners who had been absent.

Longer Term Actions

- a) Monitor student/learners, remove the deceased student/s name from school systems including text messaging
- b) Evaluate response to incident and amend plan appropriately
- c) Formalise the critical incident plan for the future
- d) Keep new staff, students, parents/guardians informed about SST policy
- e) Decide appropriate way to deal with anniversaries
- f) To ensure that the SST meet to review the response to the CI and to process this response accordingly
- g) Assess the need for any additional counselling by consulting the ETB's counselling service or, where appropriate, maintaining contact with those affected by the incident;



- h) Assess the need for any additional support from outside agencies or services;
- i) Assess the need for, and organise debriefing sessions for, all those involved in the incident, including, if appropriate, the wider ETB community;
- j) Organise debriefing sessions, depending on circumstances and the need, including:
 - i. Technical debriefing (e.g. of security or emergency staff);
 - ii. Critical incident stress debriefing and/or initial defusing, conducted by professional counsellors trained in Critical Incident Stress debriefing, for those affected by the incident; and/or Critical Incident Management Team debriefing.
- k) A copy of the review findings will be placed on the file for the relevant Critical Incident.
- l) Please refer to StaffConnect for more information on Staff Wellbeing.

Role of Student Liaison in a CI

- a) Arrange access to student records
- b) Maintain link between staff and students (take updates from Year heads on vulnerable students)
- c) Observes vulnerable students
- d) Alerts other staff to vulnerable students
- e) Advise and recommends counselling as required
- f) Provides material as appropriate to students
- g) Provides material as appropriate to colleagues
- h) Set up a 'quiet room' to share reactions and feelings
- i) Advise students on possible reactions to the CI
- j) Keep a record of students seen internally and referrals made to external agencies
- k) Liaise with Principal on an on-going basis
- l) Where appropriate have access arranged to a 'buddy' establishment

Role of Staff Liaison in a CI

- a) Leads briefing of staff on the facts as they are known. Take questions from staff and outline the routine for the day.
- b) Help teachers to prepare for questions from students Outline possible reactions and distribute handouts on handling a class/group post a CI.
- c) Prepare a statement of facts to be read out to all students.
- d) Advises staff on the procedures for identifying high-risk students and outline what supports are available.
- e) Distribute appropriate material for staff.
- f) Meet staff again later in the day to update information, to offer support and to further identify high-risk students and act as required
- g) Ensure quiet locations are made available in school
- h) Identify support services within the school
- i) Establish the need for outside services and provide contacts
- j) Makes contact with all staff including those who are absent on Maternity or Sick Leave etc.
- k) Be aware of vulnerable staff members and advise them re counselling and support as appropriate
- l) In the event of an evacuation ensure that the 'Grab bag is ready (Copy of emergency plan, first aid kit, high vis vests for SST/LST team, back up of all persons contact details, map of school, mobile phone and charger, remote access to the school system by at least two members of staff, log sheets etc.)

Role of Parent/Guardian Liaison in CI

- a) Visits bereaved family with Principal
- b) Identifies him/her self as the named contact for parents (groups)
- c) Is available to support the Principal/Deputy Principal to meet with parents (groups) and or take phone calls.
- d) Facilitates meetings with parents/guardians and manages 'questions and answers'

- e) Get letters typed and organises volunteers to help envelope and post or statements for social media and texting
- f) Distributes literature on potential reactions, coping with loss recommended by NEPS
- g) Distributes support information, contacts etc. to parents/guardians
- h) Sets up room for meeting parents/guardians
- i) Meets with individual parents/guardians or coordinates support for parents/guardians who arrive at the school unannounced
- j) Keeps a record of parents/guardians seen

Role of Media/Community Liaison in a CI

- a) Assists Principal in contacting relevant agencies
- b) Makes contacts list readily available to staff, SST, administrative staff, parents/guardians
- c) Prepares a draft press statement for delivery by Principal
- d) Delivers press statement with Principal
- e) Support Principal in all enquiries from the media and identify a room to contain media if they arrive on campus.
- f) Supports Principal in contact with Communication section of the DES
- g) Liaises with community agencies for support and onward referral
- h) Updates SST and staff on external agencies

Role of Administrative Liaison

- a) Maintains up-to-date telephone records of parents/guardians, teachers and emergency services
- b) With coordinator of SST has prepared statement ready for telephone calls from parents/guardians and takes telephone calls recording any significant interaction.
- c) Ensures that templates of letters etc are on the school system in advance and ready for adaptation
- d) Organises photocopying of materials needed

- e) Prepares and sends out letters, texts, e-mails. other social media formats and faxes with support from staff. Be careful not to send text to bereaved family
- f) Ensures that incident log are distributed and recorded, isolation room identified in event of a pandemic, prompt card with key questions for admin staff in event of a telephone call issuing an external threat are ready

Record keeping

In the event of an incident each member of the team will keep an incident log of phone calls made and received, letters sent and received, meetings held, persons met, interventions used, material used etc.

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

Confidentiality

The management and staff of Coláiste Íosaef 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. The members of the school staff will bear this in and will seek to ensure that students do so also. For instance, the term 'suicide' will not be used as in the absence of an autopsy and without the consent of the parents/carers. The phrases 'tragic death' or 'sudden death' may be used instead. Similarly, the word 'murder' will not be used until it is legally established that a murder was committed.

Policy on Confidentiality

School personnel will treat in confidence all information about students including: name, address, biographical details and other descriptions of the students life and circumstance which might result in identification of the student except as outlined hereunder where such matters should be discussed with the Principal:

- to protect the interests of the student/learner
- to protect the interests of society
- to safeguard the welfare of another student or individual

- a) A staff member should always respect the nature of a relationship occasioned by the sharing with him/her by a student of personal information
- b) Consent of the student and/or parent/guardian to disclose personal information should usually be sought where possible.
- c) Personal details about the lives of student that either they themselves or their families have confided in a staff member will not be discussed among staff or shared with others unless to promote the safety of the person concerned. In this instance, this will occur after the student has been informed of the reasons for doing so. However, it is essential that this information is only shared on a need-to-know basis. The test is whether or not the person to whom the information is being passed on has any legitimate involvement or role in dealing with the issue. This does not include conferring with or reporting to a superior nor to dissemination to a colleague, on a need to know basis, of information relating to the personal circumstance of a student, in the interest of that student.
- d) Access to personal information will be available to designated school personnel only. Staff, therefore, need to know in what circumstances and with whom to discuss their concerns i.e. the reporting procedures for their school.
- e) Staff should make it clear to the students that they cannot promise to keep information confidential. Students need to know that any information they share with staff regarding anything illegal will be passed on in a sensitive way to the appropriate person(s). If a staff member suspects that a student under the age of 18 is at risk, this information will be passed on to the designated liaison person. If the student is over 18 and discloses abuse identifying an alleged abuser this must be reported as it becomes a child protection issue. If they do not reveal a name then the member of staff who receives the disclosure should encourage them to identify this person, especially if the alleged abuser has access to children.
- f) The legal principle that the welfare of the child/student is paramount means that considerations of confidentiality should not be allowed to override the rights of the child/student to be protected from harm. In other words protection of the child/student is more important than confidentiality. Information should therefore be shared on any concerns about a child's or an adult's behaviour.
- g) It should be clearly understood that information which is gathered for one purpose, must not be used for another without consulting the person who provided the information.