

*Scoil Niocláis*

*Frankfield*

*Grange*

*Cork*

**Scoil Niocláis**

**Critical Incident Management**

**A School Crisis Plan**

**For the purpose of this plan, a crisis situation is one where death has occurred or has been perceived i.e. Suicide, Death or life-threatening injury of a student or staff member. Critical Incident Stress Debriefing (CISD) may not be a necessary step in all instances.**

## **Crisis Response Team**

### **(a) Leadership/ Family Liaison/ Communication**

**Principal, Deputy Principal, Chairperson of BOM, Chairperson of the SNPA, Teacher, nominee from the Board of Management**

### **(b) Counselling, Pastoral Care and Chaplaincy**

**Priest, Principal and Staff**

**CRITICAL INCIDENT POLICY**

Scoil Niocláis aims to protect the well being of its students, staff and visitors by providing a safe and nurturing environment at all times.

*Scoil Niocláis Mission Statement*

*“Doras Feasa Fiafraí”*

*“Questioning is the road to learning”*

*We, in Scoil Niocláis, endeavour to nurture the self-esteem of all within our school. We aim to create an environment where everyone is free to question and encouraged to think, where our children will learn and grow in honesty, respect and faith.*

The Board of Management of Scoil Niocláis through Sheelagh O Leary, Principal, has drawn up a Critical incident management plan as one element of the school’s policies and plans.

Scoil Niocláis has policies which allow us to create a coping, supportive and caring ethos in the school. The school has implemented a number of policies and procedures which ensure the physical and psychological safety of staff, students and visitors both in ordinary time and in the event of a critical incident.

Scoil Niocláis recognises a critical incident to be “an incident or sequence of events that overwhelms the normal coping mechanism of the school and

disrupts the running of the school”.[\[1\]](#) Critical incidents may involve one or more pupils, staff, visitors, in the school, or our local community. Types of incidents might include:

- *The death of a member of the school community through sudden death, accident, terminal illness or suicide*
- *Pandemic*
- *An intrusion into the school*
- *An accident/tragedy in the wider school community*
- *Serious damage to the school building through fire, flood, vandalism, etc*
- *The disappearance of a member of the school community*
- *An accident involving members of the school community*

## **Aim**

Recognising that the key to managing critical incidents is planning, Scoil Niocláis has developed this Critical Incident Management Policy and accompanying Plan. Such forward planning will, in the event of an incident, allow staff to react quickly and effectively and to maintain a sense of control and to ensure that appropriate support is offered to students and staff. It will ensure a return to normality as soon as possible and ensure that the effects on the students and staff will be limited.

## **Creation of a coping supportive and caring ethos in Scoil Niocláis**

In so far as is practicable, we have systems in place which shall reduce the possibility of the occurrence of an incident. We also 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 policies to address both the physical and psychological safety of staff, students and visitors and response plan in the case of specific threats to the normal running of the school (eg Covid-19 Response Plan)

## **Physical safety:**

**The Health, Safety and welfare at work Policy is examined and reviewed on a regular basis by the Deputy Principal and a member of the BOM. This includes the following:**

- *Evacuation plan formulated*
- *Regular fire drills occur*
- *Fire exits and extinguishers are regularly checked*
- *School public access doors are secured during class time*
- *Rules of the playground*
- *Responses to specific threats (e.g. Covid-19 health and safety risk assessment)*

## **School Security:**

- *Arrival and dispersal procedures reviewed annually*
- *During class time all outside doors are locked at 9am. Entry to the school is via the 04 door only. .all visitors must report to the school office.*
- *All school gates are closed except for the gate at the top of the steps on the Bellevue side. Parents are reminded of these entry procedures each September.*
- *Visitors to the school must sign in at the office and wear a Scoil Niocláis visitors badge while on the premises*
- *All classroom doors have a thumb lock on the inside. In the event of an intrusion to the school, an announcement will be made from the office and teachers will lock classroom doors on the inside. The following procedures will apply for classes who may be in the yard: Sheelagh O'Leary and Miriam Kenny will alert teachers to evacuate the basketball courts, astro and plaza areas. Pupils in the*

*plaza area will go through the outside door to Room 5 of Naomh Bríd. Teacher locks main classroom door that leads to corridor. Pupils on the astro and basketball courts will go directly to Room 8 and 9 of Naomh Bríd and lock themselves in there. The school secretary locks office doors, lowers the shutter and contacts the emergency services, make announcements etc. Rosemary Lee and Michelle Lane will alert classes on the main playground. Junior and Senior Infants will evacuate from the yard into their classroom and lock the doors. Senior Infants from Room 7 will go into Room 5, Senior Infants from Room 8 will go into Room 6. 3rd class and 5th class: Rooms downstairs go directly to their classrooms. Room 5 upstairs goes to Room 1 downstairs, Room 6 goes to Room 2, room 7 goes to Room 3 and Room 8 goes to Room 4. All teachers lock all doors. Classes in the halla will assemble as follows: the class on the old side of the halla will assemble in the kitchenette and will lock both doors in this room. The class on the new side of the halla will assemble in the new kitchenette/storage room area and lock this door. Please note there is a light switch just inside the door.*

- *Pupils attending SET classes will remain with the set teacher. The set teacher will ring the class teacher to let them know the child/children are safe and are in their care.*
- *Pupils who are partaking in a movement break etc with their SNA. The SNA and child will proceed to the nearest classroom or secure area ( If in the halla). where possible the SNA will ring the class teacher to let them know that both themselves and the child/children are in a safe secure place*
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### **Psychological safety:**

The Management and staff of Scoil Niocláis 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.

- *SPHE programmes are included in the curriculum to address issues such as grief and loss, communication skills, stress and*

*anger management, resilience, conflict management, problem solving, help-seeking, bullying, decision making, and alcohol and drug abuse prevention. Promotion of mental health is an integral part of this provision e.g. Weaving Wellbeing programme.*

- *Staff are familiar with the child protection procedures and the name of the designated liaison person.*
- *Principal DLP completes an oversight report to the Board of Management at each meeting*
- *All teachers are mandated to report to Tusla*
- *The school has a clear policy on bullying and deals with bullying in accordance with this policy*
- *Staff are informed of difficulties affecting individual students and are aware and vigilant to their needs.*
- *Staff have access to books and resources on difficulties affecting the primary school student.*
- *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 circular 22/2010*
- *There is a care system in place in the school using the “Continuum of Support Approach” which is outlined in the NEPS Documents published in 2007 for Primary Schools*
- *Students who are identified as being at risk are referred to the designated staff member, the Principal. In the event of the Principal being unavailable the Deputy Principal will be the designated staff member. 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.*
- *The school has developed links with outside agencies, which may be contacted in the event of an emergency and for onward referral of students.*
- *Staff are informed about how to access support for themselves e.g. Spectrum Life, Teacher Employment Assistance Service at 1800 411057*

**Critical Incident Management Team /Crisis Response Team**

The Board of Management of Scoil Niocláis has set up a CI Management Team in line with best practice [\[2\]](#) and will maintain this team in future. The members of the team were selected and appointed on a voluntary basis and will retain their roles for at least one school year. The members of the team will meet once a year to review and update the plan. Each member of the team has a Ready-to-Go Pack with relevant materials to be used in the event of an incident.

**The Crisis Response Team/Critical Incident Management Team are as follows not all members may be available on the day of the crisis.**

**Sile Ui Laoire, Rosemary Lee, Fr. Kevin O’ Regan, Paul Hannigan, Sharon Galvin, Miriam Kenny, Niamh Nic Gearailt , Pamela Thornhill**

**Key roles have been identified and assigned as follows:**

<b>TASK</b>	<b>NAME</b>
<b>OVERALL MANAGEMENT OF RESPONSE/TEAM LEADER</b>	Principal
<b>COMMUNICATION</b>	Principal
<b>ADMINISTRATION TASKS</b>	Deputy Principal and Secretary
<b>SUPERVISION</b>	Deputy Principal
<b>MEDIA/SOCIAL MEDIA LIAISON</b>	Principal and Deputy Principal

<b>PARENT LIAISON</b>	<b>Paul Hannigan and Sharon Galvin</b>
<b>COMMUNITY LIAISON</b>	<b>Principal and Chairperson</b>
<b>STUDENT LIAISON</b>	<b>Miriam Kenny</b>
<b>STAFF LIAISON</b>	<b>Rosemary Lee and Niamh Nic Gearailt</b>

### **Team Leader and Garda Liaison**

- Alerts the Team Members to the crisis and convenes a meeting
- Co-ordinates the tasks of the team
- Liaises with the Board of Management, DES, NEPS.
- Liaises with the bereaved family.
- Liaises with the Gardai
- Ensures that information about deaths or other developments is checked out for accuracy before being shared.

In the absence of the Team Leader the Deputy Principal will take over these duties.

## **Staff Liaison**

- 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 Spectrum Life – Teacher Employment Assistance service and gives them the contact number.
- Will alert staff by text and inform them that a critical incident has occurred. Staff will be asked to assemble at the earlier time of 8.20am in their staff room on the next school day.

## **Student Liaison**

- Alerts other staff to vulnerable pupils
- Looks after setting up and supervision of a quiet room for students if agreed that the incident requires one
- Provides materials for students (from critical incident folder)
- Manages consent requirements in accordance with school policy
- Maintains records of students seen by external agency staff
- A Book of Condolence may, as appropriate, be made available which is kept on the first shelf of the press directly to the right inside Miriam Kennys' Room door.

## **Community/agency liaison**

- Liaises with agencies in the community for support and onward referral
- Is alert to the need to check credentials of individuals offering support
- Coordinates the involvement of these agencies
- Updates team members of the involvement of external agencies.

## **Parent Liaison**

- Arranges parent meetings, if deemed appropriate
- Sets up room for meeting with parents (e.g. halla)
- Maintains a record of parents seen
- Provides appropriate materials for parents (from critical incident folder)

## **Media Liaison**

- Will draw up a press statement, give media briefings and interviews.

## **Administrative Tasks will entail the following:**

- Maintenance of up to date lists of contact numbers of
  - Parents or guardians
  - Teachers
  - Emergency support services(see Appendix 1)
  - Key parents, such as members of the parents association
  - Emergency Support services and other external contacts and resources
- Telephone calls need to be responded to, letters sent and materials photocopied.
- 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 of telephone calls made.

## **Record Keeping**

In the event of an incident each member of the team will keep detailed records of phone calls made and received, letters, emails and texts 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, photocopying materials, etc.

### **Letter to Parents**

The Principal will prepare a brief, written statement to include (See Appendix)

- The sympathy of the school community for the affected/bereaved family
- Positive information or comments about the deceased/injured persons(s)
- The facts of the incident ( as may have been established)
- What has been done
- What is going to be done

### **Confidentiality and good name considerations**

Scoil Niocláis has a Data Protection Policy (DPP) which shall dictate the contents of any public statement. Where such a statement is issued it will be sensitive regarding the incident and take account of the Data Protection Policy. The school has a responsibility to protect the privacy and good name of any person or people who may be involved in any incident and will be sensitive to the consequences of any public statements. Where such statements are issued, its likely impact on the family and /or school community, shall be assessed prior to issue. The members of the school staff will bear this in mind, and will seek to ensure that pupils do so also. [For instance, the term ‘suicide’ will not be used. The phrases ‘tragic death,’ ‘sudden death’ or ‘untimely death’ may be used instead.]

### **Critical Incident Room**

In the event of a critical incident, communication/critical incident rooms will be set up as follows

- Staff rooms, will be the main rooms used to meet the staff,
- Students will be met in their classrooms.
- School Hall will be used to meet with parents and visitors
- Computer room to meet with the media.
- Learning Support Rooms for individual sessions with pupils

### **Social Media and Critical Incidents.**

Social Media is now part of everyday communication and information sharing. Social media messages speed up the rate at which information is shared. This can have a significant influence on the behaviour of young people during a critical incident. Some social media communication may occur without the knowledge of school staff that leads to distress among students or their parents/guardians.

We in Scoil Niocláis consider the following issues may be helpful when dealing with a critical incident:

- As part of the school curriculum children are made aware of internet safety
- During a critical incident a message may be placed on the school website/school app along the following lines e.g.
  - *You may be aware of a recent event within the school community. We ask you to respect the relevant family's privacy and sensitivities by considering if you should post any comments, especially on social media. We will inform you through the normal channels of any relevant developments.*
- Another important message that may be posted on our website/app is to remind parents/guardians to discuss social media use with their children and monitor use more actively following a crisis.

- Media Personnel who make contact with the school during a critical incident will be provided with *Media Guidelines for reporting suicide Samaritans Booklet*.
- Young people often post RIP messages on social media sites when tragedies occur. These posts can be heart felt and emotional. Should the school become aware of any messages that cause concern regarding the emotional welfare of a child we will immediately inform parents/guardians.
- Should we become aware of inappropriate posts by students we will inform parents/guardians and encourage them to request that it is deleted.

### **Consultation and communication regarding the plan**

All staff were consulted and their views canvassed in the preparation of this policy and plan. Parent 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 Rosemary Lee, Deputy Principal.

The plan will be updated annually in October.

This policy was reviewed in November 2020

This Policy has been reviewed and ratified by the BOM of Scoil Niocláis  
on

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Fr. Kevin O' Regan

Chairperson BOM

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Sheelagh O' Leary

Principal

Appendix 1

**Emergency Contact List**

**(to be displayed in staff-room, Principals office etc)**

<b>OUTSIDE AGENCY</b>	<b>CONTACT NUMBERS</b>
<b>GARDA</b>	Douglas - 021 4857670 Togher- 021 4947120
<b>HOSPITAL</b>	CUH - 021 4922000
<b>FIRE BRIGADE</b>	999 or 112
<b>LOCAL GPS</b>	Elmwood Medical Centre - Drs. Nuala O'Connor; Rose Curtin; Andrew Crosbie; Jennifer Shine 021 4893255
<b>HEALTH BOARD/FAMILY CENTRE</b>	South Lee - child Protection 021 4923001
<b>INSPECTORATE</b>	Micheal Ryan Email: michael_ryan@ <a href="mailto:michael_ryan@education.gov.ie">education.gov.ie</a>
<b>NEPS PSYCHOLOGIST</b>	Mary Atkins Senior Psychologist at the same number 0761108450
<b>DES COMMUNICATIONS</b>	Michael Ryan as above
<b>INTO</b>	Michael Kirby 087 7681918

<b>PARISH PRIEST/CLERGY</b>	<p style="text-align: center;">Fr. Kevin O' Regan</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Home -021 4361711</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Mobile-0872508020</p>
<b>DIOCESAN OFFICE</b>	<p style="text-align: center;">Sean O Caoimh - 4301717</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><a href="mailto:education@corkandross.org">education@corkandross.org</a></p>

### Appendix 11

#### Crisis Response: Step by Step

Should a critical incident take place during the school day, there is a defibrillator available in the staff room for trained personnel to use.

1. The Principal having confirmed the death makes contact with the family.
2. Crisis Team meet to plan strategy, keeping in mind the guidelines below.
3. Key tasks are distributed.
4. Have all guidelines for teachers ready.
5. Have written and oral statements ready for all communication with the school.
6. A text to be sent to all staff that a critical incident has occurred and that staff are to assemble in their staff rooms for a briefing at 8.20am on the next school day.
7. Meet staff (note any absences or late arrivals to ensure that all staff know the news)

8. Crisis Response Team outline to staff the plan for the day and the support available.
9. Location of Crisis Response Room will be the SET Room 17 off computer room
10. Class teachers break news to their classes (handouts given on guidelines)
11. Plan another update staff meeting later in the day.
12. Clarify funeral arrangements for staff later.
13. Crisis Team meet to plan procedures for school involvement in removal and funeral.
14. **Day 2:** Students who are not coping are referred to psychologist - with parents' permission - on an individual basis. Important for the school to run as normal as possible.
15. **Day 3:** Crisis Team meet to plan critical incident stress debriefing response after the funeral in the next few days.
16. Discussion with fellow students, parents or colleagues on dealing with child's/teacher's belongings, their desk etc. What should be done with these items?

## 1. **Intervention Responsibilities:**

### **Leadership/Family Liaison/Communication**

- Confirm the death has occurred. Get accurate information
- Express sympathy to family, assure of school's support
- Ensure family know who is the contact person within the school
- Consult with family on school involvement in funeral. (Family wishes to be respected; be careful of wording)

- Organise the crisis response team to meet
- Prepare an announcement for staff/students
- Plan a staff meeting if required
- Prepare statement and distribute procedures to class teachers in breaking the news
- Devise a process for dealing with telephone enquiries from anxious parents
- Have written and/or verbal response to enquiries prepared.
- Notify BOM
- Prepare media statement
- Discourage any student or staff from dealing with the media
- Make decisions on who should attend funeral
- Draft letter to parents on the issue
- Should the school be closed on the day of the funeral? (Notification to parents/buses/visitors of closure?)

### **Intervention Responsibilities:**

#### **Pastoral Care:**

- Set up Crisis Team Room in the School. (SET Room 17 in main building)
- Outline services available to affected students during the first hours
- Assist class teacher of the class affected in breaking news
- Have guidelines for staff in dealing with students in distress i.e. information on grief responses, identifying those with need of counselling and support

- Take time with the most affected students in individual SET rooms
- Organise a class Prayer Service for mid morning, once all students have been notified
- Contact parents where some students request to go home
- Encourage those who feel able, to return to class
- Meet and support any distressed parents and staff
- Liaise with local clergy re: funeral
- Set up a Book of Condolences and candle in foyer, including a photo of the person if available

### Breaking the News to Students:

#### Guidelines for Class Teachers

- Only if the tragedy is confirmed, can it be relayed to students - tragic accident, untimely death, sudden death etc should be used.
- The class of the student who has died should be the first to be told by their class teacher and /or the Deputy Principal/Principal and/or Chairperson BOM.
- Other classes to be told by their class teachers and/or Principal/Deputy Principal
- Not every class is going to be traumatised, some students may not even know the deceased, but it is important to acknowledge the loss for the whole school community
- Tell the class you have sad news and it is difficult for you to do this
- Let them know the name of the person the news is about
- Let them know the facts, as you know them. (It is important to prevent rumours through misinformation)
- Encourage questions
- Let the class know of common reactions to tragic news

- The most common reaction is shock
  - Expect tears and outbursts
  - Don't allow a student to leave the classroom alone in a distressed state
  - Students must be supervised within the building while in a distressed state
  - Let them know that you will support them
  - Let them know who else is available to support them
  - Don't be afraid to let them know that you are also upset by the news
  - Allow them time to mingle and talk
  - Be attentive to identifying those who are not coping well with the news
  - You may need to remind students again who is there to help, as little information is assimilated once in shock
  - Let them know where the Crisis Response Team will be
  - Arrange to have refreshments ready also boxes of Kleenex
  - A short prayer for the deceased would be appropriate
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- Some children may need to stay with the Crisis Response Team for a period of time before returning to class
  - Encourage children to support their friends and each other
  - Some children may need to go home, (only if parents come and collect them)
  - Children in class may not be able to concentrate on the work of the class
  - Teachers will need to make allowances for them to talk in groups as the need arises.

**Appendix 11**

**Immediate, Medium and Long-term**

**Action and Roles: Checklist**

**1<sup>ST</sup> DAY**

TASK	NAME (KEY & SUPPORT)
GATHER ACCURATE INFORMATION	<b>Relevant Staff and Witnesses (accidents)</b>
CONTACT APPROPRIATE AGENCIES	<b>Principal</b>
CONVENE A MEETING WITH KEY STAFF	<b>Principal and Deputy</b>
ARRANGE SUPERVISION OF STUDENTS	<b>Deputy Principal</b>
HOLD STAFF MEETING	<b>ALL STAFF</b>
ORGANISE TIMETABLE FOR THE DAY	<b>Deputy Principal</b>
INFORM PARENTS	<b>Principal and parent liaison</b>
INFORM STUDENTS	<b>Staff</b>
MAKE CONTACT WITH THE BEREAVED FAMILY	<b>Chairperson/Principal/Deputy Principal</b>
DEALING WITH MEDIA	<b>Principal &amp; Chairperson</b>

## MEDIUM TERM ACTIONS AND ROLES ASSIGNED

### 24 -72 HOURS

TASK	NAME/GROUP
REVIEW THE EVENTS OF THE FIRST 24 HOURS	STAFF
ARRANGE SUPPORT FOR INDIVIDUAL/GROUPS OF STUDENTS, PARENTS ETC.	Principal/Student & parent Liaison
PLAN THE REINTEGRATION OF STUDENTS AND STAFF	Principal and Deputy. Staff and Student Liaison
PLAN VISITS TO INJURED	Deputy Principal
LIAISE WITH FAMILY RE FUNERAL ARRANGEMENTS/MEMORIAL SERVICE	Principal and Chairperson
ATTENDANCE/PARTICIPATION AT FUNERAL SERVICE ETC	STAFF
SCHOOL CLOSURE	BOM

## LONGER TERM ACTIONS AND ROLES ASSIGNED

### BEYOND 72 HOURS

<b>TASK</b>	<b>NAME/GROUP</b>
MONITOR STUDENTS FOR SIGNS OF CONTINUING STRESS	CLASS TEACHERS
EVALUATE RESPONSE TO INCIDENT AND AMEND CI PLAN APPROPRIATELY	STAFF/BOM
FORMALISE PLAN FOR FUTURE	STAFF/BOM
INFORM NEW STAFF/PUPILS	Deputy Principal
DECIDE ON APPROPRIATE WAYS TO DEAL WITH ANNIVERSARIES	Chair, Principal and Family

### Appendix IV

### USEFUL CONTACT NUMBERS

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<p><b>BARNARDOS</b></p> <p><b>Family Support Centre</b></p> <p><b>8/9, Ring Mahon Rd</b></p>	<p><b>021 4357679</b></p>
<p><b>SEEDLINGS</b></p>	<p><b>021 4275136</b></p> <p>This Peer Support Group for 12 to 18-year-olds deals specifically with the grief of adolescent and is facilitated by trained volunteers.</p>
<p><b>ISPCC</b></p>	<p><b>021 4509588</b></p> <p>The ISPCC offers a range of services for children who have experienced loss or bereavement</p>
<p><b>RAINBOW IRELAND</b></p>	<p><b>01 4734175</b></p> <p>Loreto Centre, Crumlin Road, Dublin 12.</p> <p>Organises support groups nationally for children and young adults of bereaved or separated families.</p>
<p><b>CHILDLINE</b></p>	<p><b>1800 666666</b></p>
<p><b>PARENTLINE</b></p>	<p><b>1890 927277</b></p>
<p><b>AWARE</b></p>	<p><b>1890 303302</b> <i>The Aware Helpline offers a non judgemental listening ear to people who may be distressed or worried, or just need someone to talk to.</i></p>
	<p>021-4364695   021-4321978</p>

<p><b>Bereaved Parents Support (The Compassionate Friends)</b></p>	<p>An Irish voluntary, non-denominational organisation of bereaved parents offering friendship, understanding &amp; support to anyone suffering bereavement especially those who have lost a child or children. Meeting 2nd Wednesday of the month at Sullivan's Quay School,</p>
<p><b>THE SAMARITANS</b></p>	<p><b>1850 609090</b></p>
<p><b>PIETA HOUSE</b></p>	<p><b>1800 247247</b></p>
<p><b>Irish Friends of the Suicide Bereaved</b></p>	<p>021 4294 318 Support Group for people who are bereaved by the suicide of a relative or friend. Meetings every Wednesday at the Planning Office, St. Finbarr's Hospital, Douglas Road, Cork. Contact in writing to P.O. Box 162, Cork</p>

**Appendix V**

**SAMPLE LETTER TO PARENTS**

Dear Parents,

The school has experienced (the sudden death, untimely death accidental injury) of one of our students. We are deeply saddened by the deaths/events.

*(Brief details of the incident, and in the event of a death, perhaps some positive remembrances of the person lost)*

We have support structures in place to help your child cope with this tragedy. *(Elaborate)*

It is possible that your child may have some feelings that he/she may like to discuss with you. You can help your child by taking time to listen and encouraging them to express their feelings. It is important to give truthful information that is appropriate to their age.

If you would like advice you may contact the following people at the school. *(Details)*.

Principal

**SAMPLE LETTER REQUESTING CONSENT FOR  
INVOLVEMENT OF OUTSIDE PROFESSIONALS**

Dear Parents,

Following the recent (tragedy, untimely death of x) we have arranged professional support for students in school who need particular help. (x...) is available to help us with this work. The support will usually consist of talking to children, either in small groups or on a one-to-one basis and offering reassurance and advice as appropriate.

Your son/daughter has been identified as one of the students who would benefit from meeting with the x..... If you would like your child to receive this support, please sign the attached permission slip and return to the school by .....

If you would like further information on the above or to talk to the psychologist, please indicate this on the slip or telephone the school.

Principal

.....

I consent to having our daughter/son met by .....

I understand that my daughter/son may meet x..... in a individual or group session depending on the arrangements which are thought to be most appropriate.

Name of Student: \_\_\_\_\_

Class: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

I would like my daughter/son .....to avail of the support being offered by x.....

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

**Critical Incident Management Team/Crisis Reponse Team**

Team	Landline	Mobile	Emergency Contact
Fr Kevin O' Regan	021 4361711	087 2508020	
Sheelagh O' Leary		087 4170257	Denis 087 2410811
Rosemary Lee	021 4376933	086 8235809	Yann 086 8392080
Pamela Thornhill	021 4893673	087 2225125	Anthony 087 6755791
Miriam Kenny		086 3527961	Brendan 0868757989

Niamh Nic Gearailt		086 3212420	Michael 087 6790889
Garda Aoife Walsh		021 4857671	
Paul Hannigan		086 1732056	
Sharon Galvin		087 2359538	Eddie 0862100783
Mary Atkins Senior Psychologist		0761108450	

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[1] Source: Responding to Critical Incidents in Schools – National Educational Psychological Services NEPS.

[2] A critical incident team “is a group of individuals from the staff of the school who know the community, the students and each other well enough to make the necessary decisions called for when an incident occurs” (Mary Schoenfeldt).