

# Critical Incident Management Plan

## Background/Definition

A critical incident is one where an incident or sequence of events overwhelms the normal coping mechanisms of part of or all of the school community and/or disrupts the normal functioning of the school.

For example:

- ❖ The death of a member of the school community, pupil or staff member, through sudden death, suicide, terminal illness or accident.
- ❖ An accident involving pupils or staff either on or off of the school premises.
- ❖ A physical attack on a member of the school community or intrusion into the school.
- ❖ The disappearance of a member of the school community.
- ❖ An accident or tragedy in the wider school community.

Critical incidents are usually unexpected. The key to managing a critical incident is planning. Having a plan in place allows staff to cope more effectively and to maintain a sense of control. A critical incident plan works best when there is already a caring ethos in the school. This is achieved through the creation of a physically and psychologically safe environment for students in the school.

To implement a Management Plan it is essential to have a trained team in place in the school. This team should meet regularly to update and review this plan.

## Critical Incident Management Team

This will consist of:

- Principal. Nicola Barrett: (086)3632276
- Deputy Principal. Gillian Murphy: (087)6438731
- Guidance Counsellor. Mary O'Connell: (087)1378494
- Year Head/ SPHE Teacher. Mary Forrest: (086)3853834
- RE Teacher. Barry O'Shea. (086)1637906

## Critical Incident Management Room

Parents Room.

## Immediate procedure to be followed

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

1. Factual information will be obtained from the relevant sources by the Principal.
2. Principal makes initial contact with the family and follows their wishes in relation to a response from the school.
3. Contact outside agencies such as NEPS.
4. A meeting of the Critical Incident Management Team agree a statement of facts, delegate responsibilities, organise a timetable for the day, and where necessary, prepare an information letter for parents or information for the media.
5. The Principal will call a meeting to brief all staff.

6. Any necessary supervision of the students will be arranged by the Deputy Principal.
7. The Principal will make contact with any family member/students who may need to be told individually of the death.
8. Students will be given factual information about the event/situation by their class teachers or a nominated teacher on the basis of the prepared factual statement and informs the students of the routine etc. for the day(s) ahead.
9. The Student Support Team, in consultation with other members of staff, will identify any students who may be particularly vulnerable.
10. There will be flexibility in the timetable to allow teachers and students to come to terms with the tragic news while also being aware that it is important to maintain as much as possible the normal timetable of the day.
11. A member of the team will designate a room for use by distressed students.
12. A prayer service will be organised, if appropriate to the situation. The ideal situation in this instance would be if permission for same could be obtained from the family by the Principal.
13. Principal only meets with the media. Others are asked not to speak to the media.
14. Counselling for anybody in need will be facilitated and support organised as appropriate with the assistance of the NEPS team.
15. A time for a follow-up meeting of the critical incident management team will be agreed on the same day.

As a general principle a normal school routine will be maintained where possible. The Principal will request a decision from the BOM and the school inspector if closing the school is deemed appropriate by the critical incident management team.

### **Procedures for the following days:**

1. A memory to the deceased is displayed in an appropriate room in the school with the family's permission. This can be in the form of a picture. A condolence book may be made available to both students and staff. This can be maintained for one week at the end of which there is a prayer service and the memory is removed.
2. At risk students will be identified by the Student Support team monitored by Guidance Counsellor and class teachers.
3. Students are kept informed by the Principal about the facts of the situation.
4. Students will be given opportunities to express their feelings/talk about the incident/situation in class/in group, as appropriate.
5. The Principal will liaise with family/families directly affected to ascertain how they would like the situation to be managed/to find out about arrangements (funeral/visiting) with a view to conveying this information to staff and students.
6. Management team re-convenes to review the situation.
7. Arrangements will be made for participation by staff/students in a Liturgy if this is appropriate to the situation.
8. The involvement of students in any funeral or other services needs to be discussed. This requires invitation, planning and review. The families involved need to be consulted, the students invited to take part, time given to prepare for this participation and, finally, a debriefing of those concerned. While it would be appropriate for the deceased student's classmates to attend the church services and the burial, it may be inappropriate for large numbers to be present. The presence of large numbers of young people at such highly charged events could prove to be inappropriate as well as being upsetting for individual students and for the parents of the deceased student. **At all times the rights of the deceased family to privacy must be respected.**
9. Support for individuals or groups (including staff) will be arranged if necessary.

10. Students from the year/student council to which the student belonged attend the funeral bearing a wreath and representing the school.

***Should a critical incident arise outside of school time such as the holidays:***

- a. Principal notifies staff to the best of her ability.
- b. Implement 1, 2, 3, 4, 7, 9 of Procedure Guidelines immediately.
- c. Follow up with 5, 7, 8, 10.

## **Breaking the news to students**

### Guidelines for Class Teachers

- ❖ Students will be told that ..... has passed away. Suicide will not be confirmed by any member of the school community as this is a matter only for the coroner. Let them know the facts as you know them. It is important to prevent rumors through misinformation.
- ❖ The class of the student who has died should be the first to be told, with Principal, Counsellor and class teacher present.
- ❖ Other classes to be told by their class teachers.
- ❖ 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.
- ❖ 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. Students will be accompanied to the Prayer Room by a member of the SST and a friend.
- ❖ Let them know that you will 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 to one another in groups.
- ❖ Explain how they can support one another.
- ❖ 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 (possibly base classroom).
- ❖ Arrange to have refreshments ready, also boxes of tissues.
- ❖ A short prayer for the deceased would be appropriate.
- ❖ If the students appear ready, a year group assembly may be held later in the day.
- ❖ **Some** students may be able to continue and go to class

## **After the event**

- ❖ Monitor students for signs of continuing distress.
- ❖ Refer, if necessary.
- ❖ Arrange to display a memory of the student in the school for one week, e.g. picture, candles, flowers, messages, cards, etc.
- ❖ The Principal will gather the student's belongings with a family member.
- ❖ Principal returns same to family on a follow-up visit.

- ❖ Return of other members of family to school.
- ❖ School may organise a memorial event
- ❖ Evaluate response to incident and amend plan appropriately.
  - ↳ What went well?
  - ↳ Where were the gaps?
  - ↳ What was most/least helpful?
  - ↳ Have all necessary onward referrals been made?
  - ↳ Is there any unfinished business?
- ❖ Review plan with NEPS' psychologist.
- ❖ Inform new staff of incident and of any students who may still be affected.
- ❖ Ensure that new staff are aware of policy and procedures.
- ❖ If affected students move to a new school, inform the principal.
- ❖ Decide on appropriate ways to deal with anniversaries, etc. and be sensitive to significant days (e.g.) birthdays, graduation, etc.
- ❖ In service for all staff.
- ❖ Training for team.
- ❖ Should a critical incident happen during holidays or at the weekend, Principal should contact the team to meet and plan.

### **Contacting staff if tragedy occurs over a weekend/holidays**

1. Whoever first hears the news to contact the Principal or Deputy Principal.
2. In the event of the death of a colleague, the Principal will contact the SST, each of whom will have 5/6 contact numbers for staff.
3. If it is the death of a student, the Crisis Team need to be informed immediately. Other staff will be informed later.

#### **In summary**

##### Telling the students

- ❖ Give facts as known.
- ❖ Create a safe and supportive space for the students where they can share their reactions and feelings.
- ❖ Advise them over their possible reactions over the next few days.
- ❖ In the case of suicide, avoid glorifying the victim and sensationalising the suicide.
- ❖ Advise the students on the support that is available to them.
- ❖ Give them the routine for the remainder of the day.
- ❖ Use "Resource Material" as appropriate.

##### During the day

- ❖ Prepare a letter to go home to each parent.
- ❖ Principal will contact or visit family to discuss funeral arrangements and discuss participation by the school.

##### After school

- ❖ Review the day - how students and staff are coping.
- ❖ Information on follow up support.
- ❖ Discuss closure of school for funeral and Principal may seek permission from Board of Management for same.

- ❖ Arrange for participation in funeral in accordance with family's wishes - involve classmates and close friends.

Programme for following day (if not the day of the funeral).

## Staff Meeting

- ❖ A meeting of all staff will be called by Principal as soon as possible
- ❖ The facts as known.
- ❖ An opportunity for staff to express their views and feelings.
- ❖ Give feedback from team meeting.
- ❖ How the facts should be shared with students and identify students at risk.
- ❖ Information about outside agencies that have been contacted, or are involved and the supports that will be put in place for both students and staff.
- ❖ Identify vulnerable students that may need to be told individually (e.g.) close friends, relatives, those that have been recently bereaved.
- ❖ Be conscious of vulnerable members of staff and accommodate them. They may need to opt out of classroom work.
- ❖ Encourage staff to give feedback during the day.
- ❖ Ask staff and students not to speak to the media. A person will be appointed for this.
- ❖ Resources to be kept on file by Principal and accessed if necessary.

## The Range of Reactions to a Critical Incident

Each individual has his/her own way of dealing with feelings, loss and tragedy. There is no right or wrong way to react and any or all of the following can be experienced:

### Feelings

Fear  
Guilt  
Shame  
Anger  
Regret  
Loneliness  
Anxiety  
Shock  
Yearning  
Numbness  
Confusion  
Isolation

### Behaviour

Bedwetting  
Nightmares  
Thumb sucking  
Over dependency  
Social Withdrawal  
Tantrums  
Mood Swings  
Loss of Concentration  
Forgetfulness  
Irritability  
Tearfulness  
Insecure Feelings  
Separation Anxiety  
School Refusal  
Physical/Verbal Aggression

## Misuse of drugs, including alcohol

### Physical

|               |                              |
|---------------|------------------------------|
| Tiredness     | Gastrointestinal Problems    |
| Sleeplessness | Bowel/Bladder Problems       |
| Headaches     | Loss or increase in appetite |

### Thoughts

|                    |
|--------------------|
| Disbelief          |
| Denial             |
| Sense of unreality |

### **Stages in the grieving process**

It is acknowledged that while there are distinct stages/phases in the grieving process, different people may go through these stages in different sequences and at different paces. Generally the grieving process in adults is said to take about two years while with children and adolescents it may be over a more extended timeframe with different issues arising as they go through developmental milestones.

#### Denial, numbness, shock (up to six weeks)

- ❖ Death of the person may be denied.
- ❖ Emerging feelings may be suppressed.
- ❖ Refusal to talk about the death.
- ❖ Bereaved keeps very busy to avoid thinking about death.
- ❖ Bereaved may show signs of confusion and forget everyday routines.
- ❖ Children in shock may display either silent withdrawal or outbursts of crying/screaming.

#### Acute grief/searching and longing for deceased (6 weeks to 4 months)

- ❖ Acute sadness - crying.
- ❖ Physical pangs of pain including loss of appetite and disturbed sleep.
- ❖ Emotional pain accompanied by dejection, hopelessness, lack of concentration.
- ❖ Fears of life after death, nightmares, ghosts.
- ❖ Disorganisation.
- ❖ Strong guilt feelings and questioning of self and others, particularly in the case of a sudden death.
- ❖ Feelings of anger at the departed for leaving them.
- ❖ Bereaved may reject offers to comfort them.

#### Adaptation to life without the deceased (6 months to 18 months)

- ❖ People begin to adjust to their lives without the lost person.
- ❖ Sense of isolation.
- ❖ Fearful of forgetting the deceased.
- ❖ Less crying and irritability.
- ❖ Exacerbation of existing personality problems. Children with low self-esteem may be at a greater risk of emotional behavioural difficulties.

#### Re-organisation

- ❖ Getting on with life.
- ❖ Returned sense of humour and play.

- ❖ Able to participate emotionally in new relationships.
- ❖ Changed relationship with the deceased - able to think of the deceased without pain.
- ❖ Reduction in physical/emotional symptoms.
- ❖ Less guilt.

### **Identifying students at risk**

- ❖ Close friends and relatives of the deceased.
- ❖ Students with a history of suicide attempts/self harm.
- ❖ Students who experienced a recent loss, death of a friend or relative, family divorce or separation, break-up with a boyfriend/girlfriend.
- ❖ Students who have been bereaved by a suicide in the past.
- ❖ Students with a psychiatric history.
- ❖ Students with a history of substance abuse.
- ❖ Students with a history of sexual abuse.
- ❖ Non-communicative students who have difficulty talking about their feelings.
- ❖ Students experiencing serious family difficulties, including serious mental or physical illness.
- ❖ Less able students.

Staff should be vigilant around the time of the inquest and the anniversary of the student's death. A diary will be kept in the school office which will inform staff members of any anniversaries.

### **Useful Contact Numbers**

|                                   |             |
|-----------------------------------|-------------|
| Canon Murphy, P.P                 | 085 8511897 |
| Barnardos                         | 01-4530335  |
| The Samaritans                    | 1850-609090 |
| Childline                         | 1800-666666 |
| Parentline                        | 1890-927277 |
| Aware                             | 01-6766166  |
|                                   | 1890-303302 |
| National Suicide Bereavement      |             |
| Support Network                   | 024-95561   |
| Family Ministry, 34 Paul St, Cork | 021 4275136 |

## **Appendix 1**

### **Letter to the Parents**

Dear Parents

The school has experienced (the sudden death,) of one of our students. We are deeply saddened by this news.

(Brief details of the incident and, in the event of a death, perhaps some positive remembrance of the person who had died.)

Support structures are in place to help you daughter cope with this situation. (Elaborate)

It is possible that your daughter may have some feelings that she may like to discuss with you. You can help her by taking time to listen and encourage her to express her feelings. It is important to give her truthful information that is appropriate to her age.

If you would like advice or assistance you may contact the Guidance Counsellor of the school.

Yours sincerely

---

## **Appendix 2**

### **Prayers**

#### **Prayer Service in the event of Death**

*(Death of either student or staff member)*

Blessed are they who mourn. This beatitude offers us comfort at this difficult time. We know that Jesus shares our suffering because he too, suffered when he became one of us. In fact it is in and through his life, death and resurrection that we can find hope at this difficult time. We know that he loves us tenderly and walks with us every step of the way, ready to help and to heal us.

#### **Opening Prayer**

Dear God, the death of (name) is very difficult for us. We know that your love is far greater and more powerful than ours. We pray that you give our friend (name) your peace and your joy. Let his/her memory be a light what shines within each of us as we continue on this earthly journey. We put our pain and sorrow before you, Lord, as we know that you are the source of comfort. We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

#### **Psalm**

O God, you are my God, for you I long, for you my soul is thirsting  
My body pines for you like a dry weary land without water  
So I gaze on you in the sanctuary to see your strength and your glory  
For your love is better than life, my lips will speak your praise  
So I will bless you all my life. In your name I will lift up my hands,



My soul shall be fitted as with banquet, my mouth shall praise you with joy.

On my bed I remember you, on you I muse through the night.

For you have been my help, in the shadow of your wings I rejoice.

My soul clings to you

Your right hand holds me fast

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit. As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, world without end. Amen

### **Prayer Service in the Event of a Tragedy**

Life holds so many disappointments for us. We accept that accident and tragedies are apart of life. We believe Jesus that you endured the cross which was a great tragedy. We know that in turning to you we will receive strength and courage from you to live with every situation, as you have said "come to me all you who labour and are over burdened and I will give you rest". we gather to pray for our friends who have been involved in a serious accident. We ask for your healing love to touch them and help them, and also for their families who are upset and worried for their loved ones who have been hurt.

### **Word of God**

And Jesus said: "I am with you always, yes to the end of time. Do not let your hearts be troubled, trust in God still and trust in me. Do not worry about your life. Consider the ravens; they neither sow nor reap, and yet God feeds them. I am the Way, the Truth and the Life. Do not be afraid."

### **Prayers of Intercession**

We are a people who depend on you Lord; we gather to pray for ourselves but most especially for those who need our prayers at this time.

1. Lord, help us to embrace the future with confidence even in the midst of suffering and disappointment.  
Lord hear us
2. For our friends who have been injured and will have to face the future depending on the assistance and help of others.  
Lord hear us.
3. For their parents, brothers and sisters and all of us who know them. Guide us in making a genuine effort to remember that they need us as friends.  
Lord hear us.
4. Lord God, we ask your daily protection on all of us as we come and go along the road of life. May we always respect the gift of life we have received from you and give you thanks.  
Lord hear us.

### **Reflection**

The Lord is my shepherd, he always leads me. No matter what path I take I know that the Lord is there to redirect me. He does not cast judgement against me, he does not keep records. There is simply love and a willingness so lead me and direct me. This provides me with great comfort and confidence in who I am. The Lord is full of forgiveness and love, how could I ever turn away.

Bless the Lord, for he shall comfort those who turn to him. When I am lost, the Lord shall lead me, when I am in despair, the Lord shall comfort me, when I am in hatred, the Lord will extend his love, when I am in darkness, the Lord will shed his light. Who other than the Lord can offers this, love without limit that holds no grudges. His love always welcomes us. How blessed is the Lord my God.

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

1. Dear Jesus,

\_\_\_\_\_, a member of our school community and friend to many of us, has died, and we come to You today to give thanks for the gift of her life, and for all of the ways in which she touched our lives

Comfort her family and be very close to them in their sadness and loss.

Help us to help and support each other, especially those within our school who feel most deeply the loss of \_\_\_\_\_. Be with her classmates, and with the classmates of her family members in a very special way.

Help us to always care for each other in our school, and say thank you to You every day for all of the people who love us and help us.

We place \_\_\_\_\_ into Your loving hands Jesus, and ask You to receive her into Your heavenly Kingdom where she will be happy forever and ever.

Amen.

2. God our Father,

Your power brings us to birth,  
Your providence guides our lives,  
and by Your command we return to dust.

Lord, those who die still live in Your presence,  
their lives change but do not end.

I pray in hope for my family,  
relatives and friends,  
and for all the dead known to You alone.

In company with Christ,  
Who died and now lives,  
may they rejoice in Your kingdom,  
where all our tears are wiped away.  
Unite us together again in one family,  
to sing Your praise forever and ever. Amen.

3. Prayer Resources God, we come for comfort in our grief. The absence of [name] creates within our lives an emptiness that hurts. The darkness of grief clouds our vision and hides your light. Come to us. Hold us, heal us and strengthen our weak spirits with sure faith in the Resurrection. Amen
  
4. Most merciful God, whose wisdom is beyond our understanding, surround the family of N. with your love, that they may not be overwhelmed by their loss, but have confidence in your goodness, and strength to meet the days to come. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen
  
5. Lord of all gentleness, surround us with your care and comfort us in our sorrow, for we grieve at the loss of N. As you washed N. in the waters of baptism and welcomed her into the life of heaven, so call us one day to be united with her and share forever the joy of your kingdom. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

### **Appendix 3**

#### **Principal's Check List/Items for Consideration**

The following is a checklist of things to consider on the morning of a tragedy. They are not written in order of what must come first etc. It is important for a Principal to take time to plan what he/she must do and what is appropriate to say to all concerned.

- ❖ Take time to let the news sink in.
- ❖ Call a meeting of the Student Support Team, include Year Head and Tutor of deceased student (see notes on same).
- ❖ Put together as much factual information as possible.
- ❖ Inform staff what has happened.
- ❖ Discuss school routine for the first day with the staff.
- ❖ Identify particular students who may need to be told individually, (e.g.) close friends, relatives, etc.
- ❖ Inform the pupils that a student has tragically died and explain that this is something everyone will find difficult to cope with. Explain school routine for the day and support and back-up for the students.
- ❖ Contact NEPS.
- ❖ Make contact with the family of the deceased.
- ❖ Meet with key staff who can offer student support and decide on the format for this.
- ❖ Decide on any other arrangements which need to be made on the first day, (e.g.) prayers for the student and his/her family.
- ❖ Check in with staff room during the day and keep abreast of what is happening in the school.
- ❖ Be aware of any particular teachers who may be particularly distressed, (e.g.) teachers who are recently bereaved themselves or who have had prior experience of suicide in their family.
- ❖ Encourage staff to come to you during the day and let you know how things are going.
- ❖ Find out details of the funeral etc. and communicate this to staff and students.
- ❖ Make contact with the bereaved family.
- ❖ At the end of the first day, review events with staff and make plans for the following day.
- ❖ Make staff aware of students who are particularly vulnerable and what supports will be available

to them.

- ❖ If there is a likelihood of interest from the media discuss a strategy to deal with any such requests.

## **Long Term:**

- ❖ In-service for Form Teachers and staff to help them explore death, dying and grief with students.

## **Appendix 4**

### **Suicide - Indicators and Intervention Measures**

#### Ottawa Pointers

1. Loss of interest in usual activities.
2. Withdrawal from social contact.
3. Difficulty in concentrating, problems with judgement and memory.
4. Dramatic fall-off in school performance.
5. Feelings of sadness, emptiness, hopelessness may be expressed in essays.
6. Sleep disturbance - decreased, or sometimes increased.
7. Increased overt displays of anger and rage, verbal or physical.
8. Excessive use of drugs and/or alcohol.
9. Promiscuous behaviour.
10. Uncharacteristic delinquent behaviour/thrill seeking.
11. Lack of supportive relationship with friends or family.
12. Previous suicidal threats, gestures, attempts.
13. Statements, verbal or written, revealing wish to die or preoccupation with death.
14. Nihilistic comments - life is meaningless, filled with misery.
15. Gestures to be noticed - self mutilation, scratches.
16. Planning for death, making final arrangements, giving away treasured possessions.
17. Suddenly becoming cheerful after long depression (relief when decision taken).

#### **What to do: Take It Seriously - have a talk with the young person keeping some principles in mind:**

1. Remain in control - don't panic, act slowly.
2. Encourage expression of feelings and accept them (give time).
3. Avoid judgemental comments or empty reassurance.
4. Avoid promises you can't keep (e.g. secrecy; call me any time; confidentially).
5. Empathise and let them know you care (biggest single preventative is knowing someone cares).
6. Encourage them to see a counsellor or therapist (carefully).
7. Inform Parents and Management of school.
8. If seriously worried, don't leave them alone.
9. Seek advice and support yourself (nobody should carry the worry about a suicidal youngster alone).

## **Suicide**

### What Not to Do

1. Don't assume a youngster is not the "type" to commit suicide.
2. Don't leave a child/teenager alone if you believe the risk of suicide is imminent.
3. Don't act shocked at whatever is told to you.
4. Don't debate whether suicide is right or wrong. This may make him/her feel more guilty and intensify the depression.
5. Don't take responsibility for "saving the youth", get additional help.
6. Don't feel that you have to have an answer to all the child's questions. If you do not know the meaning of life, say so. Make it clear that you are there to help. Not to solve problems.
7. Don't be afraid to be the first to mention suicide. Generally it comes as a relief to the youth that you are willing to discuss the subject.
8. Don't deny or cover up the youngster's feelings or intents. Don't be judgemental. Acknowledge his/her feelings without reinforcing the negative. "I believe you are feeling miserable right now. Let's talk about it".
9. Don't abandon the youth because the problems are too overwhelming. Follow through in getting him/her help. Don't be another loss or rejection to him/her.
10. Don't wait too long because you hope he/she will get over it. It can't hurt to talk about his feelings.

### **Appendix 5**

#### **Trauma Response Plan**

Student Support Team meeting (include Year Head and Class Tutor of deceased student)

1. Agree on a common statement with regard to the crisis giving the facts as they are known.
2. Decide who tells:
  - ❖ The class/student
  - ❖ Close friends of the student
  - ❖ Teachers of the student
  - ❖ All other teachers and staff of school
3. Decide how to inform classes and teachers, (e.g.) through pastoral care/tutor time block by block, through tutor system etc. avoid whole school announcements.
4. Discuss and decide on school routine for the first day including visit to home of the bereaved, time out for staff and students.
5. Arrange a further meeting for later in the day to discuss school routine for the following days, arrangements for the funeral etc.
6. Staff:
  - a. Ask for volunteers from staff to inform students in no larger than class size.
  - b. Allow time for Pastoral team to go through guidelines with these staff members on how to do this. Highlight the support that will be available in the school for students and staff.
  - c. Distribute guidelines on bereavement to all staff.
  - d. Arrange for a meeting of Religion teachers to discuss prayer services/assemblies for the day beginning with the year group of the deceased student.

#### Pastoral Care Co-ordinator

Contact the available support services, (i.e.) Health Board Crisis Service or private bereavement counselling service.

Home/School Liaison Officer


Be available for visit to home of bereaved to check out needs of the family in relation to school presence at the funeral, and funeral arrangements.

What can you do when a child says "I want to kill myself"

1. Try to keep your own shock under control.
2. Reply with an open question.
3. Try to find out how long they have been feeling this way.
4. Who else have they told?
5. Can you speak to Mum or Dad?
6. If "everything" is wrong, start checking "everything" (i.e.) parents, school, friends.

| Contact                  | Name | Telephone |
|--------------------------|------|-----------|
| School Doctor            |      |           |
| Local Medical Centre     |      |           |
| Fire Brigade             |      |           |
| Gardaí                   |      |           |
| Hospital Emergency Dept. |      |           |
| Social Services          |      |           |
| Local Clergy             |      |           |
| NEPS                     |      |           |
| Press / Media            |      |           |

This policy was adopted by the Board of Management of Presentation Secondary School, Ballyphehane.

Signed: 

Dr. FJ Steele  
Chairperson

Date: 26-06-17