St. Conleth’s N.S.

Kilconly,

Tuam,

Co. Galway

**Critical Incident Policy**

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**Introductory Statement and Rationale**

St. Conleth’s NS, aims to protect the well-being of its students by providing a safe and nurturing environment at all times. The school has taken a number of measures to create a coping, supportive and caring ethos in the school. The school has formulated a number of policies and procedures to be followed with a view to ensuring the physical and psychological safety of both staff and students during the normal course of the school day and in the event of a critical incident. Such policies would include

• Health and Safety Policy

• Anti Bullying Policy

• Code of Behaviour.

• S.P.H.E Programme

**Definition of Critical Incident:**

St. Conleth’s N.S.recognises a critical incident to be “an incident or sequence of events that overwhelms the normal coping mechanisms of the school, and disrupts the normal running of the school”. Critical incidents may involve students, staff, the school or the local community. Examples of a critical incident might be;

• The death of a member of the school community, through sudden death, accident, suicide or terminal illness

• A serious accident or tragedy in the school and local community

• Serious damage to the school through fire, flooding, other natural disasters, vandalism etc.

•The disappearance of a member of the school community

• A physical attack on a staff member or student

• Intrusion into the school.

**Aim of Policy**:

The aim of the Critical Incident Policyis that in the event of such an incident as outlined above, the plan will help staff and management to react quickly and effectively and to maintain control of the situation. The plan will also help the school to return to normality and routine as soon as possible and limit the effects of the incident on staff and students.

**Critical Incident Management Team**:

St Conleth’sN.S. has set up a Critical Incident Management Team consisting of the following personnel.

The Principal

The Deputy Principal

The School Secretary

The Chairperson of the Board of Management

The Critical Incident Management Team may co-opt other members of staff to assist them, should they deem it necessary. The Principal will act as Team Leader or in his/her absence, the Deputy Principal.

**Role of Team Leader:**

• The team leader alerts team members to the crisis and convenes a meeting of the team

• Co-ordinates/delegates tasks of the other team members.

• Liaises with the Board of Management and the Department of Education and Science

• In case of bereavement, liaises with the bereaved family

Other areas of responsibilities, which may be delegated by the team leader to other members of the team would include:

• Contacting Emergency support services

• Briefing and advising the staff and noting their feelings and concerns.

• Organising the supervision of students in the school

• Keeping staff updated on information/developments /progress

• Meeting students to brief them on the situation

• Taking care of “Vulnerable students/vulnerable teachers”

• Liaising with external agencies for support or referrals

• Meeting with individual parents or groups of parents.

• Visiting bereaved families or families closely associated with the incident

• Preparing a Press release and liaising with the media, while being mindful of GDPR.

• Preparation of an “Incident Room” . (The incident room at present in St. Conleth’s N.S. is in the Learning Support room. It is a quiet space, offering minimal disruptions).

**Record Keeping:**

All team members will keep written records of phone calls, letters, meetings interventions etc.

**Confidentiality:**

The school is conscious of its responsibility to protect the privacy and good name of people involved in any incident and will be sensitive to the consequences of any public statements and press releases.(See GDPR Policy).

SAMPLE LETTER TO PARENTS/GUARDIANS

Dear Parents/Guardians

The school has experienced (the sudden death/injury) to one of our students/staff. We are deeply saddened by this death/injury (Brief details of the incident, and in the case of death, perhaps some positive remembrances of persons 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 to him/her and encouraging him/her to express his/her feelings. It is important to give truthful information that is appropriate to his/her age. If you would like any advice or support you may contact the following people at school (Details) Principal.

Sample letter requesting consent for Involvement of Outside Professionals.

Dear Parents/Guardians, Following the recent (tragedy/ death of x) we have arranged specialist support for students in the 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 child has been identified as one of the students who would benefit from meeting with (X). If you would like your child to receive this support, please sign the attached permission slip and return it to the school by ….. If you would like further information on the above or if you would like to talk to the psychologist, please indicate this on the slip, or contact the school Principal. I/We consent to having our child meet with ………….. I understand that my child may meet x in an individual or group session, depending on the arrangements that are thought most appropriate.

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

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

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

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (Parents /Guardians)

**USEFUL CONTACT NUMBERS:**

NEPS, Galway[076 110 8831](https://www.google.com/search?safe=strict&ei=Z-ZiXLDfNPXdxgPtqLnoCQ&q=neps+galway+phone+number&oq=NEPS+Galway&gs_l=psy-ab.1.0.0i71l8.0.0..25987...0.0..0.0.0.......0......gws-wiz.zZjK3K-ZItE)

Inspire (Carecall)[028 9032 8474](tel:028%209032%208474)

TUSLA[(091) 546 235](https://www.google.com/search?q=TUSLA+contact+number+tuam&oq=TUSLA+contact+number+tuam&aqs=chrome..69i57.13698j1j4&sourceid=chrome&ie=UTF-8" \o "Call via Hangouts)

Tuam Garda Station [(093) 70840](https://www.google.com/search?safe=strict&ei=MudiXMjXEeui1fAP0bGY-Ag&q=tuam+garda+station+contact+number&oq=Tuam+garda+stat&gs_l=psy-ab.1.2.0j0i67l2j0i22i30j0i67j38.70087.73876..75499...1.0..0.87.1236.16......0....1..gws-wiz.......0i71j35i39j0i131i67j0i20i263j0i131.TRu28ZX5FJo)

Tuam Medical Centre (093) 37800

Rainbows, Tuam[(093) 60364](https://www.google.com/search?q=rainbows+tuam&oq=rainbows+tuam&aqs=chrome.0.69i59.3246j1j4&sourceid=chrome&ie=UTF-8)

BARNARDOS 01450355

THE SAMARITANS 1850609090

CHILDLINE 1800666666

PARENTLINE 1890927277

AWARE 016766166 1890303302

NATIONAL SUICIDE BEREAVEMENT SUPPORT 02495561

RAINBOWS 014734175

BEREAVEMENT COUNSELLING SERVICE 018391766 BEREAVEMENT COUNSELLING 016767727