

Scoil Naomh Úna, Shielbaggan

Policy on Responding to Critical Incidents

Name of School:	Scoil Naomh Úna, Shielbaggan
Address:	Shielbaggan, New Ross, Co. Wexford
Telephone:	086 0210524
School Type:	Diocesan mixed National School, under the patronage of the Bishop of Ferns and funded by the Department of Education and Skills.
Enrolment:	32 pupils.
Staff:	2 class Teachers, 1 Shared Special Educational Needs Teacher 1 Part-time Secretary and 1 Part-time cleaner.

Introduction:

In Scoil Naomh Úna, we aim to protect the well being of our pupils and staff by providing a nurturing environment at all times. The Staff, in consultation with the Board of Management and Parents' Association has drawn up a critical incident management plan as one element of the school's policies and plans. The staff has consulted the following resource documents:

- When Tragedy Strikes: Guidelines for Effective Critical Incident Management in School (INTO/Ulster Teachers Union 2000)
- Responding to critical Incidents; Guidelines for Schools (NEPS 2007).
- Our aim is to establish a Critical Incident Management Team (CIMT) to implement this plan.

Define what you mean by the term "critical incident".

The staff and management of Scoil Naomh Úna, recognise a critical incident to be "an accident or sequence of events that overwhelms the normal coping mechanism of the school". Critical incidents may involve one or more students or staff members, or members of our local community. Types of incidents might include:

- The death of a member of the school community through accident, violence, suicide or suspected suicide or other unexpected death.
- An intrusion into the school
- An accident involving members of the school community
- An accident/tragedy in the wider community
- Serious damage to the school building through fire, flood, vandalism, etc.
- The disappearance of a member of the school community

Aim

The aim of the CIMT is to help school management and staff to react 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.

Creation of a coping supportive and caring ethos in the school

We 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 measures to address both the physical and psychological safety of the school community.

Physical Safety

- Evacuation plan formulated
- Regular fire drills occur
- Fire exits and extinguishers are regularly checked.

Rules of the playground

Rules of the playground are enforced by teachers on duty and absolutely forbid any form of horseplay and/or fighting. Helmets must be worn during hurling/camogie sessions. Health and Safety audits are to be carried out by the Safety Officer and a Board of Management Representative on a very regular basis.

Psychological Safety

The management and staff of Scoil Naomh Úna 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.

- Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE) is 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; conflict management; problem solving; help – seeking; bullying; decision making and prevention of alcohol and drug misuse. Promotion of mental health is an integral part of this provision
- Staff have access to training for their role in SPHE
- Staff are familiar with the Child Protection Guidelines and Procedures and details of how to proceed with suspicions or disclosures
- 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.

- The school has a clear policy on bullying and deals with bullying in accordance with this policy.
- Students who are identified as being at risk are reported to the Principal and 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.
- Staff are informed about how to access support for themselves through the Employee Assistance Services for Teachers: phone: 1800-411057

Critical Incident Management Team (CIMT)

A CIMT has been established inline with best practice. The members of the team were selected on a voluntary basis and will retain their roles for at least one school year. The members of the team will meet annually to review and updated the policy and plan. Each member of the team has a dedicated critical incident folder. This contains a copy of the policy and plan and materials particular to their role, to be used in the event of an incident.

Roles

The key roles will be covered as follows:

- Team Leader
- Garda liaison
- Staff liaison
- Student liaison
- Parent liaison
- Community liaison
- Media liaison
- Administrator

Please see attached Appendix 1 for Responsibilities of each role.

Record Keeping

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

School Secretary, Anne Keating or her replacement will have a key role in receiving and logging telephone calls, sending letters, photocopying materials etc.

Confidentiality and good name considerations of Scoil Naomh Úna.

The management and staff of Scoil Naomh Úna 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 mind, and will seek to ensure that students do so also. For instance, the term “suicide” will not be used unless there is solid information that death was due to suicide, and the family

involved consents to its use. The phrases “tragic death” or “sudden death” may be used instead. Similarly, the word “murder” should not be used until it is legally established that a murder was committed. The term “violent death” may be used instead.

Critical incident rooms

In the event of a critical incident,

- The staffroom will be the main room used to meet the staff
- The classrooms for meeting with students
- The senior classroom for parents
- The senior classroom for media
- The S.E.N. support room for individual sessions with students
- The staffroom for other visitors.

Review and Evaluation

This policy will be reviewed after three years or as the need arises.

This policy was ratified at a Board of Management meeting on 23/08/22

Signed: 

Chairperson

Date: 23/08/22

scoil Naomh Úna, Shielbaggan

Critical Incident Management Team/Roles.

Updated September 2020

Role	Name	Telephone Number (Home and mobile)
Team Leader	1) Kevin Nimmo 2) Deirdre Sutton	0861329416 0879495416
Staff Liaison	Kevin Nimmo	
Student Liaison	Class Teacher	
Parent Liaison	Parents Association Bridget Murphy	 0878146858
Community Liaison	Fr. Richard Redmond	051-389148
Agency Liaison	Kevin Nimmo	
Media Liaison	Kevin Nimmo	
Administrator	Anne Keating	087 417 2275

Emergency Contact List

(To be displayed in staff-room, school office and Principal's office etc)

AGENCY	CONTACT NUMBERS
GARDA	Duncannon 051 389102 New Ross 051 421204 051 421831
HOSPITAL	
LOCAL GPS	Dr. Helen Doyle 389215 Dr. John Cox 397111
HSE/COMMUNITY CARE TEAM/CHILD AND FAMILY CENTRE /CAMHS	HSE South, Ely Hospital 053 9123522
SCHOOL INSPECTOR	<u>Claire_Reidy@education.gov.ie</u>
NEPS PSYCHOLOGIST	Anna Marie Cullen 01 8892487 NEPS, Government Offices, Newtown Rd, Wexford
DES	
INTO/ASTI/TUI	01 8047700 1850 708708
PARISH PRIEST/CLRGY	Fr. Redmond 389148
EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE	1800 411 057