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Critical Incident Policy

Abbreviations used in this policy

EAS- Educational Advice Service
CIMT- Critical Incident Management Team
NEPS-National Educational Psychological Service
DES- Department of Education and Science

Rationale:

1.1 A critical incident is any incident or sequence of events which may overwhelm the normal coping mechanism of the school and which disrupts the school.

In this policy, the staff and Board of Management are working to put systems in place to help build resilience in both staff and pupils to help prepare them to cope with a range of life events. These include measures to address both the physical and psychological needs of the school and its community.

Some incidents are more physical in nature and reference is made to them in our Safety Statement or in the general operation of the Board of Management. Others are of a more psychological nature and this policy seeks to address these in particular. Such would include:

1.2 Incidents of a Physical Nature:

Incident	Response
Fire	Dealt with by the BOM under the Safety Statement
Intrusion and or Vandalism	Dealt with by the BOM under the Safety Statement
Flood or Storm Damage	Dealt with by the BOM under the Safety Statement

1.3 Incidents of a more Psychological Nature:

Incident	Response
Physical attack on staff member or student	Critical Incident Policy
Accident or tragedy on the school premises	Critical Incident Policy
Serious accident off school premises involving member of school community.	Critical Incident Policy

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Sudden death of a member of the school community through accident, terminal illness or suicide	Critical Incident Policy
The disappearance of a member of the school community	Critical Incident Policy
Case of Covid 19 in a student or staff member	Critical Incident Policy

2.0 Aims

We have devised this policy:

- So that staff can react quickly and effectively and maintain a sense of control.
- To ensure that normality returns as soon as possible after an incident
- To ensure that the effects on students and staff are minimised and monitored.
- So that uniform information can be given to the pupils in an age-appropriate and sensitive way.
- In order that the parents will know what has happened so that confusion and speculation can be avoided

2.1 Physical safety

Every effort is made to safeguard the personal safety of the pupils and staff. See school's Health and Safety Policy & Code of Behaviour

2.2 Psychological safety

The management and staff of St. Saviour's N.S. 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
- to provide opportunities for reflection and discussion.

The school ethos underpins all of our actions- see Ethos Statement.

2.3 The following Programmes are used as part of the SPHE curriculum:

Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE) is integrated into the work of the school in an age-appropriate manner 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. The aim being that all of these topics would be covered by the time the pupil has completed 6th class. Promotion of mental health is an integral part of the SPHE provision. Staff have access to training for their role in SPHE through the Cuiditheoir Service (PDST) which supports teacher's continuous professional development.

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Books and resources on difficulties experienced by pupils (A above) are available in the school.

<i>Stay Safe Programme</i>	<i>RSE Programme</i>	<i>Farm/ Water Safety Manual</i>
<i>Be Safe</i>	<i>Managing Chronic Health Conditions at School</i>	<i>Friends for Life (5th/6th pupils)</i>
<i>Zippy's Friend's</i>		

3.1 Child Protection Guidelines – Children First

- Staff are trained in the “Child Protection Guidelines and Procedures” and details of how to proceed with suspicions or disclosures. Each teacher has a copy of the schools’ Child Protection Policy and this is also displayed on the Parents Noticeboard in the Hallway & in the Office. The Manuals are available in the office. Staff must follow these guidelines when dealing with allegations of neglect or abuse. Emergency Phone Numbers (See Appendix A) are displayed with the Emergency Exit Plans in the Front / PE Hall & Staff Room Foyers.

3.2 Outside Agencies

- The school has developed links with a range of external agencies
 - NEPS
 - HSE
 - Rainbows
 - Lucena Clinic Psychological Services
 - TUSLA
 - Diabetes Society
 - Asthma Society
 - Employee Assistance Service for staff
 - Rathdrum Fire Brigade
 - Juvenile Garda Liaison Officer

Lists of contact numbers & email addresses are on file & on display in the office.

- When visits are arranged from any of the above agencies to talk to the pupils regarding safety, the appropriateness of the content, and the expertise of the providers is monitored prior to & during the visit. (See Visitor’s Policy)
- The school has a clear policy on bullying and deals with bullying in accordance with the school’s Code of Behaviour & Anti Bullying Policy

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- Students who are identified as being at risk are referred to the designated staff member (e.g. Resource Teacher, Class teacher, SNA), concerns are explored and the appropriate level of assistance and support is sought. Parents are also informed about how to access support for themselves, should they require it.
- Lists of parents' contact details & allocated persons to be contacted in case of emergency/unavailability of parent for collection is on file in the office & is updated regularly

4.0 Critical Incident Management Team (CIMT)

A CIMT has been established in line with best practice. The members of the team retain their roles for a minimum of one school year. The members of the team meet annually in Term 1 to review and update 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.

4.1 *The CIMT Team are as follows:*

Antoinette Doyle – Team Leader

Victoria Spencer - Deputy Team Leader

Tim Ryan

The Rector

The School Secretary

4.2 *Roles will be assigned each September when the CIMT meets*

Role	Name & Email address	Tel. Number
Team Leader & Media Liaison	Antoinette Doyle adoylestsaviours@gmail.com	086 9793883 0402 34021
Staff Liaison	Antoinette Doyle & Victoria Spencer	
Student Liaison	Victoria Spencer vspencer@stsavioursns.com	0872287701
Parent Liaison	Liz Farrar (Chairperson B.o.M.) liz.farrar@hotmail.com & Antoinette Doyle	086 1728027

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Pastoral Liaison	Brian O'Reilly brianor@eircom.net	086 2230271
Garda Liaison	Tim Ryan energyfocusirl@gmail.com	0871228576
Administrator	Anne Marie Grant	086 8796011 / 0404 43741

Immediate Response if a child or staff member feels unwell with suspected Covid-19

The remainder of the staff will have a role in supporting each other and supporting the pupils.

LWR – Antoinette Doyle

DLWR – Victoria Spencer

Communication – the Principal will conduct an assessment of the incident and determining follow up actions & communications.

All staff members (including new and temporary staff) will be informed of the plan and given a Critical Incident Folder. The Administrator maintains up to date lists of contact numbers of – Key parents, such as members of the Parents Association – Emergency support services and other external contacts and resources

5.0 Immediate Response to Accident or Emergency:

Task	Person Responsible
In event of an accident on school grounds:	
a) The staff members on the scene will call for back up from principal or deputy principal or another staff member.	Relevant staff member
b) administer first aid and/ or call the emergency services	Relevant staff member
c) call the relevant parent/s or guardian/s	Relevant staff member/ principal

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d) gather accurate information about what happened (who, what, when , where etc.)	Relevant staff member/ principal
e) Calls Gardai & Liaises with them (if required) Advises Gardaí that BOM do not wish for media to be allowed on school premises.	
f) ensure that his/her class is cared for in another classroom by any available staff member	Relevant staff member
g) The Team Leader & Deputy Team Leader will decide : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - if a CIMT meeting needs to be held immediately - the level of information to be given to staff & pupils & other parents - if external agencies need to be contacted - if a media statement is necessary & level of information to be given 	AD & VS
In the event of a serious incident/accident/ tragedy not on out premises	
a) gather accurate information about what happened (who, what, when , where etc.)	Team Leader /Deputy Team Leader
b) alert staff (who need to know) of incident & advise as to how to proceed.	
c) The Team Leader & Deputy Team Leader will convene a CIMT meeting asap <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - decide on the level of information to be given to staff - decide whether children are to be sent home & decide with Chairperson re school closure - consider issues that may arise and how they might be responded to them (e.g. students being interviewed, photographers on the premises, etc) 	AD & VS & CIMT
d) Inform students in an age appropriate way (close friends or students who are vulnerable or have additional needs will be told separately) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Liaise with non- communicative students who have difficulty discussing feelings - Liaise with less able students. 	AD & VS
e) Inform other parents of the details (as agreed by CIMT) by phoning & asking them not to discuss the matter with others, as all parents will be contacted by the CIMT. All calls to be logged in Critical Incident Folder. The call may be	AD & Rector

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followed by a letter/ email or text (see appendices)			
<table><tr><td>Information Should Cover</td></tr><tr><td><ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ What has happened✓ The number of students or and staff involved and their names✓ The extent of the injuries✓ The location of those injured</td></tr></table>	Information Should Cover	<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ What has happened✓ The number of students or and staff involved and their names✓ The extent of the injuries✓ The location of those injured	
Information Should Cover			
<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ What has happened✓ The number of students or and staff involved and their names✓ The extent of the injuries✓ The location of those injured			
Looks after setting up and supervision of ‘quiet’ room where agreed	VS		
Prepare media statement & deal with the media <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Statement to the Media can only happen following a meeting of at least 3 members of the CIMT which must include the Principal, the Chairperson of the BOM, unless they are directly involved, if so the Deputy Principal and another Senior Board Member would take their place. The Principal will give media briefings and interviews (as agreed by school management).	AD		
Hold end of day staff briefing <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provides materials for staff (& have any additional information to hand)	AD & VS		

7.0 Medium term actions (Day 2 & following days)

Convene a CIMT meeting to review the events of Day 1	AD
Meet external agencies	AD & VS
Arrange support for pupils, staff & parents	AD & VS
Visit the injured or liaise with the bereaved family regarding funeral arrangements & agree on attendance & participation at funeral service	AD & VS & Rector
Make decision on school closure	BOM

7.1 Follow –up – Beyond 72 Hours

Develop plan to monitor students with signs of continuing distress in coming days/ weeks & monitor same	Class teachers & AD & VS
Liaise with agencies regarding referrals	AD & VS
Discuss issue of consent for students who may need to be seen by psychologist and arrange consent forms to be printed off and sent home. Look at both letters p5 and p6 and decide which we will go with.	AD & VS

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Arrange for collection of consents and recording of who has been seen by psychologist.	AD & VS & Administrator
Plan for return to school of bereaved	All staff
Return personal belongings to the family or families	AD
Plan for giving a "Memory Box" to bereaved family	Class teachers & classmates
Decide on memorials & how to mark anniversaries	All staff/ BOM / Parents & pupils
Circulate handout for parents: <u>Ways to help your child through this difficult time p20.</u> (To go to parents after incident)	AD
Review response to incident & amend plan	CIMT & Staff

8.0 Phone Calls as follows:

Team Leader A.D	Deputy Team Leader H.B	Rector
1) Emergency services if not already done & if appropriate 2) Relevant family 3) Chairperson of B.O.M, asking them to spread the news to the other Board Members 4) School Inspector 5) Rector and or Parish Priest 6) Other parents when Necessary. 7) Tusla 8) Ken Fennelly at C. of I. House 9) The INTO if relevant	1) HSE 2) NEPS –Accounts to be taken of level of response necessary P.19 Guidelines (marked) 3) Other Support agencies where relevant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Archbishops Office possibly requesting assistance of Diocesan Communications Officer.
Administrator (- Current Secretary (A.M.G.) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintenance of up to date telephone numbers of <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parents or guardians Teachers Emergency services Takes telephone calls and notes those that need to be responded to 		

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- A line will be kept free – for important incoming/outgoing calls
- Also
- Ensures that templates of letters are on the schools system in advance and ready for adaptation in folder on the desktop named Emergency.
 - Ensures that samples letters are typed up, on the school's system and ready for adaptation
 - Prepares and sends out letters, emails and texts
 - Photocopies materials & Maintains records

9.0 Action Plan Follow Up

Follow up helps the school community to cope with the impact of the events in the longer term and monitors individuals with ongoing difficulties. It may lead to a review of the Critical Incident Plan.

9.1 Record keeping for CIMT

In the event of an incident, each member of the team will keep records of phone calls made and received, offers of help & counselling, letters sent and received, meetings held, persons met, interventions used, material used etc. A special ring binder will be available in the office for these records. Administrator will have a key role in receiving and logging calls, sending letters, photocopying materials, etc.

9.2 Other Considerations:

Confidentiality and good name considerations

The management and staff of St. Saviour's 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 that the family involved consents to its use. The phrases 'tragic death' or 'sudden death' may be used instead. Similarly, the word 'murder' will not be used unless there is solid information that death was due to murder, and that the family involved consents to its use. The term 'violent death' will be used instead.

9.3 Consultation and communication regarding the plan

All staff & Parent's Representatives were consulted and their views canvassed in the preparation of the original policy. The finalised policy for responding to critical incidents has been presented to all staff. Each member of the Critical Incident Team also has a personal copy of the plan.



Addendum:

24/1/2023 removed from main policy

Taken from - COVID-19 Response Plan for the safe and sustainable reopening of Primary

Dealing with a Suspected Case of COVID-19 Staff or pupils should not attend school if displaying any symptoms of COVID-19.

The following outlines how a school should deal with a suspected case that may arise in a school setting. A designated isolation area should be identified within the school building.

The possibility of having more than one person displaying signs of COVID-19 should be considered and a contingency plan for dealing with additional cases put in place. The designated isolation area should be behind a closed door and away from other staff and pupils. If a staff member/pupil displays symptoms of COVID-19 while at school, the following are the procedures to be implemented:

- If the person with the suspected case is a pupil, the parents/guardians should be contacted immediately; • Isolate the person and have a procedure in place to accompany the individual to the designated isolation area via the isolation route, keeping at least 2m away COVID-19 Response Plan for the safe and sustainable reopening of primary and special schools — 28 from the symptomatic person and also making sure that others maintain a distance of at least 2m from the symptomatic person at all times;
 - The isolation area does not have to be a room but if it is not a room, it should be 2m away from others in the room;
 - If it is not possible to maintain a distance of 2m a staff member caring for a pupil should wear a face covering or mask. Gloves should not be used, as the virus does not pass through skin;
 - Provide a mask for the person presenting with symptoms. He/she should wear the mask if in a common area with other people or while exiting the premises;
 - Assess whether the individual who is displaying symptoms can immediately be directed to go home/be brought home by parents who will call their doctor and continue self-isolation at home;
 - Facilitate the person presenting with symptoms remaining in isolation if they cannot immediately go home and facilitate them calling their doctor. The individual should avoid touching people, surfaces and objects. Advice should be given to the person presenting with symptoms to cover their mouth and nose with the disposable tissue provided when they cough or sneeze and put the tissue in the waste bag provided;
 - If the person is well enough to go home, arrange for them to be transported home by a family member, as soon as possible and advise them to inform their general practitioner by phone of their symptoms. Public transport of any kind should not be used
- ; • If they are too unwell to go home or advice is required, contact 999 or 112 and inform them that the sick person is a Covid-19 suspect;
- Carry out an assessment of the incident, which will form part of determining follow-up actions and recovery;
 - Arrange for appropriate cleaning of the isolation area and work areas involved – (details at Section 7). The HSE will inform any staff/parents who have come into close contact with a diagnosed case via the contact

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tracing process. The HSE will contact all relevant persons where a diagnosis of COVID-19 is made. The instructions of the HSE should be followed and staff and pupil confidentiality is essential at all times.

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