



St. Raphael's College

Tragic Incident Guidelines for Principal

PRINCIPAL'S CHECKLIST/ITEMS TO CONSIDER IN EVENT OF A TRAGEDY

The following is a checklist of items to consider on the morning of a tragedy. They are not in order of what must come first etc – circumstances will dictate. It is important that the Principal takes time to plan what he/she must do and what is appropriate to all concerned.

- Take time to let the news sink in.
- Assemble as much factual information as possible and keep updated.
- Meet Critical Incident Team – Deputy Principal, Year Head(s), Councillor, Chaplain, Class Tutor, other staff may be co-opted as deemed necessary.....have this Team in place in advance so as to have them available and aware of their possible role. They should meet annually and should ensure and maintain, and have access to up-to-date contact data.
- Inform Staff and ancillary staff of what has happened.
- Discuss school routine for first day.
- Identify particular students who may need to be told individually eg. Relatives, close friends, neighbours...
- Inform students that a student has tragically died and explain that this is something that everyone will find difficult to cope with at this time.
- Explain the school routine for the day and the support and back-up available to students.
- Contact crisis support services – HSE, NEPS,
- Make contact with the family of the deceased.
- Decide on any other arrangements eg. prayers.....
- Keep in contact with Staff during the day and encourage them to monitor what is happening in the school.
- Make Staff aware of what supports are being put in place.
- Be conscious of any particular teacher or student who may have recently had a bereavement/tragic incident.
- Find out details of funeral and communicate to the Staff and students.
- At the end of the first day, review events with Staff and plan for next day.
- If there is a likelihood of media interest, discuss a strategy to deal with any interview requests. Be aware if possible of social media issues.
- A Text message might be sent to Parents informing them if thought appropriate.
- A further text might be sent to Parents of the Year involved indicating what supports are being made available
- Long term.....consider in-service for Staff on dealing with tragic events