



**Pelletstown Educate Together National School**

## **Whole School Policy**

### **Critical Incident Policy & Plan**

Ratified: 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2024  
To be reviewed: October 2025

## **Introduction and Rationale:**

Pelletstown Educate Together National School aims to protect the wellbeing of its students and staff by providing a safe and nurturing environment at all times, in line with the Educate Together ethos of the school. The Board of Management, in consultation with the staff of PETNS, has drawn up a Critical Incident Management Plan (CIMP) as one element of the school's policies and plans.

Our school has established a Critical Incident Management Team (CIMT) to steer the development and implementation of the CIMP.

The staff and management of PETNS recognise a critical incident to be 'an incident 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, for example;

- 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
- a major accident/tragedy in the wider community
- serious damage to the school building through fire, flood, vandalism etc.

## **Aim:**

The aim of the CIMP 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 impact on students and staff will be limited. It should enable us to 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:**

Pelletstown ETNS has a range of agreed plans and procedures in place to ensure physical safety in the school environment. These include:

- evacuation plan
- regular fire drills
- fire exits and extinguishers regularly checked
- school gates closed during school hours
- access codes on school doors
- Relationships and Code of Positive behaviour policy, inclusive of school, classroom and yard safety rules

### **Psychological Safety:**

The management and staff of PETNS 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.

These include:

- Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE) curriculum is integrated into the work of the school. 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 are addressed in the SPHE curriculum. Promotion of mental health is an integral part of this provision.
- Weaving Wellbeing is taught as part of the SPHE curriculum from 2<sup>nd</sup> class upwards.
- Mo and Ko is taught as part of the SPHE curriculum from Junior Infants – 1<sup>st</sup> Class.
- Staff have access for training for their role in SPHE, and the SPHE Coordinator regularly shares information about professional learning.
- A nurture room was established in September 2021, with the introduction of Nurture breakfast in 2023. A member of the SET team, works solely in nurture to meet the social, emotional and wellbeing needs of pupils.
- Staff are familiar with the Child Safeguarding Procedures and the name of the Designated as Liaison Person and Deputy Designated Liaison Person. Staff are aware of the school's Child Safeguarding Statement.
- Books and resources on difficulties affecting primary school students are available
- Information is provided on mental health in general
- A Restorative Practice approach is taken with pupils when dealing with behavioural incidents.
- The school has developed links with a range of external agencies including HSE, Tusla and NEPS. The NEPS psychologist for Pelletstown ETNS is Sarah Callanan. NEPS can be contacted on: (01) 8650674 (Direct Line), (01) 8650680 (Admin Office), or (01) 889-2700 (Head Office).
- 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. See DoE Circulars 0022/2010 (Primary).
- The school has a clear anti-bullying policy and deals with incidents of bullying in accordance with this policy. In 2024/2025 the school is engaging in Professional learning to support the development of the school's new Bí Cineálta procedures which will be established for September 2025.
- There is a care system in place in the school using the 'Continuum of Support' approach which is outlined in the NEPS documents published in 2007 for Primary Schools.
- Students who are identified as being at risk are referred to the designated staff member (e.g. support teacher), concerns are explored and the appropriate level of assistance and support is provided. Parents/carers are informed, and where appropriate, a referral is made to an appropriate agency
- Staff are informed about how to access support for themselves and are aware of the counselling support services available to them and their families (i.e. Spectrum.Life).
- Wellbeing is prioritised in the school, and is a listed focus of the School's Self-Evaluation process.

### **Critical Incident Management Team:**

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

The CIMT have nominated that the Team Leader (i.e. Caitríona Ní Cheallaigh) is the person authorised to call a Critical Incident. In her absence, the secondary person is Siobhán Maguire. The Chairperson of the Board of Management (Ray Renaghan) also holds this authority.

### Preparation of CIMP:

#### **Roles:**

PETNS recognises the importance of making arrangements for assigning roles in the school, taking account of practical issues such as school size and the number of staff available. The following are key roles for the 2024/2025 school year.

<b>Role:</b>	<b>Duties to be undertaken:</b>	<b>Named personnel:</b>
<b>Team Leader</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Alerts the team members to the crisis and convenes a meeting</li> <li>● Coordinates the tasks of the team</li> <li>● Liaises with the BOM, NEPS, Tusla etc.</li> <li>● Liaises with bereaved family</li> <li>● Liaises with Gardaí</li> <li>● Ensures that information about deaths or other developments is checked for accuracy before information is shared</li> </ul>	<b>Caitríona/Siobhán</b>
<b>Staff Liaison</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Leads briefing meetings for staff on the facts as known, gives staff members an opportunity to express their feelings and ask questions, outlines the routine for the day</li> <li>● Advises staff on procedures for identification of vulnerable students</li> <li>● Provides material for staff (from critical incident folder)</li> <li>● Keeps staff updated as the day progresses</li> <li>● Is alert to vulnerable staff members and makes contact with them individually</li> <li>● Advises staff of the availability of support services to them (i.e. Spectrum.Life Counselling service)</li> </ul>	<b>Caitríona</b>
<b>Student Liaison</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Provides materials for students (from their critical incident folder)</li> <li>● Alerts relevant staff to vulnerable students</li> <li>● Maintains student contact records (R1)</li> <li>● Looks after setting up and supervision of 'quiet' room where agreed</li> </ul>	<b>Siobhán</b>  (with assistance from Bill)

<b>Parents Liaison</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Visits the bereaved family <u>with the team leader</u></li> <li>● Arranges meetings, where necessary</li> <li>● May facilitate such meetings with the team leader and manage 'questions and answers' session</li> <li>● Ensures that sample letters are prepared and available on school computers/drive and are ready for adaptation</li> <li>● Sets up room for meeting with parents/carers</li> <li>● Maintains a record of parents seen</li> <li>● Provides appropriate material for parents (from their critical incident folder)</li> </ul>	<b>Aoife B</b>  (with assistance from Claire O' H)
<b>Community Liaison</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Maintains up to date lists of contact numbers of parents, members of Board of Management, PTA, emergency support services and other external agencies</li> <li>● Liaises with agencies in the community for support and onward referral</li> <li>● Is alert to the need of check credentials of individuals offering support</li> <li>● Co-ordinates the involvement of agencies</li> <li>● Reminds agency staff to wear identification badges</li> <li>● Updates team leader and team members on the involvement of external agencies</li> </ul>	<b>Aoife T</b>  (with assistance from Aisling)
<b>Media Liaison</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● In advance of an incident, will consider issues that may arise and how they might be responded to (e.g. students being interviewed, photographers on the premises etc.)</li> <li>● In the event of an incident, will liaise where necessary with relevant teacher unions and external agencies</li> <li>● Will draw up a press statement for approval by the team leader and will give media briefings and interviews (as agreed by school management)</li> </ul>	<b>Aoife T</b>  (with assistance from Cian)
<b>Admin.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Maintains up to date telephone numbers of parents/carers, teachers and emergency services</li> <li>● Takes telephone calls and notes those that need a response</li> <li>● Ensure that templates are available on the school's IT system/google drive and are ready for adaptation</li> <li>● Prepares and sends out letters, emails and texts, <u>in consultation with the team leader</u></li> <li>● Photocopies materials as needed</li> <li>● Maintains relevant records</li> </ul>	<b>Maeve</b>

### **Record Keeping:**

In the event of an incident each member of the team will keep records of phone calls made and received, letters emails and texts sent and received, meetings held, persons met, interventions used, material used etc. Maeve (school secretary) will have a key role in receiving and logging telephone calls, sending letters, photocopying materials etc. as is outlined in the above administrator and community liaison role.

### **Confidentiality and good name considerations:**

The management and staff of PETNS 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 students do so also. For instance, the term 'suicide' will not be used unless there is confirmed information the 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 words 'murder' should not be used until it's legally established that a murder was committed. The term 'violent death' may be used instead.

### **Critical Incident rooms:**

PETNS recognises the importance of the availability of space to facilitate CIMP team members and related activities, in the event of a critical incident. The following school spaces have been designated for such:

<b>Activity:</b>	<b>Designated space:</b>
Room used for staff	Staffroom
Rooms for meeting students	Their own classroom or School Library
Room for parents	Support Room 1 (beside Library)
Room for media	P.E Hall
Room for individual sessions with students	Nurture Room
Room for visitors	Principal's Office

### **Consultation and communication regarding the plan:**

This policy was devised in consultation with the school community, and has thereafter been updated annually to reflect personnel on the CIMT. The attention of all staff is drawn to 'Responding to Critical Incidents' NEPS guidelines and to the available information and resources on the NEPS website.

All new staff will be informed of the details of the plan by the Deputy Principal and NQT mentor.

This Critical Incident policy and plan is available to all staff members on the school's Google Drive, and to all parents/carers and the wider school community on the school website. A copy of this policy will be made available to the Department of Education and Skills and the Patron, if requested. Hard copies of this, and all school policies, are available at the school on request.

**Ratification of the plan:**

This policy was adopted by the Board of Management on the 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2024 and will be reviewed in October 2025.

Signed:  (Chairperson, BOM)

Signed: *Caitiona M Cheallaigh* (Principal)

Date: 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2024

Date of next review: October 2025



**Pelletstown Educate Together National School**

## **Fire Safety Policy**

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management on: 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2024  
Review due: October 2025



# Pelletstown Educate Together National School

*Rathborn Vale, Ashtown, Dublin 15*

*Roll No: 20392i*

## Fire Safety Policy 2024/2025

### Introduction and Rationale

This policy was formulated in order to set out the fire safety procedures that are in place in Pelletstown Educate Together National School. It was drawn up in consultation with staff and Board of Management and highlights the roles and responsibilities in relation to fire safety, as well as the safety measures that are in place in the school. This policy also links to the Health and Safety statement of the school.

The Board of Management has commissioned a company to assist with the upkeep of Fire Safety equipment and procedures in the school. Total Fire Protection will be contracted for maintenance of fire extinguishers, smoke heads and all relevant equipment.

### Fire safety measures

The Board of Management of Pelletstown Educate Together National School recognises the importance of fire safety and of drawing the attention of all members of the school community to this.

It is the policy of the Board of Management that:

1. An adequate supply of fire extinguishers, suitable for the type of fires likely to occur in each area, is available, clearly visible and regularly serviced by authorised and qualified persons.
2. Each fire extinguisher shall have instructions for its use.
3. The Deputy Principal (Siobhán Maguire) shall be responsible for fire drills and evacuation procedures. In her absence, the Assistant Principal I (Aoife Byrne) will assume this responsibility.
4. The Principal will ensure that a fire drill takes place at least once a term.
5. Fire alarm sounders will be tested by the caretaker weekly and a record kept beside main panel.
6. Fire alarm activators shall be clearly marked.
7. All call points will be covered to minimize the risk of intentional fire alarm activation/activation in error.
8. Selected call points (Autism classes and selected corridors/spaces e.g. P.E hall) will have alarmed covers to minimize the risk of intentional fire alarm activation/activation in error.
9. Fire exits will be clearly labelled so that all employees, pupils and visitors are aware of their location.
10. All doors, corridors, and entries shall be kept clear of obstruction and can be opened at all times from within the building.
11. Fire exits and escape routes will be checked monthly by Siobhán Maguire/Aoife Byrne.
12. Each teacher must ensure that the exit route through the classroom door is kept clear at all times.
13. Assembly points outside the school will be designated at specific locations.
14. Exit signs shall be clearly marked.
15. All electrical equipment that poses a risk of fire shall be left unplugged when unattended for lengthy periods. Responsibility for this rests with each teacher in the case of their classroom, the secretary in the case of the office; the Principal in the case of the Principal's office; and all employees in the case of the Staff Room.
16. The last person to leave the school building each day will ensure that all lights and electrical equipment are turned off.
17. Storage areas will be maintained in a tidy and safe condition.
18. All recommendations made by a Fire Officer in addition to these provisions shall be implemented.
19. 'Be Safe' lessons will be taught at each class level as part of the SPHE programme.

# Pelletstown Educate Together National School

Rathborne vale, Ashtown, D15 X63X

Roll No: 20392i

## Fire Evacuation Procedures

### Fire evacuation procedures

The Board of Management of Pelletstown Educate Together National School has set out the following procedures in relation to fire evacuation. All children will be talked and walked through the fire evacuation procedures proceeding the first fire drill of the school year. This will take place so that all personnel (adults and children) respond in a calm, safe and responsible manner (walking only) when the fire alarm is activated. All personnel (adults and children) evacuate the building and proceed to the designated Fire Assembly Area outside the school building. The following sets out the exit doors for each area of the school:

#### Lower level (Autism Classes):

**Storage Room (R020):** Exit door, keep right up steps to main foyer and exit the building via main school door on the right

**Classbase 1 (R005):** Exit building via fire escape door inside the classroom, keep left and exit school site via gate

**Classbase 2 (R016):** Exit building via fire escape door inside the classroom, keep left and exit school site via gate

**Multi Sensory Room (R018):** Exit room, keep left and exit the building via grey double doors on left and fire escape door on right at bottom of Stair core 1 (orange stairs)

**Movement Room (R019):** Exit room, keep left and exit the building via grey double doors on left and fire escape door on right at bottom of Stair core 1 (orange stairs)

**Linen/Sluice Room (R008)** Exit room, keep left and exit via grey double doors on left and fire escape door on right at bottom of Stair core 1 (orange Stairs)

**Toilet (R002)** Exit toilet, turn right and exit via double doors on the right and then the main door on the left.

**Toilet (R003)** Exit toilet, turn alright and exit via double doors on the right and then the main door on the left.

**Office (R001)** Exit toilet, turn alright and exit via double doors on the right and then the main door on the left.

#### Ground Floor:

**Secretary's office (R028):** Exit office, turn right and exit the building via main school door on the right

**Ground Floor Toilets (beside Secretary's Office - R026):** Exit toilet door then exit the building via main door on the right (ground floor)

**Ground Floor Toilets (beside Secretary's Office - R027):** Exit toilet door, turn right and exit the building via main school door on the right

**Classroom 1 - Junior Infants(R030):** Exit through classroom door, keep right and exit the building via main school door on the right

**Classroom 2 - Junior Infants(R035):** Exit through classroom door, keep right and exit the building via main school door on the right

**Classroom 3 - Senior Infants(R033):** Exit through the classroom door, turn right then keep left and exit the building using the fire escape door on the right beside P.E hall.

**Classroom 4 - Senior Infants(R034):** Exit through the classroom door, turn right then keep left and exit the building using the fire escape door on the right beside P.E hall.

**Multi-Purpose Room/Nurture Room (R036):** Exit through door, to the right and exit building via the fire escape door on the right beside P.E hall.

**Library (R037)/3rd Class:** Exit through the door, keep right and exit the building via the fire escape door on the right beside P.E hall.

**Support Room (R038):** Exit through door, keep right and exit the building via the fire escape door on the right beside P.E hall.

**P.E Hall (R048) -** Exit the building via fire escape doors inside the P.E hall

**Servery ((R046):** Exit room and exit the building via fire escape door opposite servery.

**Ground Floor Toilets (R041, R042, R043, R044, R045):**

Exit through the door, keep right and exit the building using the fire escape door on the right beside P.E hall.

**First Floor:**

**Principal's Office (R117)** - Exit through door and use stair core 2 (orange stairs) on the left and exit building using main door at bottom of staircase on the right

**First Floor Toilets (beside Principal's Office - R116)** - Exit through door and use stair core 2 (orange stairs) on the left and exit building using main door at bottom of staircase on the right

**First Floor Toilets (beside Principal's Office - R117)** - Exit through door and use stair core 2 (orange stairs) on the left and exit building using main door at bottom of staircase on the right

**Comm's Room (R113)** - Exit through and use stair core 2 (orange stairs) on the right and exit building using main door at bottom of staircase on the right

**Classroom 9 -3rd Class:** Exit through classroom door, keep left use stair core 3 (red stairs) and exit the building using fire escape door on the right at bottom of staircase

**Classroom 10 -3rd Class:** Exit through classroom door, keep left use stair core 3 (red stairs) and exit the building using fire escape door on the right at bottom of staircase

**Classroom 11 - Fourth Class:** Exit through classroom door, keep right, use stair core 3 (red stairs) and exit the building using fire escape on the right door at bottom of stairs

**Classroom 12 -Fourth Class:**

Exit through classroom door, keep right, use stair core 3 (red stairs) and exit the building using fire escape on the right door at bottom of stairs

**Support Room (R124):** Exit through the door, turn right and use stair core 3 (red stairs) and exit the building using Stair core 3 exit door.

**Staffroom (R125):** Exit through door, turn right and use stair core 3 (red stairs) exit door

**Store Room (R126):** Exit through door, turn right and use stair core 3 (red stairs) exit door

**Staff Toilets (R128):** Exit through door, turn left and use stair core 3 (red stairs) exit door

**Split Level 1:**

**Support Room (R101)** Exit room, use stair core 1 and exit the building via fire escape door on the left at bottom of staircase

**Toilet (R012)** Exit toilet, use stair core 1 and exit the building via fire escape door on the left at bottom of staircase

**Classroom 5- 1st Class(R105):**

Exit through the classroom door, turn right, use stair core 1 and exit the building via fire escape door on the left at bottom of staircase

**Classroom 6 - 1st Class (R106):**

Exit through the classroom door, turn right and use stair core 1 and exit the building via fire escape door on the left at bottom of staircase

**Classroom 7 - 2nd Class (R107):**

Exit through the classroom door, turn right and use stair core 2 and exit the building via main school door on the right

**Classroom 8 - 2nd Class (R108):**

Exit through the classroom door, turn right and use stair core 2 and exit the building via main school door on the right

**Toilet (R110)**

Exit through door, turn left and use stair core 2 (orange stairs) and exit the building via main school door on the right

**Cleaner's Store (R111)**- Exit through door and use stair core 2 (orange stairs)- exit the building via main school door at bottom of staircase on the right

**Toilet (R112)**- Exit through door and use stair core 2 (orange stairs) and exit the building via main school door at bottom of staircase on the right

## Split level 2:

**Support Room (R201):** Exit room, use stair core 1 (orange stairs) and exit the building via fire escape door on the left at bottom of staircase

**Toilet (R202):** Exit toilet use stair core 1 (orange stairs) and exit the building via fire escape door on the left at bottom of staircase

**Classroom 13 - 5th Class (R207):**

Exit through classroom door, keep right, use stair core 1 and exit the building via fire escape on the left at bottom of staircase

**Classroom 14 -5th Class (R208):**

Exit through classroom door, keep right, use stair core 1 and exit the building via fire escape on the left at bottom of staircase

**Classroom 15- 6th Class (R209):**

Exit through the classroom door, turn right and use stair core 2 (orange stairs) and exit the building via main school door on the right

**Classroom 16 - 6th Class (R210):**

Exit through the classroom door, turn right and use stair core 2 (orange stairs) and exit the building via main school door on the right

**Toilet (R212)**

Exit through door, turn left and use stair core 2 (orange stairs) and exit the building via main school door on the right

**Cleaner's Store (R213)-** Exit through door and use stair core 2 (orange stairs) and exit the building via main school door at bottom of staircase on the right

**Toilet (R214)-** Exit through door and use stair core 2 (orange stairs) and exit the building via main school door at bottom of staircase on the right

**Roof top:** Use stair core 2 (orange stairs) and exit main front door on the right or stair core 3 (red stairs) and exit fire escape door at bottom of staircase on the right.

**The designated Fire Assembly Area for all is the Fire Assembly Point on the grass opposite the main school entrance.**

**When the Fire Alarm Activates/Fire drill is announced:**

1. The teachers should take the Fire Drill Class Checklist from the wall, having called it that morning and marked appropriately.
2. The children should stand up silently and wait for further instructions from the teacher.
3. The teachers should lead the children, in an orderly and quiet fashion to the designated Fire Assembly Area. No time should be spent putting on coats or taking possessions etc and both sides of the stairways and corridors may be used. Children will be told that if they are not in the classroom when the fire alarm rings that they should proceed immediately, in a safe and calm manner to the designated **Fire Assembly Area (green space in front of school).**
4. Children will line up silently in the Fire Assembly Area and listen while their teacher calls the roll. Teachers must hold up a Fire Drill Class Checklist to indicate that rolla has been called and all children are accounted for.
5. The designated adult (**Maeve- Ground Floor, Caitríona - First Floor and split level toilets - Cian Autism Classes (lower level) and 1st/2nd corridor (split level 1), Aoife T 5th/6th corridor (split level 2) and rooftop**) will check the toilets and rooms to ensure that they are empty, and will close all doors. If one of the designated adults is not present **Orlaith or Claire O 'H will step in.**
6. The designated adult (Maeve) will check the staff sign-in book.
7. Siobhán will communicate with all personnel to give the ALL CLEAR signal in the event of a fire drill.
8. The Fire Brigade will be called by the Principal teacher or other available designated personnel in the event of the fire alarm activating.

**In the case of Fire Alarm Activation:** A Fire Brigade Officer will inform the Principal Teacher/Other designated staff member when re-entry to the school building is permitted.

**In the case of Fire Drill:** All staff/adults and pupils will stay outside the building until the Fire Alarm stops or until they are instructed by the Principal Teacher/Other designated staff member to re-enter the building.

### Review Process

A formal annual review of the Fire Safety Policy will be conducted every year. The policy will be reviewed and reflected upon after each fire drill/fire alarm activation.

Date of ratification by Board of Management: 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2024

Date of submission of fire safety review to Educate Together: 25<sup>th</sup> October 2024

Signature of Chairperson:   
(Ray Renaghan - Chairperson)

Signature of Principal:   
(Caitriona Ní Cheallaigh)