

# **Health & Safety Policy**

## **Scoil Chartha Naofa**

### Title

Health and Safety Statement/Policy

### Introductory Statement:

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Our staff came together on a SDP day to discuss Health and Safety in our school and to update our policy.

### Rationale

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It is a legal requirement under the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act, 2005, for every employer, in conjunction with employees, to prepare a Health and Safety Statement. It represents the Board of Management's commitment to safety and health, and specifies the manner, the organisation and the resources necessary for maintaining and reviewing safety and health standards.

The Board of Management is required to document their health and safety programme and make it available to all employees, outside services providers and Inspectors of the Health and Safety Authority. The Board of Management must also consider its 'duty of care' role in the school and this must be an integral part of any Health and Safety Statement.

### Relationship to characteristic spirit of the school

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We hope to create a safe environment for teaching and learning. Our Health and Safety policy helps us to focus on the needs of the people who use our school.

### Aims

Through our work in this area the school ideally hopes:

- to create a safe and healthy school environment by identifying, preventing and Tackling hazards and their accompanying risks
- to ensure understanding of the school's duty of care towards pupils
- to protect the school community from workplace accidents and ill health at work
- to outline procedures and practices in place to ensure safe systems of work
- to comply with all relevant health and safety legislation (so far as is reasonably practicable) to include the following areas
  - Provision of a safe workplace for all employees - teachers, SNAs, secretary, caretaker, etc.
  - To ensure competent employees, who will carry out safe work practices
  - Safe access and egress routes
  - Safe handling and use of hazardous substances and equipment
  - Safe equipment including maintenance and use of appropriate guards
  - Provision of appropriate personal protective equipment.

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

The BOM is responsible for facilitating the Health and Safety policy of our school. The teaching staff worked together on a school planning day to discuss the issues and identify hazards. They also worked to outline safe practices and procedures for the school.

### **Responsibilities of employer - Board of Management (See Sofas, December 2005):**

- Provide and maintain a workplace that is safe and do likewise for all machinery and equipment etc.
- Manage work activities to ensure the safety, health and welfare of employees
- Ensure that risks are assessed and hazards are eliminated or minimized as far as is reasonably practicable
- Prepare a safety statement and regularly update it, particularly when there have been significant changes or when the risk assessment is no longer valid
- Provide and maintain decent welfare facilities for employees
- Prepare and update procedures to deal with an emergency situation and communicate these procedures to employees
- Appoint a competent person to oversee the functions of the Board in relation to Health & Safety
- Provide training and information to workers in a format and language that is appropriate, including training on the commencement of employment
- To investigate all accidents or near accidents to staff or voluntary workers, members of the public or pupils.
- To ensure accidents are recorded in the accident record book and to ensure remedial action is taken to prevent the reoccurrence.
- Report serious accidents to the Health and Safety Authority
- To ensure all escape routes are properly marked, access to emergency exits is not obstructed and assembly points are clearly marked.
- Consult annually with employees and provide them with information in relation to safety, health and welfare
- Require employers from whom services are contracted to have an up to date safety statement (*e.g. painters, contract cleaners, bus companies ...*)

### **Responsibilities of employees:**

Health and safety is everyone's business. As a worker you have legal duties designed to protect you and those you work with (*Sofas, December 2005*).

Responsibilities include:

Employees, voluntary workers and visitors are required to co-operate and assist fully in the observance and of the compliance with all the commitments in the school safety policy.

- Not to be under the influence of an intoxicant to the extent that they endanger your own or other persons' safety.
- To co-operate with an employer or other people to ensure that the Health and Safety law is implemented
- Not to engage in improper conduct that will endanger you or anyone else
- To attend Health and Safety training and correctly use any equipment at work
- To use protective clothes and equipment provided

- To report any dangerous practices or situations that you are aware of to an appropriate person ~  
Not to interfere or misuse any safety equipment at your workplace
- If you are suffering from a disease or illness that adds to risks, to tell your employer.

**Entitlements of safety representative** (*Section 25 Safety, Health & Welfare at Work Act 2005*):

The safety representative has the right to:

- Represent the employees at the place of work in consultation with the employer on matters in relation to health and safety
- Inspect the place of work on a schedule agreed with the employer or immediately in the event of an accident, dangerous occurrence or imminent danger or risk to the safety, health and welfare of any person
- Receive appropriate training
- Investigate accidents and dangerous occurrences
- Investigate complaints made by employees
- Accompany an inspector carrying out an inspection at the workplace
- Make representations to the employer on matters relating to safety, health and welfare
- Make representations to and receive information from, an inspector
- Consult and liaise with other safety representatives in the same undertaking.

**Carry Out a Risk Assessment**

Each year, the Board of Management should carry out a risk assessment, identifying hazards, assessing the risks and specifying the actions required to eliminate or minimize them. Hazards may include physical, health, biological, chemical and human hazards. Using the HSA format below will assist the recording of the whole process.

The following is an example.

Identification of Hazards, Risk Assessment and Action(s) Taken					
Hazards	Low/Medium/High	Risk to Persons	Action Taken	Date	Person Responsible
Tiled floors in corridors which get slippery when wet	Low	Fall	Mats placed on and at each entry	Sep 14	Caretaker and BoM Treasurer
Cleaning agents under classroom sink	Medium-High	Ingestion by children	Removed to other storage area	Sep 14	Principal and cleaner
Aggressive or violent behaviour employees, pupils or parents	Medium-High	Bodily harm or ill health	Implementation of Code of Behaviour, Anti-bullying policy, Positive staff Grievance procedure (CPSMA Handbook Appendix 20)	Sep 14	School community

**A risk assessment has been carried out in Dec 14. Details of this are elsewhere in this folder.**

Health and safety is considered when any policy/plan is being drawn up e.g. PE, Visual Arts, School Excursions, etc. Our duty of care must also be considered in all areas and aspects of school life.

*Materials to support schools in devising these policies and procedures are available on the SDPS website [www.sdps.ie](http://www.sdps.ie) and [www.andoncpsma.ie](http://www.andoncpsma.ie)*

## **Procedures to deal with emergencies in Scoil Chartha**

### **• Emergency contact procedures**

- o Parents are asked to send in emergency contact details annually. These are stored centrally in the office. In the case of incident, accident or illness the secretary and/or teacher will ring the parent/guardian ..

*a* Text a parent is used to keep parents updated.

*Parents* are reminded to contact the school if they change their mobile number.

- o Parents are informed of the school procedures for dealing with minor injuries in school. Parents contact the school if they don't want their child to be treated.

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### **• Fire-drill and school evacuation procedures (See p. 67-75 A Guide to Insurance, Safety and Security in the School, Allianz /see also appendix 2 for Fire Risk Assessment Checklist)**

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- o Our fire drill procedures have been reviewed in 2009. From September 2009 fire drills will be held termly.
- o Each classroom has two exit points - the class door and the fire escape door. Children use the Fire Escape door for Fire Drills and in the event of a fire in the school.
- o Fire evacuation procedures are on display in each room. Class lists are also kept in each room beside the Fire Drill procedure.

*fire* Doors are clearly marked. Fire doors should be kept clear at all times.

*fire hydrants* are kept in the school. They are regularly serviced and staff have had training in their usage.

### **• Serious Accident Procedure & Accident Report Form (See Appendix 38 p. 285-286 CPSMA Management Board Members' Handbook):**

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A report must be made to the HSA in respect of the following types of incident:

- o An accident causing loss of life to any employed or self-employed person if sustained in the course of their employment
- a* An accident sustained in the course of their employment which prevents any employed or self-employed person from performing the normal duties of their employment for more than 3 calendar days not including the date of the accident
- o An accident to any person not at work caused by a work activity which causes loss of life or requires medical treatment to a person not at work i.e. a passer by or a pupil
- o Critical incident policy - see critical incident policy. •

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### **oEmergency closures**

- o Text a parent is used to contact all parents in the case of an emergency closure. The principal/ secretary will contact staff.

## Health issues

### Enrolment Form

- o Parents are asked to inform the school of any health related issues at enrolment. There is a section on this on the enrolment form. Parents are also invited to visit the principal/class teacher to discuss any issue.
- o Parents are reminded of the procedures around health issues and administration of medicines at the initial meetings for new pupils.
- o The school procedures for dealing with accidents and emergencies are outlined to parents.

### • Managing specific health issues

- o Staff are made aware of any Health and Safety issues relating to pupils.

### • Administration of Medication - See INTO Guidelines / See Appendix 45 and 46 p. 303-305 CPSMA Management Board Members' Handbook.

- o The CPSMA procedures for administration of medicine are adopted by the school. Parents are informed of these procedures in a school information leaflet.

### • Sickness or Injury

- o Emergency contact numbers for pupils are kept in the office. If a child is sick the school secretary will contact the school.
- o In the case of an injury to a child's head the parents are contacted and informed.

*A useful reference for first-aid guidelines is the Dept. of Health Guidelines/First Aid Chart available free of charge from the Health Promotion Unit, Hawkins House, Dublin 2.*

### • Illnesses and contagious infections rubella, chicken pox etc: See 'Infectious diseases in the Primary School: Health Service executive (H.S.E.) Parents are informed of contagious diseases when applicable. Further help and support will be asked for from the CPSMA.

### • Head-lice

- o Regular letters are sent home regarding head lice. Parents inform the school if their child has been infected.

### • School hygiene

- o Adequate washing procedures are provided within the school. Sinks are available in each classroom, Soap and hand driers are also available. Hot water is available in the kitchen.

### • General cleanliness of school environment

- o A part time cleaner is employed to clean the school.
- o Children are involved in the Green Schools Committee. Children are involved in keeping the class and yard clean and in proper disposal of waste.
- o A care taker is also employed to deal with particular issues.

### First Aid

- o The staff has done First Aid Courses. Arrangements are being made for future training.
- o The first aid box is kept in the kitchen.
- o First aid is applied by the teacher on yard.
- o Parents are informed of serious injuries or injuries to the head.
- o Parents provide the school with contact details for local GP and the GP may be contacted in the absence of a parent or in an emergency.

### • Healthy eating: Our school has a Healthy Eating Policy. We are also involved in the Green Schools. Our work is supported through the SPHE programme.

- **Water**

- o Drinking water is available in all classrooms and in the kitchen.
- o Jugs of water are brought to other classes in hot weather.
- o All children get juice every day. •

- **Clothing/protection**

- o Parents are seen as the primary care givers. The school supports the parents with reminders about appropriate clothing. Children are made aware of the necessity for appropriate clothing for yard in winter, PE, school tours etc
- o Children are made aware of importance of using sun protection e.g. use of sunscreen hat. Parents are asked to send children to school with appropriate protection.

## **Safety and welfare issues**

### **Pupils**

- Assembly and Dismissal of Pupils

- o Children assemble in lines before school.
- o Parents are made aware of the official opening and closing times of the school. Parents are asked to bring their children to school as near to the appointed times as possible.
- o Arrival times and departures of school buses are constantly monitored. On-going discussions with Bus Eireann re arrival times occur.

- Pupils leaving the school premises during the school day e.g. dentist or doctor appointment o Parents are required to contact the school if their child has to leave during the day.

- Supervision of Pupils: See Appendix 146(A) p.176-180, p. 55- Allianz Guidelines

- The measure of duty placed on the teacher is to "take such care of his/her pupils as a careful parent would his/her children" This legal practise is known as "in loco parentis" The degree of supervision required of the teacher will vary with the circumstance and the age of the child.
  - o A yard duty rota is in place for the supervision of pupils during break times. This rota is on display.

- Incident / accident book

- o Parents are called in the event of any head injuries to a pupil.
- o An accident book is kept in the school and is completed by the teacher on duty.

- Code of Behaviour and Anti Bullying Policy: Refer to school's policy for dealing with behaviour which causes a risk to others

The school has a Code of Behaviour and Anti bullying policy. These policies were put in place for the safety and well being of all. Parents and pupils are asked to abide the procedures outlined in the documents,

- Allegations or Suspicions of Child Abuse: See Appendix 56 p. 328-336 of CPSMA Management Board Members' Handbook. Also refer to Child Protection Guidelines.

- o The school has adopted and follows the procedures outlined in the Children First Guidelines.

- School tours / outings: School tours are arranged on an annual basis. Junior classes have their trip prior to Christmas and senior classes prior to the summer. The school rules and procedures apply on tours.

- Mobile phones: Mobile phones are not allowed in school. If for any emergency reason they have to be brought to school they should be turned off at all times. Emergency calls may be made through the office.

## Staff

- Garda clearance
  - o Teaching staff are ratified through the Teaching Council.
  - o The school adopts CPSMA guidelines when interviewing and appointing staff.
  - o New staff are made aware of Child Protection Procedures.
- Positive Staff Relations: See Working Together. Procedures and Policies for Positive Staff Relations. INTO 2000. Also refer to Appendix 20 p.198-203, Appendix 21 Bullying and harassment pg.204-207" Appendix 22 Grievance Procedure p.208-210 CPSMA Management Board Members' Handbook
  - o Staff are encouraged to support each other and be open to alleviate changes of bullying and/or harassment.
  - o Procedures re Grievance Procedures, Staff entitlements are available in the CPSMA Handbook, CPSMA website, INTO website. Grievance procedures provide a mechanism for the resolution of a grievance which a teacher has against a BOM or Chairperson, or the principal teacher. The grievance procedures shall generally deal with breaches of school rules, policies, procedures or practices. Full details of procedures are available in the CPSMA booklet as listed above.
  - o A staff representative is appointed to communicate with the INTO.
  - o A staff representative is also a part of the BOM.
- Assaults on Teachers/School Employees: See Appendix 23 p. 210- 212 CPSMA Management Board Members' Handbook
  - o It is the responsibility of the BOM to provide a safe place of work for employees. The BOM shall put in place measures to prevent or minimise risks of assault on teachers or other staff. The BOM shall also have measures in place to support staff that are assaulted or threatened with assault.
  - o Our Code of Behaviour promotes a positive working environment. All parties of the school community are asked to support the code. This includes respect for staff and finding positive ways to dealing with issues.
  - o If an issue regarding an assault on a teacher occurs the Guidelines outlined in the CPSMA management booklet will be used. Any such incident will be reported to the BOM. It may also be reported to the INTO or the school's insurance company.
- Comfortable and safe working environment Best effort is made to create a safe and comfortable environment taking budgetary requirements. Priorities are made for future improvements with the BOM.
- Pregnant staff members are asked to take particular care while working in the school during their pregnancy. Lifting of heavy items would be seen as inappropriate. Safety during yard supervision would also be a priority.
- Training given for lifting heavy equipment, for using fire extinguishers will be provided if required.
- The school employs a part time caretaker. The caretaker uses some of their own equipment. Other equipment will be made available should needs require.

- A part time cleaner is employed by the school. Likewise apart time caretaker is employed. Cleaning is generally carried out in the school when the children have left. Safety is encouraged at all times. Staff are made aware of the risks of having:
  - o Vacuum cleaner leads trailing on the floor
  - o Wet floors

#### **Equipment and materials**

- The part time caretaker generally uses his own equipment while working in the school.
- Solvents, cleaning products etc are stored away. Children have no access to these products. Staff and cleaners are reminded of the importance of storing equipment carefully
- An audit of electrical equipment took place as part of our annual audit. Safe methods of storing equipment form part of our risk management.

## **Success criteria**

We have put this document together to confirm to requirements asked of schools and to promote a Health and Safety environment in our school. We will feel our document and procedures are successful if procedures are followed and accidents and incidents are minimised. -

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

- Board of Management - the BOM has responsibility for providing a safe environment for the staff employed ..
- Safety Officer - represents employees
- Safety Representative -appointed on BOM
- Each member of staff - has a responsibility for following safe procedures and practises decided upon in the school.

## **Implementation Date**

These revised procedures will apply from September 2014.

## **Timetable for Review**

The HSA recommended that a review should be conducted when any changes have been made to work practices, personnel, where a practice is no longer valid or under the direction from the HSA inspector. It is recommended by the HSA that the statement be reviewed at least annually.

The staff and BOM will review this document, or parts of this document as the needs arise. Annual audits will take place to identify hazards.

## **Ratification & Communication**

This document was presented to the BOM for discussion and ratification

Signed: Gabriel Meehan, Principal.

03/03/2023

## **Reference Section**

- Guidelines on Preparing your Safety Statement, HSA
- [www.safeworkie](http://www.safeworkie)
- A short guide to The Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005 ([www.hsa.ie](http://www.hsa.ie))
- Report of the Advisory Committee on Health & Safety Statement for Schools. HSA. This report contains a format for a Safety Statement.
- INTO Guidelines for compiling a Safety Statement
- INTO Safety Representatives Checklist for School Inspections (Under H & S Background information on [www.sdps.ie](http://www.sdps.ie))
- CPSMA Management Board Members' Handbook Appendix 36,37,38
- A Supplementary Handbook for Primary Schools under Protestant Management. Second Edition. p.22 - 27 Compiling a Safety Statement

- A Guide to Insurance, Safety and Security in the School. (2002). Church & General p. 24-32
- Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act, 2005 ([www.hsa.ie](http://www.hsa.ie))
- "The Report of the Advisory Committee on Health and Safety in Schools." Health and Safety Authority, 10 Hogan Place, Dublin 2. Tel.: 01 - 6147000
- A Short Guide to Health and Safety Law. HSA
- Round Hall's Primary Education Management Manual CD - ROM
- Glendenning D. (1999) Education and the Law. Ch. 9 The Teacher's Duty of Care: Negligence
- Mahon O. (2002) The Principal's Legal Handbook IVEA. Ch.3 Safety, Health & Welfare in School
- Guidelines on Countering Bullying Behaviour in Primary and Post Primary Schools (DES 1993)
- Working Together. Procedures and Policies for Positive Staff Relations. INTO 2000
- Code of Practice on the Prevention of Work place Bullying. HSA 2002
- Guidelines for developing a School Substance Use Policy. DES act. 2002
- Child Protection. Guidelines and Procedures. DES 2001
- Children First. National Guidelines for the Protection and Welfare of Children. Department of Health and Children 1999
- Guidelines on First Aid (Index chart) from the regional Health Promotion Units
- "Infection in School". A manual for school personnel, available from regional Health promotion units on [www.healthpromotion.ie](http://www.healthpromotion.ie)
- Responding to Critical Incidents - Advice and Information Pack for Schools from The National Educational Psychological Service, Frederick Court, 24-27 North Frederick Street, Dublin 1

**Websites:**

<b>DES</b>	<b><u><a href="http://www.education.ie">www.education.ie</a></u></b>
<b>SPDS</b>	<b><u><a href="http://www.sdps.ie">www.sdps.ie</a></u></b>
<b>INTO</b>	<b><u><a href="http://www.into.ie">www.into.ie</a></u></b>
<b>IPPN</b>	<b><u><a href="http://www.ippn.ie">www.ippn.ie</a></u></b>
<b>Health and Safety Authority</b>	<b><u><a href="http://www.hsa.ie/osh">www.hsa.ie/osh</a></u></b>
<b>Church and General</b>	<b><u><a href="http://www.cg-online.ie">www.cg-online.ie</a></u></b>

<b>Identification of Hazards, Risk Assessment and Action(s) Taken</b>					
<b>Hazards</b>	<b>Low/Medium/ High</b>	<b>Risk to persons</b>	<b>Action Taken</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Person responsible</b>

Annual School Audit  
A. Fire Safety. School Record for School Year \_\_\_\_\_

<b>Fire Drill</b>			<b>Fire Equipment</b>		
<b>Date of Fire Drill</b>		<b>Areas identified that need to improve next time</b>	<b>Date Checked</b>	<b>Improvements Made and Date</b>	<b>Observations</b>

Annual School Audit  
B. School Environment. School Record for School Year

<b>Date</b>	<b>Identified Damage/Hazard</b>	<b>Location in school</b>	<b>Reported to Date</b>	<b>Action taken</b>	<b>Cost/Observations etc in maintaining safety</b>

**Report on Accidents in the school environment (*For School's Internal Records*)**

**Name:** \_

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

**Date of Accident:**

**Time of accident:**

**Staff on supervision duties at time of accident:**

**Information regarding circumstances of accident:**

**Witness 1**

**Witness 2**

**Any further information:**

**Action Taken:**

**Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:**

*(NOTE: By law, the Health & Safety Authority must be notified when an accident causes death or prevents an employed person from working for more than 3 days. This is explained in detail in the CPSMA Handbook (p.159) and is accompanied by a standard reporting form. The school's insurance company should also be notified about serious accidents that occur in the school or while on school related activities.)*