

Policy Statement on Safety, Health and Welfare at Work

- 1.1 Prepared by representatives of the Board of Management, in consultation with parents and teachers in accordance with the Safety, Health and Welfare Act 2005.

Safety Officer / Staff Nominee: Tess Hughes

Rationale:

It is a legal requirement under the Safety, Health and Welfare 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 wishes 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.

This policy documents the creation of a safe and healthy working environment for all members of the school community.

Safety, Health and Welfare Act, 2005

- The Safety, Health and Welfare Act, 2005 became effective on 1st November 2005.
- The main purpose of this Act is to make all work places safer and healthier.
- The Act provides for the establishment of a National Authority for Occupational Safety and Health.
- The Act covers all persons at work – employers, employees, and the self-employed and it requires in so far as is reasonably practicable that employers should protect the safety, health and welfare of all who work with them.
- Employers must provide and maintain in so far as is reasonably practicable safe places of work and safe systems and must provide their employees with information and training to ensure their health and safety.
- Specifically employers must produce a written *Safety Statement* that specifies the manner in which the safety and health of workers will be secured. Of particular importance are the requirements on health and safety issues.
- The Board of Management of St. Joseph's National School will set up arrangements to have candidates come forward from which a person may be selected to act as *Safety Representative*, who will have certain rights under the Act including the right to appropriate training, to make reports and to investigate accidents. The Safety Representative will have the right to represent all employees on Occupational Health and Safety matters

- The Act also confers responsibility on the employees in so far as they are required to take care to avoid injury, to co-operate with the employer in matters of safety, to use any means provided for their protection and to report to the employer any dangerous work situation they may encounter.
- *The National Authority for Occupational Safety and Health* that is primarily there to advise and encourage may also prosecute and close down a workplace that remains dangerous despite advice to render it safer.

Aims:

- This Safety Statement aims to create a safe and healthy working environment
- It aims to protect employees from workplace accidents and ill health at work
- It aims, so far as is reasonably practicable, to comply with all relevant health and safety legislation to include the following areas
 - Provision of a safe workplace
 - Safe access and egress routes
 - Safe equipment including maintenance and use of appropriate guards
 - Provision of appropriate personal protective equipment

Statement of General Policy

The Board of Management of St, Joseph's National School recognises the importance of the Legislation enacted in the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act, 2005.

This Safety Statement sets out the Safety Policy of the Board of Management, St. Joseph's National school and sets out the means to achieve this policy. The Board of Management's objective is to endeavour to provide a safe and healthy work environment for all our employees and pupils and to meet our duties to members of the public with whom we come in contact.

This policy requires the co-operation of all employees. It shall be reviewed annually or more frequently if necessary, in light of experience, changes in legal requirements and operational changes. The Board of Management will undertake to carry out a safety audit annually and report to staff. The inspection / safety audit will be carried out more frequently if requested by either staff or the Board of Management. All records of accidents or ill health will be monitored in order to ensure that any safety measures required can be put in place, wherever possible, to minimise the recurrence of such accidents and ill-health.

- 1.2** The Board of Management will ensure that, in so far as is practicable, the highest standards of safety shall prevail and that, at a minimum, the provisions of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act, 2005 are applied.
- 1.3** Specifically, the Board of Management wishes to ensure so far as is reasonably practicable:
 - a) The design, provision and maintenance of all places in a condition that is safe and without risk to health
 - b) There shall be safe access to and from places of work
 - c) The design, provision and maintenance of plant and machinery
 - d) Work systems shall be planned, organised, performed and maintained so as to be safe and without risk to health.
 - e) The provision of instruction to staff on proper lifting techniques of pupils and dealing with pupil challenging behaviour

- f) The provision of such information, instruction, training and supervision as is necessary to ensure the health and safety at work of its employees
- g) The provision and maintenance of suitable protective clothing or equivalent as necessary to ensure the safety and health at work of its employees
- h) The preparation and revision as necessary of adequate plans to be followed in emergencies e.g. fire drill and injuries
- i) The provision and maintenance of facilities and arrangements for the welfare of employees at work
- j) Obtaining where necessary, the services of a competent person for the purpose of ensuring the safety and health at work of its employees
- k) The continuing updating of the *Safety Statement* as necessity arises and the re – examination of it on at least an annual basis
- l) The provision of arrangements for consultation with employees in matters of Health and Safety
- m) The provision of arrangements for the selection from amongst its employees of a representative

- 1.4** The Board of Management of St. Joseph's N.S. recognises that its statutory of obligations under legislation extends to employees, students and to any person legitimately conducting school business and to the public.
- 1.5** The Board of Management of St. Joseph's N.S. undertakes to ensure that the provisions of the safety, Health and Welfare Act 2005 are adhered to.
- 1.6** A Safety Committee may be established to monitor the implementation of the Safety and Health Policies of St. Joseph's N.S. and the requirements under the Safety, Health and Welfare Act, 2005.

Duties of Employees:

- 1.** It is the duty of every employee while at work:
 - a) To take reasonable care for his / her own safety, health and welfare, and that of any person who may be affected by his / her acts or omissions while at work.
 - b) To co-operate with his / her employer and any other person to such extent as will enable his / her employer or the other person to comply with any of the relevant statutory provisions.
 - c) To use in such manner so as to provide the protection intended, any suitable appliance, protective clothing, convenience, equipment or thing provided (whether for his / her use alone or for use by him / her on common with others) for securing his / her safety or welfare while at work.
 - d) To report to the Board of Management without reasonable delay, any defects in plant, equipment, place of work, or system of work, which might endanger safety, health or welfare of which he / she becomes aware.
- 2.** No person will intentionally or recklessly interfere with or misuse any appliance, protective clothing, convenience or other means or thing provided in pursuance or any of the relevant statutory provisions or otherwise, for securing safety, health or welfare or persons arising out of work activities. Employees using available facilities and equipment provided should ensure that work practices are performed in the safest manner possible.

Consultation and Information

It is the policy of the Board of Management of St. Joseph's N.S.:

- To consult with staff in preparation and completion of the Health and Safety Statement and of Hazard control forms
- To give a copy of the *Safety Statement* to all present and to future staff and Welfare at work not contained in the document will be conveyed to all staff as it becomes available
- That Health, Safety and Welfare will form an integral part of any future staff training and development plans.

Hazards

Hazards shall be divided into two categories and those that can be dealt with as a matter of urgency. Those that cannot be clearly indicated and appropriate procedures listed beside them. The Board of Management in consultation with the employees will review and make recommendations on the elimination of Hazards.

Specific Hazards

1. Fire

It is the policy of the Board of Management of St. Joseph's N.S. that:

- i. There is an adequate supply of fire extinguishers that will deal with any type of fire.
- ii. All fire equipment is identified and regularly serviced.
- iii. Regular Fire drills take place at least once a term.
- iv. Instruction is given in the use of Fire Extinguishers for specific materials / equipment.
- v. Fire alarms are clearly marked.
- vi. Signs will be clearly visible to ensure visitors are aware of exit doors and routes.
- vii. All doors, corridors, and entries shall be kept clear of obstruction and will be able to be opened at all times from within the building. Each teacher who has an exit in her classroom will ensure it is kept clear. The Principal will see that the P.E. hall and main door are free from obstruction.
- viii. All electrical equipment be unplugged or turned off outside school hours and when offices are vacated for lengthy periods when the building is empty. Teachers are responsible for their own classroom. The Secretary / Principal, as appropriate, are responsible for the office. The staff room is every teacher's responsibility. The cleaner is to check when cleaning.
- ix. Assembly points are designated outside each building, and the locations specified.
- x. A fire escape plan will be on the back of each room's door and show assembly points outside the school.
- xi. Exit signs are clearly marked.
- xii. Bottled gas will be stored in a secure place in such manner as to minimise the danger of explosion in the case of fire.
- xiii. Principal shall be responsible for fire drills and evacuation procedures.
- xiv. The school and equipment have been checked by a Fire Officer and all recommendations made by him / her have been implemented.

Other Hazards

The following hazards (in so much as can be identified) are considered by the Board of Management to be a source of potential danger and are brought to the attention of all concerned.

- Wet corridors
- Gas main
- Trailing leads
- Computers
- Guillotine
- Projectors



- Fuse board
- Electric kettles
- Boiler house
- Ladders
- Excess gravel on schoolyard
- Protruding units and fittings
- External store to be kept locked
- Lawnmower
- Slabs around perimeter of school
- Icy surfaces on a cold day
- Mats in hall
- Windows opening out

To minimise these dangers the following safety / protective measures must be adhere to (see duties of employee pages 1 – 2 of this document):

- a) Access to and operation of plant / equipment is restricted to qualified members of the staff, whose job function is that of running, maintaining, cleaning and monitoring particular items of plant in the course of their normal duties. Copies of this statement will be sent to all contractors prior to contract by the Principal / Board of Management. Any other contractors entering the school must be shown a copy of the school's Safety Statement and shall adhere to its provisions.
- b) In addition all such plant and machinery is to be used in strict accordance with manufacturer's instructions and recommendations.
- c) Where applicable the Board of Management will ensure that members of the staff will have been instructed in the correct use of plant, machinery and equipment.
- d) All machinery and electrical equipment are fitted with adequate safeguards.
- e) Precautionary notices, in respect of safety matters are displayed at relevant points.
- f) Ladders must be used with another person's assistance.
- g) Avoid use of glass bottles where possible by pupils. Remove broken glass immediately on discovery.
- h) The Board of Management will check that floors are clean, even, non-slip and splinter-proof.
- i) The relevant post holder will check that PE equipment is stacked securely and is positioned so as not to cause a hazard. They will check that all PE mats and other mats are in good condition.
- j) An annual routine for inspecting furniture, floors, apparatus, equipment and fitting by the Board of Management Safety Officer and Staff Safety Officer.
- k) Check that wooden beams, benches etc. are free from splinters and generally sound.
- l) Check that vaulting horses, beams and benches are stable and do not wobble when in use.
- m) (Caretaker under Board of Management will) check that there are no uneven / broken / cracked paving slabs.
- n) Check that roofs, guttering, drain pipes etc as far as can be seen are sound and well maintained.
- o) Teachers check that manholes are safe.
- p) Check that all play areas are kept clean and free from glass before use.
- q) Check that outside lighting works and is sufficient.
- r) Check that all builder's materials, caretaker's maintenance equipment, external stores etc are stored securely.
- s) Check that refuse is removed from building each day and is carefully stored outside (Caretaker).

Constant Hazards

1. Machinery, Kitchen Equipment and Electrical Appliances

It is the policy of the Board of Management of St. Joseph's N.S. that: machinery, kitchen equipment and electrical appliances are to be used only by competent and authorised persons. Such appliances and equipment will be subject to regular maintenance checks.

2. Chemicals

It is the policy of the Board of Management of St. Joseph's N.S. that all chemicals, photocopy toner, detergents etc be stored in clearly identifiable containers bearing instructions and precautions for their use and shall be kept in a locked area, and protection provided to be used when handling them (Secretary / Cleaner / Principal where appropriate).

3. Drugs Medications

It is the policy of the Board of Management of St. Joseph's N.S. that all drugs, medication etc be kept in a separate and secure place and used only by trained and authorised personnel. Medication will only be administered with written parental consent. Children must have Deputy Principal's consent to bring medication to school.

4. Welfare

It is the policy of the Board of Management of St. Joseph's N.S. to ensure the continued welfare of the staff and children, toilet and cloakroom areas are provided. A staff room separate from the work area is provided, where tea and lunch breaks may be taken. Staff must co-operate in maintaining a high standard of hygiene in this area.

A high standard of hygiene must be achieved at all times. Adequate facilities for waste disposal must be available. An adequate supply of water, towels, soap and sanitary disposal facilities must be available.

Members of staff and students are reminded:

- a) A person who is under medical supervision or on prescribed medication and who has been certified fit for work, should notify the school of any known side effects or temporary physical disabilities which could hinder their work performance and which may be a danger to either themselves or their fellow workers. The school will arrange or assign appropriate tasks for the person to carry out in the interim.
- b) Staff and students are not allowed to attend the premises or carry out duties whilst under the influence of illicit drugs or alcohol. Any person found breaking this rule will be liable to disciplinary action.

5. Highly Polished Floors

It is the policy of the Board of Management of St. Joseph's N.S. that every attempt will be made to avoid the creation of slippery surfaces. The washing of floors will be conducted, as far as is possible, after school hours to eliminate as far as possible, the danger of slipping. Where floors are wet, warning signs regarding wet floors will be used. Attention is drawn to the possibility of outside floors and surfaces being affected by frost in cold weather. Sharp edges will be fitted with clearly marked edges of a non-slip nature wherever practical.

6. Smoking

It is the policy of the Board of Management of St. Joseph's N.S. that the school shall be a non-smoking area.

7. Broken glass

It is the policy of the Board of Management of St. Joseph's N.S. to minimise the danger arising from broken glass. The Staff are asked to report broken glass to the Principal so that it may be immediately removed.

8. Visual Display Units

It is the policy of the Board of Management of St. Joseph's N.S. that the advice contained in the guidelines on the safe operation of visual display units, issued by the Health and Safety Authority be carefully followed. Any up-to-date information regarding hazards relating to the use of VDU's will be studied and recommendations and directives implemented.

9. Infectious Diseases

It is the policy of the Board of Management of St. Joseph's N.S. that all infectious diseases shall be notified and steps taken to ensure the safety of staff and students against all such diseases. The Board of Management will endeavour to minimise the risk by adherence to sound principals of cleanliness, hygiene and disinfections and have provided disposable gloves for use in all First Aid applications, cleaning tasks, etc. Toilets and washrooms shall be provided at all times with an adequate supply of water, soap, towels and a facility for the safe disposal of waste.

10. First Aid

It is the policy of the Board of Management of St. Joseph's N.S. that a members of staff will be trained to provide First Aid to staff and pupils.

1) Notices will be posted in the office detailing:

- Arrangements for giving first aid,
- Location of first aid boxes,
- Procedure of calling ambulances etc
- Telephone numbers of local Gardai, Hospital and Fire Service

2) All incidents, no matter how trivial and whether to employees or to students or to members of the public must be reported immediately to the person responsible for the hazard identified in the Statement or in the event that the accident / incident occurs in any other place to which that paragraph dealing with hazards does not relate to the Safety Officer. This is necessary to monitor the progress of safety standards and to ensure that the proper medical attention is given where required. An Accident Report File is to be maintained for the recording of all accidents and incidents by the Safety Officer.

3) The Principal will see that there will be maintained in the school a properly equipped First Aid Box available to staff at all times containing:

- Sticking tape
- Anti-histamine for stings etc
- Tape
- Cotton Bandage and gauze
- Scissors
- First Aid Chart
- Disposable gloves (must be used at all times in administering First Aid.)



11. Access to School

Inasmuch as is compatible with the practical layout of the school premises, anyone entering the school premises shall be required to identify themselves to the Principal or the Secretary as relevant before gaining admittance to the school. Any contractor must make direct contact with the Principal before initiating any work on the premises and shall be shown a copy of the statement applying to the school and shall agree to its provisions.

While work is in progress, any noise shall be avoided wherever possible during school hours and shall at all times be reduced to the minimum necessary. The contractor and his workmen shall not create any hazard, permanent or temporary, without informing the principal or the nominated agent and shall mark such hazard with warning signs or other suitable protection.

12. Collecting Children

- 1) All parents / guardians / carers in the interest of safety must obey all signs upon entering the school grounds.
- 2) Cars are advised to drive slowly on approaching school grounds when collecting children. The staff car park is not to be used to collect children from the school.
- 3) If parents are not at the gate to collect children, the children are to wait in the front hall until collected.
- 4) Those parking outside the school grounds are advised to accompany children to and from the school premises.

Revision of this Safety Statement

This Statement will be reviewed by the Board of Management of St. Joseph's N.S. in accordance with experience and the requirements with the Health and Safety Act and the Health and Safety Authority.

This policy was ratified by the BOM on 24/10/2017

The policy will be next reviewed in **June 2018**

This policy was reviewed on 14th June 2018

This policy was reviewed on 8th December 2020.

This policy was reviewed on 6th December 2022.

This policy was reviewed on 8th November 2023.

Sr. Joan Watters
Chairperson BOM

Date: _____

Dr Rosalyn Morris
Principal

Date: _____