

**ST. HELEN'S JUNIOR NATIONAL SCHOOL, PORTMARNOCK CO.
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St. Helen's Junior National School
Health and Safety Statement

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St. Helen's Junior National School

Health and Safety Statement

Introduction

The Board of Management, to fulfil its legal requirement under the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act, 2005, has prepared this Health and Safety Statement. The Board is committed to creating a safe and healthy working environment for all members of the school community. This document represents the Board'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 seeks the co-operation of all school users in helping to maintain the school as a safe and healthy place in which to work, study and play.

A copy of this statement will be provided to each employee.

Aims

- (1) To create a safe and healthy school environment by identifying, preventing and tackling hazards and their accompanying risks
- (2) To ensure understanding of the school's duty of care towards pupils
- (3) To protect the school community from workplace accidents and ill health at work
- (4) To outline procedures and practices in place to ensure safe systems of work
- (5) To comply with all relevant health and safety legislation in the provision of a safe workplace for all employees - teachers, SNAs, secretary, caretaker, cleaners etc.
- (6) To ensure employees carry out safe work practices
- (7) Safe access and egress routes
- (8) Safe handling and use of hazardous substances and equipment
- (9) Safe equipment including maintenance and use of appropriate provision of appropriate personal protective equipment.

Policy and Requirements

- This Safety Statement/Policy requires the co-operation of all employees and is a signed declaration by the St. Helen's Junior National School Board of Management indicating the school's commitment to ensuring that the workplace is as safe as reasonably practical.
- A written assessment, hereinafter, referred to as a risk assessment(s) will be employed, where applicable, to identify the hazards in place at St. Helen's Junior National School and to assess the risks presented by those hazards, as they pertain to the health, safety and welfare of employees, pupils or any persons otherwise engaged in school activities or undertakings, who may not be employees.
- Any steps deemed necessary for the improvement to; or mitigation of; identified risks, as they pertain to safety, health and welfare at work, will be implemented in respect of all activities and levels as they relate to St. Helen's Junior National School.
- This Safety Statement will be brought to the attention of all existing and new employees annually, and at any other time, following its revision/amendment. Further, this statement will be brought to the attention of any other persons associated with St. Helen's National School, who may be exposed to a specific risk for which the safety statement applies. A copy of the statement will be sent to any person(s) involved in out of hours school activities.
- Periodic review and updating of the safety statement will be carried out annually, or more frequently if necessary, with due consideration of experience gained, changes/amendments to legal requirements, following significant changes in matters to which it applies, and/or operational requirements as required or indeed, as otherwise directed by an authorised inspector as defined under the relevant statutes and/or amendments thereof.
- A safety audit/review will be carried out at least annually by an appropriate representative(s) as assigned by the Board of Management and a report made to staff in accordance with *St. Helen's Junior National School – Inspection Checklist and Self Inspection Form*.
- All records of incidents relating to health and safety will be formally documented and will be monitored to ensure that corrective actions are identified and implemented as applicable, to minimise potential future recurrences of the same.

Duties of Board of Management

A Safety Officer has been appointed by the BoM to oversee the functions of the Board concerning Health & Safety. The Safety Representative on the BoM is Aidan Fitzgerald.

The Board of Management of St. Helen's Junior National School wishes to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable that the following measures are taken;

- Provide and maintain a safe workplace
- Prepare a safety statement and regularly update it, particularly when there have been significant changes or when the risk assessment is no longer valid
- Consult annually with employees and provide them with information concerning 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...)
- Prepare and update procedures to deal with an emergency situation and communicate these procedures to employees
- Work activities are managed and conducted in such a way, as to ensure the safety, health and welfare at work of all employees, students and visitors.
- Appropriate steps and procedures are taken to prevent improper conduct or behaviour, which is likely to put the safety health or welfare at work of employees', students and visitors at risk.
- To design, provision and maintenance of all places in the school are safe and without risk to health.
- The school is appropriately designed and maintained as such, to facilitate a safe means of access to; and egress from; the school.
- The design, provision and maintenance of plant, machinery and/or any other articles, as applicable, are safe and without risk to health.
- There is appropriate safety and prevention of risk to health at work for employees, students and visitors, relating to the use of any article and/or substance or the exposure to noise or any physical agent(s), where applicable.
- Work systems are planned, organised, executed and maintained so as to be safe and without risk to health.
- Facilities are provided for and maintained with adequate arrangements for the welfare of all employees, students and visitors.
- All required information, instruction, training and supervision as necessary are provided for, to ensure the safety, health and welfare of employees, students and visitors as per induction checklist.
- When determining and implementing necessary safety, health and welfare measures e.g. through hazard identification, risk assessment execution, safety statement preparation or other means, due consideration is given to the general principles of prevention and changing circumstances when implementing necessary safety, health and welfare measures.
- Appropriate arrangements are made, with due consideration of any identified risk, for the provision and maintenance of suitable protective clothing, equipment or other items, as necessary to ensure the safety, health and welfare of employees, students and visitors, particularly in those circumstances where identified risks cannot be eliminated or suitably controlled.
- Associated plans, procedures or policies as applicable, are appropriately prepared, maintained and followed, relating to measures to be taken in the case of emergency or serious and imminent danger, including but not limited to; fire drills, serious injury, staff

- induction, First Aid, code of behaviour, administration of medicine, school trips, parental consents, working alone, etc.
- Obtaining where necessary, the services of a competent person for ensuring the safety, health and welfare at work of all employees.

Responsibilities Towards Third Parties

- The Board of Management has the responsibility to ensure that;
- All third party visitors including contractors, visitors and other members of the general public are made aware of all known hazards and means of escape.
 - Where contractors and sub-contractors as applicable are on the premises, the Board of Management/Principal must advise employees, students, parents, visitors and other third parties likely to be affected, by the potential hazards arising from the work being undertaken.
 - There is no interference with contractors, staff in the performance of their duties, however, notify contractor management in instances where it may become apparent that unsafe practices are undertaken.
 - All contractors have submitted a Safety Statement, as applicable.

Health and Safety Training

The Board of Management is committed to supporting training and staff development, as they pertain to matters of health and safety. The School Principal will ensure that all new members of staff are familiar with the contents of this Health and Safety Statement, and associated procedures and policies. The need for specialist training as it pertains to matters of health and safety, where applicable, should be directed to the school principal

Duties of the Principal

- Take responsibility for safety, health and welfare in school facilities.
- Acquire a full and accurate knowledge and understanding of the Safety Statement and ensure that all employees understand their responsibilities.
- Understand and implement all school safety policies and statutory requirements.
- Ensure all school activities are planned and organised to minimise risk and create a safe working environment.
- Ensure that employees adhere to safe work systems and ensure that equipment is appropriately maintained.
- Ensure that all necessary Personal Protective Equipment is provided and maintained where required.
- Ensure adequate welfare facilities are provided and maintained.
- Ensure that all dangerous occurrences are reported and are entered and recorded in line with school policies and procedures and as outlined under the scope of this safety statement.

- Review absences due to accidents, injury or illness at work and ensure that occurrences are notified to the Insurance Company, as applicable and to the Health and Safety Authority when an employee is off work for more than 3 consecutive days.
- To provide full executive support for all staff who have been given responsibility under this statement of policy.
- To review safety standards with staff and to discuss health and safety topics at regular safety and staff meetings.
- To release staff for training where necessary.
- To provide input into the compilation of the Annual Health and Safety report.

Duties of the Employees

General

Health and safety is everyone's business. It is incumbent on every employee whilst in school to ensure that:

- No person will intentionally, recklessly or without reasonable cause, interfere with, misuse or damage any part of the school building, facilities, appliances, protective clothing, or any other articles, substances or items provided under the relevant statutory provisions or otherwise for securing the safety, health and welfare of persons at school.
- No person will intentionally place at risk, the safety, health or welfare at school of persons in connection with school activities.
- Each employee to notify the Principal and/or nominated medical practitioner, if they become aware that he/she is suffering from any disease or physical or mental impairment, which, should he/she perform a work activity, would likely cause him/her consequential danger/harm or the danger/harm of others.

Responsibilities of Employees:

Safety Representative:

The safety representative is Susan Kavanagh. In consultation with the Principal and Deputy Principal she 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

Duties of Employees relating to Safety, Health and Welfare at Work

- To take reasonable care to protect his/her safety, health and welfare with due consideration of the safety and well-being of other personnel who may be affected by the employee's acts or omissions at school.
- To co-operate with an employer or other people to ensure that the Health and Safety law is implemented
- To take reasonable care to protect pupils under the school's duty of care
- To refrain from improper conduct or other behaviour, which may cause danger to, his/her own safety or the safety of others
- To ensure that he/she is not adversely or otherwise affected by an intoxicant to such an extent as to endanger their own well-being and/or the safety, health or welfare at work of any other person
- To co-operate fully with his/her employer and any other person to such extent as will enable his/her employer or the person to comply with any of the relevant statutory provisions
- To attend training and undergo any assessments that may be deemed appropriate by his/her employer relating to safety, health and welfare at work or relating to the work carried out by the employee
- To make correct use of any article or substance provided, for use by the employee at work or for the protection of his/her safety, health and welfare at work, including but not limited to protective clothing or equipment
- To report to the staff safety representative or Principal, as soon as practical;
 - Any defects relating to the place of work, the systems of work and/or any article or substance which might endanger the safety, health or welfare at work of self, or that of any other person
 - Any work being carried out or is likely to be carried out in a manner which may endanger the safety, health and welfare of any individual, that he/she may become aware of
 - Any infringement of the relevant statutory provisions, that he/she is aware of, which may adversely affect the safety, health and welfare at work of any individual
 - To implement all Health & Safety procedures as outlined in this Safety Statement.

Hazards, Risks and Action

Playground: The greatest risk to pupils is likely to **occur** in the playground during recreation periods.

Therefore,

- A roster of teachers on supervision during recreation is made available to every teacher in advance and a copy is posted on the staff room notice board
- Two teachers and SNAs supervise each designated area of the playground while the classes are present there
- Supervision guidelines are issued to all teachers (*Supervision Policy*)
- Rules governing pupil behaviour are issued to teachers and explained to pupils (*Code of Behaviour policy*)
- Playground boundaries are clearly marked
- Specific assembly lines are marked in the playground for each class
- Teachers and SNAs on supervision duties take refreshments at the beginning or the end of recreation periods, having set work for their pupils to be completed in their

absence

- Broken glass and hazardous litter is removed from the playground before the pupils are allowed out to play
- Play should not be allowed outdoors if rain, snow, frost or high wind would be harmful to the health of pupils or teachers

Securing Safety in the Classroom

- Classroom fittings and furniture will be kept in good condition
- Schoolbags must be stored in classrooms in such a way as not to obstruct passageways
- Damaged floor coverings must be reported immediately and repaired as a matter of urgency
- Pupils are supervised at all times by a teacher
- When a teacher is absent from the classroom, the teacher in the adjoining/opposite classroom is responsible for supervision. The class teacher will set work for the class
- The responsibility to inform the supervising teacher rests with the class teacher.
- Pupils must remain seated if their class teacher is absent
- Pupils remain in classrooms during recreation periods if the weather is inclement
- They must remain seated and must get permission from the supervising teacher to leave their place
- Refuse is collected regularly and deposited in the bins provided
- Pupils are not permitted to use glass containers for drinks
- Staff and pupils are aware of the need for responsible precautions in the safe conduct of lessons such as Art and Science
- Blinds in the room will be kept in good condition and a child safety hook will be present to house the chords where necessary
- The children's books will be organised and stored safely in the classroom

Toilets

The BOM acknowledges the difficulty of supervising toilet areas, therefore:

- No more than one boy or girl will visit the toilet at the same time
- Pupils are encouraged to use the toilets in their class before leaving the class for yard as re-entering the building during yard time is discouraged
- Pupils who require use of toilet during yard time:
Senior Yard: Pupils seek permission for entering the school and use the PE toilet beside the hall. Pupils are required to inform teacher on duty on their return to yard.
Junior Yard: An SNA accompanies pupils from junior and senior infants if they need to use the toilet. An SNA/adult will always ensure that at least two children will enter the school for toileting.
- Toilets are cleaned and disinfected daily and floors are kept clean and dry

To ensure safety in the hall

- Pupils must wear runners when taking part in P.E. and protective helmets with visors when playing hurling/camogie
- P.E equipment is safely stored in the designated area
- Wooden benches, stored in the hall, have protective padding on the base
- Pupils are never left unsupervised in the P.E. hall
- In the month of December when the stage is in use pupils are not permitted on the stage while engaging in P.E or any other activities that take place in the school hall.

Circulation Areas

- Corridors are kept free of furniture and other objects
- Pupils walk in single file or in pairs, staying on the right hand-side where possible
- Door closures are kept in good condition and particular attention is paid to the opening and closing of external doors on windy days
- Spillages/wet floors are signposted and dried as soon as possible.
- Where feasible windows will be kept open to improve air circulation.
- Pupils are forbidden to climb on school boundaries or to leave and enter the premises by crossing school boundaries.

Car Park

A designated car park is provided for staff and visitors' cars.

Pupils are not permitted to cycle on school grounds.

Parents and staff have been requested **not** to drive on the school avenue/ grounds between the following times:

8:30am - 9am

1:20pm - 1:40pm

2:20pm - 2:40pm.

First aid and injuries -See *First Aid Procedures outlined in First Aid Policy - Appendix 1*

General

First Aid stations are located at both yard doors. In addition, there is a first aid box on each corridor and Rooms 2 and 4 and the sensory room in the Cabhair Centre (3 special classes)

are used when necessary.

- All First Aid stations contain a selection of sterile dressings, cotton wool, antiseptic wipes, dressing strips and surgical gloves.
- Extra supplies of First Aid contents can be found in the small room off the hall.
- Ice packs are kept in the two staffroom fridges.
- First Aid administered by school staff is of an elementary nature
- A written account is kept in red folders of all minor injuries dealt with.
- Serious accidents requiring medical attention occurring to employees, pupils or members of the public must be reported immediately to the Principal and/or Senior Management. Incident report forms are completed and filed securely by teachers.
- Parents/Minders are contacted as soon as possible when a serious injury to a pupil is suspected. The decision to send a pupil to the hospital should be taken by the most senior teacher in attendance and in consultation with the pupil's parents/minder.
- An Accident Report can be filled out in the Accident Report Book, located in the Principal's Office.
- Outbreaks of head lice and infectious diseases are notified to the parents via email/letter from the school.

Records:

A list of contact numbers for each pupil, including emergency numbers if parents are unavailable, is kept in the secretary's office/ Room 2. Telephone numbers of emergency contacts and services are located in the Principal's Office. This list is updated annually

Vandalism:

- Glass splinters, damaged fittings and equipment following acts of vandalism constitute a serious risk to pupils and adults in the school. Consequently, vandalised classrooms will not be occupied until it is safe to do so.
- Broken glass and litter constitute a hazard in the playground. Therefore, the playground will be cleared before the children are allowed to use it.

Administration of Medicine: (Refer to Administration of Medicine Policy)

Appendix 3

School Tours/Outings:

- The safety of pupils is a primary consideration when selecting a venue and organising the trip
- A consent form, permitting the pupils to go and also giving the teacher the right to authorise any medical procedures necessary, is signed by parents
- Parents are notified of departure and return times

- Coaches hired for long-distance trips must comply with current legislation
- Pupils who have a record of indiscipline and disruption may not be permitted to travel
- Parents may be asked to assist with supervision on school outings Extra-Curricular activities
- Teachers engaged in after school activities are responsible for the supervision of the pupils involved.
- Arrangements are made to have pupils transported to and from the venue where it takes place away from the school
- Pupils must be dressed appropriately for the activity, and designated a specific boys/girls toilet in which to change in the event they are not before exiting the school.
- The school Code of Behaviour applies to all pupils representing the school

Fire Safety & Evacuation *(See Appendix)*

An evacuation plan has been prepared and employees understand their roles as outlined in it

- Fire drill takes place each term
- Fire safety notices are displayed throughout the school Escape routes are inspected regularly
- The fire alarm system is checked weekly by Gerry Hennigan the school caretaker
- Smoke detectors are checked quarterly by BC Electrical Fire & Security
- Fire extinguishers are checked annually by Sharp Services.
- Emergency lighting is installed at every exit and tested quarterly.

Electricity:

- All electrical fittings, power points and appliances will be kept in good condition.
- Particular attention is to be paid to correct wiring, safe leads and appropriate plug and fuse fittings
- Pupils will never have access to fuse and power distribution boards
- Care is taken that there are no trailing leads
- Pupils are not permitted to pour or carry boiling water

Heating System:

- Pupils are not allowed into the boiler house
- The heating system is serviced annually
- The boiler house is not used for storage
- The burner is activated automatically in the event of a severe frost.
- Electric bar heaters are not permitted in the school

Ladders

To avoid injury, the BOM recommends that:

- Straight ladders more than 10 feet long should be secured at the top or footed at the base. Faulty ladders are removed from service and either repaired or replaced
- Extension ladders require two people to operate
- Pupils are never permitted to climb ladders to retrieve items from the school roof

Lifting

To avoid injury, the BOM recommends that:

- Training in CPI /Manual Handling is provided to the Cabhair Centre staff and all Special Needs Assistants (SNAs) in the first term annually.
- if an object is too heavy, assistance is sought mechanical aids should be used when they are available and suitable
- obstructions should be removed before lifting and a space cleared where the load is to be set down
- gloves should be used when handling sharp or slippery objects pupils lifting and transporting furniture should be supervised
- Pupils are taught the correct way to carry chairs and tables

Office Equipment

To avoid injury, the BOM recommends that:

- The guillotine blade is protected by a fixed guard. It could cause severe lacerations or amputation of the fingers if used carelessly or incorrectly by employees.
- Pupils are never permitted to use the guillotine
- School staff are familiar with the hazards associated with the use of the duplicator, shredder, scanner and photocopier and take appropriate precautions

Dangerous Machinery/Substances

- Dangerous chemicals are kept in locked cupboards. Pupils are never permitted to use them
- Hazard data sheets are supplied with cleaning materials. Members of staff using these materials should familiarise themselves with the hazards associated with the materials and precautions should be taken in the event of spillages or splashes.
- Protective clothing, masks, and gloves are required to be worn by employees handling or using dangerous or toxic chemicals, solvents etc.
- Pupils are not permitted to bring correction fluid to school or to have access to it while in school
- The school caretaker is authorised to operate the school lawnmower. Pupils are not permitted to use it. The lawnmower must never be left unattended while the engine is

running. Petrol for the lawnmower is stored in a secure shed. The quantity of petrol held is kept to the minimum and is stored in a suitable fire resistant safety container.

- Peninsula Health and Safety Management Services have been employed by the BOM since 2020 to support the management of Health and Safety policy in St. Helen's JNS
- A copy of this policy will be given to each employee and available to parents and pupils via the website and on request from the office.

Review: This policy will be reviewed annually and also at any other time when a problem with its implementation is identified.

Responsibility for review rests with the Board of Management as advised by the staff and Principal.

Ratification and Communication: This policy will be available to view in the principal's office and on the school website.

The policy was ratified by the Board of Management on 29th October 2020

The policy was updated and reviewed by staff in the 2nd term of 2023-24 and ratified by the Board of Management on 7th March 2024.

Chairperson

Principal

Celine O'Connell

Lorna Lavin

Health & Safety General Policy Statement

St Helen's Junior National School

St Helens Junior National School recognises that it has responsibilities under the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005, the Safety, Health & Welfare at Work (General Applications) Regulations 2007 to 2023 (as amended) for the health, safety and welfare of our employees, the children in our care, contractors working for us and for anyone else whose health and safety could be affected by our work activity. We will assess the hazards and risks they face and take action to minimise hazards and control risks to an acceptable, tolerable level.

Our managers and supervisors are made aware of their responsibilities and required to take all reasonable precautions to ensure the safety, health and welfare of our workforce, children in our care and anyone else.

We will meet our legal obligations by providing and maintaining a safe and healthy working environment so far as is reasonably practicable. This will be achieved by:

- Providing leadership and control of identifiable health and safety risks on our premises and at every worksite.
- Consulting with our employees on matters affecting their health and safety and that of the children in our care.
- Ensuring that our premises are secure and that safeguarding checks are made for each member of our workforce.
- Providing and maintaining safe, suitable buildings and equipment.
- Ensuring the safe handling and use of substances.
- Providing information, instruction, training where necessary for our workforce, taking account of any who do not have English as a first language.
- Ensuring that all employees and contractors are competent to do their work, and where appropriate giving them suitable training.
- Preventing accidents and cases of work-related ill health.
- Actively managing and supervising health and safety at work.
- The careful organisation, assessment and mitigation of hazards and risks for any off-site activities with a separate consideration and approval process.
- Having access to competent advice.
- Aiming for continuous improvement in health and safety performance and management by regular review and revision of this policy.
- The provision of the resource, financial and other, required to make this policy and our health and safety arrangements effective.

We also recognise our duty to co-operate and work with other employers and workers, when they come onto our premises, to ensure the health and safety of everyone at work.

To help achieve our objectives and ensure our employees recognise their duties under health and safety legislation, we will also remind them of their duty to take reasonable care for themselves and for others. These duties are explained on first employment, at induction. A Safety Handbook, setting out their duties and specific health and safety rules is given to each employee.

Our policy, procedures and arrangements will be reviewed annually.

Signature *Roma M Lavin* Date *1/12/2023*
Position *PRINCIPAL*