

Health & Safety



Scoil Mhuire

Health & Safety Policy

Rationale

The Safety Statement approved by the Board of Management of Scoil Mhuire Shankill under the 'Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005' sets out the policy and organisation of safety, health and welfare in the school. The school seeks to make every effort to preserve and promote the safety, health and welfare of our school community.

The Board of Management of Scoil Mhuire Shankill is committed to securing high standards of health and safety in and around the school. It strives at all times to create a working and learning environment that is safe and healthy for all that use it, namely staff, pupils, parents/guardians and relevant members of the public.

The school will apply the provisions of all applicable health, safety and welfare legislation and codes of practice to ensure that places and systems of work are safe and without risk to health. Continuous improvements in health and safety performance will be sought, but interventions will reflect the reality of identified risks.

Aims

The aim of the policy is to:

- Ensure that all reasonably practical steps are taken to ensure the health, safety, welfare and wellbeing of all members of the school community while on the school grounds
- Ensure that all reasonably practical steps are taken to ensure the health and safety of staff, pupils and other supervising adults participating in off-site visits
- Establish and maintain safe working procedures amongst staff and pupils
- Make arrangements for ensuring safety and absence of risks to health in connection with the use, handling, storage and transport of articles and substances
- Develop safety awareness amongst staff, pupils and other supervising adults.
- Formulate and implement effective procedures for use in the event of fire and other emergencies

Responsibilities

Board of Management

- The Board is the employer of the school's staff. As such, it has overall responsibility for ensuring healthy and safe places and systems of work for staff, as well as a duty of care to all other building users.
- The Board will ensure that an up-to-date Safety Statement is in place. It will undertake a regular risk assessment and will ensure that identified hazards are eliminated or minimised as far as is reasonably practical. The Board will devote sufficient resources to ensuring the health and safety of all members of the school community and will ensure that there is adequate insurance in place to cover the activities of the school.
- The Board will appoint at least one person to the role of Safety Officer to assure health and safety compliance. This may be an external expert or a BOM member, but not the Principal or Teachers' Representative on the BOM. The BOM will sanction relevant health and safety training for this person if necessary.

Principal and Deputy Principal

- The Principal is the link between the BOM and the staff.
- The Principal will ensure that all staff, including temporary and part-time staff, receive induction, on-going training and regular information on health and safety matters and will consult with them, on behalf of the BOM, at least annually on such matters.
- The Principal will support and assist staff to enable them to reach correct decisions about health and safety and will check at intervals that safe working methods are being observed that are in accordance with school and statutory procedures.
- The Principal will also receive and deal initially with any health and safety concerns that he receives from staff, parents, guardians and others.
- The Deputy Principal will take on the duties of the Principal in his absence.

Other Employees

- All staff, including temporary and part-time staff, are required to cooperate with the Board and others to ensure health and safety law in general, and this policy in particular, is implemented.
- They have the responsibility to take reasonable care of their own safety, health and welfare and that of any person who may be affected by their acts or omissions. This applies to any work they do on behalf of the school, both within the school premises and outside.

- Specifically in terms of child welfare, teachers are *in loco parentis* and are expected to do what a reasonably careful parent would do in any situation involving risk.
- Being mindful of their role as being in loco parentis, if any member of staff suspects that a parent/guardian may be under the influence of an medication and/or intoxicant to the extent that it endangers their own or another person's safety, the Principal must be informed immediately.
- Staff are required to attend any health and safety training that is deemed essential by the BOM and are encouraged to undertake appropriate additional training. All training must be delivered by individuals/organisations competent to do so.
- Records of all health and safety training completed by staff will be maintained by the school. Staff must use available facilities and equipment and other forms of protection to ensure work practices are performed in the safest manner possible and must never intentionally or recklessly interfere with or misuse any such facilities, equipment or protection.
- Staff may not be under the influence of any medication and/or intoxicant to the extent that it endangers their own or another person's safety and must inform the Principal if they are suffering from any injury, disease or illness or are taking any medication that potentially adds to risks within the school.
- Any dangerous practices or situations that staff become aware of must be reported to the Principal and/or staff Safety Representative without unreasonable delay.

Staff Safety Representative

This Health and Safety Policy names **Stephen Sheridan** as the Staff Safety Representative and the duties associated with this position this include but are not limited to:

- Represent employees on health and safety matters
- Inspect the place of work on health and safety grounds
- Investigate accidents and dangerous occurrences
- Investigate health and safety complaints made by employees
- Accompany a health and safety inspector carrying out an inspection if and when required
- Make representations to, and receive information from, an Inspector
- Make representations to the Board on health and safety matters
- Liaise with other relevant persons engaged in health and safety matters
- Receive appropriate training for this role.

Parents and Guardians

- Parents and guardians are requested to cooperate with the Board and others to ensure health and safety law in general and this policy in particular, are implemented.
- They have a responsibility to take reasonable care of their own safety, health and welfare and that of any person who may be affected by their acts or omissions.

Parents are especially reminded that they must not allow their children to engage in dangerous play in and around the school.

- Once a pupil enters the school building, the teachers and specifically assigned Special Needs Assistants are *in loco parentis* and thus primarily responsible for the children's health, safety and welfare.
- Parents and guardians, however, must take specific responsibility for other children *not enrolled in the school, especially young children, accompanying them in the school and its environs.*
- Parents and guardians are requested to report any health and safety concerns to the Principal and/or the Chairperson of the Board. Additionally, or alternatively, they may raise any concerns with the Chairperson of the Parents' Association Committee. High-risk concerns must be reported promptly to the Principal.

Pupils

- Pupils will be advised of any relevant health and safety procedures and are required to comply with the staff and Board in implementing these.

Members of the Public

- Members of the public who visit the school will be informed of any relevant health and safety regulations in place and will be required to abide by these.
- Reasonable efforts will be made to ensure that any outside contractors used by the school are covered by adequate insurance and comply with health, safety and welfare legislation.

Access to the premises

Bringing children into School

- The children enter the grounds via the main gate and pedestrian gate at 8.50am.
 - Infants enter via the main gate and line up in their designated areas in the coach park.
 - 1st, 2nd & 3rd Classes enter and line up in their designated zones via the pedestrian gates to be collected by their teachers.
 - 4th, 5th & 6th Classes enter via the pedestrian gate, walk around the school to line up in their designated zones in the senior yards
 - Children in The Cabin are dropped off by their Bus escort in the Car Park and are collected by their Teacher and SNAs.
- A member of staff will be present at both gates to supervise a safe entrance into the school grounds including guiding cars into the carpark.

- A member of staff will supervise at the main gate to ensure the safety of all as cars/taxis enter and exit the grounds.
- Both gates will be locked after 9.15am
- Any child who arrives late in the morning once the gate has been secured must contact the secretary who will open the gate for them.
- Parents are not permitted to park in the school grounds at any time
- Visitors, contractors, etc., must park in the place designated to them.
- In as far as it is possible with the practical layout of the school premises, anyone entering the school premises shall be required to identify themselves to the secretary or a member of staff as relevant before gaining admittance to the school.

Collecting Children from School

- All parents/guardians/authorised adults, in the interest of safety, must collect
 - Junior, Senior Infants and The Cabin from the coach car park. The teacher will remain there until all children are collected.
 - All other children from 1st class to 6th class are collected from their teachers by parents/guardians/authorised adults from the coach car park.
- Any parent/guardian who wishes the child to regularly walk home unattended must inform the class teacher in writing.
- Any parent/guardian who usually collects the child but who wishes the child to walk home unattended on certain occasions must give permission in writing for the attention of the class teacher.
- In the case of any child who has written permission to leave the school unattended, the Board of Management Scoil Mhuire is not responsible for their safety.
- Parents/guardians/authorised adults are reminded to drive slowly when approaching the school to collect children and to park in designated parking areas away from both gates.
- If parents arrange to collect their children at a place other than the school, the Board of Management is not responsible for their safety.
- If pupils are not collected on time or if they need to leave school early (for example, for a dental appointment), the parents or guardians must notify the school in advance. If a person other than a parent or guardian is collecting the child, the parent/guardian must give written permission to the class teacher (unless it is an emergency situation, in which case the school office may be contacted by telephone).
- Any child who leaves early must be signed out from their classroom with their class teacher's knowledge and permission prior to leaving the premises.

Traffic Management

The Board of Management recognises that large numbers of staff, pupils, parents/guardians and visitors travel within the direct vicinity of the school. They ordinarily arrive and leave at concentrated times of the day using different modes of transport, which poses safety

concerns. The Board wants traffic in and around the school grounds to be managed as safely as possible, but this requires the full cooperation of all parties concerned.

- Parents/guardians are reminded that they are responsible for their children once collected from the class teacher or before the gates are manned in the morning.
- Once leaving the school grounds, parents/guardians are reminded that they are responsible for ensuring their children's safety.
- Parents/guardians are reminded that there are no car parking facilities within the school grounds available at any time.
- All vehicle users coming to the school must comply with the rules set down by the Road Safety Authority. In instances of illegal road usage, the school may inform the local Garda station.

Safe Access and Leaving Routes

- Every effort will be made to ensure that all building users can safely access, leave and move around the school grounds and building where necessary.
- Entrances and corridors will be kept free from obstruction.
- Fire exits will be kept free from obstruction.

Health and Wellbeing

General Health and Hygiene

- Parents/guardians should not send a child to school who is sick or who may have a contagious infection.
- While the Board of Management encourages full attendance, parents/guardians should use their best judgment in deciding if a child is sick and therefore should not be in school.
- Should a teacher, acting *in loco parentis*, determine that a child is sick and should not be in school, he/she will inform the principal for a second opinion. The parent/guardian will, if necessary, be contacted to collect the child during the school day. If the parents/guardians are not available, the emergency contact will be contacted to collect the child. If the emergency contact is not available, medical assistance may be sought by the school.
- A doctor's certificate is required should your child need to remain indoors at break/lunchtime.
- Parents/guardians are required to inform the school of any on-going health problems that the child may have and the medications being used.
- Parents/guardians are asked to give details of any immediate health problem that a pupil may have and the medications being used.
- In case of a food allergy, either a doctor's certificate or a report from a qualified professional is required.

- If pupils have a medical condition which may affect their work at school, parents should tell their teacher. This is particularly important with any physical, hearing or eyesight problems.

Hygiene and Tidiness at School

The Board of Management makes every effort to ensure that the school is hygienically clean and tidy. Children have their part to play too!

- The school is cleaned daily and thoroughly with particular attention paid to toilet areas.
- Toilets should be flushed after use.
- Any sanitary products must be placed in the provided units.
- Litter is to be put into the bins provided in the classrooms, throughout the school and in the yard.
- All lunch litter must be taken home for disposal with the exception of the hot lunch serving dishes and waste food. The hot lunch waste food and dishes will be placed in compostable bags supplied by GlanBia and disposed of in the correct bin which will also be managed by the food company.
- Students should feel responsible for their school-home; they should take care of it and keep it as clean and neat as possible. Concern for the environment is part of the formation of ecological awareness.

Personal Hygiene

- All children enrolled in our school must be fully toilet trained. In a case where a child cannot self-toilet due to a condition or special education need, a doctor's certificate or report is required.
- "Coughs and sneezes, elbows please".
- All children must wash their hands after using the toilet.
- When a child uses a tissue to blow his or her nose, the used tissue must be immediately placed in the correct bin.
- Hand-soap, towels and toilet roll are in regular supply around the school while tissues and hand sanitiser are available in the classrooms and staff room.
- Female pupils in 5th and 6th class are informed of where to find a store of female sanitary products should they need them and how to dispose of these correctly.
- All members of staff reserve the right to inform the Principal if supplies of personal hygiene products are not sufficient at any time.
- Food items must never be brought into the toilet areas.
- Children are not allowed to swap or share previously-opened food items or milk cartons
- Children are not allowed to swap or share water bottles, milk cartons, cups or any other such items.

Long-term Health Conditions

- So that our school can provide the best level of care for all children, parents/guardians must inform the school if the child has any long-term health conditions.
- Examples of such long-term health conditions include but are not limited to asthma, epilepsy, diabetes, etc.
- This information is requested via the enrolment form.
- If such a long-term health condition is diagnosed after a child has been enrolled, it is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to inform the school of any such diagnosis immediately.

Infectious Illness

The Board of Management encourages full attendance where possible but must be mindful of the health of other members of the school community, staff members and other parents included.

- If a child is suspected of having a relatively minor infectious illness (stomach bug, etc.), parents/guardians should keep the child away from school until deemed well to return. The reason for absence will be communicated via Aladdin by the parent/guardian.
- If a parent/guardian is unsure of the seriousness of any such possibly infectious illness, medical advice should be sought and followed. Examples of such illnesses include but are not limited to chicken pox, measles, impetigo, conjunctivitis, flu, etc.
- If a child has been diagnosed by a doctor as having an infectious illness, parents/guardians must do the following:
 - inform the school at the first opportunity of the nature of the illness so that any possible immediate cases in other children in any class may be identified quickly.
 - follow medical advice to determine the date for safe return to school.
 - understand that in the case of some illnesses, the school may require a medical fitness cert to determine that the child is well and does not pose an infectious threat to other children, staff or other members of the school community.

Head Lice

To prevent the possibility and spread of head lice, parents/guardians are reminded to tie back their child's hair every school day.

- A normal part of growing up, head lice are highly contagious.
- The school will regularly remind all parents/guardians to check for head lice.
- Parents/guardians must inform the class teacher if their child has head lice so that the rest of the school can be notified. All such information received will be treated anonymously when informing the rest of the school community.

Clothing

- Children must wear our school uniform and tracksuit on the relevant days along with appropriate footwear.
- In times of cold weather, children must come to school with appropriate coats or jackets. Other cold weather gear, such as hats, scarves, gloves, etc., are at the discretion of parents/guardians.
- All items of personal clothing must be labelled with the child's name.
- Children are not allowed to wear makeup or nail varnish.
- Children are not allowed to wear jewellery, except for small stud earrings.
- Parents/guardians are required to check their child's hair regularly otherwise head lice can become a problem in school.

Medical Information

- All parents/guardians must ensure that teachers are aware in writing of any on-going medical condition that their child may have.
- Parents/guardians must complete the medical section of the application form and are reminded that they are responsible for any and all updates as necessary.

Medicines

- Parents/guardians must inform the class teacher if their child is on any form of medication, either short term or long term.
- Examples of short-term medications include but are not limited to antibiotics, medicines containing paracetamol, antihistamines, etc.
- Examples of long-term medications include but are not limited to inhalers, Ritalin, etc.
- Non-prescription medicines will neither be stored nor administered to pupils in school.
- Prescribed medicines will not be administered in school without the written consent of parents and the specific authorisation of the Board of Management.
- The medicine should not be kept by the pupil. It should be held by the authorised teacher and out of reach of pupils.
- Certain medicines, such as inhalers used by asthmatic children, must be readily accessible at all times of the school day.
- Children with acute illness (i.e. colds, temperatures, etc.) are not allowed to bring any medicines to school, either prescription or non-prescription.
- If a child has a diagnosed chronic illness (such as asthma, diabetes, etc.) and may need to take medication, a parent/guardian must write to the Board of Management to request this. A doctor's certificate must accompany this request. The medicine should be self-administered if possible, under the supervision of an authorised adult.

- The above request to the Board must give the name of the child, name and dose of medication, must state whether the child should be responsible for his/her own medication, the circumstances in which medication is to be given by the teacher and consent for it to be given.
- If the child cannot self-administer the required medicine, the request to the Board must include the exact dosage and times for administration.
- A teacher should not administer medication without the specific authorisation of the Board.
- Any teacher who is authorised to administer any medication does so on a voluntary basis and reserves the right to refuse.
- In cases where class teachers have been authorised to administer medication, it is the parents'/guardians' duty to ensure that the class teacher is present on any given school day.
- In any case where the class teacher is not present to administer a prescribed medication as per the Board's permission, the Principal will administer the medication instead. If the Principal is not available, the Deputy Principal fills this role.
- Where possible, parents/guardians should ask the prescribing doctor to prescribe the administration of prescribed medicines outside of school hours.
- Parents are further required to indemnify the Board of Management and authorised members of staff in respect of any liability that may arise regarding the administration of prescribed medicines in school. The Board of Management will inform the school's insurers accordingly.
- Where permission has been given by the Board of Management for the administration of medicine the smallest possible dose should be brought to school, preferably by the parent, with clear written instructions for administration, giving the name of the pupil.
- Changes in prescribed medication (or dosage) should be notified immediately to the school with clear written instructions of the procedure to be followed in storing and administering the new medication.

Parents should ensure that these procedures are clearly understood before submitting any request to the Board of Management.

School Medical Inspections

- The HSE will carry out vaccinations or school medical inspections (including but not limited to hearing, sight and dental) according to their policy during the school year.
- Consent forms will be issued and no child will be submitted to any vaccination or medical inspection without the direct and signed permission of parents/guardians. In the case of vaccinations in Junior Infant classes, parents/guardians must be in attendance on the day of these taking place. More information is available on www.hse.ie (School Immunisation Programme)

Food Allergies

- If a parent/guardian has a concern that the child has a specific food allergy, the Board insists that a medical diagnosis must be sought before the school is officially informed of any such possible allergy.
- Where children are suffering from certain and specific diagnosed on-going food allergy conditions (for example, nut allergy), parents should outline clearly in writing the nature of the allergy and provide this to the class teacher.
- This written report relating to the allergy must state what can and cannot be done in a particular emergency situation, with particular reference to what may be a risk to the child.
- Teachers must be made aware of any such diagnosed on-going conditions as they occur.
- Children who are identified as having diagnosed food allergies will not under any circumstances be offered any items of food that may contain ingredients that the class teacher knows are unsuitable.
- If a teacher is unsure on the exact ingredients of any food item that may be available to the class, he or she will act on the side of caution and not allow the child with a diagnosed food allergy to eat or drink it.
- Parents/guardians are reminded that if their child has a certain and specific diagnosed food allergy, they are responsible for informing the school of this as and when such a diagnosis may be provided.
- Parents and guardians are further reminded that they also have an important role in helping the child know and understand what he or she can and cannot eat.
- Bearing in mind the role of all teachers *in loco parentis*, parents are further required to indemnify the Board of Management of any liability that may arise regarding a child with a diagnosed and specific food allergy consuming any food product that he or she is allergic to.

Identification of Children with Diagnosed and Specific On-Going Medical Conditions, Food Allergies and/or Board-approved Administration of Medication

- The Board wants to ensure that all staff, permanent or temporary, can correctly identify children with diagnosed and specific on-going medical conditions, food allergies and/or board-approved administration of medication.
- Therefore, each such child will have their photograph displayed in the staff room, along with their name, class and diagnosed and specific on-going medical conditions, food allergies and/or board-approved administration of medication.

Accidents

- Parents/guardians are reminded that although children will be supervised by designated teachers and other staff who are *in loco parentis* during breaks and at all other times, accidents can occur.
- The Board of Management and all parents/guardians recognise that members of staff are not medical professionals but rather act *in loco parentis*.
- Minor accidents are treated at school, such as slight cuts and abrasions etc. The supervising staff or other designated staff members at the school will deal with these by washing the affected area with cold water. Parents/guardians are expected to check injuries when the child returns home from school.
- Hypo-allergenic plasters will only be used at the discretion of the supervising teacher.
- If the injury requires more attention than a wash with cold water or the use of an ice pack, then the parents/guardian will be notified.
- A member of staff will never administer medication due to an accident.
- When a child receives a blow to the head, no matter how minor it may be deemed by the supervising teacher, parents/guardians will also be notified.
- When an accident occurs during the school day that the supervising teacher deems more serious than a minor accident, an accident form must be written up and signed by the supervising teacher and by any other members of staff who witnessed or attended the accident as a true and accurate reflection of what occurred.
- All parents/guardians must inform the school of any changes to mobile, work or home phone numbers as they may occur.
- All parents/guardians must provide the school with the details of an emergency contact in case the parents/guardians cannot be reached.
- In the event of an accident, every possible effort will be made to contact the child's parents/guardians or the persons delegated to take responsibility for the child.

First Aid

- All school staff will receive and be certified in first aid training on a two-yearly basis.
- The Board of Management accepts that it needs a minimum of three designated first aiders, whose certification is renewed every two years. The names of these designated first aiders will be _____
- The Board further accepts that while all staff will receive first aid training, the selection of the minimum of three designated first aiders must be from members of staff who are willing to be named as such.
- If available, the designated certified first aiders will administer any first aid in the first instance. However, in the absence of such a person, any competent adult will make every effort to attend to an injured person.
- There will be a number of first aid boxes in the school – a basic first aid box is located in each classroom. The first aid boxes on the top and bottom corridors are stocked in accordance with guidelines issued by the Health and Safety Authority.
- Medication may never be stored in first aid boxes and will never be administered by first responders
- A defibrillator will be stored in the photocopying room. Appropriate training will be provided for staff members commencing in September 2025.

Investigation, Recording and Reporting

- All instances of serious and potentially serious accidents are recorded and investigated. To this end, the school maintains a logbook of all such instances, which is kept in the Principal's office.
- The Principal will report on these at the next meeting of the BOM (and sooner to the Chairperson of the BOM if the instance is deemed sufficiently serious).
- Any accident deemed serious involving a child will also be notified on the day itself to the relevant parent/guardian, ordinarily by the class teacher.
- Furthermore, the Principal will make a report to the Health and Safety Authority in the case of dangerous occurrences, death or serious accidents (that is, an accident requiring absence from work/school for more than three days, not including the day of the accident itself, or requiring medical treatment by a registered medical practitioner or hospital).
- Additionally, if required, the Principal will make a report to the school's insurance company.

Emergencies

Emergency Routes and Exits

- The school has, and will maintain, an adequate number of emergency routes and exits, which meet statutory regulations.
- These will be clearly signed and kept free from obstruction at all times.
- All rooms will have evacuation instructions on the inside of each door.
- School evacuation will be practised as part of regular fire drills.
- Special provisions will be made for evacuations that take place during extra-curricular activities.

Fire Protection

- The school has, and will maintain, appropriate fire detection and fire-fighting equipment, which meets statutory obligations.
- Fire drills will be held at least three times per school year and a logbook will be maintained of all such drills.
- Staff will be trained in the use of fire-fighting equipment on a regular basis to ensure that at any given time that there are sufficient staff with such knowledge employed.
- Any contractor completing hot work (including welding, soldering, use of blow lamps, blow torches and cutting equipment) must be qualified and insured to do so, must carry a fully charged fire extinguisher and must make a full check one hour after completion of the work.
- No naked flames are permitted to remain unattended at any time. Examples include but are not limited to candles lit for Religious Education lessons.

Emergency contact details

- Emergency contact details of the parents and guardians of all children in the school as well the next of kin of all staff, will be kept in the school office online via Aladdin, our online records system.
- The responsibility lies with parents/guardians to inform the school of any changes to the emergency contact details.

Emergency closures

- In the event of, for instance, heavy snowfall, high winds, thunderstorms, disconnection of services, death or critical incident, the Principal will consult as soon as feasible with the Chairperson of the BOM to decide whether it is in the interests of all parties to close the school.
- If it is decided that it would be unsafe to keep the school open, an exceptional closure will be deemed to have been granted by the BOM.
- Exceptional closures will be kept to an absolute minimum.
- Parents and guardians will be informed at the earliest opportunity of any such closure using a range of communication techniques (SMS, email, telephone calls, posting on school website, message on school voicemail, note at school gate, etc.).
- If school is open when an incident occurs, staff will remain on the premises until all children have been collected.

Heating

The Board will endeavour to ensure that the school is kept comfortably warm for all members of the school community. This is particularly important during winter.

Similarly, especially during warmer weather, all classrooms must be kept properly ventilated to ensure an appropriate level of comfort for everyone. The below procedure is taken from the Department of Education's Circular 21/79 which deals with school heating.

- The lowest acceptable temperature in the classrooms is 16 degrees centigrade.
- If the temperature in the classrooms has not reached 16 degrees C within one hour of the opening time of the school, the Principal must take immediate action.
- Unless there is a definite chance that the minimum temperature will be reached very soon, the Principal must inform the Chairperson of the Board of Management to decide if the school will have to be closed. If the Chairperson cannot be contacted then the Principal must use his or her judgement.
- If the school must be closed due to a lack of proper heating, the principal will make arrangements for the pupils to be sent home, provided this can be done without risk to the children.
- Where it is not possible to send all children home, teachers continue to have a legal obligation to supervise the children for the remainder of the school day. Teachers

should not, however, be expected to carry out their normal teaching programme in these circumstances.

- Where the principal fails to follow out the above procedure, any member of staff has the right to report the matter to the Chairperson.

Supervision of children during the school day

General Supervision

- The children are supervised by the school from the time they enter the school until the time they are collected.
- If class teachers are unexpectedly absent for any reason, for example, an illness or family emergency, the children may be divided up between the other classes for the school day if a substitute teacher is not available.
- In cases of longer term absences, depending on availability substitute teachers may be engaged.
- On occasion, a teacher may have to leave the classroom for a short period of time. If so, s/he will ensure that a colleague will provide temporary supervision cover.
- At an age-appropriate stage, sometimes children may be allowed to leave their classrooms for limited periods of time to undertake specific errands or appropriate responsibilities. Another child should always accompany them.

Yard Supervision

- During yard time, our school operates a weekly yard timetable of supervising staff: Two rostered teachers will always be on duty on the Junior Yard and will be assisted by rostered Special Needs Assistants. Three rostered teachers will always be on duty in the Senior Yard and will be assisted by rostered Special needs assistants. The appropriate yard supervision rota will be displayed in the staff room.
- The teachers rostered for yard duty are the people responsible for the health and safety of *all children on the yard at that time*. These teachers should not leave the yard for any reason.
- The Special Needs Assistants are allocated specific areas for support and they follow the direction of the supervising teacher responsible.
- Teachers rostered for yard duty are reminded that Special Needs Assistants are not responsible for yard supervision should the teacher leave the yard for any reason.
- The teachers rostered for yard duty on any given day are responsible for deciding whether or not the weather is suitable for going to the yard. If unsure they must check with the Principal for a second opinion.

School Excursions

- Parents/guardians are asked to provide permission for the children to take part in age-appropriate, relevant and educational excursions and field trips.

- Based on the age and profile of any class, parents/guardians may be asked to accompany specific groups on excursions. They may not bring younger children with them.
- Where transport is required, the school will only engage buses that are adequate for the size of the group from a reputable company that provides safe vehicles and drivers. Every effort will be made to source buses that have seat belts and all passengers will be required to make use of these.
- Pupils are paired up for each excursion and must follow their teacher's instructions at all times.
- A teacher or other responsible adult always leads the way and the group is required to stay together, using waiting points where necessary.
- Children are counted when leaving school and at various points during the excursion.

Conduct on Tours

- Pupils' behaviour on tours will comply with the standard set down in the School's Code of Discipline. In certain circumstances parents may be asked to agree to a contract on behaviour. Where it is felt that a child's conduct would pose a safety risk or inhibit the educational benefit for self or others, the teacher may refuse the child permission to travel. Parents will be advised of this in advance.
- In the event that a child's behaviour on a school trip doesn't comply with the school's Code of Behaviour, the teacher will immediately contact the Principal and parents to advise them of this. If feasible, the parents will be asked to collect the child. If this is not feasible, the child will be required to remain with the teacher in charge for the remainder of the trip and will not be allowed to participate in activities that might endanger himself/herself or others.

Safety and Supervision

- Teachers will be extra vigilant when taking children out of the school. Special attention will be paid to - Road Safety, behaviour on bus, risks posed by particular venues (e.g. adventure playgrounds etc.). The minimum supervision ratio will be 15:1 (adult).
- Since April 2016 new legislation regarding vetting has come into effect. In line with statutory requirements it is necessary for parents who volunteer to help with tours and outings to be Garda vetted. Parents must complete a vetting form every three years. Forms will be available in the school office.
- A minimum of two Garda vetted adults are required for supervision purposes on all school tours. This applies even when the supervision ratio is within the minimum 15:1.

Swimming Lessons

- Best practice in relation to the supervision, instruction and child protection procedures as outlined by the Irish Sports Council, Swim Ireland and the National Safety Council will be adhered to at all times. Staff will follow the guidelines of our own Health & Safety and Child Protection policies at all times.
- Pupils are required to behave at all times in a manner that ensures the safety of all involved in school swimming. Pupils must endeavour to obey the instructor's orders at all times and comply with the School Code of Behaviour.
- Parents/guardians will receive a standard letter providing information on school swimming before their child starts their swimming term.
- The school will treat all pupils fairly and with respect for their privacy and dignity
- Teachers of all classes should remain on the viewing deck during the lesson in order to supervise the overall group and pupils who may need to use the toilets during the lesson.
- The permission from parents to the school to let children go swimming is covered in the Annual swimming and consent and permission slip.
- The pool will be provided with information regarding any child with a Special Educational Need, physical disability or medical diagnosis that may compromise their safety at swimming
- A roll will be called before leaving the school premises and before boarding the bus to leave the swimming facility

At the pool and in the changing rooms

- It is expected that all children who participate in the swimming program are able to change into their togs, dry themselves and dress themselves without help
- Teachers and SNA will be the only people permitted in the change room
- Pupils who need assistance getting changed will require their parent/guardian to be present.
- It is necessary for parents who assist and accompany a child with needs to be Garda vetted. They will change only their own child and assist no other children in an individual changing cubicle
- SNAs assisting children with additional or special needs to dress will leave the cubicle door open and be observed by another teacher
- Teachers should be vigilant – if they decide to help a child do not do so without another teacher observing and the cubicle door open.
- Change rooms are communal approx. 30 individual cubicles and several large group cubicles for approx. 5 per cubicle.
- Doors should remain slightly open in group cubicles.
- Where possible, female staff should supervise girls and male staff should supervise boys.
- Where possible boys should be brought to one side of the change room and girls to the other
- If there is a need for an adult to enter a cubicle, the pupils will be alerted to this by announcing it to give pupils the opportunity to cover up if they want to

- Pupils should know that adults will enter the room if necessary - in response to a disturbance or request, for example.
- One teacher should remain behind in the changing room until the last child has left.
- When leaving after swimming, One teacher will need to be outside the changing room for those who have finished changing. This teacher will supervise the line in reception.
- Teachers should do a final sweep of the change rooms before they leave to go home to ensure nothing is left behind.

Other

- The school will provide safe equipment for both its staff and pupils, including where necessary, guards and appropriate personal protective equipment.
- Equipment will be appropriately certified, maintained to a high standard and disposed of if it poses a safety risk.
- Electrical equipment will only be used and maintained by staff qualified to do so. Wherever possible, fuses and power breakers shall be used and all portable power equipment shall operate on 110V.
- Equipment and substances for maintenance, cleaning, catering and similar will be stored securely away from children. Cleaning and maintenance will normally be done outside of school hours.
- Appropriate training will be provided in the safe handling and use of equipment and ~~through the use of mechanical aids and the sharing of loads, and skills for safe manual handling.~~ through the use of mechanical aids and the sharing of loads, and skills for safe manual handling.
- Work at height will be avoided wherever possible and must never take place without other people being on the premises. Safe ladder practice must be observed and ordinary school furniture must never be used to undertake work at height.

Animals

- No animals may be brought into the school grounds at any time, with the exception of assistance/Reading dogs.
- Any organisation/individual who brings any animals onto school grounds must have the permission of the Board of Management.

Hens

- Whilst keeping hens at our school is particularly beneficial to our pupils, we understand that we have a legal duty of care towards any animals we are responsible for, and that this must be a priority at all times.
- The Animal Welfare Act 2006 places a duty on schools to provide provision for the welfare of any animal that they are responsible for the animals need for a suitable environment, Its need for a suitable diet, Its need to be able to exhibit normal behaviour patterns, Its need to be protected from pain, suffering and disease

Food

- The Principal and the designated member of staff responsible for the Hens, Isobel Creane, will conduct a risk assessment prior to looking after the chickens to ensure that all risks are manageable and are controlled.
- Pupils and staff will undergo training on a termly basis to ensure that they are aware of their responsibilities when looking after the Hens, including: feeding, hygiene, handling and how to spot signs of infestation and disease.
- The Principal will establish a rota for looking after the Hens before, during and after the school day, as well as during holidays and weekends.
- Food for the Hens will be sourced from a reputable supplier, to ensure it is of appropriate nourishment suitable to their age and breed.

Housing and environment

- The Hen coop will:
 - Be warm, dry and well-ventilated.
 - Contain food and water inside.
 - Contain nest boxes, which will be draught-free and lined with a layer of dust free, absorbent bedding.
 - Be spacious enough for the Hens to exercise and carry out their normal behaviours.
 - Have flooring covered with dry material, such as wood chips, to allow foraging and dustbathing.
 - Hens will be provided with fresh clean water and this will be checked regularly by staff.

Cleaning and maintenance

- The Hen coop and run will be cleaned on a weekly basis by the designated member of staff, or the member of staff indicated on a rota.
- The school will purchase appropriate cleaning materials, including a shovel, bucket, stiff brush and detergent cleaner.
- The detergent cleaner, as well as any other chemicals purchased, will be checked to ensure that they are not hazardous to the Hens or to the members of staff using them.
- All bedding will be removed and replaced, and all droppings will be scraped into the bucket provided. Both the bedding and droppings will be disposed of appropriately by the member of staff carrying out the cleaning duties.
- The water and food feeders will be cleaned on a weekly basis to avoid any build-up of green algae which can be harmful to Hens.

Contact with the Hens

- Pupils are able to provide the Hens with food and water. When doing so, pupils will be supervised by an adequate number of staff.
- Pupils will be supervised at all times and are instructed to treat the Hens with respect. Pupils must not harm the animals or cause them any distress.
- Before and after any contact with equipment used for the Hens and their food, pupils and members of staff are required to wash their hands, using warm water and soap.
- If required, pupils and staff will wear personal protective equipment (PPE), such as plastic gloves, to avoid any skin contact with food or equipment.
- When carrying out cleaning duties, the designated member of staff will wear PPE equipment, such as plastic gloves, at all times.

Policies linked with the Health and Safety policy:

- Supervision
- Healthy Eating
- Health & Safety Risk Assessment
- Fire Safety
- Medicines
- Swimming
- School trips
- Yard Supervision

This policy will be monitored on an ongoing basis. Health and Safety risk assessments will take place at least annually, and sooner if circumstances require this.

This policy was reviewed in consultation with the children, parents and staff and it was ratified by the Board of Management on

Reviewed by the Board of Management on _____

Signed: Dr. Phil Ryan (Chairperson)

Date: 7/4/25

Signed: K. A. (Principal)

Date: 7/4/25