

Health and Safety Policy

Scoil an Chlochair, Kilbeggan

Introduction

The existing Health and Safety policy was reviewed in September 2020 due to the Covid pandemic.

General Guidelines

It is the policy of the Board of Management, Scoil an Chlochair, so far as is reasonably practicable, to:

1. establish and maintain a safe and healthy environment throughout the school;
2. establish and maintain safe working procedures among staff and pupils;
3. make arrangements for ensuring safety and absence of risks to health in connection with the use, handling, storage and transport of articles and substances;
4. ensure the provision of sufficient information, instruction and supervision to enable all employees and pupils to avoid hazards and contribute positively to their own health and safety and to ensure that they have access to health and safety training as appropriate or as and when provided;
5. maintain all areas under the control of the Board of Management and Principal in a condition that is safe and without risk to health and to provide and maintain means of access to and egress from that place of work that are safe and without risk;
6. formulate effective procedures for use in case of fire and for evacuating the school premises;
7. lay down procedures to be followed in case of accident;
8. teach safety as part of pupils' duties where appropriate;
9. provide and maintain adequate welfare facilities and to make recommendations to the appropriate authority as required.

Roles and Responsibility

The Board of Management, principal, staff and pupils working together have responsibility for the implementation of this policy.

Responsibility of the Board of Management and Principal

The Board of Management and Principal are responsible for implementing this policy within the school. In particular they will:

1. monitor the effectiveness of the safety policy and the safe working practices described within it and shall revise and amend it, as necessary, on a regular basis;
2. prepare an emergency evacuation procedure and arrange for periodic practice evacuation drills (normally at least once a term) to take place and for the results of these to be recorded;
3. make arrangements to draw the attention of all staff employed at the school, to the school and departmental safety policies and procedures and of any relevant safety guidelines and information;
4. make arrangements for the implementation of the school's accident reporting procedure and draw this to the attention of all staff at the school as necessary;
5. make arrangements for informing staff and pupils, of relevant safety procedures. Other users of the school will be appropriately informed;
6. ensure that regular safety inspections are undertaken.
7. arrange for the withdrawal, repair or replacement of any item of furniture, fitting or equipment which is deemed to be unsafe as according to Health and Safety guidelines ;
8. report to the Department of Education any defect in the state of repair of the buildings or their surrounds which is identified as being unsafe and make such interim arrangements as are reasonable to limit the risk entailed.

N.B. The Board of Management will deal with all aspects of maintenance which are under their control. report to the Department of Education any other situation identified as being unsafe or hazardous and which cannot be remedied within the financial resources available to them;

9. monitor, within the limits of their expertise, the activities of contractors (in liaison with the Department of Education), hirers and other organisations present on site, as far as is reasonably practicable;
10. identify any member of staff having direct responsibility for particular safety matters and any member of staff who is specifically delegated to assist the Board of Management and Principal in the management of health and safety at the school. Such delegated responsibility must be defined as appropriate.

Duties of the Person Delegated to Assist in the Management of Health and Safety

As part of their Post of Responsibility, the delegated person, Caroline Dunne, shall:

1. assist the Principal in the implementation, monitoring and development of the safety policy within the school;
2. monitor general advice on safety matters given by the Department of Education and other relevant bodies and advise on its application to the school;
3. co-ordinate arrangements for the design and implementation of safe working practices within the school;
4. investigate any specific health and safety problem identified within the school and take or recommend (as appropriate) remedial action;
5. order that a method of working ceases on health and safety grounds on a temporary basis subject to further consideration by the Board of Management and Principal;
6. assist in carrying out regular safety inspections of the school and its activities and make recommendations on methods of resolving any problems identified;
7. ensure that staff with control of resources (both financial and other) give due regard to safety;
8. co-ordinate arrangements for the dissemination of information and for the instruction of employees, students, pupils and visitors on safety matters and to make recommendations on the extent to which staff are trained.

Responsibilities of Staff Towards Pupils and Others in their Care

All staff are responsible for the health and safety arrangements in relation to staff, students, pupils and volunteer helpers under their supervision. In particular, they will monitor their own work activities and take all reasonable steps to:

1. exercise effective supervision over all those for whom they are responsible, including pupils;
2. be aware of and implement safe working practices and to set a good example personally. Identify actual and potential hazards and introduce procedures to minimise the possibility of mishap;
3. ensure that any equipment or tools used are appropriate to that use and meet accepted safety standards;
4. provide written job instructions, warning notices and signs as appropriate;

5. provide appropriate protective clothing and safety equipment as necessary and ensure that these are used as required;
6. minimise the occasions when an individual is required to work in isolation, particularly in a hazardous situation or on a hazardous process;
7. evaluate promptly and, where appropriate, take action on criticism of health and safety arrangements;
8. provide the opportunity for discussion of health and safety arrangements;
9. investigate any accident (or incident where personal injury could have arisen) and take appropriate corrective action;
10. provide for adequate instruction, information and training in safe working methods and recommend suitable "off the job" training;
11. where private vehicles are used to transport children to and from school functions, staff should ensure that child restraints and seats appropriate to the age of the children concerned are used.

N.B. When any member of staff considers that corrective action is necessary but that action lies outside the scope of their authority, they should refer the problem to the Principal.

Responsibilities of all Employees

All employees have a responsibility under the Act to:

1. take reasonable care for the health and safety of themselves and of any person who might be affected by their acts or omissions at work;
2. co-operate with the Department of Education, Board of Management and others in meeting statutory requirements. not interfere with or misuse anything provided in the interests of health, safety and welfare;
3. make themselves aware of all safety rules, procedures and safe working practices applicable to their posts; where in doubt they must seek immediate clarification from the Principal;
4. ensure that tools and equipment are in good condition and report any defects to the Principal;
5. use protective clothing and safety equipment provided and ensure that these are kept in good condition;
6. ensure that offices, classrooms and other general areas are kept tidy;
7. ensure that any accidents, whether or not an injury occurs, and potential hazards are reported to the Principal. Accidents of any pupil, member of the public or employee, no matter how trivial, are reported in the "Incident Reports" folder on RushFiles without unreasonable delay. Specifics of the accident, including the date and approximate time, must be recorded concisely. The report should be printed and signed by a

teacher who was present at the accident. This report is kept in the office . It must be ensured that proper medical attention is given where required.

WHENEVER AN EMPLOYEE IS AWARE OF ANY POSSIBLE DEFICIENCIES IN HEALTH AND SAFETY ARRANGEMENTS SHE/HE MUST DRAW THESE TO THE ATTENTION OF THE PRINCIPAL.

Please note the following:-

1. It must be realised that newly appointed employees could be particularly vulnerable to any risk and it must be ensured that all relevant health and safety matters are drawn to their attention at an early stage.
2. Whilst it is a management responsibility to instruct all employees in safe working procedures in relation to their posts and work places, employees may from time to time find themselves in unfamiliar environments. In such cases, the employee concerned should be particularly alert for hazards, and whenever possible, ensure they are accompanied by a person familiar with the environment or that they are advised of specific hazards.
3. All volunteer helpers will be expected, as far as reasonably possible, to meet the same standards required of employees.

Responsibilities of Parents and Guardians.

Parents and guardians are requested to cooperate with the BOM and others to ensure health and safety law in general and this policy in particular, are implemented. They have 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 reminded that they must not allow their children to engage in dangerous play in and around the school. Parents and guardians are requested to report and health and safety concerns to the principal or BOM.

Responsibilities of Pupils

All pupils are expected, within their expertise and ability, to:

1. exercise personal responsibility for the safety of themselves and their fellow pupils;
2. observe standards of dress consistent with safety and/or hygiene (this would preclude unsuitable footwear, knives and other items considered dangerous;
3. observe all the safety rules of the school and in particular the instructions of the teaching staff in the event of an emergency;
4. use and not wilfully misuse, neglect or interfere with things provided safety purposes.

N.B. The Board of Management and Principal will make pupils (and where appropriate the parents) aware of these responsibilities through direct instruction, notices and the school handbook.

Visitors

In as much as is compatible with the practical layout of the school premises, anyone entering the school premises should be required to identify themselves to the Principal or the Secretary 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 Safety 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 his nominated agent and shall mark such hazard with warning signs or other suitable protection.

Lettings

The Board of Management and Principal must ensure that:

1. the means of access and egress are safe for the use of hirers, and that all plant and equipment made available to and used by the hirers is safe. If the Principal knows of any hazard associated with the above, she/he should take action to make hirers aware of it;
2. fire escape routes and exits are clearly marked for the benefit of unfamiliar users of the building, particularly during the hours of darkness;
3. hirers of the building are briefed about the location of the telephone, fire escape routes, fire alarms and fire fighting equipment. Notices regarding emergency procedures should be prominently displayed;
4. hirers using any equipment or facility provided by the school are familiar with its safe use and, if necessary, briefed accordingly;
5. arrangements are made for checking the security and condition of the premises and equipment used after vacation by the hirer or his staff.

General Hazards

All hazards shall be eliminated in so far as resources and circumstances allow. The following hazards (in as much as can be identified) are considered by the school to be a source of potential danger and are brought to the attention of all concerned: -

- Wet corridors (after cleaning, wet days), slippery surfaces.
- Trailing leads should be positioned in a safe, unobtrusive manner.
- Computers
- Projectors
- Staffroom/kitchen appliances
- Basketball posts.
- Bins
- Area behind portocabins
- Protruding units and fittings
- Car park - back of school.
- Cars, bicycles and other vehicles in the school area
- Shores and drains in the yards
- Doors and mats
- Yard at break time
- Scissors
- Hall
- Broken glass or delph
- School doors
- Blind cords
- Boiler
- Computer trolley
- Emergency closures
- Work carried out by the caretaker/workmen
- Gardening by children
- Extra furniture stored in the school shed

Minimising General Hazards

To minimise these dangers the following safety procedures must be adhered to:

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- Where applicable, all members of staff have been instructed in the correct use of plant, machinery and equipment.
- All machinery and electrical equipment have been fitted with adequate safeguards/instructions.
- Only safety scissors used by children.
- Precautionary notices in respect of safety matters are displayed at relevant points.
- Glass bottles are not permitted by pupils.
- Basketball posts will be covered as soon as possible.

- Class teachers will ensure that PE equipment is safe, well maintained, stacked securely and positioned so as not to cause a hazard after each PE class.
- Children are not permitted to access areas behind the portocabin.
- Care is exercised when moving bins.
- It is imperative that there should be adequate supervision. Supervising teachers are the first to enter the yard at break times and any dangers/incidents encountered notified without delay. Class teachers will routinely and as needed inspect furniture, floors, apparatus, equipment and fittings in their classrooms.
- Care is exercised when leaving the school yard. Junior and Senior Infants are not allowed to leave at home time unsupervised. Children are aware that they return to the school building if no one has arrived to collect them.
- Only the caretaker has access to the boiler. Care exercised in the boiler.
- Only the principal or class teacher can move the trolley. Care is exercised when moving the trolley. All laptops are plugged out after school and stored appropriately and safely.
- Equipment used by the caretaker/cleaner is stored safely away. No machinery should be used in yards during break times and tools and equipment must not be accessibly to children.
- Proper and safe use of gardening equipment at all times. Children are supervised during such activities.
- All school doors remain locked during lunch time and after school. During break times the school doors are only opened under the guidance and permission from teacher on yard.
- Care is exercised at all time in the hall. Children only allowed in hall under strict supervision. Climbing in this area is not permitted.
- Care must be exercise when using all kitchen appliances e.g. Microwave, kettle, toaster etc.
- Store rooms are kept locked
- All children have been instructed on how to enter the school grounds. Children are not permitted to leave the school grounds without permission from a parent or communicating with their teacher.
- Teachers/SNA`s escort the children into the school each morning. In the afternoon, junior classes are escorted to a collection point and senior classes are escorted to the school exit.
- Tape is placed around the extra furniture being stored in the school shed on a temporary basis, due to Covid 19.

Fire and Emergency Evacuation Procedures

1. The school's procedures for fire and emergency evacuation are appended. They are also posted in the school entrance hall.
2. These procedures will be updated as appropriate.
3. The log book for the recording and evaluation of practice and evacuation drills is available.

Fire Prevention Equipment

Arrangements are made to regularly monitor the condition of all fire prevention equipment. This would include the regular visual inspection of fire extinguishers and the fire alarm system.

First Aid and Accident Reporting Procedures

First Aid

The First Aid Box is located in the Office. A smaller bag will be used by the staff, supervising the yard. This will contain alcohol wipes, antiseptic cream, tissues, sanitiser and plasters. Minor injuries will be treated on the yard. There is also a smaller first aid bag which should be brought to all matches, tours etc by the organising teacher/ member of staff. In the case of head injuries and suspected breakages, a parent is contacted.

Accident Reporting Form

The person responsible for administering the accident reporting procedure, the notification of serious accidents causing death or major injury and dangerous occurrences is the Principal.

Accident report forms are available on Rush Files and should be completed by the member of staff who witnessed/dealt with the child to whom the accident occurred.

AED Irish Heart Foundation

An Automatic Emergency Defibrillator (AED) is located outside the Principal's office. The following members of staff have completed the Irish Heart Foundation Heartsaver AED course:- March 2019

Niall Rabbitt

Jean Wade

Eileen O Neill

Debbie Coughlan

Mona Kelly

Florence Guilfoyle

Angela Doonan

Brenda Watts

Rebecca Hannevig

Myra Pettit

Fionnuala Irwin

Emma Grey

Health Promotion

The school will promote safe and healthy living, both through the curriculum and in other ways. For example, walking and cycling to school will be encouraged and guidelines will be issued to parents and guardians about the content of healthy lunch boxes.

Success Criteria

The effectiveness and success of this policy will be measured in a number of ways: -

5. Reduction in the number of incidents happening in the school.
6. Dealing quickly with any incidents that should arise.

Implementation and review

This policy will be implemented, once ratified by the B.O.M of Scoil an Chlochair. We aim to implement it from September 2020. Once ratified every member of staff will have access to a copy of this policy. This policy will be circulated to parents of pupils enrolled in the school via the school website in due course.

This policy shall be reviewed annually by the Board of Management of Scoil an Chlochair in accordance with experience and the requirements of the Health and Safety Act and the Health and Safety Authority, or sooner should the need arise

SPECIFIC HAZARD: Covid 19

Risk Communication, Education and Training

- The Board of Management and staff has developed a response plan for the prevention and mitigation of Covid-19 following a risk assessment of the school facility. This plan highlights the measures necessary to protect the health and safety of staff in re-opening and modifying the work arrangements within the school. This plan has been uploaded to the school website for all staff and parents to access.
- The Covid Lead Worker Representative, Caroline Dunne and Deputy Lead Worker Representative, Florrie Gill, will be properly consulted when developing and implementing the action plan for the prevention and mitigation of Covid-19 within the school and all staff will be informed about the measures being introduced, using specific risk communication and staff engagement approaches. All staff will watch the relevant DES training before the school reopens.
- The Board of Management will:
 - Ensure that all staff members receive necessary training prior to returning to work.
 - Provide posters and information to increase awareness of Covid-19 among staff and pupils.
 - Promote safe individual practices within the school campus.
 - Engage with staff in providing feedback on the preventive measures and their effectiveness.
 - Provide regular information about the risk of Covid-19 using official sources, such as government agencies (HSE, HSA, etc.) and the World Health Organisation.
 - Emphasise the effectiveness of adopting protective measures, especially good personal hygiene.
 - Provide specific training in the proper use of PPE for staff, where required.

Attendance

- Parents are advised not to bring their children to school if the child has symptoms of a viral respiratory infection or if there is someone in the household suspected or known to have Covid-19.
- Parents are advised not to bring their children to school if they have been identified as Covid-19 contacts.
- Pupils are made aware that if they develop signs or symptoms when at school they should let their teacher know.

- Parents are advised that the school reserves the right to decline entry to pupils who appear to have fever or respiratory tract infection.
- Up-to-date contact details for parents/guardians will be maintained so that they can be contacted to collect pupils from school in the event of illness.
- No employees are permitted to attend work if they display any of the symptoms below:
 - Fever (temperature of 37.5 degrees or above)
 - Cough
 - Shortness of breath or breathing difficulties
 - Loss of smell, of taste or distortion of taste
- Any staff member displaying symptoms must self-isolate and contact their GP for Covid testing referral.
- Any staff member living with someone who is self-isolating or waiting for a Covid-19 test must restrict their movements for 14 days.
- Any staff member who has tested positive for Covid-19 must not return to work until deemed fit to do so and upon approval of their medical advisor. If the result of the test is negative, then they can return to school.

Hand Hygiene

- Everyone entering the school building will be required to perform hand hygiene with a hand sanitiser. This may need to be supervised.
- Good hand hygiene is promoted and posters displayed throughout the facility (available on the HPSC website).
- Hand hygiene will be achieved by handwashing and use of a hand sanitiser.
- Care will be taken to clean up any hand sanitiser spills to prevent risk of falls.
- Use of hand hygiene facilities including wash hand basins will be managed so as to avoid congregation of people waiting to use wash hand basins and hand sanitiser.
- Wash hand basins, running water, liquid soap dispensers and hand drying facilities are provided in all toilets, classrooms and staffrooms.
- Pupils and staff should perform hand hygiene
 - On arrival at school
 - Before eating or drinking
 - After using the toilet
 - After playing outdoors
 - When their hands physically dirty
 - When they cough or sneeze.

Respiratory Etiquette

- Coughing/sneezing etiquette is explicitly taught.
- All staff and pupils must cover their mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing and sneezing or cough and sneeze into the crook of their elbow.
- Adequate supply of tissues for single use is provided.
- Used tissues should be put into a bin and hands washed afterwards.

Wearing of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

- As per guidelines, all staff will wear face coverings. Visors and/or face masks are provided.
- All adult visitors will be required to wear face coverings.
- For a limited number of staff, PPE will need to be used occasionally or constantly due to the nature of certain work activities or work areas. This might include roles such as:
 - Assisting with intimate care needs
 - Administering First Aid
- Where a suspected case of Covid-19 is identified while the school is in operation
- Where staff members are particularly vulnerable to infection but are not on the list of those categorised as people in very high-risk groups or may be living with those who are in the very high-risk category.
- When staff members have to move between classrooms to support children with learning needs.
- Appropriate PPE will be available for dealing with suspected Covid-19 cases, intimate care needs and for first aid. Where staff provide healthcare to children with medical needs in the school environment, they will apply standard precautions as per usual.

Cleaning

- All cleaning will be undertaken in line with DES and public health guidance.
- Cleaning staff will be trained in the new cleaning arrangements for the school.
- Sufficient cleaning materials and PPE will be available to allow for increased cleaning.

Physical Distancing

- Physical distancing is a key control measure in reducing the spread of infection.
- All persons will adhere to relevant social distancing rules in relation to entering the school and while working in the school.
- Start and finish times are staggered.

- Break times are staggered and supervision procedures strictly adhered to, with play areas clearly demarcated.
- Appropriate signage in line with public health guidelines is displayed throughout school (buildings and grounds).
- Appropriate social distancing arrangements are in place throughout the school.
- Every effort is being made to limit interaction within classrooms, to limit contact between class groups and to limit the sharing of common facilities.
- The children and their teacher work in class bubbles. A class bubble is a grouping which stays apart from other classes as much as possible. The aim of the system within the school is that class groupings mix only with their own class from arrival at school in the morning until the children go home at the end of the school day.
- Classroom space has been reconfigured to maximise physical distancing.
- Meetings of staff will take place online if necessary.
- There is currently a strict no handshaking policy in place within the school. All staff, contractors and visitors should avoid direct physical contact with any other persons as far as possible.

Dealing with a Suspected Case of Covid-19

- If a pupil displays symptoms of Covid-19 while in the building, the following are the procedures that will be implemented:
 - Parents/guardians will be contacted immediately.
 - The child will be accompanied to the designated isolation area via the isolation route by a member of staff. The staff member will remain at least 2 metres away from the symptomatic child and will also make sure that others maintain a distance of at least 2 metres from the symptomatic child at all times.
 - A mask will be provided for the child presenting with symptoms. The child should wear the mask if in a common area with other people or while exiting the premises.
 - The child and parent/ adult will exit via the back door of the school.
 - An assessment will be made as to whether the child who is displaying symptoms can immediately be brought home by parents and call their doctor and continue self-isolation at home.
 - The school will facilitate the child presenting with symptoms to remain in isolation, if they cannot immediately go home, and will assist them by calling their GP.
 - The child presenting with symptoms should be advised to cover their mouth and nose with the disposable tissue provided when they cough or sneeze and to put the tissue in the waste bag provided.
 - If the child is well enough to go home, the school will arrange for them to be transported home by a family member, as soon as possible, and

advise them to inform their GP by phone of their symptoms. Public transport of any kind should not be used.

- If they are too unwell to go home or advice is required, the school will contact 999 or 112 and inform them that the child is displaying signs and symptoms of Covid-19.
- Arrangements will be made for appropriate cleaning of the isolation area and work areas involved.
- If a staff member displays symptoms of Covid-19 while in the building, the following are the procedures that will be implemented:
 - Staff members who are symptomatic should immediately inform the Principal/Deputy Principal or LWR and go to the isolation area.
 - A face covering will be provided to the staff member who is symptomatic.
 - The staff member who is symptomatic should maintain a 2 metre distance from others if possible and avoid touching people, surfaces and objects.
 - The staff member should be advised to cover their mouth and nose with a disposable tissue when they cough or sneeze and put the tissue in the bin.
 - If the staff member is not well enough to go home, they should wait in the isolation room away from others, mindful of the need to observe good respiratory and hand hygiene.
 - Arrangements will be made for the staff member to be transported home by a family member, as soon as possible.
 - If the staff member needs to use the bathroom they should wipe contact surfaces, e.g., taps and clean their hands after attending the toilet.
 - Anyone who is symptomatic is advised to inform their general practitioner by phone of their symptoms.
 - If the staff member is too unwell to go home or advice is required, the school will contact 999 or 112 and inform them that the sick person is a Covid-19 suspect.
 - The isolation area and work areas will be thoroughly cleaned in line with the guidelines.

Supervision

- Children are supervised in yard during staggered break times by the teachers on yard duty.
- On wet days, pupils will be supervised in their classrooms by the teachers on duty. It is, however, anticipated that children will have a break in the yard insofar as is possible.
- In the event of the class teacher being absent every effort will be made to secure a substitute teacher for the class.