Health and Safety Policy



2025 – 2026

Principal: Tony Riley **August' 2025 - June' 2026** **Roll Number: 17479D**

Introductory Statement

This policy was developed in consultation with the staff and BOM of Scoil Mhuire Lacken in response to "Guidelines on Managing Health, Safety & Welfare". A Health and Safety Audit was completed by Staff representative for Health & Safety appointed by the Board of Management.

This Health and Safety Audit informed the bases for this policy as well as all relevant Health and Safety legislation. The Board of Management of Scoil Mhuire Lacken NS brings to the attention of its staff the following arrangements for safeguarding the safety, health and welfare of those employed and working in the school. The Board of Management accepts responsibility to ensure that all safety measures are monitored and that the welfare and safety of its employees are safeguarded.

Rationale

It is a legal requirement under the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act, 2005 for every employer, in conjunction with employees, to prepare a Health and Safety policy. In addition, roles and responsibilities were revised in 2013 with the publication of "Guidelines on Managing Health, Safety & Welfare in Primary Schools".

The policy represents the Board of Management's commitment to safety and health, and specifies the manner, the organisation and the resources necessary for maintaining and reviewing safety and health standards.

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

Relationship to characteristic spirit of the school

The creation of a safe and healthy working environment for all members of the school community is a priority for the Board of Management of Scoil Mhuire Lacken.

Aims

In the implementation of this Safety Statement, the Board of Management hopes to achieve the following aims:

- to create a safe and healthy school environment by identifying, preventing and tackling hazards and their accompanying risks
- to ensure understanding of the school's duty of care towards pupils
- to protect the school community from workplace accidents and ill health at work
- to outline procedures and practices in place to ensure safe systems of work.

To comply with all relevant health and safety legislation (so far as is reasonable practicable)

to include the following areas:

- provision of a safe workplace for all employees – teachers, SNAs, secretary, caretaker, cleaners, etc.
- to ensure competent employees, who will carry out safe work practices
- safe access and egress routes
- safe handling and use of hazardous substances and equipment
- safe equipment including maintenance and use of appropriate guards
- provision of appropriate personal protective equipment.

Responsibilities of Employer – Board of Management

- provide and maintain a workplace that is safe and do likewise for all machinery and equipment etc
- manage work activities to ensure the safety, health and welfare of employees
- ensure that risks are assessed and hazards are eliminated or minimised as far as is reasonable practicable
- prepare a safety statement and regularly update it, particularly when there have been significant changes or when the risk assessment is no longer valid
- provide and maintain decent welfare facilities for employees

- prepare and update procedures to deal with an emergency situation and communicate these procedures to employees
- appoint a competent person to oversee the functions of the Board in relation to Health & Safety
- provide training and information to workers in a format and language that is appropriate, including training on the commencement of employment
- report serious accidents to the Health and Safety Authority
- consult annually with employees and provide them with information in relation to safety, health and welfare
- require employers from whom services are contracted, to have an up to date safety statement (e.g. painters, contract cleaners, bus companies, etc.).

Responsibilities for Employees

Health and safety is everyone's business. As a worker you have legal duties designed to protect you and those you work with.

Responsibilities include:

- not to be under the influence of an intoxicant to the extent that they endanger your own or other persons' safety. To submit to tests for intoxicants as and when regulations specifying testing procedures are adopted
- to co-operate with an employer or other people to ensure that the Health and Safety lay is implemented
- not to engage in improper conduct that will endanger you or anyone else
- to attend Health and Safety training and correctly use any equipment at work
- to use protective clothes and equipment provided
- to report a dangerous practices or situations that you are aware of to an appropriate person
- not to interfere or misuse any safety equipment at your workplace
- if you are suffering from a disease or illness that adds to risks, to tell your employer.

Entitlements of Safety Representative

(Section 25 Safety, Health & Welfare at Work Act, 2005).

The safety representative has the right to:

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

Risk Assessment

A Health and Safety Audit/ Risk Assessment will be carried out annually by the Board of

Management identifying hazards, assessing the risks and specifying the actions required to eliminate or minimise them. Hazards may include physical, health, biological, chemical and human hazards. Risk assessment templates from "Guidelines on Managing Health, Safety & Welfare in Primary Schools" will be used for this purpose. (Appendix A). The results of which will be examined and summarised by the Safety Representative & presented to the BOM who will be responsible for action taken to minimise risks. (See Risk Assessment Summary Sheet Appendix 2)

As part of the general approach to safety, other policies & practices which have a bearing on safety, health and welfare will need to be put in place and communicated to employees, pupils, parents and others using the premises.

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

Procedures to deal with emergencies

emergency contact procedures

- emergency contact details are updated annually & are uploaded onto Aladdin
- in case of emergency parents are contacted immediately
- fire-drill and school evacuation procedures: fire-drills held on a regular basis, normally one per term (organised by the Principal)
- teachers and pupils are aware of the designated assembly points following evacuation of the building.

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

- an accident causing loss of life to any employed or self-employed person if sustained in the course of their employment
- an accident sustained in the course of their employment which prevents any employed or self-employed person from performing the normal duties of their employment for more than 3 calendar days not including the date of the accident
- an accident to any person not at work caused by a work activity which causes loss of life or requires medical treatment.

Health Issues

Enrolment Form

- there is a section allowing parents to identify any allergies/ illnesses of the applicant

Managing specific health issues

- staff made aware of the health issues in relation to certain pupils initially highlighted on the child's record on Aladdin
- where there is a serious/ life threatening allergy or condition relevant members of staff are made aware of the condition & relevant training is provided
- administration of Medication policy available in secretary's office

Sickness or Injury

- children who are sick or injured in class are treated by class teacher initially & parents are phoned where necessary
- children who are sick or injured on yard are treated in the yard by the teacher in charge & where necessary parents are phoned by the secretary, principal or teacher
- illnesses and contagious infections such as rubella, chicken pox, are treated according to 'Infectious Diseases in the Primary School: Health Service Executive (HSE) advice

Head-lice

- a letter/ notice that is sent home to all parents in a class where head lice is apparent. In the event that the problem persists untreated a follow up phone call or meeting with parents might be arranged.

School Hygiene

- Hand wash facilities with soap, towels, etc, for every child
- procedures are in place to ensure general cleanliness of the school environment. Checklists are available in areas for cleaners to sign off on cleaning routines.

First Aid

- at least one member of staff from each yard duty team has been trained in First Aid – refresher courses and information sessions will be arranged annually. First Aid kits are maintained by the Deputy Principal and are available in several locations around the school.

Healthy Eating

- the school promotes healthy eating at all times

Safety and welfare issues

Pupils

- teachers bring students to the relevant exit at home time
- pupils leaving the school premises during the school day e.g. dentist or doctor appointment, parents must sign children out of school
- parents/ guardians when collecting children must wait at school entrance corridor and may not collect the pupil from the classrooms.

Supervision of Pupils

- where a teacher is absent and the absence is not substitutable the class will be divided among other classes in the school
- supervision roster for playground duty is clearly displayed in the staff room and all supervision arrangements are contained in the supervision policy.

Incident Records

- in the event of a serious incident or accident the teacher supervising at that time will fill in an incident report form which will be kept on the child's file and/ or forwarded to the insurance company if necessary
- the school has a Code of Behaviour and Anti-Bullying Policy, now part of our Bi Cineálta Policy in place for dealing with behaviour which causes a risk to others
- the school's Child Protection Policy, in line with child Protection Guidelines, must be followed in the case of an allegation or suspicion of child abuse.

Staff

Garda Clearance

- all staff members are recruited in line with Circular 63 2010 & as such have Garda Vetting & statutory declaration in place before being employed in the school
- cases of alleged adult bullying/ harassment are dealt with according to procedures detailed in CPSMA handbook and INTO
- assaults on teacher's/ school employees are dealt with in accordance with our Code of Behaviour. Persistent offenders are referred with parental consent to NEPS psychologist for assessment.

All procedures followed by cleaners:

- safety signs clearly visible – wet floors
- equipment and materials - lawnmowers, ladders, solvents, chemicals, cleaning agents, etc., and any other equipment associated with school maintenance are stored in a safe area, not accessible to children
- the storage area is locked during the school day.

Success Criteria

The ongoing provision of a safe & healthy environment for children & staff. With the absence of serious accidents or incidents is indicative of the success of the Health & Safety policy.

Roles and Responsibilities

The people who have particular responsibilities for aspects of the policy and how they fulfil their role:

Board of Management

- Principal: Tony Riley
- Safety Officer: TBC
- Safety Representative:
- Each member of staff

Implementation Date

These procedures will apply from September 2025.

Timetable for Review

The Health and Safety Statement will be reviewed annually following a risk assessment as described in the policy.

Ratification & Communication

Board of Management officially ratified the policy on 23/09/2025.

The Health and Safety Statement will be communicated to the school community through the school's website.

Signed: John Donohoe Chairperson of the Board of Management

Signed: Tony Riley Principal

Date: 23/09/2025