

Health & Safety Statement

St Mary's N.S., Knockbridge, Co. Louth



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 Statement. It represents the Board of Management's commitment to safety and health in the school and specifies the organisation and the resources necessary for maintaining and reviewing safety and health standards. The BOM wishes to document the health and safety programme and make it available to all employees, outside services providers and Inspectors of the Health and Safety Authority.

Relationship to Characteristic Spirit of the School

According to our Mission Statement, St. Mary's N.S. strives to provide a well-ordered, caring, happy and secure atmosphere for our pupils. In keeping with this philosophy, our Health and Safety policy emphasises the importance of the health and safety of our pupils and that of all school employees. The Board of Management of St. Mary's N.S. recognises the importance of the legislation enacted in the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act, 2005. This Health & Safety Statement sets out the safety policy of the school and sets out the means to achieve that policy. The Board of Management's objective is to endeavour to provide a safe and healthy work environment for all our employees and pupils and to meet our duties to members of the public with whom we come into contact. This policy requires the co-operation of all employees.

It is our intention to undertake regular reviews of the statement in light of experience, changes in legal requirements and operational changes. A safety audit shall be carried out regularly by the Board's Safety Officer in conjunction with the Staff Safety Representative. This inspection/safety audit will be carried out more frequently if requested by either a member of staff or the Board of Management. All records of accidents or ill health will be monitored in order to ensure that any safety measures required can be put in place, wherever possible, to minimise the recurrence of such accidents and ill health.

Safety Policy-Guidelines

The Board of Management of St. Mary's N.S wishes to ensure in so far as is reasonably practical:

- The design, provision and maintenance of all places in the school shall be safe and without risk to health.
- There shall be safe access to and from places of work.
- Plant and Machinery may be opened safely in so far as is possible.
- Work systems shall be planned, organised, performed and maintained so as to be safe and without risk to health.

- Staff shall be instructed and supervised in so far as is reasonably possible so as to ensure the health and safety at work of its employees.
- Protective clothing or equivalent shall be provided as is necessary to ensure the safety and health at work of its employees.
- Plans for emergencies shall be complied with and revised as necessary.
- This statement will be revised by the Board of Management as necessity arises, and shall be re-examined by the Board on a regular basis.
- Employees shall be consulted on matters of health and safety.
- Provisions shall be made for the election by the employees of a safety representative.

The Board of Management of St. Mary's N.S. recognises that its statutory obligations under legislation extends to employees, students, to any person legitimately conducting school business, and to the public. In addition, the Board undertakes to ensure that the provisions of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 1989 are adhered to.

Duties of Employees

It is the duty of every employee while at work:

- to take reasonable care for his/her own safety, health and welfare, and that of any person who may be affected by his/her acts or omissions while at work.
- To co-operate with his/her employer and any other person to such extent as will enable his/her employer or the other person to comply with any of the relevant statutory provisions.
- To use in such manner so as to provide the protection intended, any suitable appliance, protective clothing, convenience or equipment provided (whether for his/her lone use or for use by him/her in common with others) for securing his/her safety, health or welfare at work.
- To report to the Board of Management without unreasonable delay, any defects in plant, equipment, place or work, or system of work, which might endanger safety, health or welfare of which he/she becomes aware.

No person will intentionally or recklessly interfere with or misuse any appliance, protective clothing, convenience or other means provided in pursuance or any of the relevant statutory provisions or otherwise, for securing safety, health or welfare or persons arising out of work activities.

Employees using available facilities and equipment provided should ensure that work practices are performed in the safest manner possible (see section 9 of Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 1989).

Consultation and Information

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

- consult with staff in the preparation and completion of the Health & Safety Statement
- make a copy of the Safety statement available to all present and future staff through hard or soft copy
- convey any additional information or instructions regarding health, safety and welfare at work to all staff as it becomes available.
- Consider health, safety and welfare at work in any future staff training and development plans.

Hazards

The Board of Management, in consultation with the employees, will review and make recommendations on the elimination of hazards. Hazards shall be divided into two categories.

1. Hazards which can be rectified and dealt with as a matter of urgency e.g. broken glass
2. Ongoing hazards will be clearly noted and appropriate measures set out to deal with them and minimise any danger to staff and pupils e.g. electrical appliances

All hazards shall be eliminated in so far as resources and circumstances allow.

Fire

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

- The Board of Management will ensure that an adequate supply of fire extinguishers, suitable for the type of fires likely to occur in each area, is available, identified and regularly serviced by authorised and qualified persons. Each fire extinguisher shall have instructions for its use.
- The principal will ensure that fire drills shall take place at least once a term.
- Fire alarms shall be clearly marked.
- Signs shall be clearly visible to ensure that visitors are aware of exit doors and routes.
- All doors, corridors, and entries shall be kept clear of obstruction and shall be able to be opened at all times from within the building. Each teacher who has an exit in her classroom must ensure it is kept clear. P.E. hall and main door must be kept free of obstruction.
- A plan of the school shows assembly points outside the school.
- Assembly areas are designated outside each building, and the locations specified.
- Exit signs shall be clearly marked.
- All electrical equipment shall be left unplugged when unattended for lengthy periods and when the building is empty. Teachers are responsible for their own classroom. The secretary/Principal, as appropriate, is responsible for the office. Staff room is every teacher's responsibility. Cleaner to check when cleaning.
- Principal shall be responsible for fire drills and evacuation procedures.
- All recommendations made by a Fire Officer in addition to these provisions shall be implemented.

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

1. Wet corridors & footpaths
2. Trailing leads
3. Computers
4. Guillotine
5. Projectors
6. Fuse Board
7. Electric kettles & burkos
8. Boiler house
9. Ladders
10. Protruding units and fittings
11. Flat roof of school
12. Lawnmowers
13. Icy surfaces on a cold day
14. Windows opening out
15. Car park
16. Slamming doors

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

The Board Safety Officer and the Staff Safety Representative will ensure the following:

- Access to and operation of plant/equipment is restricted to qualified members of the staff, whose job function is that of running, maintaining, cleaning and monitoring particular items of plant in the course of their normal duties. Copies of this Safety Statement will be sent to all contractors prior to contract by the Principal/Board of Management. Any other contractors entering the school must be shown a copy of the school's Health & Safety Statement and shall adhere to its provisions.
- In addition all such plant and machinery is to be used in strict accordance with the manufactures instructions and recommendations.
- Where applicable, Board of Management will ensure that members of the staff will have been instructed in the correct use of plant, machinery and equipment.
- All machinery and electrical equipment are fitted with adequate safeguards.
- Precautionary notices, in respect of safety matters are displayed at relevant points.
- Ladders must be used with another person's assistance.
- Avoid use of glass bottles where possible by pupils. Remove broken glass immediately on discovery
- Check that floors are clean, even, non-slip and splinter-proof.
- PE equipment must be stacked securely and in position so as not to cause a hazard.
- An annual routine for inspecting furniture, floors, apparatus, equipment and fittings.
- Check that wooden beams, benches etc. are free from splinters and generally sound.
- Check that there are no uneven/broken/cracked paving slabs or areas of tarmac.
- Check that roofs, guttering, drain pipes etc as far as can be seen are sound and well maintained and that manholes are safe.
- Check that all play areas are kept clean and free from glass before use.
- Check that outside lighting works and is sufficient.
- Check that all builder's materials, caretakers' maintenance equipment, external stores etc are stored securely.
- Check that refuse is removed from building each day and is carefully stored outside.
- Ensure cars are parked appropriately, maximising spaces available and minimising potential dangers to staff and pupils.
- Check door closers are operating correctly and minimising possibility for doors to slam or shut suddenly owing to windy conditions or ventilation of the school building

Constant Hazards

Machinery, kitchen equipment, electrical appliances.

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

Electrical Appliances

Arrangements will be made for all appliances to be checked on a regular basis by a competent person (i.e.) maintenance person, the supplier or his agent. Before using any appliance the user should check that:

- All safety guards which are a normal part of the appliance are in working order
- Power supply cables/leads are intact and free of cuts or abrasions.
- Suitable undamaged fused plug tops are used and fitted with the correct fuse.
- Follow official guidelines issued by the Health and Safety Authority.
- Unplug leads of appliances when not in use.

Chemicals

It is the policy of the Board of Management of St. Mary's N.S. that all chemicals, sanitising fluids, photocopier toner, detergents etc be stored in clearly identifiable containers bearing instructions and precautions for their use and shall be kept in a safe area, and protection provided to be used when handling them. (Staff Safety Rep).

Drugs and Medication

It is the policy of the Board of Management of St. Mary's N.S. that all drugs, medications, etc. should be kept securely at all times and only accessed by authorised personnel in line with the administration of medicines policy of the school.(School Secretary)

Health, Hygiene & Welfare

To ensure the continued health and welfare of the staff and children of the school, toilets and cloakroom areas are provided. A staffroom separate from the work area is provided, where tea and lunch breaks may be taken. Staff must co-operate in maintaining a high standard of hygiene in this area at all times.

Adequate facilities for waste disposal must be available. An adequate supply of hot and cold water, towels and soap and sanitary disposal facilities must be available.

Members of staff and students are reminded:

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

Highly Polished Floors

It is the policy of the Board of Management of St. Mary's N.S. that every attempt will be made to avoid the creation of slippery surfaces. The washing of floors shall be conducted, in so far as is possible, after school hours to eliminate the danger of slippy floors. Where floors are wet, warning signs regarding wet floors shall be used. Attention is drawn to the possibility of outside floors and surfaces being affected by frost in cold weather.

Smoking

It is the policy of the Board of Management of St. Mary's N.S. that the school shall be a non-smoking area to avoid hazard to staff and pupils of passive smoking.

Broken Glass

The Board of Management shall minimise the danger arising from broken glass. Staffs are asked to report broken glass to the Principal so that it may be immediately removed.

Infectious Diseases

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

Covid 19

See Covid 19 Response Plan for further details.

First Aid

It is the policy of the Board of Management of St. Mary's N.S. that a member of staff should be adequately trained to provide First Aid to staff and pupils.

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

- sticking plasters
- Anti-histamine for Stings, etc.
- Tape
- Disinfectant (e.g.) Savlon
- Eye lotion (e.g.) Optrex
- Antiseptic cream
- Cotton Bandage
- Cream for First Aid treatment of Burns
- Antiseptic Wipes
- Scissors
- Sanitiser
- Rubber gloves

Disposable gloves must be used at all times in administering First Aid

All incidents, no matter how trivial and whether to employees or to students or to members of the public must be reported immediately to the person responsible for the hazard identified in the statement or the principal. This is necessary to monitor the progress of safety standards and to ensure that the proper medical attention is given where required. An Accident Report File is to be maintained for the recording of all accidents and incidents by the school staff..

Access To School

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

Collecting Children

- All parent/guardians/carers in the interest of safety must obey all signs upon entering the school grounds.
- Cars are advised to drive slowly when collecting children.
- Those parking outside the school car parks are advised to accompany children to and from the school gates.
- The school must be informed if a parent/guardian is collecting a child before the end of the school day. In such circumstances, parents/guardians must sign their child in and/or out using the official record book at the entrance to the school.

Contractor Duty of Care Clause

Prior to commencing any work activities, contractors shall be responsible for conducting a comprehensive risk assessment, in accordance with the safety statement to cover agreed scope of work to be undertaken. This assessment shall identify potential hazards, evaluate associated risks, and propose appropriate control measures to mitigate those risks. The contractor shall document and communicate the results of the risk assessment to relevant parties and ensure that all necessary safety precautions are implemented before work begins. Contractors shall exercise a duty of care towards all individuals affected by their work activities, as outlined in the safety statement, by implementing and maintaining appropriate safety measures to prevent injury, illness, and damage to property, and by complying with all relevant safety regulations, standards, and guidelines.

In the event of any changes or variations to the scope of work, contractors shall undertake a dynamic risk assessment to identify and assess any new or altered hazards and associated risks. This assessment shall be carried out promptly and shall take into account the potential impact of the changes on the safety of the work environment and the individuals involved. The contractor shall document and communicate the results of the dynamic risk assessment to relevant parties and ensure that any necessary adjustments to safety measures and control measures are implemented to address the identified risks effectively.

Proof of insurance and professional indemnity cover should be provided upon confirmed tender acceptance.

Revision of this Safety Statement

This statement shall be regularly revised by the Board of Management of St. Mary's N.S. in accordance with experience and the requirements of the Health and Safety Act and the Health and Safety Authority.

This policy was updated and adopted by the Board of Management on **14th June 2023.**

Signed on behalf of the Board of Management:

Chairperson: Helen King

Date: 14th June 2023

Principal: Brian McDonnell

Date: 14th June 2023

Safety Officer: Brian McDonnell

Date: 14th June 2023 (Nominee of BOM)

Safety Officer: Gerard Pepper

Date: 14th June 2023 (Nominee of staff)

Policy statement in accordance with the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 1989