

# **St. Joseph's N.S., Leitrim Village Health and Safety Policy**

## **Introduction**

The existing Health and safety policy was reviewed during **August and September 2020 due to the Covid pandemic.**

## **Rational**

The Board of Management of St. Joseph's National School recognises its statutory obligations regarding health and safety extends to employees, students, to any person legitimately conducting school business and to the public. The Board undertakes to ensure that the provisions of the Safety, Health and Welfare Act 2005 are implemented.

The Board safety representative will undertake to carry out a safety inspection annually and report to staff. The inspections will be carried out more often if requested by staff or 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 minimize the recurrence of such accidents and ill-health.

## **Aims**

This policy aims to: -

- Provide a safe environment for pupils and staff
- Outline the duties of the BOM as an employer
- Outline the duties of all school employees
- Identify common hazards – **see Appendix B: SPECIFIC HAZARD – Covid 19**
- Put strategies in place for minimising common hazards
- Ensure that the BOM and staff comply with legislative requirements and principles of good practice.

## **Roles and Responsibility**

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

## **Content of Policy**

This policy will be looked at under the following headings: -

1. Safety Statement
2. Duties of the BOM
3. Duties of all employees
4. Duties of parents/guardians
5. Pupils
6. Consultation and information
7. Hazards & Minimising Hazards - **see Appendix B: SPECIFIC HAZARD – Covid 19**
8. Constant Hazards
  - a. Electrical appliances/ work equipment
  - b. Work areas/ classrooms/ school corridors
  - c. Chemicals
  - d. School trips
  - e. Games

- f. Drugs and medication
  - g. Welfare
  - h. Polished/ wet floors
  - i. Visual display units
  - j. Infectious diseases - **see Appendix B: SPECIFIC HAZARD – Covid 19**
  - k. Access to the school
  - l. Depositing/ collecting children
  - m. smoking
  - n. animals
9. First Aid
  10. Fire Protection & Prevention
  11. Reporting
  12. Health Promotion
  13. Other Policies
  14. Success Criteria
  15. Implementation and Review

### **1. Safety Statement**

The following safety statement will be displayed in the entrance area of the school: -

#### **SAFETY, HEALTH AND WELFARE AT WORK MANAGEMENT PROGRAMME**

The Board of Management of St. Joseph's N.S. shall ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the Safety Health and Welfare at Work of its Employees & Pupils as follows: -

- **MANAGE AND CONDUCT WORK ACTIVITIES SAFELY**
- **PREVENT IMPROPER CONDUCT AND BEHAVIOUR**
- **DESIGN, PROVIDE AND MAINTAIN A SAFE PLACE OF WORK**
- **DESIGN, PROVIDE AND MAINTAIN SAFE ACCESS AND EGRESS**
- **DESIGN, PROVIDE AND MAINTAIN SAFE PLANT AND MACHINERY OR ANY OTHER ARTICLES**
- **THE PREVENTION OF RISK TO HEALTH RELATING TO THE USE OF ANY ARTICLE OR SUBSTANCE OR THE EXPOSURE TO NOISE, VIBRATION OR IONISING OR OTHER RADIATIONS OR ANY OTHER PHYSICAL AGENT**
- **PROVIDE SYSTEMS OF WORK THAT ARE PLANNED, ORGANISED, PERFORMED, MAINTAINED AND REVISED AS APPROPRIATE**
- **PROVIDE APPROPRIATE RESOURCES, INFORMATION, INSTRUCTION, TRAINING AND SUPERVISION IN A FORM, MANNER AND LANGUAGE THAT IS LIKELY TO BE UNDERSTOOD**
- **IDENTIFY HAZARDS, CARRY OUT RISK ASSESSMENTS, PREPARE SAFETY STATEMENT AND ENSURE THAT THE MEASURES TAKE ACCOUNT OF CHANGING CIRCUMSTANCES AND THE GENERAL PRINCIPLES OF PREVENTION**
- **PROVIDE AND MAINTAIN, HAVING REGARD TO THE GENERAL PRINCIPLES OF PREVENTION, SUITABLE PROTECTIVE CLOTHING AND EQUIPMENT, **see Appendix B: SPECIFIC HAZARD – Covid 19****

- **WHERE RISKS CANNOT BE ELIMINATED OR ADEQUATELY CONTROLLED,**
- **THE PREPARATION AND REVISION OF ADEQUATE PLANS AND PROCEDURES TO BE FOLLOWED AND MEASURES TO BE TAKEN IN THE CASE OF AN EMERGENCY OR SERIOUS IMMINENT DANGER see Appendix B: SPECIFIC HAZARD – Covid 19**
- **PROVIDE AND MAINTAIN WELFARE AND HYGIENE FACILITIES AS APPROPRIATE see Appendix B: SPECIFIC HAZARD – Covid 19**
- **PROVIDE REGULAR SAFETY AUDITS AND REVIEWS TO MONITOR THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE SAFETY POLICY AND TO MAINTAIN STANDARDS.**
- **COMPLIANCE WITH LEGAL SAFETY, HEALTH AND WELFARE REQUIREMENTS AS A MINIMUM STANDARD, AND WITH RELEVANT CODES OF PRACTICE AND GUIDELINES WHERE APPROPRIATE**
- **EMPLOYEE & PUPIL CONSULTATION AT ALL LEVELS**
- **REPORT ACCIDENTS AND DANGEROUS OCCURRENCES TO HSA**
- **OBTAIN THE SERVICES OF A COMPETENT PERSON**
- **PROMOTE A SAFETY CULTURE AND INCLUDE SAFETY CONSIDERATIONS AS AN INTEGRAL PART OF THE MANAGEMENT PROGRAMME**
  
- **N.B. In accordance with Part 1 Preliminary and General Cl. 2(6) of the Safety Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005 “Reasonably Practicable”, in relation to the duties of an employer, means that an employer has exercised all due care by putting in place the necessary protective and preventive measures, having identified the hazards and assessed the risks to safety and health likely to result in accidents or injury to health at the place of work concerned and where the putting in place of any further measures is grossly disproportionate having regard to the unusual, unforeseeable and exceptional nature of any circumstance that may result in an accident at work or injury to health at that place of work.**

**SIGNED:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Chairperson of Board of Management**

**DATE:** \_\_\_\_\_

## **2 The BOM**

The Board of Management of St. Joseph's N.S. wishes to ensure that as far as is reasonably practicable: -

- The design, provision and maintenance of all areas in the school shall be safe and without risk to health.
- Safe access and egress from the school building.
- Work systems shall be planned, organised, performed and maintained so as to be safe and without risk to health.
- Plans for emergencies shall be complied with and revised as necessary. See the school policies on Emergency Closures and Critical Incidents.
- Undertake regular and appropriate revision and auditing for staff and pupils are co-ordinated and carried out, using both in-house and external resources.
- Ensure that adequate fire protection and prevention measures are provided.

- Consult all relevant partners on matters of health and safety.
- Appoint a competent person as a safety representative- the elected parent on BOM has been elected.
- Ensure as far as is reasonably practicable that the school fulfils all statutory requirements in respect to the Safety, Health and Welfare Act (2005).
- Duties also extend to providing and maintaining facilities and arrangements for the welfare employees at work, providing the information, instruction, training and supervision necessary to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the safety, health, and welfare at work of his or her employees
- All accidents and dangerous occurrences shall be investigated and the appropriate statutory notification procedures properly completed. Causes of accidents shall be determined as far as is practicable and where appropriate, remedial action shall be specified. The BOM will be informed of any safety malpractice which could lead to injuries or otherwise.

### **3 Duties of Employees**

An employee shall, while at work: -

- Comply with the relevant statutory provisions, as appropriate, and take reasonable care to protect his or her safety, health and welfare and the safety, health and welfare of any other person who may be affected by the employee's acts or omissions at work
- Co-operate with his or her employer or any other person to such an extent as will enable his/her employer or the other person to comply with the relevant statutory provisions.
- To use in such manner so as to provide the protection intended, any suitable appliance, protective clothing, convenience or any 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.
- Ensure that he or she is not under the influence of an intoxicant to the extent that he or she is in such a state as to endanger his or her own safety, health or welfare at work or that of any other person
- If reasonably required by his or her employer, submit to any appropriate, reasonable and proportionate tests for intoxicants by, or under the supervision of, a registered medical practitioner who is a competent person, as may be prescribed
- Not engage in improper conduct or other behaviour that is likely to endanger his or her own safety, health and welfare at work or that of any other person.
- Attend such training and, as appropriate, undergo such assessment as may reasonably be required by his or her employer or as may be prescribed relating to safety, health and welfare at work or relating to the work carried out by the employee
- Report to the Board of Management or to any other appropriate person (e.g. Principal), either orally or in writing, without reasonable delay -
  - Any defect in the place of work, the systems of work, any article or substance which might endanger the safety, health or welfare at work of the employee or that of any other person, of which he or she is aware of. Such defects are logged in the maintenance book
  - Accidents of any pupil, member of the public or employee, no matter how trivial, in the accident/ incident report book without unreasonable delay. Specifics of the accident, including the date and approximate time, must be

recorded concisely. The written report should be signed by a teacher who was present at the accident. This book is kept in the office. It must be ensured that proper medical attention is given where required.

- Report that work practices are performed in the safest manner possible, while using any equipment and facilities provided by the school.

#### **4 Duties 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.

#### **5 Pupils**

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

#### **6 Consultation and Information**

Safety is a line management responsibility. Staff are responsible for safety in their own areas and for the implementation of relevant safety procedures. A copy of the Safety Statement shall be made available to all staff members. Health, safety and welfare at work will be considered in any future staff training and development plans. Any other additional information or instructions regarding the health and safety, not contained in this document will be conveyed to staff as it becomes available.

Any concerns by teachers or parents should be brought immediately to the attention of the principal or the safety representative. This will inform the board as to the needs there may be for staff training.

#### **7 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 portocabin (First and Second Class Rooms).
- Protruding units and fittings
- Storeroom
- Car park - front of school.
- Cars, bicycles and other vehicles in the school area
- Shores and drains in the yards
- Stoppers for sockets and chairs

- Doors and mats
- Yard at break time-
- Scissors and knives.
- Hall
- Broken glass or delph
- School doors
- Blind cords
- Boiler
- Computer trolley
- Emergency closures
- Work carried out by the caretaker/workmen
- Gardening by children

### ***Minimising General Hazards***

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

- 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, knives under strict supervision
- Precautionary notices in respect of safety matters are displayed at relevant points.
- Glass bottles are not permitted by pupils.
- Basketball posts are covered and any changes notified in the maintenance book.
- 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 school or portocabin and also are not permitted to play on the grass at break times.
- 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. See school '***Supervision Policy***' for more details. 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. Children are not permitted to get the ball during break times. 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. The children play on the wooden floor in the hall space.
- At times furniture is safety stored in the hall. Children are not allowed access this area of the hall.
- Care must be exercise when using all kitchen appliances e.g. Microwave, kettle, toaster- all plugged out after 2 o'clock.
- 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 escort their classes 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.

## **8 Constant Hazards**

### ***a Electrical Appliances/ Work equipment***

All machinery will be used in line with safety instructions provided and manufacturer's specifications. Paper shredders, photocopiers, fax machines, printing machines etc. will be used in accordance with safety instructions and supplier's instructions and will be maintained in good condition at all times. Employees should take all due care when using ladders or climbing. Defects to equipment will be reported to the Health & Safety Representative/ Officer and will be repaired or serviced by qualified persons only. Defects are also logged in the maintenance log book located in the staff room. Machinery, kitchen equipment and electrical appliances are to be used only by authorised persons. Such appliances and equipment will be subject to regular maintenance checks.

Arrangements will be made for all appliances to be checked on a regular basis, at least annually, by a competent maintenance person (school electrician), the supplier or his agent.

Before using any appliance, the user should check that: -

- All safety guards which are part of the appliance are in working order.
- Power supply cables/leads are intact and free of cuts or abrasions.
- Leads of appliances, when not in use, are unplugged.
- Suitable undamaged fused plug tops are used and fitted with the correct fuse.
- Official guidelines issued by the health and safety authority are followed.

### ***b Work areas, Classrooms, School corridors etc***

Staff will be responsible to keep classrooms and work areas safe and free of all hazards. This includes careful storage of sharp implements and potentially dangerous products. Children are encouraged to put their schoolbags under their tables to minimise tripping hazards.

It is the responsibility of management to provide a healthy working environment for employees. It is the responsibility of employees to use facilities provided by management to ensure a healthy environment is maintained for children and adults e.g. correct ventilation, temperature, lighting etc. floors are mopped when wet.

***c Chemicals***

All chemicals, photocopier toner, detergents, tippex etc. will be stored in clearly identifiable containers bearing instructions and precautions for their use and kept in locked areas with protection provided to be used when handling them. The cleaner's storage room is located at the end of the hall. Nothing will obstruct the entrance to this room. All cleaning products are stored and locked here. Please refer to the school ***Substance Use Policy*** for more details

***d School Trips***

The level of supervision required for school trips is the same as for other activities in the school. School rules remain in operation for all school activities and outings, even out of school hours, for the duration of the activity or trip. Please refer to the school ***Code of Behaviour and Anti-Bullying Policies*** for more information.

***e Games***

Teachers must encourage all pupils to acquire and use relevant safety equipment in all sports. This includes children wearing the school tracksuit and runners for P.E. activities.

***f Drugs and Medication***

Children who require inhalers or Ana/ Epi- pens will hold these in their school bags during school time. Parents are responsible for the maintenance and renewal of all medication. Please refer to the school policy on ***Accidents and Administration of Medicines*** for more information.

***g Welfare***

To ensure the continued welfare of the staff and children, toilet and cloakroom areas are provided. A staff room is provided where tea and lunch breaks may be taken. Staff must co-operate in maintaining a high standard of hygiene in this area. Members of staff and students are reminded that: A person who is under medical supervision or on prescribed medication and who has been certified fit for work, should notify the Principal 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. See the school ***Substance Use Policy***.

***h Polished/ Wet Floors***

The washing and polishing of floors shall be conducted, as far as is possible, after school hours. Where floors are wet, warning signs shall be used. Attention is drawn to the possibility of outside surfaces being affected by frost/leaves in cold weather.

***i Visual Display Units***

Any up-to-date information regarding hazards relating to the use of VDUs will be studied and recommendations and directives implemented.

For staff working with display screen equipment, more than one-hour continuous use per day, eye and eyesight tests will be facilitated and funded by the B.O.M.

***j Infectious Diseases***

All infectious diseases shall be notified to the relevant bodies, and steps taken to ensure the safety of students and staff against all such diseases. Risks will be minimised by adherence to

sound principles of cleanliness and hygiene. Disposable gloves are provided for use in all First Aid applications and cleaning tasks.

***k Access to School***

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.

***l Depositing/ Collecting Children***

Parents/ guardians/ carers must obey all signs upon entering the school grounds, in the interest of safety. Drivers are not permitted to enter school grounds when collecting children. Parents/ guardians parking outside the school grounds are asked to accompany children to and from the school premises. Parents/ guardians are frequently reminded not to park in the bus space and to park responsibly every morning and afternoon.

***m. Smoking***

Smoking is prohibited at all times in the school, and on the school grounds, as is the law.

***n. Animals***

No animals may be brought into the school grounds, with the exception of assistance dogs or animals brought in as part of educational learning/lessons.

**9 First Aid**

A member of staff will administer First Aid to staff and pupils. Minor injuries are treated with water, cotton wool, ice packs or Band-Aid. In the case of head injuries and breakages, a parent is contacted.

Notices are posted in the office detailing: -

- Arrangements for giving first aid.
- Location of first aid boxes- at the main entrance to the building.
- Procedure for calling ambulances etc.
- Telephone numbers of local doctor, hospital and Garda.

A First Aid box is available to staff at all times containing:

- Plasters
- Medical tape
- Cotton bandage/ Cotton wool
- Sterile water
- Burn cream
- Scissors
- Disposable gloves (which must be used at all times in administering First Aid).

A list containing the medical conditions of all children in the school is circulated to all teachers every September.

In the case of epileptic or other attacks medical aid is administered (where the children have medication on site), medical assistance is called for immediately. Parents are then contacted. Please refer to the school policy on *Accidents and Administration of Medicines* for more information.

#### **10 Fire Protection & Fire prevention**

- Fire alarm system in place
- Fire extinguishers are provided, identified and regularly serviced by authorised and qualified persons.
- Termly fire drills take place, where evacuation procedures are followed. Fire alarm bells shall be heard clearly by all teachers, pupils and staff.
- Fire alarms shall be clearly marked.
- Exit signs shall be clearly marked so that visitors are aware of exit doors and routes.
- All doors, corridors and exits are kept clear of obstruction. PE hall doors are also be free of obstruction.
- Appropriate assembly areas are designated outside the school building. Teachers are familiar with their designated areas and a map is available in each class/room, which clearly states where these areas are.
- See *appendix A for Fire Drill* practices in the school. This appendix will be reviewed and updated annually, should the need arise.
- All electrical equipment shall be left unplugged or switched off when unattended for lengthy periods and when the building is empty.
- All recommendations made by a fire officer in addition to these provisions shall be implemented.
- Liaison with relevant authorities takes place as is necessary.

#### **11. Health Promotion see Appendix B: SPECIFIC HAZARD – Covid 19**

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.

#### **12. Reporting**

It is important that all instances of ill health, accident and 'near miss' that result from compromised health and safety circumstances are recorded, investigated and reported to the principal/BOM to ensure relevant lessons are learnt for the future. 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, the principal will make a report to the school's insurance company if necessary.

#### **12. Other Policies**

This Health and Safety policy does not stand alone but works in conjunction with other school policies previously referred to. These policies include: -

- Code of Behaviour

- Anti-Bullying
- Child Safeguarding
- Communications
- Substance Use
- School Tour
- Healthy Eating
- ICT
- R.S.E
- Special Educational Needs Policy
- Supervision Policy
- Policy on Student Teacher Placement
- Policy on record Keeping
- Policy of Equality of Access and Participation
- Critical Incidents
- Emergency Closures
- Accidents and Administration of Medicines

These policies can be accessed on the school website [www.leitrim-ns.ie](http://www.leitrim-ns.ie). This list is not exhaustive and may be added to at any time.

### **13. Success Criteria**

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

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

### **14. Implementation and review**

This policy will be implemented, once ratified by the B.O.M of St. Joseph's N.S. 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 St. Joseph's National School 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.

**Appendix A**

***Fire Drill Procedures for St. Joseph's N.S., Leitrim Village***

**In the event of fire please follow the instructions below: -**

- Exit building on hearing fire alarm
- Bring nothing but a Class kept on a notice board beside the exit door.

Exit doors as follows: -

- Ms Quinn, SET Room 2, via door and walk staffroom side of the school building to the yard. Junior and Senior Infants via side door
- Mrs Keaneney and Mrs. Ryan via main door
- Mrs McElgunn and Ms. McGowan via emergency exits in classrooms
- Ms. McManus and Mr. Blake via disability door (door with railing)
- Mrs. Griffin, shared area via disability door (door with railing)
- Staffroom and Secretary via main door
- Principal via main door
- Teachers/ Children in hall will exit via the disability door in the shared area.
- Everyone walks quickly and quietly to the Assembly point on school yard (Green sign, near the road)
- Classes to line up as follows, in front of the number on the fence by the road.
- -12, Ms Quinn (SET Room 2)
- -10, Mrs McElgunn (Sixth Class)
- -8, Mrs. Keaveney (**Fourth Class**)
- **-6, Mrs Ryan (Third Class)**
- -4, Ms. Quigley (Junior Infants)
- -2, Ms. **Kilkenny** (Senior Infants)
- 0, Ms McManus (Second Class)
- 2, Mr Blake (Fifth Class)
- 4, Ms. McGowan (**First Class**)
- 6, Mrs Griffin (SET)
- 8, SET From Hall
- Roll call to ensure everyone is accounted for
- Principal and another appointed person will re-enter the building and check sensors
- The alarm will be turned off
- The principal will inform staff that the building is safe to re-enter
- All pupils and staff will re-enter the building in a safe manner, class by class.

*Teachers are asked to practice this with their classes on a regular basis. It is aimed to have a full school fire drill once per term. Teachers will be given prior notice of the drill.*

***Appendix B – 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 and Deputy Lead Worker Representative 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. Both the Lead Worker and Deputy Lead Worker 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 not attend school for 14 days.
- 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.

### **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 are 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.
- Tissue bins are provided in all classrooms for safe disposal of used tissues.

### **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 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. **Mrs McElgunn, whose classroom is adjacent to isolation area, will supervise the child. Mrs McElgunns classroom door will be left open and Mrs McElgunn will check on the pupil, from her classroom door. The isolation area has a clear Perspex screen.**
  - The isolation area is on the corridor outside Mrs. **McElgunn's classroom. There is one window and two chairs in this area. A large Perspex screen creates a specific space while still being able to supervise individual.**
  - 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 door beside the staffroom.
  - 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.

### **First Aid Procedures for Incidents/Accidents – MINOR**

- Each teacher will deal with minor injuries.
- Teacher administers First Aid.
- An Incidents/ Accident form is completed and given to Ms Kelly. The Incident/ Accident forms are located in the First Aid press just inside the main door of the school. Completed Incident/ Accident forms are given to Ms Kelly.
- The teacher, where it is deemed necessary, informs the parent of bumps/bruises etc.

### **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. If a substitute teacher is not available, it is not appropriate for the class to be divided into groups and accommodated in other classes. In such

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circumstances, it may not be possible for the class to attend on that day. If that is the case, as much notice as possible will be given to parents.

- Please see the updated School Supervision Policy for more details.