



## **S.N. Chaoimhín Naofa/St. Kevin's NS Health and Safety Policy Statement**

### **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. The Board of Management of S.N. Chaoimhín Naofa/St. Kevin's NS is committed to safety and health. This statement specifies the manner, the organisation and the resources necessary for maintaining and reviewing safety and health welfare standards in our school.

The Board of Management will make it available to all employees, outside services providers and Inspectors of the Health and Safety Authority. The Board of Management is also taking into consideration its 'duty of care' role in the school and this is an integral part of our Health and Safety Statement. This policy requires the co-operation of all employees. It shall be reviewed annually/regularly or if necessary, in light of experience, changes in legal requirements or operational changes. All records of accidents and ill health will be monitored to ensure that any safety measures required can be put in place to minimise the recurrence of such accidents and ill health.

### **Relationship to the characteristic Spirit of the School**

The Board of Management of S.N. Chaoimhín Naofa/St. Kevin's NS is committed to the creation of a safe and healthy working environment for all members of the school community.

### **Aims**

In drafting this policy the Board of Management aims to achieve the following with this statement:

- to create a safe and healthy school environment by identifying, preventing and tackling hazards and their accompanying risks;
- to take into account the Covid 19 School Response Plan and the Logistics Plan;
- to ensure understanding of the school's duty of care towards pupils;
- to ensure that plans are in place in the event of emergencies and that they are complied with and revised as necessary;

- 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 reasonably practicable) to include the following areas:
  - Provision of a safe workplace for all employees – teachers, SNAs, secretary, caretaker, 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 (PPE)

### **Responsibilities of employer - Board of Management**

It is the responsibility of the Board of Management to

- Provide and maintain a workplace that is safe and do likewise for all machinery and equipment etc.
- Maintenance of an appropriate security and fire detection system
- Employ a suitable company to check all fire-fighting equipment in the school on an agreed regular basis (minimum once a year)
- Manage work activities to ensure the safety, health and welfare of employees
- Ensure that risks are assessed and hazards are eliminated or minimized as far as is reasonably practical.
- Ensure that an internal and external safety audit is carried out annually.
- 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.

### **Responsibilities of 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 of employees include:

- Not to be under the influence of an intoxicant to the extent that you endanger your own or another 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 law 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 without reasonable delay any dangerous practices or situations that you are aware of the School Principal or Deputy Principal
- To take responsibility for their own classrooms and to ensure that in so far as is reasonably practical that the means of access are safe and free from hazards or risk
- 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.

**Role and Responsibility of the safety representatives (A Teacher and a Board of Management representative) (Section 25 Safety, Health & Welfare at Work Act 2):**

The safety representatives have 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 (annually) 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.

- Prepare an orderly evacuation system in the event of a fire or any other event which may require children and staff to leave the school building, including a fire drill. This will be on display in every area of the school.

### **Role and Responsibility of the Cleaners**

- To protect their own health and safety and that of any other person likely to be affected by their work
- To report immediately accidents or safety concerns or defects to the Principal or Deputy Principal
- Where a defect or safety concern is identified ensure suitable isolation to prevent reuse of equipment until it is made safe.

### **Role and Responsibility of the Contractors**

- All contractors employed by S.N. Chaoimhín Naofa/St. Kevin's NS will be required to comply with the requirements of the School Safety Statement.
- To protect their own health and safety and that of any other person likely to be affected by their work.
- Adhoc/minor works: the contractor will be required to submit a Safety Statement plus the insurance details prior to commencing work. These must relate specifically to the work being undertaken on the school's behalf.

As part of the general approach to safety, other policies and 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. Some examples are given below. These need to be monitored and updated regularly e.g. an annual fire safety audit, a school environment audit.

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

### **Procedures to deal with emergencies**

- Emergency contact procedure
  - The school secretary updates contact details annually. These are kept on the Aladdin database. The teachers and the secretary have access to these details.
  - In case of emergency parents/guardians or emergency contact person nominated by parents/guardians are contacted by telephone.
- Fire-drill and school evacuation procedures
  - Fire-drills are held twice a year (September and March).

- All teachers and pupils are aware of the designated assembly point/s following evacuation of the building.
- The school reviews these procedures annually and all staff members are informed of any changes.

- *Serious Accident Procedure & Accident Report Form.*

(See “Guidelines on Managing Safety, Health and Welfare in Primary Schools”).

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 on the premises;
- 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;
- All accidents sustained by students will be recorded in an Incident Report book. Where such accidents require medical attention an Accident Report form will be completed.
- Accidents can be reported to the HSA using an ‘IR1 form’ which can be accessed directly online at [www.hsa.ie](http://www.hsa.ie)

- *Severe Weather Conditions*

- Frost/Ice/Snow: The driveway and walkways will be cleared and salted. If necessary, non-slip mats will be used to secure a safe pathway from the yard into the school building.
- Wind: Children will not access the yard during high winds and the school yard will be kept clear of any items that may cause a hazard during high winds.

- *Emergency closures*

Where the school needs to close for particular emergencies, parents will be notified in the following way:

- By text (Aladdin)
- An announcement on the parish Facebook page/local radio if suitable.

## Health issues

- *Notification of allergies/illnesses*

- Parents are requested to identify any allergies/illnesses pertaining to their child on the enrolment form.

- Administration of Medication
  - In specified exceptional circumstances application must be made to the Board of Management.
  
- Sickness or Injury
  - Children who become sick or are seriously injured during the school day are sent home.
  - Procedures outlined in the Covid 19 School Response Plan will be followed.
  - The school will deal with minor accidents/illnesses and basic first-aid that will be administered by a member of staff. A First Aid Box is kept fully stocked in school at all times. Disposable gloves must be worn when administering first aid.
  
- Procedures for Calling an Ambulance for a Child
  - If a child becomes very ill or is involved in a serious accident, every possible effort will be made to contact the pupil's parents or guardian.
  - If a child is seriously injured in the classroom, the teacher sends for help from another staff member or uses the classroom phone to ring for help if the situation allows. If necessary, a member of staff will ring for an ambulance.
  - Arrangements will be made to take the other children out of the classroom. The injured child stays with a member of staff until the arrival of parents/guardian or an ambulance.
  - If parents/guardian cannot be contacted, a teacher is delegated to accompany the child to hospital in the ambulance
  
- Procedure for calling an ambulance for a teacher
  - If a teacher has a serious accident or illness, it should be reported to the teacher next door. Teachers will remind their children of this procedure once per term.
  - The teacher next door sends a message to the office. A member of staff will ring for an ambulance if deemed necessary.
  - A member of staff will take the children out of the injured teacher's classroom. A staff member will remain with the injured/ill teacher until medical help or an ambulance arrives. A member of staff will be delegated to travel with the injured teacher in the ambulance.
  
- Illnesses and contagious infections rubella, chicken pox etc;

Where pupils have infectious diseases parents are required to keep them at home. In the case of a pandemic outbreak guidelines from the HSE will be adhered to. See Covid 19 School Response Plan.

- Head-lice
  - When parents inform the school about an outbreak of head-lice a letter/notice/text message is sent home requesting parents to check their children over a particular weekend and treat as necessary.
  
- School hygiene
  - Soap and paper towels are available in all toilet areas.
  - Hand Sanitising stations at every entry point to the school and in every classroom
  - Wipes and table spray available for cleaning tables during the school day.
  
- General cleanliness of school environment - See Logistics Plan and Covid 19 School Response Plan
  - Cleaners are employed to maintain the school premises.
  - A caretaker is employed on an ad-hoc basis to oversee external maintenance.

## Safety and welfare issues

### Pupils

- Assembly and Dismissal of Pupils
  - Children are not encouraged to be on the premises prior to 8.50 a.m. At that stage they line up in the yard at the relevant entry door. Pupils should arrive and leave school in accordance with the staggered schedule as outlined to parents.
  - No traffic is allowed in the school grounds during these arrival and dismissal times.
  - Parents/guardians who are collecting children may enter and exit school grounds to do so using the one-way system.
  
- Pupils leaving the school premises during the school day e.g. dentist or doctor appointment
  - The parent/guardian must collect the pupil from the front door having informed the school in writing or by a telephone call prior to the appointment time.
  - Children who leave school before the end of the school day are recorded under 'Early Leaving' in Aladdin.
  
- Supervision of Pupils:

- In the event of a teacher being absent the principal or another teacher is appointed to supervise until a substitute can be employed.
- The supervision rota for playground duty is agreed at the beginning of each school year.
- This rota is kept as part of the school records.
  
- Incident / accident book
  - The supervising teacher will write the report in the event of a more serious incident or accident. This record will be kept in a cupboard in the staffroom.
- Code of Behaviour and Anti Bullying Policy:
  - Refer to school's policy for dealing with behaviour which causes a risk to others.
  
- Allegations or Suspicions of Child Abuse:
  - 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.
  
- School tours / outings:
  - Refer to School Policy on Tours and Outings

### Staff

- Garda vetting
  - The school conducts a Garda check on all persons to be employed or ensures that the person holds an up-to-date Garda vetting certificate.
  - Garda vetting is secured for all personnel coming into school to deliver PE lessons, SPHE lessons or other such workshops.
  
- Assaults on Teachers/School Employees:

See Appendix 23 p.210 CPSMA Management Board Members' Handbook

  - Respect for others is the principle at the heart of our school's ethos. With this in mind, the school aims to maintain a culture where abuse of any nature is not tolerated.
  - If an incident did occur the Board of Management would convene an emergency meeting.
  
- Staff work in a comfortable and safe environment.
- Staff are instructed in the use of fire extinguishers.
- Appropriate safety gear and PPE is available where necessary for all members of staff.

### Equipment and materials

- Any equipment associated with school maintenance are stored in a safe area which is not accessible to children. Teachers and caretaker have access.
- Solvents, chemicals, cleaning agents etc. are stored in the cleaning storeroom. Teachers and cleaners have access.
- All electrical equipment, computers, cameras, tablets and other technologies are stored safely.

### **Success Criteria**

The effectiveness of this policy will be evident in the day to day running of the school. It is hoped that all serious misadventures will be avoided through the implementation of this policy.

### **Roles and Responsibilities**

- The Board of Management is responsible for the overall safety of the school. As part of this role, they must maintain the building and ensure that repairs are carried out as soon as possible when identified.
- **Ian Taaffe** and **Ann Marie Byrne** are the Safety Representatives.
- Each member of staff has responsibilities as outlined at the beginning of the policy. All staff should use their own initiative in relation to safety issues.

### **Timetable for Review**

The Safety Statement will be reviewed annually or more frequently if necessary.

### **Ratification and Communication**

The Board of Management officially ratified the policy on:

Signed: *Michael Murtagh*

Date: 31/01/22

Chairperson, Board of Management

The Health and Safety Statement will be on display in the school and is available to parents via the school website.