



Statement on General Policy on Health and Safety

This Board of Management of Whitechurch National School recognises the importance of the Legislation enacted in the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act, 1989 and its successor the Safety, Health and Welfare Act 2005.

The Safety Statement sets out the Safety Policy of The Board of Management of Whitechurch National 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 in contact.

The policy requires the co-operation of all employees of the school.

It is our intention to undertake regular reviews of the statement in light of experience, changes in legal requirements and operational changes.

The Board of Management will undertake to carry out a safety audit annually and report to staff. This inspection/safety audit will be carried out more frequently if requested by either 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.

Policy Statement on Safety, Health and Welfare at Work of the Board of Management of Whitechurch National School

1.1 **Board of Management:** The Board of Management members are:

Mr. Tony McCarthy	Chairperson
Mr. Seamus Hannon	Principal/BoM Secretary
Mrs. Niamh Reynolds	Patron's representative
Mrs. Emma Duffy	Teacher's representative
Mrs. Theresa Deery	Parents' /Guardians' representative
Mr. John Byrne	Parents' / Guardians' representative
Mrs. Helen Ahearne	Community representative
Mr. James McGrath	Community representative

1.2 The Board of Management will ensure that, in so far as is practicable, the highest standards of safety shall prevail and that, at a minimum, the provisions of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Acts 1989 and 2005 are applied.

1.3 Specifically, the Board of Management wishes to ensure so far as is reasonably practicable:

- (a) the design, provision and maintenance of all places in a condition that is safe and without risk to health.
- (b) the design, provision and maintenance of safe means of access to and progress from places of work.
- (c) the design, provision and maintenance of machinery and equipment.
- (d) the provision of systems of work that are planned, organised, performed and maintained so as to be safe and without risk to health.
- (e) the provision of such information, instruction, training and supervision as is necessary to ensure safety and health at work of its employees.
- (f) the provision and maintenance of suitable protective clothing or equivalent as necessary to ensure the safety and health at work of its employees.
- (g) the preparation, revision as necessary and communication of adequate plans to be followed in emergencies, e.g. fire drill, injuries etc.
- (h) the safety and prevention of risk to health at work in connection with use of any article or substance.

- (j) the provision and maintenance of facilities and arrangements for the welfare of pupils, teaching staff and ancillary staff
- (k) obtaining where necessary, the services of a competent person for the purpose of ensuring the safety and health at work of its employees.
- (l) the continuing updating of the *Safety Statement*.
- (m) the provision of arrangements for consultation with staff on matters of Health and Safety.
- (n) the provision of arrangements for the selection from amongst the staff of a representative.

1.4 The Board of Management recognises that its statutory obligations under legislation extends to staff, students, any person legitimately conducting school business and the public.

1.5 The Board of Management of Whitechurch National School will ensure that the provisions of the Safety Health and Welfare at Work Acts 1989 and 2005 are adhered to.

1.6 A Safety committee may be established to monitor the implementation of the Safety and Health Policies of Whitechurch National School and the requirement under the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Acts 1989 and 2005.

Duties of Employees of Whitechurch National School

It is the duty of every employee while at work:

- (a) 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.
- (b) 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.
- (c) to use in such manner so as to provide the protection intended, any suitable appliance, protective clothing, convenience, equipment or anything provided (whether for his/her use alone or for use by him/her in common with others) for securing his/her safety, health or welfare while at work.
- (d) 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, equipment or anything provided in pursuance of any of the relevant statutory provisions or otherwise, for securing safety, health or welfare of persons arising out of work activities.

Employees will, by using available facilities and equipment provided, ensure that work practices are performed in the safest manner possible.

Consultation & Information

It is the policy of the Board of Management of Whitechurch National School

- to consult with staff in the preparation and completion of the Health and Safety Statement and of Hazard control forms.
- to make available a copy of the *Safety Statement* to all present and future staff so that they are enabled to read and understand its contents
- any additional information or instructions regarding Health, Safety and Welfare at work not contained in the document will be conveyed to all staff as it becomes available.
- that Health, Safety and Welfare will form an integral part of any future staff training and development plans.

Hazards

All staff and the Board of Management will complete Hazard Control Forms. Some Hazards can be rectified but others remain constant. The Hazards have been divided into two categories.

Hazards that can be rectified or minimized will be dealt with as a matter of urgency. Those that cannot will be clearly indicated and appropriate procedures listed beside them.

The Board of Management in consultation with the employees will review and make recommendations on the elimination of Hazards.

Specific Hazards

1. Fire

It is the policy of the Board of Management of Whitechurch National School that

- There is an adequate supply of fire extinguishers at strategic points around the school
- All fire equipment is identified and regularly serviced
- Regular fire drills take place at least once a term
- Demonstration is given in the use of Fire extinguishers for specific materials/equipment
- Signs will be clearly visible to ensure visitors are aware of exit doors
- All electrical equipment be turned off outside of school hours and when rooms are vacated for lengthy periods. (exception made for the school's main server)
- Suitable assembly locations to be chosen – c.f. fire drill procedures
- Exit signs are clearly marked
- There will be a named person responsible for fire drills and evacuation procedures

The school and equipment have been checked by a fire officer and all recommendations made by him / her have been implemented

2. Other Hazards

It is the policy of the Board of Management of Whitechurch National School that

- The school is properly maintained
- Dampness is minimised
- Draughts are minimised
- The roof is properly maintained
- All electrical fittings are properly fitted and safe
- Adequate lighting exists in all internal areas and that there are external lights over each exit
- Proper ventilation exists
- All windows open safely
- link doors in corridors and all exit doors are properly sprung and are not allowed to swing freely,
- the playing surfaces in the playgrounds are safe and even,
- all manholes and gullies are properly and safely covered,
- the path entrances to the school are safe and even,
- radon levels in ground floor rooms be ascertained and appropriate action taken subsequently, if necessary.
- the floors in hallways, passageways and toilet/bathrooms be kept dry,

- no protruding units should exist in hallway or passageways which might be a danger or which might impede movement,
- adequate lighting exists for the hallway and passageways
- mats are not positioned in a hazardous way
- rubbish is not allowed to accumulate.
- all individual classrooms are safe and healthy places,
- all light switches and sockets and electrical equipment are safe and are properly used and there are no trailing wires,
- all lights are working and that all light tubes have safety covers.
- all P.E. equipment and equipment used in extra curricular sport be maintained, used and stored properly and safely in the designated 'Sports Room' or store room.
- the children are not allowed out to the playground spaces when they are flooded, when there is ice on the ground or when the surface is slippery as a result of frost
- yards should be checked each morning and anything dangerous to pupils removed.
- children are not allowed home for lunch
- toilet paper, soap and paper towels be provided in each toilet/bathroom area,
- the children be taught and encouraged to keep their toilet/bathroom area in a safe, healthy and hygienic condition,
- the toilet/bathroom areas be inspected and cleaned on a daily basis.
- the Staff toilet/bathroom areas be equipped with toilet paper, soap, clean towels and sanitary disposal units.

Constant Hazards

1. Machinery, Kitchen Equipment and Electrical Appliances

It is the policy of the Board of Management of Whitechurch National School that: Machinery, Kitchen Equipment and Electrical Appliances are used only by competent persons. Such appliances and equipment will be subject to regular maintenance checks.

2. Chemicals

It is the policy of the Board of Management of Whitechurch National School that all chemicals, detergents etc., be stored in clearly identifiable containers bearing instructions and precautions for their use and kept in a locked area, and protection provided for use when handling them.

3. Drugs and Medication

It is the policy of the Board of Management Whitechurch National School that all medications, drugs etc., be kept in a proper medication cabinet, locked at all times, key to which is kept in a secure and safe place.

4. Highly Polished or Wet Floors

It is the policy of the Board of Management of Whitechurch National School that:
Floors will not be polished to a dangerous level or made slippery.

That washing of floors is conducted after school hours to ensure, as far as is reasonably practicable, elimination of danger of slipping.

As a matter of course children will be trained to wipe their feet as they enter the buildings in order to avoid slipping

5. The Code of Discipline

The Code of Discipline in the school provides for a level of behaviour to minimise personal risk or stress to any person

6. Access to school staff members is by consent

When a staff member feels at risk from or threatened by a particular person on school property, this must be drawn to the Board of Management's attention. The Board of Management will undertake to ensure that in such circumstances all appropriate measures will be taken to protect employees.

Trained First Aid Personnel

It is the policy of the Board of Management Whitechurch National School that:-

A staff member(s) will be trained to apply First Aid. (Mr. Hannon, Mrs. Maher, Ms. Gee and Ms. Duffy all trained in First Aid in 2022)

All required remedies and equipment are made available for first aid function.

There will be a properly equipped First Aid Box available at all times to staff which will contain:

Elastoplast Plasters,

Wasp Eze,

Tape,

Savlon Antiseptic Disinfectant,

Panadol,

Optrex Eye Lotion,

Savlon Antiseptic Cream,

Cotton Bandage,

Burn Eze,

Antiseptic Wipes,

Scissors,

First Aid Chart.

Disposable gloves which must be used at all times when administering First Aid.

Hot water and soap will be available and should be used before and after administering First Aid.

When an accident occurs, a **full** account of what happened and symptoms of distress noticed should be recorded on the Accident Report Form. Procedures followed by the supervising teacher/the Principal/other staff members/first aiders should also be entered.

Other Issues Relating to Health and Safety

It is the policy of that:

when the Patron is making nominations to the Board of Management and when parents are electing parents' representatives to the Board of Management, that they are requested to bear in mind the importance of the Health and Safety Act, to ensure that the Board of Management should contain at least one member with skills in this area,

persons coming onto the school premises must report to the school office before gaining admittance to the school premises and should sign in and out in the Visitors' Book. Any contractor should make direct contact with the Principal, or Deputy Principal before initiating any work on the school premises,

- sound pollution - room to room, corridor to room, yard to room etc be minimised,
- when people are working on the premises with drills or other loud implements they must wear protective ear muffs. Where such work is taking place which constitutes any threat to Health and Safety the school will be closed or the work will not take place during school hours,
- flammable, toxic and corrosive substances must be kept in a locked press and must be clearly and accurately labelled.

Ongoing Review of Health and Safety Statement

It is the policy of Whitechurch National School that the Health and Safety Policy Statement be reviewed on an annual basis and updated if necessary. To this effect, on an annual basis, the Health and Safety Representative will check for hazards in the school and its environs. (See Appendix 1).

ACCIDENT PROCEDURES

- ◆ Hazards are identified and reported on an annual basis or as they may arise by teachers or other staff members to the Safety Representative. If these hazards can be dealt with appropriately the Safety Representative will ensure that the necessary actions are carried out. If not, the Safety Representative passes on these reports to the Safety Officer, who is a member of the Board of Management, for his/her attention.
- ◆ Pages 5-9 of our Health and Safety Statement deal thoroughly with hazards.
- ◆ Pupils are supervised at all times in the classroom situation. If there is an urgent need for a teacher to leave the classroom, the classroom door should be left open and the teacher next door alerted to monitor behaviour. Pupils should never be left unsupervised in the yard during break time. See yard supervision rosters.
- ◆ In the event of a minor accident in the classroom, school building or yard, the injured child is treated by the teacher in charge using the school First Aid Kit which is kept in the secretary's office. Slight cuts or grazes are treated by cleaning with cold water. A non-allergenic plaster may be applied to the wound. When a dressing has been put on a wound, a note is sent home advising parents to inspect the wound and to follow up on after care when the child comes home from school.
- ◆ In the event of a child becoming ill or being involved in a serious accident, every possible effort will be made to contact the pupil's parents or the person delegated to take responsibility for the pupil. If a child is seriously injured in the classroom, the teacher notifies the teacher next door who reports the incident to the office. If necessary the principal or secretary 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 qualified in the administration of first aid, until the arrival of his/her parents / guardians or the ambulance. If parents / guardians cannot be contacted, a teacher is delegated to accompany the child to hospital in the ambulance.
- ◆ In the event of an accident involving a pupil, a report should be written by the teacher in charge of the pupil at the time of the accident. This report should be written into the school accident report form and kept in the principal's office.
- ◆ Parents are asked to supply the school with emergency contact telephone numbers. The school should be notified immediately of a change of address or telephone number.

Pupils in Whitechurch National School are encouraged to take out separate insurance to cover medical expenses incurred as a result of an accident in school. Details of this scheme are circulated to all parents during the month of September.

Goal posts used by the school during the school year will not be left in the playing field during holiday periods. The use of the goal posts must adhere to good practice in that they must be securely anchored to the ground prior to use in a game.

Review and Monitoring

This policy will be monitored and reviewed by the Board of Management when the need arises. The board of management will ensure that adequate training and support is provided for all staff.

Policy reviewed and updated June 2022

Signed: _____
Chairperson BoM

Appendix 1

SAFETY REPRESENTATIVES' CHECKLIST FOR SCHOOL INSPECTIONS

1 CIRCULATION AREAS

1. Passages

Check that:

- a) floor surfaces are even and are not slippery;
- b) passages are adequately lit;
- c) litter or rubbish has not been allowed to accumulate;
- d) mats, etc, are not positioned in such a way as to be tripping hazards;
- e) there are no areas of loose, flaking or damaged paint, plaster or plasterboard.

2. Doors and Windows

Check that:

- a) doors are unobstructed;
- b) doors with glass windows have toughened or laminated glass;
- c) doors with a fire resistance requirement have wire reinforced glass;
- d) there are no doors with:
 - a. loose or broken hinges;
 - b. damaged or sticking catches;
 - c. broken wood panels or glass panels;
 - d. loose or stiff handles;
- e) doors are not allowed to swing freely without restraint;
- f) windows are not broken or cracked;
- g) windows open easily without undue force being applied;
- h) windows do not jut out dangerously when open;
- i) windows are cleaned regularly;
- j) windows do not have broken fastenings or cords;
- k) where necessary, a window pole is available.

2 HEATING AND VENTILATION

Check that:

- a) the heating system is regularly serviced and maintained in good order.
- b) the heating system is adequate to comply with the requirements of circular 24/82;
- c) where there are large areas of glass facing direct sunlight, there is provision for shading, e.g. Venetian blinds;
- d) windows can be easily opened to allow for adequate ventilation.

3 FIRE SAFETY

Check that:

- a) the fire exits and escape routes are clear from obstructions;
- b) fire doors are kept unlocked and unobstructed whilst people are on the premises;
- c) all designated fire exits are clearly marked;
- d) evacuation procedures are clearly displayed;
- e) staff and children are familiar with evacuation procedures;
- f) staff are familiar with and have been adequately trained in the procedure to be followed when using fire fighting equipment;
- g) there have been practice evacuations/fire drills held at least once per term;
- h) fire doors open outwards and are not held or wedged open;
- i) fire extinguishers and fire blankets are checked and maintained in accordance with manufacturer's instructions;
- j) the fire fighting equipment available is that recommended by the local authority's fire officer and is located in accordance with the fire officers recommendations;
- k) the fire alarm system is tested at regular intervals whilst the school is in session to ensure that it works and is audible in all parts of the building;

- I) flammable substances e.g. cleaning fluids, photocopying chemicals etc, are stored correctly, away from any sources of heat.

4 ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT

General

All electrical equipment should be maintained and checked regularly by a competent person. Such maintenance should include checking that:

- a) equipment is correctly wired and earthed;
- b) plugs are correctly wired;
- c) use ratings that are correct for the type of equipment being used (fuse ratings should be marked on the equipment and the plug).
- d) the mains supply is still capable of meeting the maximum demand;
- e) the distribution system (i.e. sockets, bench supplies etc) is suitable for the type of work being carried out;
- f) the isolating switches are marked, well-sited, accessible and known to staff;
- g) residual current (earth leakage) circuit breakers are used where appropriate.

Lighting

Visually check that:

- a) all the light fittings are working and are kept in a clean condition;
- b) light switches are not broken and appear to be in a safe condition;
- c) the lighting is adequate for the type of work being undertaken as specified in Circular 24/82.

Plugs/Sockets/Leads

Visually check that:

- a) plugs are in good condition with no cracks or pieces missing;
- b) sockets are in good condition with no cracks or pieces missing;
- c) socket screws and mountings are secure;
- d) sockets are situated in safe positions, convenient for the equipment to be used and not subject to damp;
- e) indicator lights on sockets function correctly;
- f) insulation on leads is not cracked or frayed;
- g) leads are without knots or joins and are reasonably free of 'kinks';
- h) leads are the correct length for the equipment being used;
- i) there are no trailing leads;
- j) multi-point adaptors are not being used;
- k) leads and flexible cable are securely fixed at both equipment and plug ends.

Equipment

Check that:

- a) fixed and portable electrical equipment is not damaged and, as far as you are aware, is operating correctly;
- b) copies of manufacturers' instructions/operating manuals are easily accessible;
- c) equipment is only being used for purposes for which it was intended;
- d) where appropriate, all electrical equipment is switched off and, unplugged when not in use;
- e) mains isolating switches are easily accessible and known to staff;
- f) on/off indicator lights function correctly;
- g) equipment incorporating heating has a thermal safety cut-out in addition to a thermostat;
- h) all items of electrical equipment are properly and regularly maintained and serviced.

5 FIRST AID

Check that:

notices are posted in prominent positions detailing:

- a) location of first aid boxes;
- b) procedure for calling ambulances etc;
- c) telephone number of local doctor, gardai, hospital.

first aid boxes are readily available and adequately stocked with,

- a) a card with general first aid guidance;
- b) a supply of individually wrapped sterile adhesive dressings;
- c) sterile eye pads, with attachments (e.g. standard dressing);

- d) triangular bandages (preferably sterile, but if not, sterile covering appropriate for serious wounds should also be included);
- e) safety pins;
- f) selection of medium, large and extra large sterile medicated dressings;
- g) disposable gloves;
- h) crepe and roller bandages;
- i) cotton wool;
- j) forceps or tweezers and scissors;
- k) antiseptic cream.

The accident book is readily available and kept up-to-date.

6 GENERAL PURPOSE CLASSROOMS

look again at sections 1-4;

Check that:

- a) hazards are not arising from overcrowded classrooms;
- b) all cupboards, fixed blackboards, display units are stable;
- c) classroom furniture is not damaged;
- d) wherever possible, there are no sharp edges or corners on the furniture;
- e) furniture is positioned safely;
- f) all shelf mountings are secure.

7 NON-TEACHING AREAS

Offices

Check that:

- a) substances for use with photocopying are stored correctly, and that the room where photocopying machines are operated is adequately ventilated;

Kitchen Areas

- b) the kitchen/dining area is kept clean;
- c) the kitchen floors are sound and non-slip, especially when wet;
- d) first aid boxes are available in the kitchen area;
- e) equipment is adequately guarded.

Boiler Rooms

- a) there is no combustible waste stored in boiler rooms or elsewhere
- b) all safety devices in the boiler room are in proper working order;
- c) the boiler is regularly maintained by a competent person;
- d) all cleaning materials, particularly those which might be hazardous, are securely stored;

Staff Facilities

- a) the staffroom is clean, warm and well lit;
- b) there are adequate cloakroom facilities and storage facilities for personal belongings, books etc;
- c) the staffroom is large enough for the numbers to be accommodated and sufficient seating is provided with
- d) upright chairs and tables.
- e) there is provision for tea and coffee to be made;
- f) staff sanitary facilities are suitable, sufficient and properly cleaned.

Hygiene

Check that the following are available:

- a) soap
- b) hand drying facilities
- c) hot water
- d) toilet paper
- e) litter bin per classroom
- f) provision for disposal of sanitary towels
- g) safe, suitable, sufficient and properly cleaned sanitary facilities.

Outside Areas

Check that:

- a) there are no uneven/broken/cracked paving slabs;
- b) roofs, guttering, drain pipes etc. are, as far as can be seen, sound and well maintained;
- c) all safety devices in the boiler room are in proper working order;
- d) the boiler is regularly maintained by a competent person;
- e) all play areas are kept clean and free from glass;
- f) holes for goalposts are covered when posts are not in position;
- g) outside lighting works and is sufficient;
- h) all parking facilities for cars are safe in regard to the presence of pedestrians;
- i) all caretakers' maintenance equipment etc, are kept securely.