

# St Mary's P.S. Altinure



## **HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY**

Reviewed: 22/03/24

Approved by Board of Governors: 25/03/24

Review Date: Term 3 - 2027

## **Introduction**

The health and safety of all the people who work or learn at our school are of fundamental importance. We aim to provide a safe and secure working environment for everyone. Our Board of Governors, in conjunction with CCMS, and EA, take responsibility for protecting the health and safety of all children and members of staff.

## **Objective**

The objective of this policy is to ensure, so far as is 'reasonably practicable' that no person is placed in a situation where injury or ill health may be caused as a result of the school, and that all such risks are assessed and appropriately controlled.

## **Rationale**

The school recognises and accepts its responsibility for health and safety as an employer, and in particular the duties laid down in Article 4 (Employer's Duties) of the Health & Safety at Work (Northern Ireland) Order 1978, Article 5 and 6 of that Order in respect to persons other than its employees and Article 88 of the Education and Libraries (Northern Ireland) Order 1986.

The school will maintain maximum possible provision in relation to the following –

- a safe place of work, safe access to it and safe egress from it;
- plant, equipment and systems of work that are safe;
- safe arrangements for the use, handling, storage and transport of articles & substances;
- sufficient information, instruction, training and supervision to enable all employees to avoid risk and contribute positively to health and safety at work; and
- a healthy working environment

So far as is reasonably practicable, we will provide and maintain up-to-date information for all staff on the hazards and risks of substances, equipment and systems used at work including the recommendations of relevant risk assessments. The school will rely on CCMS/EA to provide competent technical advice on all health and safety matters and, where necessary, to assist in effecting improvements.

The school will co-operate fully with queries from staff representatives and recognised trade unions. Opinions and suggestions in relation to health and safety are welcomed from members of staff.

Members of staff are reminded of their duties under Article 8 of the Health and Safety at Work (Northern Ireland) Order, 1978: to take reasonable care for their own safety and that of others.

The school will establish procedures to monitor and increase the effectiveness of its Health and Safety Policy.

## **The Board of Governors**

Governors have a statutory responsibility under the Health & Safety at Work (Northern Ireland) Order, 1978 for ensuring that the Health & Safety Policy is understood and implemented and that assessments are carried out to address significant risks.

The Schedule to the Scheme for the Membership, Procedure and Functions of the Board of Governors and the Scheme for Local Management of Schools assign to Boards, duties and responsibilities in respect of Health & Safety, including the preparation of a policy on fire safety. Governors have also taken guidance from CCMS Circular 22/2016 regarding the annual Health and Safety audit.

In the discharge of their statutory responsibilities Governors must ensure:

- that all teaching staff recommended for appointment by them hold appropriate qualifications, both to teach the subjects required of them and to use the necessary equipment and machinery;
- that both teaching and non-teaching staff are kept up-to-date with whatever training is required for their safe working;
- the maintenance of procedures for the safety of both teaching and non-teaching staff under their control;
- the maintenance of procedures for the safety of all persons using the premises under their control;
- that an inspection of the school premises and equipment is carried out at least once a year;
- the prompt and efficient maintenance of all equipment and all non-structural repairs as defined in the relevant Annex to the Scheme for the Local Management of Schools;
- that contractors who are carrying out work on behalf of the Board of Governors carry out their undertakings in a safe manner so as to ensure the health and safety of all personnel on the premises;
- that all equipment and materials either purchased or acquired by them are suitable and safe for their intended use; and,
- that teaching and non-teaching staff are aware of the school's health and safety policy and that the physical, mental and emotional health and wellbeing of staff and pupils are considered a priority.

The Principal has overall responsibility for the health and safety of all children and staff and for ensuring that members of the general public who may be affected by any activity undertaken by or on behalf of the school are not exposed to reasonably foreseeable risks to their health and safety. The Principal is responsible for the day-to-day application of the Health and Safety Policy. In discharging this responsibility, the Principal will:

- ensure that all teaching staff hold appropriate qualifications both to teach the subjects required of them and to use the necessary equipment and machinery;
- that both teaching and non-teaching staff are kept up-to-date with whatever training is required for their safe working;
- ensure the provision and maintenance of procedures for the safety of all the teaching and non-teaching staff;
- ensure that all staff are aware of any instructions or safety advice pertaining to their particular discipline;

- ensure that all safety reports pertaining to the school are understood and that the detailed work has been completed;
- ensure that adequate arrangements exist for carrying out regular emergency evacuation (fire) drills and that all staff are aware of, and participate in, such arrangements;
- report to the Board of Governors all defects and hazards that are its responsibility;
- ensure that safe systems of working are used by contractors or persons carrying out inspections or non-structural repairs that are the Governors' responsibility as set out in the Scheme for the Local Management of Schools;
- report to CCMS/EA all defects and hazards which cannot be dealt with under the Scheme for the Local Management of Schools;
- ensure that all accidents to children, teaching staff and non-teaching staff are reported promptly to EA and, ensure that all staff operate safe working practices in the execution of their duties.
- prioritise the physical, mental and emotional wellbeing of all pupils and staff and ensure there is appropriate support in place

Following guidance issued in CCMS Circular 22/2016:

- the Principal should undertake a formal Maintenance Audit of the school premises and grounds on an annual basis using a suitable audit tool (See *Appendix 1*)
- the audit should incorporate a health and safety assessment and be completed with at least one member of the Board of Governors and the Buildings Supervisor in attendance.
- the audit establishes a baseline for any subsequent actions, and audits, and should be formally reported to the Board of Governors and recorded in the minutes of the meeting under a Maintenance/Health & Safety or Buildings/Premises agenda heading.
- regular monitoring of this audit and subsequent actions should be undertaken by the Principal and Buildings Supervisor. These updates should be provided to the Board of Governors per term via the Principal's Report. In the absence of the Principal, the acting Principal or nominated senior teacher will assume the role.

*(Due regard will be taken to the CCMS checklist issued to schools as guidance – Appendix A. It indicates the minimal policy and procedural areas that Governors and Principals should have in place to be complaint with their Health and Safety obligations under the CCMS Scheme of Management and as advised by Circular 2016/07(fire safety) 2016/13 (fire risk assessment and inspection reports) and 2016/22 (health & safety).*

## **Teaching Staff**

Each member of the teaching staff has a responsibility to exercise care and attention regarding the safety of themselves and pupils under their control.

In the discharge of this responsibility all teachers shall:

- ensure that they take responsible care during work activities to avoid accident or injury to themselves, other members of staff and pupils;
- observe all safety instructions and advice issued by CCMS, EA or DENI and all safety rules relating to specific machinery or processes;
- ensure that all necessary protective clothing and equipment is both available and used by themselves and pupils;

- report all potential hazards affecting health and safety to the Principal and make recommendations on the provision of safety equipment and on improvements to plant, tools and equipment which are dangerous, or potentially so;
- report all accidents to the Principal and ensure that accident or incident report forms are fully completed;
- co-operate fully with the Principal on all matters pertaining to health and safety;
- exercise effective supervision of pupils and know emergency procedures in respect of fire, first aid etc.;
- know any special safety measures to be adopted in their own teaching area and ensure they are applied; and,
- give clear instruction and warnings to children as often as is necessary and follow safe working procedures personally.
- prioritise the physical, mental and emotional wellbeing of all pupils and other staff

### **All Employees**

All employees have a responsibility to exercise personal care and attention for the safety of themselves and others and to co-operate with their employer in the execution of this policy. In the discharge of this responsibility, all employees shall:

- ensure that their workplace is free from hazards before commencing work;
- report all potential hazards and defects in equipment and protective clothing to the Principal;
- ensure that any equipment or machinery known to need repair is not used until the necessary work has been carried out;
- use only those electrical appliances owned by the school, C2K or EA;
- co-operate with any health and safety training considered necessary and reasonably practicable;
- perform their duties in a safe and tidy manner;
- ensure that all toxic and flammable substances are correctly used, stored and labelled;
- ensure that they are aware of any safety precautions to be taken when undertaking potentially hazardous procedures;
- ensure that all necessary protective clothing and equipment are available;
- include safe working methods in instruction to pupils;
- report all accidents and injuries to the Principal as soon as possible;
- obtain adequate treatment as soon as practicable if injured;
- assist in the investigation of injuries and accidents as necessary; and,
- observe the safety rules of the CCMS/EA and school.
- prioritise the physical, mental and emotional wellbeing of all pupils and other staff

### **Dogs**

For health and safety reasons, dogs, with the exception of guide dogs or a visit from the Dog's Trust charity, are not permitted into the playground or school buildings. Any dogs brought into the school car park are the owner's full responsibility and must be kept under control at all times. They must not cause injury to any other party.

## **The School Curriculum**

We teach the children about health and safety in order to equip them with the skills, knowledge and understanding to enable them to live positive, successful and healthy lives. Teachers take every opportunity to educate children in this regard in the normal school curriculum. For example, in the Foundation Stage /Key Stage 1 curriculum, the unit of work 'People Who Help Us' deals with the work of the Police & the Fire Service. Through this topic, we teach children about the danger of fire and how to avoid accidents. Through Science activities in the World Around Us curriculum, we teach children about hazardous materials and how to handle equipment safely.

We teach children respect for their bodies, and how to look after themselves. We also teach pupils about safety on the roads, in the sun and on the farm. We discuss these issues with the children in PDMU and RSE lessons and we reinforce these points in WAU where children learn about healthy eating and hygiene. We also show them how to move and play safely in PE lessons. Technology and Design and STEM lessons often involve health and safety learning as pupils may use hazardous materials or tools.

Health and Safety issues also arise when we teach care for the environment and awareness of the dangers of litter through WAU (Geography focus) and Eco-Council /School and Class Council activities. Key Stage 2 children also receive Drugs Education and Education about alcohol. (See Drugs Education Policy).

## **Child Protection**

The Principal (Mrs Redmond) is the Designated Teacher responsible for Child Protection and Miss Doyle is the Deputy-Designated Teacher. Marie Gormley is our Designated Governor for Child Protection.

We require all adults employed, on placement or volunteering in school to have their application vetted in order to ensure that there is no evidence of offences involving children or abuse.

## **School Security**

While it is difficult to make the school site totally secure, we will do all we can to ensure the school is a safe environment for all who work or learn here. We require all adult visitors to the school who arrive in normal school hours to report to the Secretary's Office, or to the Principal, on arrival and sign the Visitors' Book. Visitors are requested to wear Visitor Passes if appropriate. Teachers will not allow any adult to enter their classroom unless sanctioned by the Principal or, in her absence, the teacher deputising for her. The entrance school gates are closed from 9.30am to 1.50 pm. Playground gates are locked from 9.30am to 3pm. The Building Supervisor is responsible for the safe opening and closing of the school building and completes a visual check each morning to ensure that the interior and exterior of the premises are safe for pupils and staff. He also regularly completes a more detailed security checklist. (Appendix B).

If any adult working in the school has suspicions that a person may be trespassing on the school site, they must inform the Principal immediately. The Principal will warn any intruder that they must leave the school site straight away. If the Principal has any concerns that an intruder may cause harm to anyone on the school site, she will contact the police.

## **Safety of Children**

It is the responsibility of each teacher to ensure that all curriculum activities are safe. If a teacher does have any concerns about pupil safety, they should draw them to the attention of the Principal before the activity takes place.

Parents sign a consent form for school trips at the beginning of the school year which lasts for the whole academic year. If an accident does happen, resulting in an injury to a child, the teacher will do all he/she can to aid the child concerned.

We keep a First Aid Box in the main school office. We also have two portable First Aid Kits that are brought on school trips. The following staff at school have completed their First Aid training – Miss U Doyle and Mrs C McKenna. Mrs Redmond has also completed Emergency First Aid at Work training. Three further staff members have been trained in Heartstart, although refresher training for this is no longer available. If any incident involving injury to a child take place, a trained member of staff will be called to assist. If necessary, the school secretary will telephone for emergency assistance.

We record all minor incidents in the Minor Accident book kept in the staff room. More serious injuries are recorded in the online EA Incident Report form. Parents are informed in all cases of head injury and serious injury. It is also important that parents inform school if their child has sustained a serious head injury as the child may be at risk of second impact syndrome. Parents must inform reception of any changes in emergency telephone details so that they can be contacted as necessary.

### **Seat Belts**

Pupils are instructed to use the belts provided at all times when the buses are moving. When we hire buses from private operators, we ensure that they also have seat belts. Staff travelling with pupils will remind pupils to wear seatbelts before the journey begins.

### **Theft or other Criminal Acts**

The teacher or Principal will investigate any incidents of theft involving children. If there is a serious incident of theft from the school site, the Principal will inform the police and record the incident in the School Incident Book. Should any incident involve physical violence against a teacher, we will report this to the Governors/CCMS/EA/Health & Safety Executive and support the teacher in question if he or she wishes the matter to be reported to the police.

### **Monitoring and Review**

The Board of Governors has a named Governor, Fr Micheál McGavigan, with responsibility for Health & Safety matters. It is his responsibility to liaise with the Principal on health and safety matters and ensure that the school regularly reviews its processes and procedures with regard to Health & Safety matters. The Principal Mrs Redmond or Fr McGavigan will also liaise with CCMS, EA and other external agencies as appropriate.

The Principal implements the Health, Safety Policy on a day-to-day basis and ensures that the staff is aware of the details of the policy as it applies to them. The Principal reports to the Governors termly on health and safety matters.

The Principal, in consultation with Governors, EANI and external agencies, carries out regular risk assessments to ensure that the school is a safe environment – for example, outside play equipment is checked annually to ensure it is safe and fit for purpose.

This Policy will be reviewed at any time, at the request of the Governors, or at least once every three years.

Signed: *Mrs Róisín McInroy* (Chair) Date: 25.03.24

Signed: *Mary Redmond* (Principal) Date: 25.03.24



## **Appendix A - CCMS HEALTH AND SAFETY CHECKLIST**

The checklist below is intended as guidance only for schools. It indicates the minimal policy and procedural areas that Governors and Principals should have in place to be compliant with their Health and Safety obligations under the CCMS Scheme of Management and as advised by Circular 2016/07 (fire safety) 2016/13 (fire risk assessment and inspection reports) and 2016/22 (health & safety)

This checklist indicates the policy and procedural areas that may be formally audited by CCMS in future.

### **Checklist**

- A formal monitoring/audit process is undertaken, recorded and reviewed as advised in Circular 2016/22
- The school has a Health and Safety Policy approved by Governors
- The school has a Fire Safety Policy approved by Governors
- The school has a School Trips Policy approved by Governors
- The school has a First Aid Policy approved by Governors
- The School has critical incident policy/plan approved by Governors
- Appropriate Risk Assessments are undertaken
- Accidents are recorded
- School maintains and monitors Asbestos Register (if applicable)
- PAT (Portable Appliance Test) report
- Maintenance log is monitored



## Appendix B - St. Mary's Primary School, Altinure Security Checklist

Action	Date Checked	Required Actions	Date Checked	Required Actions
All windows are locked and secure				
All doors are closing via door entry mechanism				
Door Entry Mechanism is updated				
Pupil pedestrian gate is opened by 8.25am and closed at 9.30am				
Staff Car Park gates are closed at 9.30am and open at 1.50pm				
Year 1/2 and Year 3-7 playground gates are securely locked by 9.30am				
Flooring does not provide a trip or slip hazard				
Fixtures and Fittings are checked regularly and reported/fixed if damaged				
Emergency Plan is updated and in place				
Outdoor play equipment checked and safe for use				
All visitors report to Reception				
Sign in register is used for all visitors				
Fire Doors are not propped open				
Fire Drill procedures are shared and followed				
Fire Safety Manual is up to date				
Boundary fencing is secure				