

**ST. PATRICK'S NATIONAL SCHOOL
POLICY DOCUMENT**



Policy Title	Safety Statement St Patricks National School Calry
Reference	002
Version	001
Board Management Approval date	of 25 th January 2023
Revision due	

Introductory Statement

Our previous Safety Statement was reviewed and updated to take into account the most recent legislation in regard to Health and Safety. It was disseminated to the wider school community through the school website and ratified by the Board of Management of the St. Patrick's National School.

Rationale

It is a legal requirement under the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act, 2005 for every employer, in conjunction with employees, to prepare a Health and Safety Statement. It represents the Board of Management (BOM)'s commitment to safety and health, and specifies the manner, the organisation and the resources necessary for maintaining and reviewing safety and health standards.

The BOM wishes to document their health and safety programme and make it available to all employees, outside service providers and Inspectors of the Health and Safety Authority.

Relationship to Characteristic Spirit of the School

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

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

Aims

- to create a safe and healthy school environment by identifying, preventing and tackling hazards and their accompanying risks
- to ensure understanding of the school's duty of care towards pupils
- 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.*

Guidelines (*content of policy*)

POLICY STATEMENT ON SAFETY, HEALTH AND WELFARE AT WORK OF THE BOARD OF MANAGEMENT OF St. Patrick's NS

1.1 The members of the Board of Management of St. Patrick's NS are

Chairperson: Fr. Hugh Mc Gonagle

Secretary: David Gallagher

Treasurer: Bernie Flynn

Other Board Members: Deirdre Moylan

Deirdre Norton

Jimmy Harney

Gerard McGovern

Ultan McNassor

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 Act, 2005 are applied.

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

- The design, provision and maintenance of all places in a condition that is safe and without risk to health.
- The design, provision and maintenance of safe means of access to and egress from places of work
- The provision of systems of work that are planned, organised, performed and maintained so as to be safe and without risk to health.
- The provision of instruction to staff on proper lifting techniques of pupils and dealing with pupils with challenging behaviour when such children are enrolled.
- The provision of such information, instruction, training and supervision as is necessary to ensure the safety and health at work of its employees.
- The provision and maintenance of suitable protective clothing or equivalent as necessary to ensure the safety and health at works of its employees.
- The preparation and revision as necessary of adequate plans to be followed in emergencies. e.g. fire evacuation, injuries etc..
- The safety and prevention of risk to health at work in connection with use of any article or substance.
- The provision and maintenance of facilities and arrangements for the welfare of employees at work.
- Obtaining where necessary, the services of competent persons for the purpose of advising on the safety and health at work of the employees e.g. Advisors from the HSE, Fire Officers, ICT Advisors re equipment, ergonomics etc.
- An annual review of this *Health & Safety Statement* and a log of issues raised and remediated.
- The provision of arrangements for consultation with employees on matters of Health and Safety
- The provision of arrangements for the selection from amongst its employees of a Health and Safety Representative.

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

1.5 The Board of Management of St. Patrick's NS will ensure that the provisions of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act, 2005 are adhered to.

1.6 The Board of Management will form the Safety Committee to monitor the implementation of the Safety and Health policies of ST. PATRICK'S NS and the requirement under the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act, 2005.

1.7 The Board of Management will appoint a Safety Representative from the School Staff and a Safety Officer from the BOM.

(Tina Smith is the Safety Representative and Board Member; Tina Smith was appointed as Safety Officer for the term 2019-2023).

CONSULTATION & INFORMATION

It is the policy of the Board of Management of St. Patrick's NS:

- To consult with staff in the preparation and completion of the Health and Safety Statement.
- To make available the *Health & Safety Statement* to all present and future staff.
- That any additional information or instructions regarding safety, health 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 will complete Hazard Control Forms (Appendix 2) as hazards are identified. Some hazards can be rectified but others remain constant. The hazards have been divided into two categories.

Hazards that can be rectified or minimised will be dealt with as a matter of urgency. Hazard Control Forms will be posted on the Staffroom Noticeboard. When a Staff Member notices a hazard, he/she will use the form to notify the Safety Representative (Caretaker), who will rectify the issue and sign with date and time of when the issue was resolved. Those hazards that cannot be rectified 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 St. Patrick's is that

- * There is an adequate supply of fire extinguishers, which will deal with any type of fire.
- * All fire equipment is identified and regularly serviced.
- * Regular fire drills take place at least twice a year. (See Appendix 1 for Fire Evacuation Procedure)
- * Instruction 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 unplugged or turned off outside school hours and when classrooms are vacated for lengthy periods.
- * An assembly area is designated (The school carpark at the front of the school)
- * Those leaving buildings/classrooms should let someone know.
- * Exit signs are clearly marked.
- * The teacher in each classroom will be responsible for fire evacuation and fire drills procedures.
- * A fire officer has checked the school and equipment and all recommendations made by him/her have been implemented.
- * The position of the Assistant Principal (AP2) has as one of her duties to act as Fire Marshall and oversee in conjunction with the Safety Officer and Representative the above aspects of the policy.

2. Other hazards

- * The surface of some of the playing areas is uneven, rocky and potentially hazardous.
- * Some classroom windows open out at head level.
- * On occasions the tiled surface of classrooms, hallways and toilets become slippery due to condensation and pose a risk.
- * There are goalposts on the school football pitch (See Appendix 4 for Goalpost Safety Plan)
- * Pupils are not allowed to play in the school grounds during weather which would pose a danger to their safety e.g. frost, snow and ice.
- * During particularly inclement weather the Board of Management reserves the right to keep the school closed if it is felt that a risk is posed to staff and pupils by travelling to or attending school.

CONSTANT HAZARDS

1. Electrical Appliances

It is the policy of the Board of Management of St. Patrick's NS that only competent persons use Electrical Appliances. Such appliances and equipment will be subject to regular maintenance checks.

2. Chemicals

It is the policy of the Board of Management of St. Patrick's NS 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/Medications

It is the policy of the Board of Management of St. Patrick's NS that no drugs or medication be administered to pupils by members of school staff due to the fact that staff are not qualified to do so and therefore could pose a threat to the welfare of the pupils. In exceptional circumstances where emergency medication is required to safeguard a seriously ill child's welfare, a teacher or SNA may be requested to administer such medication. The procedure in such cases is outlined in our school's Administration of Medication Policy.

4. Wet Floors

It is the policy of the Board of Management of St. Patrick's NS that the washing of floors is conducted after school hours to ensure, as far as is reasonably practicable, elimination of danger of slipping. During heavy weather condensation can cause tiled areas to become slippery.

5. The Code of Conduct

The Code of Conduct in the school provides for a level of appropriate behaviour to minimise personal risk or stress to any employee.

6. Accidents and Injuries

However vigilant the school staff is in relation to pupil safety, accidents will happen and correct procedures in the event of accidents can prevent or minimise injuries. This is outlined in our school's Accident and Injury Policy.

7. Bullying

St. Patrick's NS Anti-Bullying Policy is a stand-alone policy, which provides a framework for dealing with instances of bullying among pupils. The procedures for dealing with Adult Bullying are in accordance with the INTO publication '**Working Together: Procedures and Policies for Positive Staff Relations (2000)**' and our '**Dignity at Work Statement**' included as Appendix 5.

8. Access to Employees is by Consent

When an employee 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.

9. Trained First Aid Personnel

It is the policy of the Board of Management that: -

Employees will be trained to apply First Aid to pupils and other employees.

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

There will be an adequate supply of properly equipped First Aid Boxes available at all times to staff which will contain:

Elastoplast plasters

Wasp Eze

Tape

Disinfectant (e.g) Savlon

Eye lotion(e.g) Optrex

Antiseptic cream

Cotton Bandage

Cream for First Aid treatment of Burns

Antiseptic Wipes

Scissors

First Aid Chart

10. Asbestos

In August, 2007, Asbestos Removal Works were carried out at the school. After which the school was certified for re-occupation. The accompanying report forms part of this Health & Safety Statement and is available for inspection in the school.

OTHER PROCEDURES

1. Educational Visits

Educational visits will be booked with a reputable, properly insured coach service with fully seat-belted coaches. We will aim for a ratio of ten pupils per adult (teacher or parent) but not more than fifteen. Every effort will be made to ensure the safety of the pupils at events or activities they are participating in i.e. the theatre, swimming pool, playground, etc. will be properly equipped and manned by qualified staff.

2. Visitors to the School

Persons coming onto the school premises must identify themselves clearly to whoever answers the door before gaining admittance to the school premises. Any contractor should make direct contact with the Principal, or Deputy Principal before initiating any work on the school premises. All outside facilitators, teachers, coaches etc. who are delivering workshops to pupils will do so under the supervision and direction of the class teacher. Any outside professionals working with children without such supervision must have appropriate qualifications and Garda vetting.

3. Wet Days

On wet days, children will be supervised indoors. The pupils stay in their classroom, where they read, draw, play board games or chat.

4. Emergency Closures

On occasions where school is in progress and it becomes necessary to close the school for safety reasons, the school bus operators and parents who bring their children to school are contacted. Every effort is made to ensure that all parents are made aware of the situation through Text-a-Parent, local media, school website etc. Transport home is arranged and where there is nobody at home pupils can stay with neighbouring parents with their own parents' consent. In instances of staff members' vehicles being used to bring pupils home, it is policy to carry additional pupils to ensure that a pupil will not be alone in the vehicle with a staff member at any time.

Success Criteria

Our success criteria will be based on the achievement of our aims to provide a safe environment for our employees, pupils and visitors. We will use staff observation and parental feedback in addition to Health Inspector's Reports and our safety record as our benchmark for success or otherwise of the policy.

Roles and Responsibility

DUTIES OF ALL EMPLOYEES

1. 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 an extent as will enable his/her employer and the other person to comply with any of the relevant statutory obligations.
 - (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 and welfare while at work.
 - (d) To report to the Board of Management without unreasonable delay, any defects in plant, equipment, place of work or system of work, which might endanger safety, health or welfare, of which he/she might become aware.
2. 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 and welfare arising out of work activities.

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

DUTIES OF SAFETY REPRESENTATIVE

- Conduct an assessment to identify all hazards on the appropriate form (Appendix 2 & 3)
- Assess the risks associated with these hazards.
- Detail arrangements made, resources supplied, and responsibility required to deal with the hazards and to keep them under review.

DUTIES OF SAFETY OFFICER

- To liaise with the Safety Rep on matters of Health and Safety.
- To make recommendations for the alleviation of potential hazards.
- To monitor progress in relation to dealing with hazards.
- Report on all of the above at appropriate BOM meetings.

■ **Timeframe for Implementation**

The revised policy will be implemented from _____.

■ **Timeframe for Review**

This policy is reviewed annually.

■ **Responsibility for Review**

The BOM will be responsible for reviewing the policy.

■ **Ratification and Communication**

The Board of Management ratified this policy on the _____ of _____.

Signed: _____, (Chairperson, BOM)

St. Patrick's NS does not have adequate resources to disseminate all of its policies to all the concerned members of the wider school community. The policy is communicated to the members of the BOM and is available to the wider school community through the parents' representatives on the BOM. All ST. PATRICK'S NS policies are available for inspection in the school.

APPENDIX 1

Fire Drill Evacuation Procedure

Alarm

- Activation of the fire alarm in Secretary's office

Evacuation

- In all classroom/resource areas, children are to stand up, push their chairs under the tables and calmly walk in a single file to the door
- All teachers must check the class toilets before vacating the room
- All classroom doors must be closed when vacating school

Exits

Junior Infants exit: - Rear door

Senior Infants / 1st exit: - Rear door

Second class exit: - Front door

Third / fourth class exit: - G.P. room exit door

Fourth / fifth class exit: - Front door

Sixth class exit - G.P. room exit door

SET take charge of children in their care at the time the alarm is sounded.

These children should be reunited with their classes at the first safe

Assembly

- Each class is to assemble in lines at the first four car parking spaces on the left hand side
 - Each teacher will take the class list with them and call the roll on reaching the fire assembly point
 - Pupils can only return to the classroom once permission has been given to do so
 - The fire drill is to be carried out once a term
 - To prevent a call out from the fire brigade when a fire drill is being undertaken Power Right must be informed beforehand by phone (Power Right 1800 - 938881) displayed on the notice board in Secretary's office.

APPENDIX 2

HAZARD CONTROL FORM			
Hazard	Action Taken	Date Remedied	Person Responsible
Hand Sanitisers/gels – non-alcohol based & alcohol based	Stored in locked store	Reviewed Sept. 2022	Key Holders Only
Domestos – Bleach	Stored in locked store off library and in janitors store beside staffroom	Reviewed Sept. 2022	Key Holders Only
Domestic cleaning products <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cif Cream • Surface Sanitiser • Descaler • Wipes • Spray Polish 	Stored in locked store off library and in janitors store beside staffroom	Reviewed Sept. 2022	Key Holders Only

APPENDIX 3 – Safety Audit

See separate document for more details.

APPENDIX 4

Goalpost Safety Plan

Guidance for the general procurement, installation, maintenance, storage and other related matters.

- 1 Before use, ensure that the goalpost is secured at all times by means of the appropriate supplied anchoring system. This applies to all posts whether they are fixed, portable or free-standing. All goalposts should be anchored, weighted, pinned, chained, pegged or otherwise made secure so as to prevent overturning.
- 2 Before assembly of equipment check that it is not damaged and that it is fit for use. Check for damages to nets, joints and that locking des are in good working condition.
- 3 Check that the equipment for securing the product is intact and in good working order.
- 4 When goalposts that are tall or heavy are being erected/assembled, it is recommended that heavy lifting equipment is used and that correct tools for the job are used at all times. Assembly and erection of goals should be carried out by sufficient number of persons.
- 5 Consideration should be given to the proximity of overhead electrical cables during the erection and transportation of goalposts.
- 6 When dismantling goalposts follow the assembly instructions and recommendations. Ensure all ground sockets have been suitably blanked off when goalposts have been taken out to eliminate trip hazards.
- 7 Portable goalposts should be dismantled or removed to a secure area when not in use following the recommended storage instructions by the manufacturer/owner.
- 8 Moving: If a piece of equipment must be moved, and no transportation wheels are provided, the equipment should be lifted by a sufficient number of competent persons to prevent injury and to prevent damage to the product.
- 9 Procurement: All new goalposts should be purchased from manufactures/suppliers that comply with the following standards I.S.EN 748, I.S.EN 749, I.S.EN 750 and BS 8462. All products should carry a manufactures label and safety warning label. The manufacturers label should include instructions for installation, storage, dismantling, inspection and maintenance.
- 10 Maintenance: Regular maintenance of goalposts is essential to ensure that it is fit for use. In the absence of a standard, it is recommended that the user follow the guidelines set out by the manufacturer.
- 11 Alterations or additions/appendages (such as target sets) to parts of a goalpost that could affect the essential safety of the equipment should not be carried out.

APPENDIX 5

Dignity at Work:

Building & Maintaining a Positive & Effective Work Environment

- The Board of Management of St. Patrick's National School has adopted the following as part of the school's Health & Safety Statement.
- This document was formulated in light of a number of background documents, including the Health & Safety Authority's *Code of Practice for Employers and Employees on the Prevention and Resolution of Bullying at Work* (2007) and the Equality Authority's *Code of Practice*, given legal effect in the Statutory Instrument entitled *Employment Equality Act 1998 (Code of Practice) (Harassment) Order 2002* (S.I. No. 78 of 2002).

A. Core Principles

This school is committed to a positive work environment where work is done in an atmosphere of respect, collaboration, openness and equality.

Adult bullying and harassment in the workplace are phenomena which this school will seek to prevent and will not tolerate. All employees have the right to be treated with dignity and respect. Management is committed to intervening in an appropriate manner - utilising one of the accepted Management/INTO procedures - to investigate and deal with allegations of bullying or harassment. The provisions of Circular 40/97 on *Assaults on Staff in Primary Schools* will be utilised as appropriate.

B. What is Workplace Bullying and Harassment?

The Board of Management adopts the definition of adult bullying as set out by the Task Force (2001):

"Workplace Bullying is repeated inappropriate behaviour, direct or indirect, whether verbal, physical or otherwise, conducted by one or more persons against another or others, at the place of work and/or in the course of employment, which could reasonably be regarded as undermining the individual's right to dignity at work. An isolated incident of the behaviour described in this definition may be an affront to dignity at work but, as a once off incident, is not considered to be bullying".

A key characteristic of bullying is that it usually takes place over a period of time, it is regular and persistent inappropriate behaviour, which is specifically targeted at one employee or a group of employees.

The following is a non-exhaustive list of examples of types of behaviour that may constitute bullying:

- Verbal abuse/insults, undermining remarks
- Exclusion with negative consequences
- Intimidation
- Aggression
- Humiliation, ridicule, belittling efforts
- Excessive monitoring of work
- Withholding work-related information

Harassment is any form of unwanted conduct related to any of the following grounds:

- i. Gender
- ii. Civil status
- iii. Family status
- iv. Sexual orientation
- v. Religious belief
- vi. Age
- vii. Disability
- viii. Race, colour, nationality or ethnic or national origin
- ix. Membership of the Traveller community

which has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity and creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for the person. Unlike bullying, a single incident may constitute harassment.

Sexual harassment is any form of unwanted verbal, non-verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature, which has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity and/or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for the person.

It is recognised that bullying and harassment complaints may arise among work colleagues but may also arise in relation to visitors to the school. In either case, the commitment to a positive workplace, where dignity at work is respected, prevails.

C. A Positive Work Environment

It is agreed that we will all work to make this school a happy place to work. A happy place to work has a positive work environment characterised by

- Our Catholic Ethos
- A supportive atmosphere
- Good and open communication (e.g. through opportunities at regular staff meetings)
- Appropriate interpersonal behaviour
- Collaboration
- Open discussion and resolution of conflict
- Recognition, feedback and affirmation as appropriate
- Fair treatment of all staff (including fair systems of selection and promotion in line with agreed procedures)

Every person has a responsibility to play his/her part in contributing to a positive work environment. In this regard, a person who is a witness or bystander has a clear responsibility to raise concerns about dignity at work and threats to this, in an appropriate and timely manner.

The Safety Statement - as mandated under the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005 – will also include a commitment to a positive work environment, in light of the Employer's obligations as outlined at Section 8 of that Act, including the duty to manage work activities in such a way as to prevent "*improper conduct or behaviour*" likely to put health and safety at risk.

It is agreed that the adoption of this policy in our school will be accompanied by a number of steps to examine our work environment and, as necessary, to agree changes which reflect a commitment to dignity at work. These steps will be initiated by Management, and be repeated by way of review at appropriate intervals.

The actions to be undertaken may generally be described as Identification, Assessment, Implementing Strategies and Monitoring.

D. Adult Bullying as a Problem

Our school recognises that Adult Bullying and Harassment are problems where they occur in any workplace.

Bullying behaviour generally amounts to psychological abuse which causes serious pain and suffering. Studies have shown that any person may become a target, irrespective of their personality or ability. In addition to its unacceptable effects on persons who are its targets, workplace bullying and harassment is extremely detrimental to organisational effectiveness.

Bullying may include behaviours such as:

- Verbal abuse/insults, undermining remarks
- Excessive monitoring of work
- Withholding work-related information
- Exclusion with negative consequences.

Such behaviours need not and should not be part of a workplace. This policy aims to ensure that a positive environment prevents such behaviours from occurring. Where bullying or harassment does occur or is alleged to have occurred, there are means of tackling it through the agreed procedure.

E. What Happens if there is an Allegation of Bullying or Harassment?

Without prejudice to an individual's right to take such advice or steps as they themselves may decide, the Board of Management will take seriously any allegations or workplace bullying or harassment.

Supportive and effective procedures, in accordance with nationally-agreed practice, (Working Together Procedures and Policies for Positive Staff Relation & Code of Practice on

Sexual Harassment and Harassment at Work Prevention Policy) are in the place in this school. These procedures to address and investigate allegations will focus on the earliest possible resolution, will proceed as necessary from informal to formal stages and will have a stress on confidentiality.

F. Summary

Management has a duty of care towards employees. Similarly, employees have a duty of care towards one another. This policy seeks to set out principles and practices to support the exercise of that duty in our school.

Just as inappropriate and undermining behaviour among work colleagues is taken seriously, so is such behaviour when perpetrated against an employee of this school by any other person.

Together we are committed to building and maintaining a work environment where respectful, open and equal relationships are the norm.

In summary, we are committed to having a positive, happy place to work.