



Health & Safety Policy Statement Carns NS

Introductory Statement

This policy statement was adapted to the current format in accordance with the most up to date guidelines. Our was 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 on June 18th 2024.

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 services providers and Inspectors of the Health and Safety Authority.

Relationship to Characteristic Spirit of the School

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, Carns 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, Carns 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 cooperation 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 practises in place to ensure safe systems of work

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- 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 practises
 - 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)

1.1 Safety Standards

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.

1.2 Commitments of the BOM

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

- Provide and maintain a workplace that is safe
- 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 practicable – effective operation of risk register system
- 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, including the provision of a safe place of work in which the risk of assault is prevented or minimised
- 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 – BOM safety representative
- Provide training and information to staff including induction training for new staff members Report serious accidents to the Health and Safety Authority
- Consult (audit) with employees and provide them with information in relation to safety, health and welfare
- Require employers from whom services are contracted to have an up to date safety statement (e.g. painters, contract cleaners, bus companies...)
- The provision of instruction to staff on proper lifting techniques of pupils when such practice is deemed necessary and advice has been received from other agencies.

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1.3 Statutory Obligations

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.

1.4 Provisions

The Board of Management of Carns NS will ensure that the provisions of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act, 2005 are adhered to.

1.5 Safety Committee

The Board of Management will form the Safety Committee to monitor the implementation of the Safety and Health policies of Carns NS and the requirements under the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act, 2005.

1.7 Safety Representative

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

BOM Safety Representative: Mike Healy

School Staff Safety Officer- Deputy Principal

Consultation & Information

It is the policy of the Board of Management of Carns 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

Some hazards can be rectified but others remain constant. The hazards have been divided into two categories.

- Specific Hazards
- 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. Staff will notify principal or deputy principal when hazard has been identified. Hazard will be fixed/remedied.
- Constant Hazards-Those hazards that cannot be rectified will be clearly indicated and appropriate procedures listed beside them.

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- 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 Carns NS 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 once per term. (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 when classrooms are vacated for lengthy holidays.
- An assembly area is designated (area at main shed)
- Those leaving buildings/classrooms are accounted for at the assembly point
- Exit signs are clearly marked.
- The teacher in each classroom will be responsible for fire evacuation and fire drills procedures.
- A fire officer will be invited to check the school and equipment and all recommendations made by him/her have been implemented.
- The position of deputy principal has as one of its duties to act as Safety Officer and oversee in conjunction with the BOM and Safety Representative the above aspects of the policy.

2. Other hazards

- The surface of some of the playing areas is uneven.
- 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 6 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.

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Constant Hazards

1. **Electrical Appliances**-It is the policy of the Board of Management of Carns NS that only adults 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 Carns 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**- See Medicine Administrations Policy
4. **Wet Floors**-It is the policy of the Board of Management of Carns 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. Our accident/illness procedure is included as Appendix 5.
7. **Bullying**-The Carns 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)'.
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 very basic First Aid to pupils and other employees. A minimum of one employees will be fully trained as First Aid responders.
 - 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
 - Tape
 - Cotton Bandage
 - Scissors

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Other Procedures

1. Educational Visits

Educational visits will be booked with a reputable, properly insured coach service with fully seat-belted coaches. 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 texts, local media, school website etc. In instances of staff members' vehicles being used to bring pupils home, it is policy to always have two members of staff in the vehicle to ensure that a pupil will not be alone in the vehicle with one 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.

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Roles and Responsibilities

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 a 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 practises are performed in the safest manner possible.

Duties Of Safety Representative

1. Conduct an assessment to identify all hazards on the appropriate form (Appendix 3). A Sample Checklist is included as Appendix 4. Further support is at [http://www.hsa.ie/eng/Education/Guidelines on Managing Safety Health and Welfare in Primary Schools.pdf](http://www.hsa.ie/eng/Education/Guidelines%20on%20Managing%20Safety%20Health%20and%20Welfare%20in%20Primary%20Schools.pdf)
2. Assess the risks associated with these hazards.
3. Detail arrangements made, resources supplied, and responsibility required to deal with the hazards and to keep them under review.

Duties Of Safety Officer

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

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Timeframe for Review -This policy is reviewed bi-annually

Responsibility for Review -The BOM will be responsible for reviewing the policy.

Ratification and Communication

Carns NS policies will be published on the school website and are available for inspection upon request at the school.

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Appendix 1-Fire Evacuation Procedure

Sequence

1. Alarm
2. Call the fire brigade if fire confirmed
3. Evacuation
4. Assembly
5. Roll Call
6. Tackle the fire
7. Aim

To prevent panic and ensure the safe, orderly and efficient evacuation of all the occupants of the school using all the exit facilities available and to train the mind to react rationally when confronted with a fire or other emergency at school or elsewhere.

Alarm

Anyone discovering an outbreak of fire will raise the alarm at once by informing a teacher. The teacher will immediately sound the fire alarm.

Call the Fire Brigade

All outbreaks of fire however small, or any suspected fire will be reported immediately to the Fire Brigade by the Principal or Deputy Principal.

Evacuation

1. When fire alarm rings ask the children to quietly stand up and line up in the same manner as when they are going home. Check the class toilet for any child.
2. Teacher collects the white laminated card beside the classroom door and leads the children out their designated outside door quietly and calmly.
3. The last child in the line closes the classroom door and if they are the last class leaving, close the designated outside door.
4. The first child leading the line with the class teacher walks using the designated channel over to the appropriate number on the tennis court wall.
5. This child walks down to the number and when it is reached then turns around. The child behind him/her does the same so that the last child in the original lines becomes the first.
6. When the children are assembled in their line the teacher calls out the roll from the white card checking to see that each child is present.
7. When all this is complete we wait until told to go back into the school using the correct channel and in a neat and orderly manner.

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Assembly

The place of assembly is in front of the large concrete shed inside the small gate.

Roll Call

As soon as classes arrive at the place of assembly, a roll call or count will be taken, from the class list. If anyone is missing an immediate search by the staff will be made. As far as is practicable, no place to which pupils have access will be overlooked.

The officer in charge of the Fire Brigade will be met on arrival and immediately informed whether or not all persons have been safely evacuated.

Attacking Fire

Circumstances will dictate whether fire-fighting operations will be attempted. Fire fighting will always be secondary to life safety. While small fires may be dealt with summarily, in the case of a sizable fire, safe evacuation will be the primary concern.

Fire Drills and Testing Alarms

A Test fire drill will be held once per term. It will be carried out according to the above procedure with the exception of 'Calling the Fire Brigade' and 'Tackling the Fire'. A record of all fire drills will be kept. It will include details of drills including date, time, weather conditions, time taken for evacuation and any other relevant information. Fire Alarms will be tested once a term outside of school hours.

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Appendix 3

Hazard Control Form

Hazard	Action Taken	Date Remedied	Person Responsible



Appendix 4-Staff Safety Representatives' Checklist

Circulation Areas

1. Hallway/lobby

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:
- e. loose or broken hinges;
- f. damaged or sticking catches;
- g. broken panels or glass panels;
- h. loose or stiff handles;
- i. doors are not allowed to swing freely without restraint;
- j. windows are not broken or cracked;
- k. windows open easily without undue force being applied;
- l. windows do not jut out dangerously when open;
- m. windows are cleaned regularly;
- n. windows do not have broken fastenings or cords;
- o. where necessary, a window pole is available.

3. 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. windows can be easily opened to allow for adequate ventilation.
- d. Further advice on heating and ventilation is given in the next section.

4. 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;

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- e. staff and children are familiar with evacuation procedures;
- f. there have been practice evacuations/fire drills held at least once per term;
- g. fire doors open outwards and are not held or wedged open;
- h. fire extinguishers and fire blankets are checked and maintained in accordance with manufacturer's instructions;
- i. 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;
- j. flammable substances e.g. cleaning fluids, photocopying chemicals etc, are stored correctly, away from any sources of heat.

More detailed advice on fire safety is given in the next section.

5. Electrical Equipment

a. General

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

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

b. Lighting

Visually check that:

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

c. Plugs/Sockets/Leads

Visually check that:

- i. plugs are in good condition with no cracks or pieces missing;
- ii. sockets are in good condition with no cracks or pieces missing;
- iii. socket screws and mountings are secure;
- iv. sockets are situated in safe positions, convenient for the equipment to be used and not subject to damp;
- v. indicator lights on sockets function correctly;
- vi. insulation on leads is not cracked or frayed;

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- vii. leads are without knots or joins and are reasonably free of 'kinks';
- viii. Leads are the correct length for the equipment being used;
- ix. there are no trailing leads;
- x. surge protection adaptors are being used and not overloaded;
- xi. leads and flexible cable are securely fixed at both equipment and plug ends.

d. Equipment

Check that:

- i. fixed and portable electrical equipment is not damaged and, as far as you are aware, is operating correctly;
- ii. copies of manufacturers' instructions/operating manuals are easily accessible;
- iii. equipment is only being used for purposes for which it was intended;
- iv. where appropriate, all electrical equipment is switched off and, unplugged when not in use;
- v. mains isolating switches are easily accessible and known to staff;
- vi. on/off indicator lights function correctly;
- vii. equipment incorporating heating has a thermal safety cut-out in addition to a thermostat;
- viii. equipment containing liquid has a leakage detector;
- ix. all items of electrical equipment are properly and regularly maintained and serviced.

6. First Aid

Check that:

- a. notices are posted in prominent positions detailing:
- b. procedure for calling ambulances etc;
- c. telephone number of local doctor, gardai, hospital.
- d. procedure for dealing with individual pupils emergencies due to known conditions/allergies etc
- e. first aid boxes are readily available and adequately stocked
- f. The accident book is readily available and kept up-to-date.

General Purpose Classrooms

Look again at sections 1-4;

Check that:

- 1. hazards are not arising from overcrowded classrooms;
- 2. all cupboards, fixed blackboards, display units are stable;
- 3. classroom furniture is not damaged;
- 4. wherever possible, there are no sharp edges or corners on the furniture;
- 5. furniture is positioned safely;
- 6. all shelf mountings are secure.
- 7. floors are clean, even, non-slip and splinter proof;
- 8. all brackets securing ropes, wall bars etc are sound;

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9. PE equipment is stacked securely and positioned so as not to cause a hazard;
10. there is a regular routine for inspecting furniture, floors, apparatus, equipment and fittings;

Non-Teaching Areas

Offices/staffroom

Check that:

1. substances for use with photocopying/duplicating machines are stored correctly, and that the room where photocopying/duplicating machines are operated is adequately ventilated;

Kitchen Areas

Check that:

1. the kitchen/dining area is kept clean;
2. the kitchen floors are sound and non-slip, especially when wet;
3. first aid boxes are available in the kitchen area;
4. equipment is adequately guarded.

Sluice Room

Check that:

1. all cleaning materials, particularly those which might be hazardous, are securely stored;

Staff Facilities

Check that:

1. the staffroom is clean, warm and well lit;
2. there are adequate cloakroom facilities and storage facilities for personal belongings, books etc;
3. the staffroom is large enough for the numbers to be accommodated and sufficient seating is provided, both with upright chairs and tables or desks for working and with comfortable
4. there is provision for tea and coffee to be made;
5. staff sanitary facilities are suitable, sufficient and properly cleaned.

Hygiene

Check that the following are available:

1. soap
2. hand drying facilities
3. hot water
4. toilet paper
5. litter bin per classroom
6. provision for disposal of sanitary towels
7. safe, suitable, sufficient and properly cleaned sanitary facilities.

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Outside Areas

Check that:

1. there are no uneven/broken/cracked paving slabs;
2. outside steps are secure, with a firmly fixed handrail;
3. roofs, guttering, drain pipes etc are, as far as can be seen, sound and well maintained;
4. all play areas, are kept clean and free from glass;
5. outside play/PE appliances are securely anchored;
6. holes for goalposts, netball posts, tennis posts are covered when posts are not in position;
7. outside lighting works and is sufficient;
8. all parking facilities for cars and cycles are safe in regard to the presence of pedestrians;
9. all builders' materials, caretakers' maintenance equipment etc are kept securely.

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Appendix 4 Procedure In The Event Of An Accident/Serious Illness

When a teacher witnesses an accident involving a pupil or other employee, or when an accident or serious illness is brought to the notice of a teacher the following procedure will be followed:

1. The teacher will ascertain the seriousness of injury or illness.
2. Minor injuries will be dealt with in a manner consistent with what any prudent parent would do in a similar situation. However, this treatment will not generally include administration of medication (See Appendix 2).
3. In a case where serious injury or illness is suspected, the teacher will make a decision in conjunction with a First Aid trained member of staff as to whether or not the injured/ ill person can be moved. Where it is felt a breakage or other such serious injury has occurred, the injured/ill person will be made comfortable and kept warm in situ until the emergency services can be contacted.
4. If the injured/ ill person is a pupil, the parents or guardians will be contacted immediately in all instances.
5. If it is felt the pupil needs to be brought to the hospital emergency department, parental permission will be sought. If a parent/guardian cannot be contacted a decision will be made by a member of staff in the best interests of the child. This may involve a trip to the emergency department by calling an ambulance. Written parental consent for such action will be a prerequisite for enrolling a child in the school.
6. In such circumstances, repeated attempts will be made to contact parents.
7. Where a pupil is carried in a member of staff's vehicle, it is policy to carry additional staff member(s) to ensure that a pupil will not be alone in the vehicle with a lone staff member at any time.
8. If the injured/ ill person is an adult, the next of kin will be contacted immediately in all instances. The procedure will follow the same lines as with a pupil adapted to an adult's circumstances having regard to the health & safety of the injured/ill person.
9. A written report will be kept of all serious accidents.