

# **Saint Michael's National School**

## **Health and Safety Policy January 2013**

### **Introductory Statement:**

The statement was drafted based on current practice and agreed following consultation from September 2009 to December 2009 involving staff, Parents Association and B.O.M.

### **Rationale**

It is a legal requirement under the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act, 2005, for every employer, in conjunction with employees, to prepare a Health and Safety Statement. The aim of this Act is the prevention of accidents and ill health at the place of work. This policy represents the Board of Management of St. Michael's N.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 Board of Management will, as required, document the health and safety programme in St. Michael's N.S. and make it available to all employees, outside services providers and Inspectors of the Health and Safety Authority. The Board of Management also accepts its 'duty of care' role in the school and understands this is an integral part of our Health and Safety Statement.

### **Relationship to characteristic spirit of the school**

This policy is intended to lead to the creation of a safe and healthy environment for all members of the school community in line with our caring catholic ethos and our commitment to life long learning.

### **Aims**

We ideally aim...:

- 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, staff, pupils and also visitors from workplace accidents and ill health at work.
- to outline procedures and practices in place to ensure a safe work environment.

- 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, secretary, caretaker, etc. (minimal physical / emotional risk)*
    - *To ensure competent employees, who will carry out safe work practices (e.g. Training and communication)*
    - *Safe access and egress routes (e.g. Assembly and dismissal )*
    - *Safe handling and use of hazardous substances and equipment (e.g. cleaning)*
    - *Safe equipment including maintenance and use of appropriate guards(e.g. electrical)*
      - *Provision of appropriate personal protective equipment (e.g. protective gloves)*

St Michael's National School, Glenfarne, Co. Leitrim has 6 staff members including a part time secretary and a part time caretaker.

We also employ a varying number of contract staff and utilise parent volunteers on a regular basis.

Our area of concern include all school buildings and yard. There is some green space and also waste ground inside the boundary wall.

All areas are our responsibility.

There are 70 children approximately attending the school.

**Responsibilities of employer - Board of Management: These responsibilities will be carried out through the Designated Safety Officer (Principal) under the direction of the Board**

- Provide and maintain a workplace that is safe and do likewise for all machinery and equipment etc. by carrying out ongoing hazard audit and bi annual risk assessment
- 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
- Regularly update this safety statement and, particularly when there have been significant changes and when the risk assessment report has been discussed.

- Provide and maintain facilities to cater for the welfare for employees
- Prepare and update procedures to deal with an emergency situation and communicate these procedures to employees (see fire drill appendix 6, critical incident duties and resp. Appendix 7)
- Appoint a competent safety officer yearly before the school year starts
- Provide training and information to workers in a format and language that is appropriate, including training on the commencement of employment
- Report serious accidents to the Health and Safety Authority
  
- Consult with employees at each September staff meeting 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, buses, tradesmen etc.....*)

**Responsibilities of Teachers and Ancillary staff (secretary, caretaker, cleaner and part time staff :**

**Health and safety is everyone's business**

**As an employee of St. Michael's N.S. there are legal duties designed to protect you and those you work with**

Responsibilities include:

- Not to be under the influence of an intoxicant (alcohol, drugs (illegal or prescribed) to the extent that they endanger your own or other persons' safety. To submit to tests for intoxicants as and when regulations specifying testing procedures are adopted
- To co-operate with the Safety Officer (Principal) and safety representative (Deputy Principal) to ensure that the Health and Safety law is implemented
- Not to engage in improper conduct that will endanger you or anyone else
- To attend Health and Safety training when required and correctly use any equipment at work
- To use protective clothes and equipment provided as required
- To report any dangerous practices or situations that you are aware of to the safety representative (Deputy Principal) or safety officer (Principal)
- Not to interfere or misuse any safety equipment at your workplace

- If you are suffering from a disease or illness (mental or physical) that adds to risks to yourself or others, to tell your employer.

### **Entitlements of Safety Representative: (Deputy Principal)**

The Safety Representative has the right to:

- Represent all staff of St. Michael's N.S. in consultation with the BOM on matters in relation to health and safety
- Inspect the place of work during the first week of each term and immediately in the event of an accident, dangerous occurrence or imminent danger or risk to the safety, health and welfare of any person and make report to the safety officer (Principal)
- Receive appropriate training on request.
- Ensure that investigation and recording of accidents and dangerous occurrences is carried out as required. Ensure new staff are suitably informed as to agreed procedures
- Investigate complaints in relation to H and S made by employees
- Accompany an inspector carrying out an inspection at the workplace
- Make representations to the B.O.M. on matters relating to safety, health and welfare
- Make representations to and receive information from a Safety Inspector, B.O.M.
- Consult and liaise with Safety Representatives in other schools or workplaces in the same undertaking

### **Carry Out a Risk Assessment**

Each year, the Board of Management Safety Officer will carry out a risk assessment or engage a person or persons to do so and consult with the safety representative, identifying hazards, assessing the risks and specifying the actions required to eliminate or minimize them. Hazards may include physical, health, biological, chemical and human hazards. The safety officer will use the HSA format to assist the recording of the whole process and it will be presented to the BOM on a minimum of 2 occasions yearly.

Risk Assessment blank copy: Appendix I

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**As part of the general approach to safety, other policies and practices which have a bearing on safety, health and welfare will need to be put in place and communicated to employees, pupils, parents and others using the premises. These will be monitored and updated regularly and be available for inspection in school planning folder. Each member of staff will be required to have their copies in an accessible location (e.g. desk drawer, planning folder)**

**Health and safety will be considered when all policies / plans are being drawn up e.g. Codes of Behaviour for staff and pupils, Anti bullying, Adult bullying, Sexual Harassment, PE, Visual Arts, School Excursions, etc.**

**The Board of Management of St. Michael's N.S. will be mindful that our duty of care will also be considered in all areas and aspects of school life.**

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

- Emergency contact procedures
  - Parent Contact details updated annually through notes and text a parent service
  - Emergency Contact details are kept in every classroom and in the school staff room
  - Parents/guardians are called/texted immediately in case of an emergency
- Fire-drill and school evacuation procedures
  - Fire-drills are held once per term
  - Teachers and pupils are made aware of the designated assembly points following evacuation of the buildings
  - Procedures for evacuation are displayed in each classroom
  - The school revise these procedures as necessary following each drill
  - New staff and pupils are notified of these procedures by Safety Representative
- Serious Accident Procedure & Accident Report Form(See Appendix 38 p159-160 CPSMA Management Board Members' Handbook) Copy attached Appendix 8

A report must and will be made by the safety officer to the HSA in respect of the following types of incident:

- An accident causing loss of life to any employed or self-employed person if sustained in the course of their employment
- An accident sustained in the course of their employment which prevents any employed or self-employed person from performing the normal duties of their employment for more than 3 calendar days not including the date of the accident
- An accident to any person not at work caused by a work activity which causes loss of life or requires medical treatment.
- Critical incident policy – Tasks and Responsibilities Sheet attached(Appendix 10)
  - The procedures are in place to deal with a critical incident
- Emergency closures

- In the event of an emergency closure all parents are contacted by means of text and phone call. Children not collected will be supervised by 2 members of staff until collected where possible otherwise phone contact will be maintained for Child Protection reasons.

## **Health issues**

- Enrolment Form
  - There is a section allowing parents to identify any allergies/illnesses of the applicant
  - The school requests detail of how parents wish accidents/illnesses to be dealt with
- Managing specific health issues
  - Staff are made aware of the health issues in relation to certain pupils by being given a copy of the enrolment form to file in the individual pupil classroom file
- Administration of Medication – is carried out strictly in line with INTO Guidelines / See Appendix 45 and 46 p. 172-175 CPSMA Management Board Members' Handbook.
- Sickness or Injury
  - Parents are notified when children are sick or injured at the discretion of the individual teacher following consultation with S.O. or S.R.
- Parents are notified by note / text in the case of illnesses and contagious infections, rubella, chicken pox, head-lice
- School hygiene
  - Wash facilities: / water, soap, paper towels available in all classroom toilets
- General cleanliness of school environment
  - The school environment is kept clean –classrooms, toilets, playground, and collection of refuse through caretaker duties arrangements.
  - Reviewed as required at staff / BOM meetings
- First Aid
  - Principal has a qualification in First Aid
  - B.O.M. will be requested to provide staff training in First Aid
- Healthy eating: Refer to school's SPHE plan.
- Water
  - Drinking water is supplied in the school for staff and pupils in the G.P. room (filter tap).
- Clothing/protection (School dress code)

Parents/pupils are made aware by note / text of the need for

- proper clothing and protection
- Wearing coats/jackets in cold or wet weather
- Using sun protection e.g. use of sunscreen/hat.

## **Safety and Welfare issues**

### **Pupils**

- Assembly and Dismissal of Pupils
  - Assembly 9:20am
  - Dismissal Infants. 2:00pm - with designated adult only (as per written/oral advisement from parent/guardian)
  - 1<sup>st</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> 3:00pm - in an orderly manner via school gate
  - Pupil safety on the grounds – parking/traffic/coming off the bus/ are the focus on ongoing risk assessment and parents/staff are advised accordingly and revised on a termly basis
- Pupils leaving the school premises during the school day e.g. dentist or doctor appointment
  - The parent/guardian must collect the pupil from the school in normal circumstances. Otherwise consultation with S.O. required
  - A note or phone call is required
- Supervision of Pupils:
  - Supervision will be arranged by the Principal in the event of a teacher being absent
  - Supervision roster for playground duty is clearly displayed in the staff room.
  - This roster kept as part of the school records for 1 school year (Attached appendix 4 )
- Incident / accident book
  - The teacher on duty will write the report in the event of a serious incident or accident. This record is kept in the staff room
- Code of Behaviour and Anti Bullying Policy: Refer to school's policy.
- Allegations or Suspicions of Child Abuse:

Refer to School Policy on Child Protection Procedures for staff and non staff doc. (Summary on school staff notice board (Appendix 5)

The school's Child Protection Policy, in line with Child Protection Guidelines, must be followed in the case of an allegation or suspicion of child abuse

- School tours/outings. The following ratios apply for supervision on all outings outside of school premises Jun inf. to 1<sup>st</sup> class 8:1, 2<sup>nd</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> classes 12:1. Buses will have appropriate seatbelts; clear instructions will be given to all participants. The Principal will inform the guardian of any child who does not comply with H and S procedures for outings immediately if there is any behavioural or compliance issue.
- Mobile phones: Refer to school's policy on mobile phones.

## **Staff**

- Gardaí clearance
  - The school conduct a Gardaí check before a person is employed
  - Volunteers fill a declaration form (appendix 1) and are fully vetted if any concerns are expressed by a member of the school community

- A volunteer clearance form will be gathered from all parents at enrolment (Appendix)

### **Positive Staff Relations:**

All staff required to follow agreed procedures in relation to issues as outlined in the BOM CPMSA Handbook which is available to all staff from staff room shelf or from the Principal (p 198 – 203 refer to Appendix 20, Appendix 21 Bullying and Harassment p 204-207, Appendix 22 Grievance Procedure p.208 - 210)

We support positive staff relations in the school by enabling the ISMT to take joint responsibility for promoting good relations. Individual members have specific duties of a pastoral nature to assist in achieving this objective. All staff have copies of the duties of the ISMT

- Staff are made aware of the procedures to address cases of adult bullying/ harassment or to initiate a grievance procedure through the Principal
- Employees work in a reasonably comfortable and safe environment. Improvements are made e.g. ventilation, light, anti-glare computer screens, chairs, desks where requested and feasible
- Pregnant staff members are considered and protected from any potential hazard on request or on the advice of the safety representative
- Safe Procedures to be followed are clarified by the Safety Officer for all caretaking and cleaning staff e.g.
  - Vacuum cleaner leads not trailing on the floor
  - Safety signs clearly visible – wet floors

### **Equipment and materials**

- Drills, ladder and any other equipment associated with school maintenance are stored in the yard shed. The storage area is locked during the school day.
- Solvents, chemicals, cleaning agents etc. are stored in a locked press accessed by staff only.

### **Reference Books**

The following books are available on shelf in staff room

- CPMSA Handbook (Revised 2007)
- Responding to Critical Illness
- When tragedy strikes



- Infection in School
- Introduction to Bereavement and Management of Critical Incident

## **Success criteria**

Indicators of the success of the policy will be the safe and healthy environment of St. Michael's N.S. and the constant awareness among all members of the school community of the importance of maintaining high standards

## **Roles and Responsibility**

Name the people who have particular responsibilities for aspects of the policy and how they fulfill their role

- Board of Management
- Safety Officer (Principal)
- Safety Representative (Deputy Principal)
- Each member of staff

## **Implementation Date**

These procedures will apply from March 2013

## **Timetable for Review**

The statement will be reviewed annually

## **Ratification & Communication**

The B.O.M. officially ratified the policy at Board Meeting in March 2013

The Health and Safety Statement will be communicated to the school community via a staff training meeting.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_