

# St. Michael's National School

## Health and Safety Policy



### Introduction

This safety statement outlines the Health & Safety Policy of St. Michael's National School, Trim, and in doing so, aims to fulfill the requirements of all relevant legislation.

- Safety, Health and Welfare at work Act, 2005.
- Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act (General Application) Regulations, 2007.
- Relevant European legislation.
- The Childrens' Act 2001.
- Education for Persons with Special Needs Act, 2004.
- Disability Act, 2005.

St. Michael's National School is located at the rear of the public car park on Patrick Street and adjacent to St. Mary's Primary School. It has a staff of 25 teachers, 21 special needs assistants, 1 secretary, 1 caretaker and 2 cleaning ladies. There is a lollipop lady positioned on Patrick Street to assist pupils at the relevant times. The school consists of a mainstream building with a two storey extension which houses our six special classes. The playing area is to the rear of the school.

As with most places of work there are risks and hazards. This safety statement endeavours to deal with these to ensure the safety of the entire school community.

The current members of the Board of Management are:-

Chairperson:	Mary Hilliard
Principal:	Bríd Gorry
Teachers' Representative:	Marguerite Feeney
Patron's Representatives:	Fr. Warren Collier and Mary Hilliard
Parents' Representatives:	John Leonard and Olga Dempsey
Community Representatives:	Séamus Brennan and Geraldine Clabby

The current members of the safety committee are:

Principal:	Bríd Gorry
Safety Officer:	Mary Burke
Safety Representative:	Mary Hilliard
Caretaker:	James Regan

## **Aims**

The aim of the policy is to:

- Ensure that all reasonably practical steps are taken to ensure the health, safety and welfare of all persons using the premises.
- Ensure that all reasonably practical steps are taken to ensure the health and safety of staff, pupils and other supervising adults participating in off-site visits.
- Establish and maintain safe working procedures amongst staff and pupils.
- Make arrangements for ensuring safety and absence of risks to health in connection with the use, handling, storage and transport of equipment and substances.
- Develop safety awareness amongst staff, pupils and other supervising adults.
- Formulate and implement effective procedures for use in the event of fire and other emergencies.

## **Guidelines**

### **Responsibilities**

The maintenance of a healthy and safe school is the shared responsibility of the whole school community.

### **The Board of Management**

- Decide the policy.
- Give strategic guidance.
- Monitor and review health and safety issues.
- Ensure adequate resources for health and safety are available.
- Recognise their responsibility under the Safety, Health and Welfare Act, 2005 so far as is reasonably practicable to:
  - a. Manage and conduct all work activities so as to ensure the safety, health and welfare of people at work (including the prevention of improper conduct or behaviour likely to put employees at risk).
  - b. Design, provide and maintain a safe place of work and equipment that is safe and without risk to health.
  - c. Prevent risks from the use of any article or substance, or from exposure to physical agents, noise, vibration and ionizing or other radiations.
  - d. Plan, organize, maintain and, where appropriate revise systems of work that are safe and without risk to health.
  - e. Provide information, instruction, training and supervision regarding safety and health to employees, this must be in a form, manner, and language that they are likely to understand.
  - f. Co-operate with other employers who share the workplace so as to ensure that safety and health measures apply to all employees (including permanent/temporary/part time workers) and provide employees with all the relevant safety and health information.
  - g. Provide appropriate protective equipment to the employees.

- h. Appoint one or more competent persons to specifically advise the employer on compliance with the safety and health laws.
- i. Ensuring that accidents/incidents of a serious nature are, in compliance with law, reported to the Health and Safety Authority.

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

The Board of Management of St. Michael's National School will ensure that the provision of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005 are adhered to.

### **The Principal**

- Be responsible for the day to day implementation of school safety organization.
- Develop a culture of safety throughout the school.
- Report to the Board of Management on pertinent issues relating to the Safety, Health and Welfare of St. Michael's National School.
- Report accidents and incidents of violence and bullying at St. Michael's National School to the Board of Management.
- Liaise with outside agencies able to offer expert advice on the safety, health and welfare of St. Michael's National School.
- Formulate and co-ordinate safety procedures.
- Review first aid, fire/evacuation and risk assessment procedures with relevant staff, on an annual basis, or as and when necessary as well as reporting this information back to the Board of Management of St. Michael's National School.
- Ensure relevant staff have access to appropriate training.
- Meet with the safety officers to manage site issues.
- Report to the safety officers any defects and hazards that are brought to their attention.

### **All Staff**

- Must ensure that they have read the Health and Safety Policy.
- Must support all health and safety arrangements.
- Must take reasonable care of their own health and safety and that of others who may be affected by their actions.
- Must ensure, as far as is reasonably practicable, that their classroom or office is safe.
- Must use equipment safely.
- Must ensure, that as far as reasonably practicable, that students use equipment safely.
- Must report situations which may present a serious or imminent danger to the Principal or safety officer at St. Michael's National School.

- Must report any defects and hazards to the Principal or the safety officer at St. Michael's National School.
- Must report any concerns of abuse to the students of St. Michael's National School to the Principal who is the Designated Liaison person.
- Must complete an Accident/Incident Form in the event of a significant accident or incident of violence.
- Familiarize themselves with the "Medical Board" in the staffroom which informs all staff of any student with medical needs or who may need specific handling, to ensure the health and safety of students and staff.

### **The Caretaker**

- Will ensure that he is familiar with St. Michael's National School's Health and Safety Policy.
- Will conduct a termly site check with the Principal.
- Will meet with the Principal and the safety officer on a termly basis to manage site issues.
- Will ensure that all cleaning staff are aware of any implications of the Health and Safety Policy as it affects their work activities. e.g. storage arrangements for materials, equipment, substances etc.
- Will report to the Principal or safety officer any defects and hazards that are brought to her attention.
- Will ensure that all goods received by suppliers (for direct school use), machinery, equipment, substances etc. is accompanied by adequate information and instruction prior to use.
- Will inform the Principal whenever contractors are due to enter the school to undertake maintenance, service or work contracts.
- Will maintain a record of hazardous substances used for cleaning and similar purposes.
- Will ensure all cleaning materials are securely stored.
- Will ensure that gates leading to the playground are closed each morning at 9:30am. and that the gate leading to the field is closed at all times except when in use for games etc.

### **The Safety Officer for Safety, Health and Welfare**

- Will test and record the fire bells and fire doors.
- Will conduct a termly health and safety survey with the Principal and Caretaker.
- Will report to the Principal and Caretaker any defects and hazards that are brought to their attention.
- Will liaise with the caretaker when organising health and safety works.
- Will report to the Principal on any financial implications for health and safety issues.
- Will meet with the Principal and caretaker on a termly basis to manage site issues.
- Will ensure that persons wishing to rent space for out of school activities will be sent a copy of the Health and Safety Policy for St. Michael's National School.

### **Special Duties Postholder**

- Will ensure staff and any other supervising adults are aware of any matters pertaining to Health and Safety in their particular curriculum areas.

### **Supervision Staff**

- Must ensure that they are present for supervision when rostered.
- If unavailable, staff should arrange to exchange with a colleague.
- Must report any health and safety concerns at break times to the Principal.
- Must organize first aid in the event of an accident.
- Must ensure that Accident/Incident forms are completed and signed as soon after an incident as reasonably practicable.
- Pupils are supervised 9:10- 9:20 each morning and during breaktimes in the playground or classrooms. Pupils from our special classes are collected at the school gate/ buses at 9:00am daily.

### **Students**

- Must exercise personal responsibility for the safety of themselves and classmates.
- Must observe standards of dress consistent with safety and/or hygiene. E.g. safety helmets to be worn during hurling training.
- Students are not permitted to wear jewellery, earrings etc. which may cause damage to themselves or other pupils during the course of the day.
- Must follow the safety rules of the school and in particular the instructions of teaching staff given in an emergency.
- Must use and not willfully misuse, neglect or interfere with resources provided for their safety e.g. fire hoses, fire bells etc.
- Students must at all times walk in the corridors and exit/enter the school in single file.
- Students must not cycle in the school grounds at any time.

### **Parents**

- Must support St. Michael's National School in any health and safety matters reported to them.

### **Bullying**

- Any allegation by or of a pupil or adult in St. Michael's National School will be addressed under the procedures outlined in the school's Anti- Bullying Policy.

### **Child Abuse**

- Any allegation of child abuse will be investigated and addressed under our Child Protection Policy. The designated Liaison person is Ms. Bríd Gorry, Principal. Each staff member has received and read a copy of this policy. Should a child make a disclosure of abuse, the procedures laid down in this policy will be strictly adhered to.

## **Accidents and Incident Reporting**

- a. Any student complaining of illness or who has been injured in the playground is brought to the deputy principal's office where First Aid will be administered if deemed necessary.
- b. All incidents, accidents and treatment are reported in the accident /incident book.
- c. Parents are contacted if there is any doubt over the health or welfare of a pupil.
- d. In the event of a serious incident/accident an ambulance is called and a member of staff accompanies the student to hospital.
- e. If staff is concerned about the welfare of a student they should contact the Principal immediately. The student should not be moved if there is any danger of further injury.
- f. Staff should complete the accident book for employees if they sustain an injury at work. This book is stored in the Deputy Principal's Office. An injured member of staff or other supervising adult should not continue to work if there is any possibility that any further medical treatment is needed. The member of staff or other supervising adult should seek medical advice without delay and inform the principal of the outcome.

## **Administration of Medicines**

- a. St. Michael's National School's trained First Aiders administer medicines for chronic or long-term conditions.
- b. All medications must be clearly marked with student's name and placed along with a photograph of the student and a copy of their health plan in a zip lock bag. This will be stored in a locked cupboard in the Deputy Principal's office. Staff record the time medication is given and sign the record sheet.
- c. Pupils with a serious medical condition such as allergies requiring epipen administration will have their photographs and health plans displayed in the staff room. Parental consent will be required .
- d. Pupils must be supervised by an adult when taking their asthma medication.
- e. No medication may be given to students unless a parent/guardian makes a specific request in writing. The principal of St. Michael's National School will then authorize staff to administer the medication. The Board of Management, Principal and staff of St. Michael's National School accept no responsibility for the adverse effect of such drugs/medication properly administered.
- f. Parents are asked to sign an Indemnity form.
- g. All staff must familiarize themselves where appropriate with the medical needs of particular pupils.
- h. If a pupil requiring medication leaves the school for swimming, games, school outings etc. the class teacher must take the medication with him/her.

## **Restrictive Physical Intervention**

“Restrictive Physical Intervention” is the term used to describe interventions where bodily contact using force is used to control or manage a child’s behaviour. Restrictive physical interventions will only be used when all other strategies have failed. It refers to any instance in which a teacher or other adult authorized by the Board of Management of St. Michael’s National School has to use “reasonable force” to control or restrain pupils in circumstances that meet the following legally defined criteria.

- To prevent a child from committing a criminal offence (This applies even if the child is below the age of criminal responsibility)
- To prevent a child from injuring self or others.
- To prevent a child from causing serious damage to property (including the child’s own property)
- To prevent a child from engaging in any behavior which is prejudicial to maintaining the good order and discipline at the school.

## **Enclosed Playground**

- a. The enclosed playground is closely supervised by staff during breaks. Students may not use this playground unless a member of staff is in attendance.
- b. Staff should regularly remind students of safe use of the equipment.
- c. The surface and equipment in this playground and in the Activating Sensory room are regularly inspected and well maintained.

## **Cooking**

- a. Cookers will not be used without essential fire precautions being immediately available e.g. fire blanket, fire extinguisher.
- b. Staff will ensure student safety during a cooking activity.

## **Educational Visits**

- a. Staff must ensure that the transport company used has updated insurance cover and VLR to transport school going children on educational visits.
- b. All buses/cars used have an individual seat and working seat belt per pupil.
- c. Parental permission will be obtained through the Aladdin Connect App prior to educational visits/outings.
- d. Should a bus/car carrying pupils be involved in a traffic accident, the teacher in charge will immediately contact the principal and any relevant agencies.

## **Electrical Testing**

- a. All items of portable electrical apparatus and equipment in use at St. Michael's National School are inspected and checked regularly.
- b. All electrical appliances will be used only by competent persons and pupils must be supervised at all times if using same.

## **Games/PE Activities**

- a. In all activities involving games of whatever kind, teachers at St. Michael's National School will exercise prudent judgment on the level of supervision required and inform the Principal of any matters requiring attention.
- b. Safety must be the overriding factor in the choice of equipment used in games.
- c. Before using, all equipment must to be checked to ensure that they are safe.
- d. All equipment used during any activity should be returned to its proper place and the safety officer is informed of any damaged or broken equipment.
- e. St Michael's National School uses The Aura swimming pool in Trim for swimming lessons and follows the Department of Education & Science guidelines.
- f. Swimming instruction is provided by qualified swimming instructors with a lifeguard on site.
- g. Supervising staff should remain with the pupils during swimming lessons.
- h. Any medication which may be needed by pupils should be carried by staff.
- i. If a problem arises, staff will inform the Principal/Deputy Principal to decide what action is required.

## **First Aid Provision**

- a. The Principal of St. Michael's National School is responsible for ensuring that there is an adequate number of qualified First Aiders.
- b. First Aid is administered in the Deputy Principal's office
- c. First Aid Boxes are located in all mainstream classes.
- d. Cover disposal containers are located in the Deputy Principal's office. All cotton pads etc. used to deal with bleeding must be placed in these containers.
- e. The Post Holder for Safety, Health and Welfare will ensure the maintenance of the contents of the First Aid boxes and other supplies.
- f. All staff at St. Michael's National School will be trained in any aspects of First Aid deemed necessary. E.g. asthma, epilepsy, the use of epipens etc. .
- g. Surgical gloves must be used when administering First Aid.
- h. All accidents/injuries must be reported in the accident/incident book and signed by the witnessing teacher.
- i. In all incidents of head injury, parents will be notified and given the choice of taking the pupils home.



## **Hazards**

Some hazards can be rectified but others remain constant. The hazards have been divided into two categories. Hazards that can be rectified or minimized will be dealt with as a matter of urgency. Those that cannot, will be clearly indicated and appropriate procedures listed beside them. The Board of Management at St. Michael's National School in consultation with employees will review and make recommendations on the elimination of hazards.

### **A. Specific Hazards**

#### **a. Fire**

It is the policy of the Board of Management of St. Michael's National School that:

- i. There is an adequate supply of fire extinguishers which will deal with any type of fire.
- ii. All fire equipment is identified and regularly serviced.
- iii. That fire drills will take place once a term.
- iv. The Principal and staff are responsible for fire drills and evacuation procedures.
- v. All electrical equipment will be unplugged or turned off outside of school hours and when school is vacated for lengthy periods.
- vi. Assembly areas are designated outside each building.
- vii. Pupils leaving the school buildings must have written permission from parent/guardian.
- viii. All staff must inform the Principal/Deputy Principal if leaving premises during school hours.

### **Fire Drill/Evacuation Procedures**

When the fire alarm sounds, evacuation should take place in an orderly fashion. The assembly point is behind the school. Staff and pupils from our special classes will assemble in the enclosed playground while mainstream staff and pupils will assemble at their designated assembly point beside the enclosed playground.

Teachers should ensure that:

- All students have left the building and all classroom toilets have been checked.
- The classroom door is closed.
- The class should proceed to assembly point.
- Teachers should ensure that the pupils walk quietly and in single file to their assembly point in playground area.
- Class teacher should lead the class line and ensure they bring the class lists which are stored on the back of classroom doors with them.

Students attending resource and learning support must leave with attending teacher/SNA. The attending teacher/SNA should ensure that these students join their respective class lines at assembly point.

At the assembly point classes must line up in an orderly fashion. A roll call of staff will be taken by the Principal /Deputy Principal. A roll call of pupils will be taken by their teachers. In the case of a fire drill, all classrooms as well as the building will be checked and deemed safe by the Principal and the Deputy Principal before the “All Clear” is given. The children should then re-enter the building in an orderly fashion .

## **B. Other Hazards**

It is the policy of The Board of Management that:

- i. The school buildings are well maintained.
- ii. The yard surface is properly maintained.
- iii. Individual classrooms are cleaned regularly and that fittings such as lights and sockets are well maintained.
- iv. Toilets throughout the school are cleaned regularly.
- v. Hallway condensation is minimized to avoid slippery floor surfaces.
- vi. All hard surfaces are cleaned and dried frequently so as to avoid mishaps by slipping.
- vii. A supply of paper towels is available in toilets.
- viii. Sanitary disposal units are provided and maintained in toilets for female staff and students.
- ix. Non slip mats be used.
- x. Great care is taken when the school yard is covered with snow and/or ice.
- xi. Bins are provided in all classrooms and other areas where the children congregate. Bins will be emptied daily.
- xii. Doors with glass windows have toughened or laminated glass.
- xiii. Students are not allowed to stand on chairs or tables and should keep their workspace tidy.
- xiv. Students should not run around corners or corridors.
- xv. Students should not bring dangerous items to school e.g. compasses, pen-knives, thumb-tacks, cigarette lighters, matches, elastic bands etc.
- xvi. Students should enter the school via the front gate and are not permitted to climb walls.
- xvii. Students should not leave the school grounds without permission.

## **Manual Handling**

- a. Pupils, staff and any other supervising adults should only lift equipment and furniture within their own individual capability.
- b. When a student who needs to be lifted is enrolled at St. Michael’s National School, suitable support services must be provided, arrangements made and training provided for the lifting of the student in order to minimize strain on the staff.

- c. Staff will complete a manual handling course and will be trained in the use of the hoist and slings in the disabled toilet.

### **Parking/Movement within the school grounds**

- a. Only staff may park within the school grounds.
- b. Contractors coming onto the school grounds to load or unload equipment must park outside the perimeter. They may only gain access to the school grounds by contacting the principal. If possible any such work should take place outside of school hours.
- c. No vehicles should be in the playground during break times.
- d. Cars should be parked in such a way that access is available should any emergency vehicle i.e. ambulance/fire brigade be required.
- e. Students must walk safely around the school and line up in single file while waiting to go into their classrooms.
- f. No student should be left in any classroom or the playground unsupervised.
- g. Students may not cycle within the school grounds but must walk their bicycles to the designated parking area at the front of the school.

### **On Site Work**

- a. It is the responsibility of any contractor to ensure that their employees adhere to safety guidelines in respect of personal protection equipment.
- b. If work is taking place during school hours and constitutes any threat to health and safety of the staff and students, the school will be closed. If possible, all such work should take place outside of school hours.

### **Other items for Inclusion**

When the Patron is making nominations to the Board of Management and when the parents are electing parent's representatives to the Board of Management they are requested to bear in mind the Safety, Health and Welfare Act 2005.

### **Playground**

- a. The playground is zoned for different classes. Students must stay in their zoned area.
- b. Staff on duty must wear high vis jackets and encourage students to play safely and discourage fighting or other rough games.
- c. Adequate supervision staff are in the playground at all times.

### **Pregnant and Nursing Mothers**

The Principal will carry out a risk assessment. Appropriate action will be taken to ensure that the staff member is not exposed to any significant risk. Any request by the staff member will be addressed. The assessment will be reviewed if and when necessary.

### **Safe Stacking and Storage**

Equipment will be stored at an appropriate level and positioned relative to its height, weight and bulk.

### **Security**

- a. The front door leading into the school must remain closed at all times. This door and the two internal hall doors are fitted with a fob door entry system.
- b. The back doors leading into the school from the playground must be closed at all times.
- c. Visitors must report to the secretary's office before proceeding into the school building.
- d. External doors in our special classes are code protected.

### **Smoking**

The Board of Management of St. Michael's National School is compliant with the Public Tobacco Act.

### **Sound Pollution**

It is the policy of the Board of Management of St. Michael's National School to minimize sound pollution. i.e. Room to room, yard to room etc.

### **Supervision of Students**

- a. Staff and other supervising adults must maintain good order and discipline, safeguarding their health and safety at all times.
- b. No student must be left unsupervised.
- c. Staff must be punctual in collecting students from the playground
- d. Staff must be punctual and proactive when on duty on the playground.
- e. If a member of staff knows that he/she is unable to undertake a duty he/she must organize cover.
- f. A roster of personnel on playground duty will be displayed in the staffroom and a copy given to each staff member.
- g. If a parent /guardian fails to collect a student after school, staff must make every effort to contact the parent/guardian.

Policies referred to:-

*Child Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment.*

*Code of Discipline Policy.*

*Anti-Bullying Policy.*

*Physical Intervention Policy.*

**Review**

This policy shall be regularly reviewed by the Board of Management of St. Michael's National School in accordance with experience and the requirements of the Safety, Health and Welfare Act 2005 and the Health and Safety Authority.

**Ratified by the Board of Management**

Signed: Mary Hilliard                      Date:13/02/2023  
Chairperson of Board of Management

Signed: Bríd Gorry                      Date: 13/02/2023  
Principal