

Health and Safety Policy

In accordance with the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005, it is the policy of the Board of Management to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the safety, health and welfare at work of all staff and to protect pupils, visitors, contractors and other persons at the school from injury and ill health arising from any work activity.

The successful implementation of this policy requires the full support and active co-operation of all staff; teachers, SNA's, administrative and maintenance, contractors and visitors to the school.

The School shall meet all relevant regulatory requirements and will strive to achieve leading edge best practice in the special needs educational field as amplified in our Mission Statement, to this end the Board has implemented a Safety, Health and Environmental Management System.

The Board recognises that hazard identification, risk assessment and control measures are legal requirements, which must be carried out by the employer to ensure the safety, health and welfare of the staff, pupils, contractors and visitors to the school.

The Board of Management, as employer, undertakes in so far as is reasonably practicable to:

- Promote standards of safety, health and welfare that comply with the provisions and requirements of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005 and other relevant legislation, standards and codes of practice
- Provide information, training, instruction and supervision where necessary, to enable staff to perform their work safely and effectively
- Provide and maintain safe means of access to and egress from the school's places of work
- Maintain a constant and continuing interest in safety and health matters pertinent to the activities of the school
- Continually improve the system in place for the management of occupational safety and health and review it periodically to ensure it remains relevant, appropriate and effective.
- Consult with staff on matters related to safety, health and welfare at work
- Provide the necessary resources to ensure the safety, health and welfare of all those to whom it owes a duty of care, including staff, pupils, contractors and visitors.

- Empower all employees to priorities health, safety and care of the environment when performing their duties.

The Board of Management is committed to playing an active role in the implementation of this occupational safety and health policy and undertakes to review and revise it in light of changes in legislation, experience and other relevant developments.

Signed: _____

Chairman, Board of Management
School of the Holy Spirit

Introduction

- This document sets out the Board of Management's Safety Statement for all employees, pupils, visitors and contractors at the School of the Holy Spirit, Kilkenny.
- It has been prepared in accordance with section 20 of the Safety, Health & Welfare at Work Act, 2005 and all associated relevant legislation.
- The purpose of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005, is to ensure the safety, health and welfare of all employees in the workplace and to ensure that non-employees present in the workplace are safe.
- Section 20 of the Act requires employers to prepare a written safety statement specifying the manner in which the safety, health and welfare at work is to be secured and managed.
- The School Safety Statement is part of the Schools safety management system for assuring safety & health of all individuals at the School, it is not a stand-alone document but is used in conjunction with Schools rules and safety and health procedures see appendices.

The central theme of safety and health management at the School of the Holy Spirit is contained in the nine general principals of prevention:

- The avoidance of risks
- The evaluation of unavoidable risks
- The combating of risks at source

- The adaptation of work to the individual
- The adaptation of the place of work to technical progress
- The replacement of dangerous substances or systems of work by safe or less dangerous substances or systems of work
- The giving of priority to collective protective measures over individual protective measures
- The development of an adequate prevention policy in relation to safety, health and welfare at work
- The giving of appropriate training and instructions to employees

The members of the Board of Management of School of the Holy Spirit are:

Chairperson	Mr. Tommy Lanigan
Principal / Secretary to B.O.M.	Ms. Karen Lowther
Treasurer/Community Nominee	Mr. PJ Flynn
Community Representative	Mr. Martin Mulligan
Patron's Nominee	Ms. Christine Leonowicz
Parent's Representative	Mr. Noel Cullen
Parent's Representative	Mrs. Aine Brennan
Representative Teacher's	Ms. Jill Mulligan

Legal Responsibilities

In accordance with the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005, The Board recognises its express responsibilities under Section 8 of the Act, which outline the employer's duties.

These duties cover:

- The management and conduct of work activities
- Preventing improper conduct or behaviour (for example, violence or bullying of people or pupils at the school)

The design, provision and maintenance of:

- Safe workplaces
- Safe means of access to and egress from the workplace

- Safe plant and machinery
- Providing safe systems of work
- Provision of adequate instruction, training and supervision and any necessary information
- Preparing risk assessments and safety statements
- Provision and maintenance of suitable personal protective equipment
- The preparation of adequate plans and procedures to be followed in the case of an emergency.
- The reporting of accidents and dangerous occurrences
- To obtain, where necessary, the services of a competent person to assist in ensuring the safety, health and welfare of his or her employees

Employee duties while at work include:

- To take reasonable care to protect his or her safety, health and welfare and the safety, health and welfare of any other person who may be affected by their acts and omissions at work.
- To co-operate with his or her employer or any other person so far as is necessary to enable his or her employer or the other person to comply with the relevant statutory provisions
- To attend training and take instruction on the correct use of articles or equipment
- To use personal protective equipment (PPE) or clothing provided for his or her safety.
- To report to his or her employer as soon as practicable; any work being carried out which might endanger him/herself or others; any defects in the place of work, the system of work, any article or substance which might endanger him/herself or others; any contravention of the relevant statutory provisions of which he/she is aware.
- Not to engage in any improper conduct or dangerous behaviour

School Profile

School of the Holy Spirit is a special co-educational Catholic Primary School with second level provision.

- The Primary School caters for the educational needs of students diagnosed with Autism / Asperger's Syndrome / Severe Emotional Disturbance.

- Second level provision is only for students with a diagnosis of Autism / Asperger's Syndrome.
- The school caters for students with an I.Q. of borderline normal or above which has to be confirmed by a conclusive professional's report / psycho-educational assessment.
- The Management body of School of the Holy Spirit is the Board of Management, which operates under the guidelines of the Department of Education & Science.

Safety Management System Planning

The following spreadsheet describes how the Safety System will be administered, in broad outlines

Board of Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initiate health and safety audit • Review and update safety statement in light of safety committee's recommendations • Agree actions required • Allocate resources where necessary • Identify short, medium and long-term priorities • Approve/ratify health and safety decisions • Sign off on Health and Safety policy • Sign off on Safety Statement
Safety System coordinator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Convene meeting of safety committee • Take necessary actions on foot of agreed safety committee decisions • Ensure that required protocols for fire drills, accident reporting etc. are fulfilled • Respond to health and safety reports, events and issues • Brief staff on health and safety and report on issues as necessary
Safety Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agree a format and calendar for committee meetings • Agree a plan of action for year • Review safety statement, hazard register and risk assessments • Assess training needs - (fire, covid-19, first aid, manual handling etc.)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agree training programme based on risk assessments • Agree necessary corrective actions <p>Convey requests for actions to the Safety System Coordinator for approval</p>
Staff Meetings	<p>Brief staff on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • key aspects of the safety system • changes in risk, controls and procedures <p>discuss safety and health-related issues as they arise</p>
Staff	<p>Teaching staff:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inspect work areas, workshops, kitchens, classrooms, corridors, toilets, etc. • Complete risk assessments as appropriate to one's own area of work • Follow internal accident and incident reporting procedures • Comply with safety and health decisions of the Board of Management <p>Non-teaching staff:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inspect Offices, laundry, Grounds, Boiler House, Maintenance area • Complete risk assessments as appropriate to one's own area of work • Follow internal accident and incident reporting procedures <p>Comply with safety and health decisions of the Board of Management</p>

Resources for health and safety in the school

The resources necessary to implement and develop the Safety Management System are budgeted for annually, employees will be allocated adequate time for training and to carry out their roles effectively.

Roles and Responsibilities

Role	Responsibilities	Number
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Safety System coordinator	Coordinate the Safety System on behalf of the Board of Management	One Person
Emergency evacuation coordinators	Coordinate all aspects of the plan for emergency preparedness	One Person + One
Assembly point coordinators	Coordinate assembly Point during an emergency evacuation	One Person + One
Safety Representative	Carry out the role as defined in Section 25 of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005	Two Persons + Two Persons
Occupational First Aider	Deliver First Aid as needed	

Consultation and Communication

Safety Committee

It is the policy of the Board of Management:

- To consult with staff in preparation and completion of the Health and Safety Statement and of the Hazard Register
- To form a safety committee. *the committee will function as a forum for, employee management, consultation and communication*
- To consult and appraise staff on all safety and health related matters as changes and developments occur.
- To give a copy of the Safety Statement to all present and future staff

Safety Representative:

It is the policy of the Board of Management to facilitate the Safety Representative when they:

- Represent the school employees in consultation with the employer on matters in relation to health and safety

- Inspect the place of work on a schedule agreed with the employer or immediately in the event of an accident, dangerous occurrence or imminent danger or risk to the safety, health and welfare of any person
- Receive appropriate training
- Investigate complaints made by employees
- Accompany an inspector carrying out an inspection at the workplace if requested to do so by the inspector.
- Make representations to the employer on matters relating to safety, health and welfare
- Make representations to and receive information from, an inspector
- Consult and liaise with other safety representatives in the same undertaking.

Hazards

Generally, hazards are categorised as:

- **Physical hazards**
 - o manual handling, slips, trips, and falls, electricity, fire
- **Health hazards**
 - o noise, harmful dusts, unsuitable lighting levels, vibration
- **Chemical hazards**
 - o glues, solvents, dyes, cleaning agents
- **Biological hazards**
 - o viruses, bacteria
- **Human-factor hazards**
 - o stress, bullying, violence

The Board of Management with the cooperation of all staff will compile of a Hazard Register for the School

The Hazard Register will be reviewed and updated on a regular basis and always when:

- New equipment, compounds or processes are introduced or modified
- Following reportable incidents
- Legislative changes

Hazards will be addressed, prioritized and removed having regard to the seriousness of their inherent risk.

All Hazards remaining on the Hazard Register will be risk assessed and controls put in place to reduce the risk to ALARP levels. (*as low as reasonably practicable*)

Specific Hazards

Fire

It is the policy of the Board of Management of School of the Holy Spirit 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 during each term.
- Staff will receive training in the safe use of Fire Extinguishers.
- Fire alarm activation points are clearly marked.
- Signs are clearly visible to ensure all persons in the school building or grounds are aware of exit doors and evacuation routes to Assembly Point/s
- A real time register of all persons on School property is maintained
- An assembly area is designated outside, and a safe distance, from the School building.
- There will be nominated person/s responsible for emergency evacuation coordination.
- There will be nominated person/s responsible for assembly point coordination.
- All electrical equipment is unplugged or turned off outside office/school hours and when the school are vacated for lengthy periods

Manual Handling

It is the policy of the Board of Management to:

- Take appropriate organisational measures to avoid the need for the manual handling of loads by school employees.

- Wherever the need for manual handling cannot be avoided, the school will assess the risks involved and organise the work and workstations in such a way as to make such handling as safe as possible.
- Ensure that needs of especially sensitive risk group employees are taken into account
- Provide employees with manual handling training as appropriate

Machinery, Kitchen Equipment and Electrical appliances

It is the policy of the Board of Management that:

- Machinery, Kitchen Equipment and Electrical Appliances are used only by competent and authorised persons
- The use of Machinery, Kitchen Equipment and Electrical Appliances by pupils is supervised by competent and authorized persons
- Such appliances and equipment will be subject to regular maintenance checks.

Cleaning Chemicals

It is the policy of the Board of Management to remove Chemical and Biological hazards from the school, as far as reasonably practicable and to ensure that the remaining:

- Chemicals, detergents etc., are stored in a secure location, in clearly identifiable containers bearing instructions and precautions for their use.
- Appropriate PPE (personal protective equipment) is available when handling them
- MSDS sheets are easily accessible

Drugs Medications

- Parents / Guardians must make an application to the Board of Management before medication can be administered by staff:
See: School of the Holy Spirit Policy, Administration of Medication to Pupils.
- Medication is kept locked at all times.

Floors and stairways

It is the policy of the Board of Management of School of the Holy Spirit that:-

- Floors and stairways surfaces will be maintained in a non-slip condition will not be polished in such a way as to cause a hazard.
- That cleaning and maintenance of floors is conducted after school hours to ensure, as far as is reasonably practicable, the elimination of the danger of slipping or tripping.
- Spills are identified by warning signs and cleaned up as soon as possible

Infectious Diseases

It is the policy of the Board of Management of School of the Holy Spirit that:-

- As far as reasonably practicable to protect all staff, pupils and visitors from contact with infectious diseases.
- A School Covid19 Response Plan is in place in line with Department of Education and Skills guidance and the Return to Work Safely Protocol and public health advice

It will endeavour to achieve this aim by: -

- Adherence to best practice in the area of hygiene and cleanliness
- The use of detergents and disinfection in the cleaning of the school
- The identification and segregation of cleaning equipment for all areas in the school
- The provision of PPE in line with DES and HSE and HSPC recommendations
- The provision of hand sterilization fluid dispensers at selected locations through the school
- Raising the awareness of staff and pupils of dangers of infectious diseases the need for good hygiene practices, increase in social distance and minimising interactions
- Setting standards and ongoing monitoring of contract cleaning services
- Appointment of a Lead Worker Representative and Assistant Lead Worker Representative in line with the Return to Work Safely Protocol

Bullying, Stress or Violence

See, School of the Holy Spirit Policies:

- Code of Behaviour; the Code of Behaviour in the school provides for a level of behaviour to minimise personal risk or stress to any employee or pupil.

- Child Safeguarding ; aims to provide its pupils with the highest standard of care in order to promote their wellbeing and protect them from harm
- School Position on Bullying Policies, Adult Anti-Bullying Policy and Cyber-Bullying Policy

Access to Employees

It is the policy of the Board of Management that:

- Contact with school employees will be by appointment except in emergency situations.
- If a situation arises that an employee feels at risk from or threatened by a particular person on school property, this will 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.

First Aid Personnel

An appropriate number of employees will receive training in occupational first aid

Adequately equipped and stocked first aid station and first aid boxes will be maintained at all times

Safety Statement Revision

The Board will review and update the safety statement annually, and as necessary in light of legislative changes, reportable events and or changes to the organization or work practices at the school.

Implementation/Ratification and Review:

This policy was re-ratified by the Board of Management on 29th September 2021.

This policy will be reviewed by the Board of Management in September 2022.

Signed: _____
Chairman Board of Management

Signed: _____
Principal

Date: _____