



**Scoil Náisiúnta Naomh Fheargus,
An Gleann,
Co. Luimnigh.**

**St.Fergus' National School,
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Health and Safety Policy for St. Fergus' National School September 2024

Introduction

This Health and Safety Policy outlines the procedures and measures in place to ensure the safety and well-being of all pupils, staff, and visitors to St. Fergus' N.S.. The Board of Management is committed to providing a safe, secure, and healthy environment by adhering to the statutory requirements of the Irish Department of Education and the Safety, Health, and Welfare at Work Act 2005.

School Profile:

- Staff: 10 teaching staff, 7 Special Needs Assistants (SNAs), 1 secretary, 1 caretaker, 1 cleaner.
- Pupils: 160 pupils, including 12 pupils with Autism accommodated in 2 special education classes.
- Facilities:

Original building from the 1950s, with later additions including a General Purpose Hall, kitchenette (1980s), and 3 modular classrooms (2023). The School building is raised off the ground level, resulting in a number of steps and levels on the grounds and building. The school also has three school yards, an enclosed play area for Autism Class pupils, and a grass pitch.

Health and Safety Policy Aims

The Board of Management and Staff of St. Fergus' NS are committed to:

- Ensuring compliance with health and safety legislation.
- Providing a safe and healthy working and learning environment.
- Managing and minimizing risks through regular assessments and safety audits.
- Promoting safe practices for staff, pupils, and visitors.

Roles and Responsibilities

- Department of Education is responsible for providing funding and guidance for H&S procedures and repairs/replacements of dangerous goods/services.

Board of Management delegates the day to day running of the School and overseeing of H&S to the School Principal.

- Principal: The Principal acts as the Health and Safety Officer on Staff and on the Board of Management. In his/her absence the Deputy Principal will assume this role.

Under the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005 (Ireland), the duties of a Health and Safety Representative/Officer include the following:

- Consultation: Representing employees on matters relating to safety, health, and welfare at the workplace and being consulted by the employer on these matters.
- Inspection: Conducting inspections of the workplace at specific intervals (termly) or after an accident, dangerous occurrence, or disease outbreak.
- Investigation: Investigating potential risks and complaints related to the safety and health of employees without hindering the work process.
- Accident Reporting: Accompanying and assisting inspectors from the Health and Safety Authority (HSA) during their inspections.
- Receiving Information: Being informed by the employer (BOM) of any reportable incidents, dangerous occurrences, or illnesses and given relevant safety and health documentation.
- Making Representations: Bringing concerns about safety, health, and welfare issues to the employer's (BOM) attention and making representations on these matters.
- Attending Training: Undergoing training provided or arranged by the employer that is necessary for the role.
- Consultation with Inspectors: Having the right to consult with inspectors from the HSA during workplace visits.
- Feedback and Communication: Reporting back to the employees they represent on any safety, health, or welfare issues that arise.

These duties help ensure that there is a strong, proactive approach to workplace safety, where the employees' perspectives are represented and incorporated into safety practices and policies.

- Teaching Staff: Supervise pupils during lessons and break times and ensure classrooms are safe. They are also responsible for bringing any hazards to the attention of the Principal.

- SNAs: Support pupils with special needs and assist teaching staff during breaks. They are also responsible for bringing any hazards to the attention of the Principal.

- Secretary: Maintain health and safety records, reorders supplies as needed and stores Indemnity Forms.

- Caretaker/Cleaner: Maintain cleanliness and safety of school grounds and report hazards.

Risk Assessment and Control Measures

Hazard Identified	Who is at risk and when	Control Measures	Action required
Classrooms			
Trips and falls from school bags, training coats	Any one who enters the room is at risk of a fall over items on floor	Hooks placed outside all classrooms to hang up coats. School bags to be kept under tables at all times to keep pathways clear.	Students to be reminded to keep school bags under desks always
Trailing leads from laptops etc	Anyone in the room is at risk of tripping	Leads should be aligned with the nearest wall and cross open space for as little time as possible. Leads crossing the floor should be covered with tape or a mat	Covering yellow and black tape to be purchased by principal and distributed to each class teacher
Open mugs of tea/coffee from Staff	Staff and pupils at risk of scalds/burns	All hot beverages must be in covered travel mugs leaving the Staff Room	Staff advised to use a covered travel mug for hot drinks
Electrocution/ Electrical Hazard	Any one using the electrical equipment in the classroom e.g. White Boards, laptops etc	Electrical equipment is checked regularly by users. Adults only in charge of electrical equipment.	Any equipment which is damaged or not working is repaired or replaced.
Stress and Mental Health Strain	Pupils Staff	Encourage a positive work/classroom environment and ensure breaks are taken. Provision of Mental Health support and supports. Teaching of Wellbeing lessons as per Primary Curriculum i.e. SPHE and PE	Promote Staff Mental Health and Wellbeing through regular check ins. Pupil check ins Wellbeing Week
Inadequate ventilation or lighting	Pupils Staff	Ensure windows and doors are opened regularly. Suitable lighting provided. Blown bulbs are replaced	Use of ventilation and lighting encouraged. Replace/repair broken windows, latches, bulbs.
Movement of furniture - chairs, tables and other items	Staff Pupils	Ensure knees are bent and lift from the legs. Pupils only moving tables and chairs as appropriate. Sufficient and appropriate adults to move larger pieces of furniture.	Manual handling course provided by BOM for Staff Adult supervision of all moving of furniture

Falls on or off stage in Halla/Classroom	Pupils/Staff	No unsupervised access to the stage. Pupils instructed to use steps for going up and down from the stage	Surface of stage inspected regularly for damage. Supervision always provided while pupils are on the stage. Repeated reminders to pupils of behaviour/rules while on stage.
Overheating/Feeling faint	Pupils/Staff when we gather together in Halla	Windows always open when Assembly taking place.	Staff open windows and close before departure.
Incorrect administration of medicines Loss of critical medical supplies	Pupils with allergies	Secure storage in locked cabinets. Only trained staff administer medication Indemnity Forms and Action Plans in place.	Epi-pens replaced by parents yearly Indemnity forms signed and stored in Office Training received by Staff in administration of epi-pens
Bathrooms			
Slips and falls from wet flooring	All pupils and staff when using the toilet facilities	Floors to be kept dry through use of hand dryers and windows open on wet days to prevent condensation. Taps stop automatically.	Mats are placed inside all entry points to ensure feet are wiped. Windows are opened to avoid condensation. Wet floor signs is used.
Scalds from hot water	Pupils, Staff and visitors	Water heater turned off when not in use. Water temperatures maintained at comfortable but safe temperatures	Regular servicing of appliances.
Hygiene and Infection Control	Students, Staff and visitors to the School, especially during illness outbreak	Ensure soap, hot water, paper towels, hand driers and sanitisers are always available	Monitor hygiene supplies and order in time to prevent running out.
Injury, "high jinx", bullying or vandalism in the bathrooms	Students during breaks or at unsupervised times e.g. bathroom breaks during class	Scheduled monitoring and supervision of the bathrooms during indoor rainy day breaks. Preventative lessons on anti-bullying Only one child from each class using toilet at a time	Supervision during breaks Monitoring the number of pupils in the bathroom from classes Only one pupil allowed in from Yard during breaks to use toilets - permission needed from Teacher on Yard Duty
Locked or Jammed Doors Catching of fingers in doors	Pupils using the bathrooms	Maintenance of doors and locks. Slow release doors on junior bathroom doors	Repair of any stuck/jammed/loose locks on doors. Add slow release doors to Senior Bathrooms
Improper waste disposal	Students and Staff	Ensure daily waste disposal in appropriate manner by cleaning staff Hygiene Company dispose of sanitary waste on a regular basis	Maintain contract with Hgyiene Company
Corridors			
Slips, trips and falls	All pupils and staff when using the toilet facilities	Floors to be kept dry through use of hand dryers and windows open on wet days	Mats are placed inside all entry points to ensure feet are wiped. Windows are opened to avoid

		to prevent condensation. All coats kept hanging on hooks.	condensation. Wet floor signs is used. Staff pick up coats when passing. Encourage pupils to hang items up properly. No running allowed in the corridor.
Crowding and congestion	Staff Pupils	Clear pathways ensured by removing all unnecessary items from corridor. Adult supervision during times of transition e.g. Going out to break	Monitor times of congestion. Pupils walk on right hand side of the corridor always
Fire Safety Hazard	Staff Pupils Visitors	Ensure fire safety equipment is visible, clearly labelled and checked annually. Signage visible and in working order	Fire equipment checked annually by APEX Signage and escape lighting to be installed asap
Poor lighting	Pupils Staff	Ensure proper lighting and maintenance Replace blown bulbs Turn lights on, on dark days	Install additional lighting in long corridors
Slips and trips on steps between levels e.g. from Halla to main building, steps to Yards	Pupils Staff Visitors	Hand rails installed and maintained-checked regularly for damage Pupils/Staff encouraged to use handrails Maintain the surface of the steps	Regular inspection and repair of railings and of flooring Anti-slip paint on outdoor steps
Yards/Grounds			
Slips, trips and falls	Pupils and Staff	Supervision of pupils at all times when in yard. Caretaker maintains surface in a safe condition.	Adults on yard remind pupils of School Rules surrounding safe play. Adults maintain vigilance regarding the playing surface. Weeds and cracks in surface are fixed/removed when reported.
Appropriate behaviour	Pupils and Staff	All adults on supervision duty are aware of content of supervision policy. All adults rostered for Supervision in Yards are physically able to do so and cleared for work	Adults who are physically fit for work as cleared by doctor or medmark are available for supervision.
Injury from football	Pupils and Staff	Designated areas for football for different age groups. Rules of the game reinforced. Soft Derby Balls purchased by the School to avoid injury by hard balls.	Maintain vigilance of behaviour and play. Restock of balls as needed.
Exposed basketball pole	Pupils who play games in the yard can collide with the pole	Ensure pole is adequately padded & that the padding is of a sufficient height to protect all pupils	Purchase of padding & regular review to ensure it remains at a sufficient height
Exposed Shelter Poles	Pupils who play games in the yard can collide with the	Ensure pole is adequately padded & that the padding is of a sufficient height to	Purchase of padding & regular review to ensure it remains at a sufficient height

	pole	protect all pupils	
Inappropriate behaviour, rough housing in Yard e.g. during breaks	Pupils	Promotion of safe, appropriate behaviour and play Adequate supervision at all times on Yard	Regular reminding of rules and acceptable behaviour Implementation of the Code of Behaviour Supervision Rota devised and implemented to cover all areas of play
Injury from broken green fencing/low hanging branches in Basketball Court	Pupils	Green Wire Fencing to be maintained Pupils encouraged to refrain from tugging at it	Adequate supervision always Reminder of rules to Senior Pupils Broken fencing to be repaired or replaced.
Falls, trips, injuries using Playground equipment	Pupils	Pupils are supervised at all times by an adult when using playground equipment. Rules of the playground are reinforced constantly. Playground equipment is monitored for wear and tear as well as for damage.	Equipment is serviced and repaired/replaced regularly. Supervision always provided when playground is in use.
Slip Hazard -Manholes covers on yards after rain/ice/snow	All children, staff, visitors	Avoid walking/running directly on them	Non-slip sealant to be applied. Coned off area around manholes in rain/icy/snow.
Accidents in school car park	Pupils Staff Parents Visitors	Pupils supervised at all times when in care park. Speed limit of 15 km/hr in carpark Pupils only allowed to walk on path Pupils must cross at Zebra Crossing	Parents regularly reminded of speed limit Staff maintain visual on pupils at peak dismissal time Surface inspected regularly for damage Halogen lighting in carpark Carpark locked at night.
Enclosed Autism Play Area -Sensory overload or over-stimulation. Pupils wandering in/out	Pupils who access this area due to SEN	Area if fully fenced and secure. Supervised by two adults at least always. Sensory tools and calming strategies are in place.	Supervision always provided by SNAs who know the children.
School Pitch (Grass) - Slips on wet or uneven ground. - Injuries from ball games.	Pupils and Staff who access the pitch in fine weather	Pitch is inspected regularly for hazards/uneven ground/debris Pitch not accessed during inclement weather Supervision always provided	Caretaker inspects grounds each morning for debris/litter etc Supervision rota always in place
Staff Room			
Trailing leads from kettles etc	Anyone in the room is at risk of tripping	Leads should be-aligned with the nearest wall and cross open space for as little time as possible. Leads crossing the floor should be covered with tape or a mat	Covering yellow and black tape to be purchased by principal and distributed to each class teacher

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Scalds/burns from kettles/ toasted sandwich maker/Air Fryer	Staff and visitors	Equipment is well spaced out throughout the room. Equipment is turned off when not in use. Adults only use the equipment	Ensure sufficient sockets in room. Equipment checked regularly for damage. Replacement sourced if needed.
Slips, trips and falls	Staff and Visitors	Spillages are cleaned up immediately with mop located in cleaning press. Wet Floor Sign placed in appropriate place	Wet Floor Sign to be purchased
Cuts	Staff Visitors Pupils	Knives and scissors are kept in drawers out of view of pupils.	Knives only used by adults.
Electrocution/ Electrical Hazard	Any one using the electrical equipment in the classroom e.g.dishwasher	Electrical equipment is checked regularly by users. Adults only in charge of electrical equipment. Electrical equipment switched off and plugged out each evening.	Any equipment which is damaged or not working is repaired or replaced.
Stress and Mental Health Strain	All Staff	Encourage a positive work environment and ensure breaks are taken. Provision of Mental Health support and supports	Promote Staff Mental Health and Well-being through regular check ins. Special Lunches Social Evenings/Nights
Offices			
Falls, strain, injury from retrieving items on shelving	Staff	Items used most often are placed on lowest shelving. Use of step ladder to assist in reaching higher items Floor kept clear of all items.	Use of ladder/step ladder to reach higher up. Step ladders located in; 1. Geraldine's Office 2. Disabled Toilet 3. Art Press
Trailing leads from printers etc.	Anyone in the room is at risk of tripping	Leads should be-aligned with the nearest wall and cross open space for as little time as possible. Leads crossing the floor should be covered with tape or a mat	Covering yellow and black tape to be purchased by principal and distributed to each class teacher
Injury due to ergonomically unsuitable chairs, tables etc	Secretary Principal	Ergonomically suitable equipment e.g. chairs, tables, computer assistives provided as per individual requirements	Regular review of equipment for wear and tear and breakage. Unsuitable or broken equipment repaired or replaced
Inadequate ventilation or lighting	Secretary Principal	Ensure windows and doors are opened regularly. Suitable lighting provided. Blown bulbs are replaced	Use of ventilation and lighting encouraged. Replace/repair broken windows, latches, bulbs.
Stress and Mental Health Strain	Secretary Principal Deputy Principal	Encourage a positive work environment and ensure breaks are taken. Provision of Mental	Promote Staff Mental Health and Well-being through regular check ins.

		Health support and supports	
Kitchenette			
Scalds/burns from kettles/electrocution cooker	Staff and visitors	Equipment is well spaced out throughout the room. Equipment is turned off when not in use. Adults only use the equipment	Ensure sufficient sockets in room. Equipment checked regularly for damage. Replacement sourced if needed.
Scalds from hot water	Pupils, Staff and visitors	Water heater turned off when not in use. Adult supervision always.	Regular servicing of appliances.
Cuts	Staff Visitors Pupils	Knives and scissors are kept in drawers out of view of pupils.	Knives only used by adults.
Food hygiene risks e.g. contamination	Pupils Staff Parents - if food is consumed at home	All food handlers wash hands before commencing Hygiene guidance and standards are followed always	Reminders and signage to be displayed
Fire Hazard	Pupils Staff	Cooker and rings only worked by adults in charge. Cooker switched off at wall when not in use	Inspect appliances in kitchen e.g. mixer, cooker, kettle etc, regularly Broken appliances are repaired or replaced immediately
Cross contamination/Anyphalxis e.g. Allergens	Pupils and Staff with allergies	Baking to be conducted under adult supervision Adult must have knowledge of allergens in group Products to be clearly labelled always Staff familiar with School Policy on epi-pens	Staff educated on allergens and trained in epi-pen use Anyphalxis Action Plans for all pupils with allergies in place Epi-pens supplied by parents of pupils with allergies. Stored in a locked medicine press in each class. Administration of Medicines Policy updated
Nurture Room/Sensory Room			
Trips and falls	Any one who enters the room is at risk of a fall over items on floor	Items kept on shelving provided. Chords and cables kept by wall or covered with cable tape if running across floors	Adult inspection of room prior to use. Items returned to the appropriate place. Electrical equipment checked regularly for faults. Replaced if necessary.
Rough Behaviour	Pupils	Pupils in Sensory/Nurture Room are supervised at all times	Supervision Policy in place Staff are familiar with this policy
Overcrowding	Pupils Staff	Timetable in place for use of Nurture/Sensory Room Only 3 people Maximum	Ensure timetable for the room is adhered to

		at any one time allowed in Sensory Room i.e. 1 adult and 2 children	
Sensory overload	Pupils Staff	Staff are aware of the sensitivities of the pupils they bring to the rooms. Lighting and Sounds can be adjusted accordingly	Implementation of Occupational Therapists always at the centre of Nurture Room visits.

First Aid and Medical Needs

- First Aid kits are located in the Kitchenette and inside the Middle White Door.
- Trained staff handle the administration of medication, including the use of epi-pens, with protocols in place for emergency procedures (c.f. Administration of Medicines Policy)

Essential Emergency Phone numbers

- Emergency -999/112
- Riverwest GP Glin 068/26000, Foynes 069/65196
- Tarbert Medical Services 068/36433
- Athea Medical Centre-Westbury House 068/42271
- Parental Numbers found on Aladdin Connect

School Secretary is responsible for restocking First Aid supplies when Staff inform her of stock running low. SNA Trish O'Connor to keep an eye on stock levels and report to Geraldine in the Office.

Staff trained in First Aid

- Trained first aiders: Sinéad Mulroe, CarolAnn Healy, Jean Costello, Stephanie Downes, Megan Farrell Deirdre Kennelly
- Trained in use of a defibrillator: Sinéad Mulroe, Jean Costello, Stephanie Downes and Geraldine Flavin

Fire Safety Procedures

- Fire drills are conducted each term.
 - Fire exits are clearly marked and checked for accessibility.
 - Fire alarms and extinguishers are maintained, and staff are trained in emergency evacuation procedures.
- (c.f. Fire Safety Procedures Policy)

Supervision and Safeguarding

- All yard areas are supervised by 2 teachers and 7 SNAs during breaks to ensure the safety of pupils.
- Pupils with Autism are supervised within a secure, enclosed play area.
- Supervision is provided indoors on wet days
- Supervision is also provided when pupils transition between classrooms, playgrounds, and other areas that require navigating steps.

Off-Site Activities

- Risk assessments are conducted for all school trips, with a focus on transportation safety, venue suitability, and emergency procedures.
- Staff-to-pupil ratios (1:15) are maintained according to best practice guidelines, and extra support staff are provided for pupils with special needs.

Accident Reporting and Investigating

Accident Reporting Procedures:

-Accidents are reported using the Incident Report Form for St. Fergus' NS. These can be found on a shelf in the Staff Room. These forms are to be completed within 24 hours and filed in DP Filing Cabinet.

Arrangements for Accident Investigation

-Investigation of incidents is conducted by the leadership team initially within 48 hours. If deemed necessary, Board of Management will investigate.

In cases of serious accidents the HSA may be contacted.

Policies and Procedures

The following policies and plans are useful and helpful to staff and should be read in conjunction with this Health and Safety Statement (this list is not exhaustive);

- Accident reporting form
- Critical Incident Policy
- Dignity at Work Policy
- Child Safety Statement and Risk Assessment
- School Tour Policy
- Administration of Medicines Policy
- Code of Behaviour-Anti Bullying/Anti Cyber Bullying Policy (Bí Cineálta)
- Bus Escort Policy

Visitor and Contractor Management

- All visitors must sign in at the office and adhere to school policies while on-site.
- Contractors are required to provide proof of insurance and follow health and safety guidelines while working on school premises.

Monitoring and Review

This Health and Safety Policy is reviewed bi-annually or in response to significant changes within the school. Any incidents, risks, or hazards reported by staff or identified through inspections are addressed immediately to maintain a safe learning environment.

Ratified at a Board of Management Meeting on 21st January 2025.

Signed: *Canon Tim Curtin*
CHAIRPERSON

Date: 21/01/2025

