



Scoil Náisiúnta Baile Chaisleáin an Róistigh

Health and Safety Policy

Reviewed in May 2023 by staff members

Introductory Statement:

This policy statement was adapted to the current format in accordance with the guidelines of the Primary Professional Development Service. Our previous Safety Statement was reviewed and 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.

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

According to our Mission Statement Castletownroche N.S. strives to provide a well-ordered, caring, happy and safe environment for our pupils. In keeping with this philosophy 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, Castletownroche N.S. recognises the importance of the Legislation enacted in the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act, 2005. This Safety Statement outlines the Safety Policy of the Board of Management, Castletownroche N.S. 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 co-operation 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 practices in place to ensure safe systems of work
- 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, School-cleaner etc.*
 - *To ensure we have competent employees, who will carry out safe work practices*
 - *Safe access and exit 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, for general purpose use and for protection from Covid 19.*

Guidelines (content of policy)

POLICY STATEMENT ON SAFETY, HEALTH AND WELFARE AT WORK OF THE BOARD OF MANAGEMENT OF Castletownroche NS

1. 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.
2. Specifically, the Board of Management wishes to ensure so far as is reasonably practicable:
 - The design, provision and maintenance of all places in a condition that is safe and without risk to health.
 - The design, provision and maintenance of safe means of access to and egress from places of work
 - The provision of systems of work that are planned, organised, performed and maintained so as to be safe and without risk to health.
 - The provision of instruction to staff on proper lifting techniques of pupils and dealing with pupils with challenging behaviour when such children are enrolled.
 - The provision of such information, instruction, training and supervision as is necessary to ensure the safety and health at work of its employees.
 - The provision and maintenance of suitable protective clothing or equivalent as necessary to ensure the safety and health at works of its employees.
 - The preparation and revision as necessary of adequate plans to be followed in the case of emergencies. E.g. fire evacuation, injuries etc.
 - The safety and prevention of risk to health at work in connection with use of any article or substance.
 - The provision and maintenance of facilities and arrangements for the welfare of employees at work.
 - Obtaining where necessary, the services of competent persons for the purpose of advising on the safety and health at work of the employees e.g. Advisors from the HSE, Fire Officers, ICT Advisors re-equipment, ergonomics etc.
 - An annual review of this *Health & Safety Statement* and a log of issues raised and remediated.

- The provision of arrangements for consultation with employees on matters of Health and Safety
 - The provision of arrangements for the selection from amongst its employees of a Health and Safety Representative. (Marcia Howard D.P.)
3. 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.
 4. The Board of Management of Castletownroche N.S. will ensure that the provisions of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act, 2005 are adhered to.
 5. The Board of Management will form the Safety Committee to monitor the implementation of the Safety and Health policies of Castletownroche N.S. and the requirement under the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act, 2005.
 6. The Board of Management will appoint a Safety Representative from the School Staff, normally the School Caretaker and a Safety Officer from the BOM.

CONSULTATION & INFORMATION

It is the policy of the Board of Management of Castletownroche N.S.:

- 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

All staff will complete Hazard Control Forms (Appendix 3) as hazards are identified. Some hazards can be rectified but others remain constant. The hazards have been divided into two categories.

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. When a Staff Member notices a hazard, he/she will use the form to notify the Safety Representative, who will rectify the issue and sign with date and time of when the issue was resolved. Those hazards that cannot be rectified will be clearly indicated and appropriate procedures listed beside them.

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 Castletownroche N.S. 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 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 outside school hours and when classrooms are vacated for lengthy periods.
- * An assembly area is designated (Grass Area at the front of School)
- * Those leaving buildings/classrooms should let someone know.
- * Exit signs are clearly marked.
- * The teacher in each classroom will be responsible for fire evacuation and fire drills procedures.
- * A fire officer has checked 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 Fire Marshall and oversee in conjunction with the Safety Officer and Representative the above aspects of the policy.

2. Other hazards identified in Castletownroche N.S:

- * The surface of some of the playing areas is uneven, rocky and potentially hazardous.
- * Some classroom windows open out at head level.
- * On occasions the tiled surface of classrooms, hallways, stairs 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.

Constant Hazards

1. Electrical Appliances

It is the policy of the Board of Management of Castletownroche N.S. that only competent persons 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 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

It is the policy of the Board of Management of Castletownroche N.S. that no drugs or medication be administered to pupils by members of school staff due to the fact that staff are not qualified to do so and therefore could pose a threat to the welfare of the pupils. In exceptional circumstances where emergency medication is required to safeguard a seriously ill child's welfare, a teacher or SNA may be requested to administer such medication. The procedure in such cases is included as Appendix 2.

4. Wet Floors

It is the policy of the Board of Management of Castletownroche N.S. 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 being in place in the event of accidents can prevent or minimise injuries. Our accident/illness procedure is included as Appendix 5.

7. Bullying

The Castletownroche N.S. 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)**' and our '**Dignity at Work Statement**' included as Appendix 6.

8. The Board of Management and staff of Castletownroche N.S. recognise that parents may sometimes need to speak with employees in relation to their children. This can be done by arranging a suitable time to speak/meet with the employee. This will be conducted on the assumption that all parties will be non-threatening and respectful. If however 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.

9. Covid 19: The Board of Management of Castletownroche N.S. formulated and ratified a School Response Plan allowing for the successful reopening of the school in September of 2020. This is a stand-alone policy, which supported the reopening of the school and has allowed for the maintenance of same to date.

Other Procedures

1. Educational Visits

Educational visits will be booked with a reputable, properly insured coach service with fully seat-belted coaches. We will aim for a ratio of ten pupils per adult (teacher or parent) but not more than fifteen. 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, and 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 the classrooms on the main corridor, where they read, draw, play board games, watch a movie 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 Aladdin Connect, local media, school website etc. Transport home is arranged and where there is nobody at home pupils can stay with neighbouring parents with their own parents' consent. In the event that parents cannot be contacted, an alternative contact provided by the parents and recorded on Aladdin Connect will be asked to collect and supervise the child until such time as the child's/children's parents are informed.

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.

Roles and Responsibility

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 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 practices are performed in the safest manner possible.

DUTIES OF SAFETY REPRESENTATIVE

- Conduct an assessment to identify all hazards on the appropriate form (Appendix 3). A Sample Checklist is included as Appendix 4.
- Assess the risks associated with these hazards.
- Detail arrangements made, resources supplied, and responsibility required to deal with the hazards and to keep them under review.

DUTIES OF SAFETY OFFICER

- To liaise with the Safety Rep on matters of Health and Safety.

- To make recommendations for the alleviation of potential hazards.
- To monitor progress in relation to dealing with hazards.
- Report on all of the above at appropriate BOM meetings.

Timeframe for Implementation

The revised policy will be implemented from January 2021.

Timeframe for Review

This policy is reviewed annually.

Ratification of Policy:

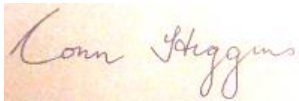
This policy was adopted by the Board of Management on 23/5/'23

Policy review:

In accordance with the systematic review of policies in Castletownroche N.S., this policy will be reviewed every year or immediately following any serious incidences or if a need arises.

Staff will be informed that the review has been completed. The updated policy will be readily accessible to all members of the school community; a policy folder will be available in all classrooms, it will be published on the school website & will also be provided to the Parent's Association. A record of the review and its outcome will be made available, if requested, to the patron and the Department.

Signed:



(Chairperson of Board of Management)

Signed:



(Principal)

Date: 23/5/'23

Date of next review: May 2024

APPENDIX 1

FIRE EVACUATION PROCEDURE

Sequence

- Alarm
- Call the fire brigade
- Evacuation
- Assembly
- Roll Call
- Tackle the fire

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 become familiar with the correct procedures to be followed 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 by pressing on the button on either of the red fire alarm boxes at any of the exits to the school.

Call the Fire Brigade

All outbreaks of fire however small, or any suspected fire will be reported immediately to the Fire Brigade by using the emergency phone number.

Evacuation

On hearing the alarm, pupils will stand to attention by their desks and, when instructed by the teacher in charge of the class as to the exit route to be followed, will leave the classroom in single file. Classes will then proceed at a steady uniform pace to the place of assembly followed by the teacher who will bring the list of pupils from beside their classroom door and close the classroom door and any other doors used to exit. The Principal and Deputy Principal will, if safe to do so, 'sweep' the main building to ensure no pupils remain in toilet or other areas.

Assembly

The place of assembly is the Grass Area in front of the Main Building and all classes will stand together in lines according to class. If this area becomes unsafe, supervised evacuation from the school grounds to the church grounds will take place.

Roll Call

Immediately, once the classes have gathered at the place of assembly, a roll call or count will be taken. 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 being 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 by the Principal or Safety Representative.

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 sizeable 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 by the Safety Officer.

APPENDIX 2

ADMINISTRATION OF MEDICATIONS

See policy.

APPENDIX 3

HAZARD CONTROL FORM			
Hazard	Action Taken	Date Remedied	Person Responsible

APPENDIX 4

SAFETY REPRESENTATIVES' CHECKLIST

CIRCULATION AREAS

Passages

Check that:

- floor surfaces are even and are not slippery;
- passages are adequately lit;
- litter or rubbish has not been allowed to accumulate; (staff have a duty to keep their classrooms clean)
- mats, rugs etc. are not positioned in such a way as to be tripping hazards;

Doors and Windows

Check that:

- doors are unobstructed;
- doors are not allowed to swing freely without restraint;
- windows open easily without undue force being applied;
- windows do not jut out dangerously when open;
- windows are cleaned regularly;
- windows do not have broken fastenings or cords;
- where necessary, a window pole is available.

HEATING AND VENTILATION

Check that:

- the heating system is regularly serviced and maintained in good order.
- where there are large areas of glass facing direct sunlight, there is provision for shading,
- windows can be easily opened to allow for adequate ventilation.

Further advice on heating and ventilation is given in the next section.

FIRE SAFETY

Check that:

- the fire exits and escape routes are clear from obstructions;
- all designated fire exits are clearly marked;
- evacuation procedures are clearly displayed;
- staff and children are familiar with evacuation procedures;
- there have been practice evacuations/fire drills held at least once per term;
- fire doors open outwards
- fire extinguishers and fire blankets are checked and maintained in accordance with manufacturer's instructions;
- the fire fighting equipment available is that recommended by the local authority's fire officer and is located in accordance with the fire officers recommendations;
- 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;
- 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.

ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT

General

All electrical equipment should be installed, maintained and checked regularly by a competent person.

Maintenance should include checking that:

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

Lighting

Visually check that:

- all the light fittings are working and are kept in a clean condition;
- light switches are not broken and appear to be in a safe condition;
- the lighting is adequate for the type of work being undertaken

Plugs/Sockets/Leads

Visually check that:

- plugs are in good condition with no cracks or pieces missing;
- sockets are in good condition with no cracks or pieces missing;
- socket screws and mountings are secure;
- sockets are situated in safe positions, convenient for the equipment to be used and not subject to damp;
- indicator lights on sockets function correctly;
- insulation on leads is not cracked or frayed;
- leads are without knots or joins and are reasonably free of 'kinks';
- Leads are the correct length for the equipment being used;
- surge protection adaptors are being used and not overloaded;
- leads and flexible cables are securely fixed at both equipment and plug ends.

Equipment

Check that:

- fixed and portable electrical equipment is not damaged and, as far as you are aware, is operating correctly;
- copies of manufacturers' instructions/operating manuals are easily accessible;
- equipment is only being used for purposes for which it was intended;
- where appropriate, all electrical equipment is switched off and, unplugged when not in use;
- mains isolating switches are easily accessible and known to staff;
- on/off indicator lights function correctly;

USE OF GAS

There are currently no gas installations in the school.

FIRST AID

All staff have been trained and are certified in General Emergency First Aid. A First Aid Kit is located in the staff room and is clearly labelled and visible to all.

Check that:

- notices are posted in prominent positions detailing:
 - procedure for calling ambulances etc.;
 - telephone number of local doctor

- procedure for dealing with individual pupils emergencies due to known conditions/allergies etc.
 - the incident book is readily available and kept up-to-date.

GENERAL PURPOSE CLASSROOMS

- hazards are not arising from overcrowded classrooms;
- all cupboards, fixed whiteboards, interactive boards, noticeboards, display units are stable;
- classroom furniture is not damaged;
- wherever possible, there are no sharp edges or corners on the furniture;
- furniture is positioned safely;
- all shelf mountings are secure.

NON-TEACHING AREAS

Office

- 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

- the kitchen/dining area is kept clean;
- the kitchen floors are sound and non-slip, especially when wet;
- first aid boxes are available in the kitchen area;

Boiler Rooms

- there is no combustible waste stored in boiler rooms or elsewhere (e.g. oily rags);
- all safety devices in the boiler room are in proper working order;
- the boiler is regularly maintained by a competent person;
- all cleaning materials, particularly those which might be hazardous, are securely stored;

Staff Facilities

- the staffroom is clean, warm and well lit;
- there are adequate cloakroom facilities and storage facilities for personal belongings, books etc.;
- 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 seating;
- there is provision for tea and coffee to be made;
- staff sanitary facilities are suitable, sufficient and properly cleaned.

Hygiene

Check that the following are available:

- soap
- hand drying facilities
- hot water
- toilet paper
- litter bin
- provision for disposal of sanitary towels
- safe, suitable, sufficient and properly cleaned sanitary facilities.

Outside Areas

- outside steps are secure;
- roofs, guttering, drain pipes etc. are, as far as can be seen, sound and well maintained;

- all play areas are kept clean;
- outside play/PE appliances are securely anchored;
- holes for goalposts, netball posts, tennis posts are covered when posts are not in position;
- outside lighting works and is sufficient;
- all parking facilities for cars and cycles are safe in regard to the presence of pedestrians;
- all builders' materials, caretakers' maintenance equipment etc. are kept securely.

APPENDIX 5

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:

- The teacher will ascertain the seriousness of injury or illness.
- 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).
- In a case where serious injury or illness is suspected, the teacher will take a decision 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.
- If the injured/ill person is a pupil, the parents or guardians will be contacted immediately in all instances.
 - If it is felt the pupil needs to be brought to casualty, 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 casualty or the calling of an ambulance. Written parental consent for such action will be a prerequisite for enrolling a child in the school.
 - In such circumstances, repeated attempts will be made to contact parents.
 - Where a pupil is carried in a member of staff's vehicle, it is policy to have two adults in the car
- 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.
- A written report will be kept of all serious accidents.

APPENDIX 6

Dignity at Work Statement

The Board of Management of Castletownroche N.S. has adopted this policy in May 2023, following consultation with all staff members.

The policy is formulated in light of the Labour Relations Commission's Codes of Practice S.I. No.17/2002 and S.I. 208/2012 for addressing bullying in the workplace and harassment/sexual harassment respectively, together with the Health & Safety Authority Code of Practice (2007) on the prevention and resolution of bullying at work.

A. Core Principles of Policy

This school is committed to a positive work environment where work is done in an atmosphere of respect, collaboration, openness and equality.

Adult bullying and harassment will not be tolerated by this school. All employees have the right to be treated with dignity and respect. Management is committed to intervening in an appropriate manner - utilising one of the accepted Management/INTO procedures - to investigate and deal with allegations of bullying or harassment. The provisions of DES Circulars 61/2017 and 62/2017 with respect to the assault of teachers and SNA will be apply, as appropriate.

B. What is Workplace Bullying and Harassment?

The Board of Management defines adult bullying as repeated inappropriate behaviour, direct or indirect, whether verbal, physical or otherwise, conducted by one or more persons against another or others, at the place of work and/or in the course of employment, which could reasonably be regarded as undermining the individual's right to dignity at work.

An isolated incident of the behaviour described in this definition may be an affront to dignity at work but, as a once off incident, is not considered to be bullying.

A key characteristic of bullying is that it usually takes place over a period of time, it is regular and persistent inappropriate behaviour, which is specifically targeted at one employee or a group of employees.

The following is a non-exhaustive list of examples of types of behaviour that may constitute bullying:

- Verbal abuse/insults, undermining remarks
- Exclusion with negative consequences
- Intimidation
- Aggression
- Humiliation, ridicule, belittling efforts
- Excessive monitoring of work
- Withholding work-related information

Harassment is any form of unwanted conduct related to any of the following grounds:

- i. Gender
- ii. Civil status
- iii. Family status

- iv. Sexual orientation
- v. Religious belief
- vi. Age
- vii. Disability
- viii. Race, colour, nationality or ethnic or national origin
- ix. Membership of the Traveller community

which has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity and creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for the person. Unlike bullying, a single incident may constitute harassment.

Sexual harassment is any form of unwanted verbal, non-verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature, which has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity and/or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for the person.

It is recognised that bullying and harassment complaints may arise among work colleagues but may also arise in relation to visitors to the school. In either case, the commitment to a positive workplace, where dignity at work is respected, prevails.

C. A Positive Work Environment

It is agreed that we will all work to make this school a good place to work. A good place to work has a positive work environment characterised by:

- ✓ A supportive atmosphere
- ✓ Good and open communication (e.g. through opportunities at regular staff meetings)
- ✓ Appropriate interpersonal behaviour
- ✓ Collaboration
- ✓ Open discussion and resolution of conflict
- ✓ Recognition, feedback and affirmation as appropriate
- ✓ Fair treatment of all staff (including fair systems of selection and promotion in line with agreed procedures)

Every person has a responsibility to play his/her part in contributing to a positive work environment. In this regard, a person who is a witness or bystander has a clear responsibility to raise concerns about dignity at work and threats to this, in an appropriate and timely manner.

The Safety Statement - as mandated under the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005 - will also include a commitment to a positive work environment, in light of the employer's obligations as outlined at Section 8 of that Act, including the duty to manage work activities in such a way as to prevent "improper conduct or behaviour" likely to put health and safety at risk.

It is agreed that the adoption of this policy in our school will be accompanied by a number of steps to examine our work environment and, as necessary, to agree changes which reflect a commitment to dignity at work. These steps will be initiated by Management, and be repeated by way of review at appropriate intervals.

The actions to be undertaken may generally be described as Identification, Assessment, Implementing Strategies and Monitoring.

D. What Happens if there is an Allegation of Bullying or Harassment?

Without prejudice to an individual's right to take such advice or steps as he/she may decide, the Board of Management will take seriously any allegation of workplace bullying or harassment.

Supportive and effective procedures, in accordance with nationally-agreed procedures, Working Together (INTO), are in the place in this school. These procedures to address and investigate allegations will focus on the earliest possible resolution, will proceed as necessary from informal to formal stages and will have a stress on confidentiality.

The Employee Assistance and Wellbeing Programme (formally called Carecall), a free and confidential counselling service, is available for teachers, SNAs and other staff. The Freephone number is 1800 411 057 and is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

E. Summary

Management has a duty of care towards employees. Similarly, employees have a duty of care towards one another. This policy seeks to set out principles, practices and procedures to support the exercise of that duty in our school.

Together we are committed to building and maintaining a work environment where respectful, open and equal relationships are the norm.

In summary, we are committed to having a good and safe place to work, where every individual's dignity is respected.