
Health and Safety Statement

SCOIL MHUIRE, CLONDRA, CO LONGFORD



INTRODUCTION

The Board of Management of Clondra recognises the importance of the Legislation enacted in the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act, 2005.

This Safety Statement sets out the Safety Policy of the Board of Management in Clondra National School and sets out the means to achieve that policy. The Chairperson's and Board'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 in 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 Chairperson 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 Chairperson.

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.

This policy is reviewed annually.

Signed: _____

Mrs Mary Duignan,

Chairperson, Board of Management, Scoil Mhuire, Clondra

Date: _____

POLICY STATEMENT ON SAFETY, HEALTH AND WELFARE AT WORK OF THE BOARD OF MANAGEMENT (SCOIL MUIRE, CLONDRA)

1.1 The members of the Board of Management of Scoil Mhuire, Clondra, Co. Longford with responsibility in this area are:

Mrs Mary Duignan (Chairperson, Board of Management)

Melissa Hussey (Principal and school administrator) Health & Safety Officer

Paula Mac Eoin (Deputy Principal) – Health & Safety Representative

Fiona Reilly (Teacher) – Fire Officer.

If one of the above teachers are absent the next most senior teacher, or teacher who is covering the absent teacher's leave, will take on the role.

1.2 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.

1.3 Specifically, the Board of Management wishes to ensure so far as is reasonably practicable that:

- (a) the design, provision and maintenance of all places in the school and grounds in a condition that is safe and without risk to health.
- (b) The design, provision and maintenance of safe means of access to and egress from school buildings and grounds.
- (c) the design, provision and maintenance of school equipment.
- (d) the provision of systems of work that are planned, organised, performed and maintained so as to be safe and without risk to health.
- (e) the provision of instruction to staff on proper lifting techniques of pupils and dealing with pupil challenging behaviour.
- (f) the provision of such information, instruction, training and supervision as is necessary to ensure safety and health at work of its employees.
- (g) the provision and maintenance of suitable protective clothing or equivalent as necessary to ensure the safety and health at work of its employees.
- (h) the preparation and revision as necessary of adequate plans to be followed in emergencies e.g. fire drill, injuries etc.
- (i) the safety and prevention of risk to health at work in connection with use of any article or substance.
- (j) the provision and maintenance of facilities and arrangements for the welfare of employees at work.
- (k) obtaining where necessary, the services of a competent person for the purpose of ensuring the safety and health at work of its employees.
- (l) the continued updating of the Health & Safety Statement.

- (m) the provision of arrangements for consultation with employees on matters of Health and Safety.
 - (n) the provision of arrangements for the selection from amongst its employees of a safety representative.
- 1.4 The Board of Management recognises that its statutory obligations under legislation extends to employees, students, any person legitimately conducting school business and the public.
- 1.5 The Board of Management of Scoil Mhuire, Clondra will ensure that the provisions of the Safety Health and Welfare at Work Act, 2005 are adhered to.

DUTIES OF EMPLOYERS

Employers, to ensure the safety, health and welfare of their employees, must:

- Manage and conduct work activities;
- Prevent improper conduct and behaviour in the workplace;
- Design, provide and maintain a safe place of work that has safe access and egress and that uses plant and equipment that is safe and without risk to health;
- Prevent risks to employees from the use of any articles or substances, and from noise, vibration, radiation or any other physical agent;
- Plan, organise, maintain and revise systems of work;
- Provide and maintain adequate welfare facilities;
- Inform, instruct, train and supervise their employees;
- Provide and maintain suitable protective clothing and equipment;
- Prepare and revise emergency plans and measure to be taken when there is an emergency or a risk of serious or imminent danger;
- Report to the Health and Safety Authority any notifiable accidents and disease, and dangerous occurrences;
- Obtain, where necessary, the services of a competent person for the purpose of ensuring the safety, health and welfare of their employees.

Employers must also conduct their undertaking so that individuals at their place of work who are not their employees are not exposed to risks to their safety, health and welfare.

CO-OPERATION WITH OTHER EMPLOYERS

Where employers share a place of work they must co-operate with each other to:

- Achieve compliance with safety and health legislation;
- Co-ordinate their actions and inform each other and their respective employees and safety representatives of any risks from their work activities.
- Exchange safety statements or relevant sections of safety statements.

PENALISATION OF EMPLOYEES

Employees may complain to a Rights Commissioner that their employer has penalised them for exercising their rights under health and safety legislation. The Rights Commissioner may:

- ❑ Declare that the complaint was or was not well founded;
- ❑ Require the employer to take a specific course of action, or
- ❑ Require the employer to pay compensation to the employee.

DUTIES OF EMPLOYEES

1 It is the duty of every employee while at work:

- ❑ Comply with health and safety legislation to protect his or her safety, health and welfare and that of others who may be affected by their acts or omissions;
- ❑ Ensure that s/he is not under the influence of an intoxicant to the extent of endangering his or her own or any other person's safety and health.
- ❑ Submit to any appropriate, reasonable and proportionate tests for intoxicants in accordance with Regulations under the 2005 Act;
- ❑ Co-operate with the employer and any other person to enable them to comply with safety and health legislation;
- ❑ Not engage in any improper conduct or other behaviour, such as horseplay, that is likely to endanger his or her safety, health and welfare, or that of any other person.
- ❑ Attend any training and undergo assessment of the training required by his employer or that is required by safety and health legislation.
- ❑ Following training and instruction, make correct use of any article or substance provided for the protection of their safety and health, including any personal protective equipment.
- ❑ 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.
- ❑ To co-operate with his/her employer and any other person to such extent as will enable his/her employer or the other person to comply with any of the relevant statutory provisions.
- ❑ 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 or welfare while at work.
- ❑ 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 becomes aware.

Employees must also, where they are aware, report to the employer:

- ❑ Any defect in the place or system of work or with any article or substance used which might endanger the safety and health of employees or any other person;
- ❑ Any contravention of safety and health legislation, which may endanger the safety and health of employees or any other person.

Where health and safety legislation requires certain training in relation to any work activity then employees must not misrepresent themselves in regard to the level of training they have received when entering into a contract of employment.

Employees must not intentionally or recklessly interfere with, misuse or damage anything provided for securing the safety and health of persons at work or in connection with work activities, place the safety and health of any person at risk.

PROSECUTION AND PENALTIES

Most offences, including any breaches of Regulations under the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act, 2005, can be tried either in the District Court (where a maximum penalty is €3000 and/or up to six months imprisonment) or on indictment in the Circuit Court (maximum penalty is €3,000,000 and/or imprisonment for a term not exceeding two years).

Offences under the Act, which are considered minor in nature can only be prosecuted in the District Court. These offences include the failure to consider representations from employees on health and safety matters, the failure to consult with employees or to allow safety representatives discharge their functions, and the non-display of enforcement notices at the place of work.

The Health and Safety Authority may compile and publish a list of the names and addresses and the description of the business or activities of every person who has been fined or gain any other penalty by a court in relation to health and safety legislation; on whom a Prohibition Notice has been served; against whom a High Court Order was made.

Fines

The offences for which fines may be issued will be specified in Regulations made under Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act, 2005. The level of fines will also be fixed in Regulations and can be set up to a maximum of €1000. Payments, which will not be refunded must be made directly to the Health and Safety Authority.

RIGHTS OF EMPLOYEES

Employees may select and appoint a safety representative from amongst their number to represent them in consultation with their employer on safety and health matters.

Employees must receive information from the employer on:

- ❑ Hazards and risks at the workplace;
- ❑ Protective and preventative measures to be taken;
- ❑ The names of persons with responsibilities in the emergency plan; and
- ❑ The name of the safety representative.

Employees are entitled to receive safety and health training, which must take place during work time and without loss of remuneration:

- ❑ When first recruited;
- ❑ On transfer and change of task;
- ❑ When new technology, work equipment or systems of work are introduced;

If required by safety and legislation.

Every employee must be consulted with regard to the Safety Statement and the hazard identification and written risk assessment, and on any notifiable accidents, ill health, disease and dangerous occurrences at that place of work.

Every employee must be consulted in advance and in good time regarding:

- ❑ Any measures to be taken which would substantially affect his or her safety, health and welfare'
- ❑ Persons who will be designated duties under the emergency plan;
- ❑ Activities arising from or related to protection from and prevention of risks;
- ❑ The appointment by the employer of a competent person for the purpose of ensuring safety and health;
- ❑ The planning and organisation of any training;
- ❑ The introduction of new technologies and the choice of work equipment, particularly if they impact upon working conditions or the working environment.

PROHIBITION ON PENALISATION OF EMPLOYEES

An employee must not be penalised or threatened with penalisation for:

- 1 Being a safety representative;
- 2 Acting in compliance with, or performing any duty or exercising any right under safety and health legislation;
- 3 Making a complaint or representation to the employer, the Health and Safety Authority or their safety representative;
- 4 Giving evidence in proceedings in respect of the enforcement of the relevant safety and health legislation; or
- 5 Leaving and or refusing to return to work or taking steps to protect himself or others in situations of serious and imminent danger.

Penalisation of an employee is any action that affects, to his or her detriment, and employee with respect to any term or condition of his or her employment and includes suspension, lay-off or dismissal, or the threat of suspension, lay-off or dismissal, demotion or loss of opportunity for promotion, transfer of duties, change of location of place of work, reduction in wages or change in working hours, the imposition of any discipline, reprimand or other penalty (including financial penalty), and coercion or intimidation.

Penalisation of an employee involving suspension, lay-off or the dismissal of an employee in such a case may be dealt with under the Unfair Dismissals Acts, 1977 to 2001.

SAFETY REPRESENTATIVES

Safety representatives now have protection from penalisation under the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act, 2005. They are protected from suspension, lay off or dismissal or the threat of such action, demotion, transfer or change of duty, place of work, wages or working hours, imposition of any disciplinary action or penalty.

Powers of Safety Representatives

One or more safety representatives may be appointed at a place of work and each safety representative may:

- ❑ Inspect the whole or any part of any place of work at a frequency to be agreed with the employer;
- ❑ Investigate complaints, accidents and dangerous occurrences;

- ❑ Accompany an Inspector on any inspection, including, at the discretion of the Inspector, an accident investigation;
- ❑ At the request of the employee and at the discretion of the Inspector, attend an interview by an Inspector in regard to any accident or dangerous occurrence;
- ❑ Make representations to the employer;
- ❑ Make oral or written representations to an Inspector;
- ❑ Receive advice and information from an Inspector; and
- ❑ Consult and liaise with other safety representatives at the place of work or a different place of work under the control of the same employer.

Employers' Legal Duties to Safety Representative

Safety representatives names must be included in the safety statement and they must have access to any risk assessment, information relating to reportable accidents and dangerous occurrences, and any information arising from protective or preventative measures required by safety and health legislation.

Employers must agree with safety representatives on the frequency of inspections of the place of work and allow them reasonable time off from work with pay to both acquire necessary knowledge and training and to discharge their functions.

The employer is required to consider any representations relating to health, safety and welfare at work made by the safety representative and to take any action that he or she consider appropriate.

The employer must inform the safety representative that an inspection is taking place when an Inspector attends at the place of work.

Employers must give the safety representative a copy of the written confirmation, required under the 2005 Act and sent to the Inspector, that an Improvement or Prohibition Notice has been complied with. Inspectors will now give a copy of any Notice issued to the safety representative as a matter of routine. Inspectors will also inform safety representatives in writing if a Notice has been withdrawn.

PERSONS IN CONTROL IN A PLACE OF WORK

The Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act, 2005 generally requires that a place of work, the means of access to or egress from it and any article or substance for use by persons at the place of work are safe and without risk to health. Normally this responsibility falls to the employer, but in a case where a person other than the employer of the workers concerned has control to any extent of these matters then this duty is passed to them.

A person who has control of a place of work includes anyone who has any obligation under a contract, tenancy, licence or otherwise to maintain or repair a place of work or the access and egress to it or from it or anyone who has an obligation in regard to any article or substance provided for use in that place of work.

INTOXICANTS

The Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act, 2005, defines 'intoxicant' as including alcohol and drugs and any combination of drugs or of drugs and alcohol. Employees must not be under the influence of an intoxicant to the extent that they are in such a state as to endanger their safety and health or that of any other person.

The Act gives scope for regulations to be made that can allow for employees to be required to undergo appropriate, reasonable and proportionate tests for intoxicants carried out by or under the supervision of a registered medical practitioner.

CONSULTATION & INFORMATION

It is the policy of the Board of Management of Scoil Mhuire, Clondra:

- ❑ to consult with staff in the preparation and completion of the Health and Safety Statement and of Hazard control.
- ❑ to give a copy of the **Safety Statement** to all present and future staff.
- ❑ that any additional information or instructions regarding Health, Safety 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 and the Board of Management are aware of the hazards. Some hazards can be rectified but others remain constant. The hazards are listed below.

Hazards that can be rectified or minimised will be dealt with as a matter of urgency. Those that cannot will be clearly indicated and appropriate procedures listed beside them.

1. Utility Press in hall area
2. Boiler House.
3. Sockets in individual classrooms.
4. Extension leads in individual classrooms (occasionally).
5. Oil Radiators and central heating radiators.
6. Interactive white boards
7. Laminator
8. Guillotine stored in main office
9. Photocopier.
10. Computers.
11. Kitchen appliances: microwave, kettles, toaster, oven, etc.
12. Washer/dryer
13. Marmoleum in hall area: when coming in from yard is occasionally slippery.
14. Water Heaters in under sinks in toilets and in the classrooms - these are thermostatically controlled.
15. First Aid Box in staff room.
16. Icy conditions in School Yard.
17. Solvents/Chemicals etc. kept in Cleaner's store.
18. Stairs. As 3rd and 4th classes and Learning Support room are upstairs. The children are trained and constantly reminded to hold the bannister going up and down the stairs. 'No pushing, no running' policy is also strictly enforced.
19. All upstairs classroom Velux windows have all been fitted with safety chains which prevent windows being opened fully.
20. Walls in GP room can present a hazard to children when running
21. Fire extinguishers

22. Doors- fitted with slow-closing hinges.
23. Children will not be allowed to bring personal sanitisers to school with them as they constitute a hazard.

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 Scoil Mhuire, Clondra that outside agencies (local fire station, fire officer) are utilized to enhance safety procedures. Fire officers talk to senior pupils each year on the importance of fire safety both at home and at school.

We will ensure that:

- There is an adequate supply of fire extinguishers which will deal with any type of fire. At present there are 10 CO2 extinguishers to deal with electrical fires and 10 Foam extinguishers to deal with all other types of fires.
- All fire equipment is identified and serviced regularly.
- Regular Fire drills take place at least once per term.
- Instruction is given in the use of Fire Extinguishers for specific materials/equipment.
- The fire bells are clearly marked,
- Signs will be clearly visible to ensure visitors are aware of exit doors,
- All electrical equipment should be unplugged or turned off outside school hours and when the school is vacated for lengthy periods,
- An assembly area is designated outside the school and marked with 'Fire Assembly Point' signs.
- Those leaving buildings/classrooms must be signed out.
- Exit doors are clearly marked. The main exit areas being the fire doors at the front on both sides of the building and also a fire door at side of building.
- Exit zones and alarm guidelines are on display in the hall.
- All doorways and exits are to be kept clear at all times.

Fire Procedures

1. The teacher in each classroom is responsible for fire drills and evacuation procedures.
2. If fire/smoke is noticed one of the fire bells will be rung, located each side of the fire door and at top of stairs.
3. When fire alarm is sounded, in all classroom/resource areas, children are to stand up, push their chairs under the tables and calmly walk in a single file to the door.
4. All teachers must check the class toilets before vacating the room.
5. All teachers have a class list which will be brought with them from the classroom and the secretary prints an absence list daily which is left at the fire point in the main office and will be taken from the school by the Fire Officer in the event of a fire.

6. Leave the classroom in an orderly manner as quickly as possible leaving all personal items behind. Classroom 1 uses the fire door to the left of front door. Classrooms 2, 3 and 4 use fire door to the right of the front door. Those in downstairs resource/learning support or general purpose rooms use the fire door at the side of the building. Those in Learning Support/Resource Room upstairs use the double fire doors to the right of the front door.
7. Leave the building in an orderly manner using the designated exit.
8. Meet at fire assembly point beside large gate. Each class line up at their designated arrows (which they are familiar with at break times).
9. Get into Class Groups. To make sure everyone is out the roll will be called.
10. A teacher or pupil from the senior room may be requested to go to nearest phone and call the Fire Brigade.
11. If a teacher decides that the fire can be tackled he/she will use the fire extinguishers available. Safety of employees and pupils is paramount and fire should only be dealt with if it is contained and within a small area.
12. Pupils can only return to the classroom once permission from teachers has been given to do so.

Exit Zones:

Classroom 1:

Fire door to the left of front door.

Classrooms 2, 3 and 4:

Double fire doors to the right of the front door.

Those in downstairs Special Education or general purpose rooms

Fire door at the side of the building.

Those in upstairs Special Education Room

Double fire doors to the right of the front door.

2. Equipment and Electrical Appliances

It is the policy of the Board of Management Scoil Mhuire, Clondra that:

Equipment and Electrical Appliances are used only by competent persons. Such appliances and equipment will be subject to regular maintenance checks.

3. Chemicals

It is the policy of the Board of Management Scoil Mhuire, Clondra that all chemicals, detergents etc., be stored in clearly identifiable containers bearing instructions and precautions for their use and kept in a secure area, and protection provided for use when handling them.

4. Drugs/Medications

It is the policy of the Board of Management Scoil Mhuire, Clondra not to have medications, drugs etc., kept in the school. In cases where a child has to take medication, we will follow our Administration of Medicines Policy.

5. First Aid Box

There will be an adequate supply of the following items in the First Aid Box available at all times to staff. It is located in the staffroom. A mobile first aid kit will be taken on the school tour.

- ❑ Hypoallergenic wipes,
- ❑ Hypoallergenic plasters and steristrips
- ❑ Tape,
- ❑ Cotton Bandage,
- ❑ Sterile water,
- ❑ Scissors/Tweezers
- ❑ First Aid Chart
- ❑ Disposable gloves which must be used at all times when administering First Aid.
- ❑ Slings/Eye bandages
- ❑ Ice pack

Warm water and soap is available and should be used before and after administering First Aid. Please see our First Aid Policy, below.

6. Health

Any contagious illness should be notified to the school immediately and pupils should return to school only when fully recovered. Parents should contact the school as soon as possible. All parents will be notified of the illness in question. Parents confidentiality assured. We have a specific protocol in place in the event of a suspected case of Covid-19.

7. Highly Polished or Wet Floors

It is the policy of the Board of Management Scoil Mhuire, Clondra that:-

Floors will not be polished or made slippery. That washing of floors is conducted after school hours to ensure, as far as is reasonably practicable, elimination of danger of slipping. Mats have been placed on floors inside the front and side doors to minimise risk of falling.

8. The Code of Behaviour

(a) The Code of Behaviour in the school provides for a level of behaviour to minimise personal risk or stress to any employee or pupil. **The Code of Behaviour is available to view by parents on our website.**

(b) Arrangements will be made to ensure the protection of staff from violent or disruptive situations.

9. Access to School

Entry is by means of the front door, which is fitted with a bell. 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. Visitors to the school must sign in, using the Visitors' Book.

10. Access to employees is by consent

When the employee feels at risk from or threatened by a particular person on school property, this must 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.

11. The School Yard

In icy or wet conditions children may not be allowed out onto the school yard at break times. Particular attention should be paid to the fact that the concrete area at the front of the school is extremely dangerous in icy conditions.

The Board of Management is also aware that in some instances the ball may go out on the road/canal during break time. Special wire mesh to a height of 4 metres has been erected around all of the playground to keep this to a minimum.

Recovery of ball or other items:

Occasionally a ball, hula hoop or other item exits the school boundary. In the event of this happening, a member of staff may accompany or supervise children to retrieve the item. If the item exits on the canal side of the boundary, it may not be retrieved if it is deemed too dangerous.

12. Sound Pollution

It is the policy of the Board of Management Scoil Mhuire, Clondra to minimise sound pollution - room to room, yard to room etc.

When people are working on the premises with drills or other loud implements they must wear protective ear muffs. Where such work is taking place which constitutes any threat to Health and Safety the school will be closed or the work will not take place during school hours.

13. Classroom Environment

It is the policy of the Board of Management of Scoil Mhuire, Clondra, to keep the number of students in a classroom to an amount that ensure the health and safety of teachers and pupils. At any point, the Board of Management can declare classes full or impose an overall cap on numbers. This ensures that children have a safe and comfortable amount of space to allow teaching and learning to take place.

Review of Safety Statement

The safety statement will be reviewed by the Board of Management annually.

Responsibility for Ensuring Safety

The ultimate responsibility for safety rests with the Board of Management. The staff will keep the Board of Management informed of any defects or faults that might endanger the health and safety of any person using the school premises.

RATIFICATION

This policy was ratified on _____

Signed: _____

Mrs Mary Duignan, Chairperson, Board of Management, Scoil Mhuire, Clondra.