



# Health and Safety Policy

**Article 19**

***You have the right to be protected from being hurt and mistreated, in body or mind.***

***Reviewed Oct 2022***

***Next Review 2023***

## **Health and Safety Policy**

### **St Therese of Lisieux Primary School**

This school's Board of Governors (BOG) recognise their statutory duty to ensure health and safety on premises under their control. They also acknowledge their responsibility to ensure that the Education Authority's (EA) health and safety policy is both understood and implemented in their school, that risk assessments are carried out to address significant risks, and that they operate within the procedures and guidelines set out in the employing authority's scheme of management. The BOG wish to provide and maintain a safe and healthy working environment for pupils, staff and visitors. They encourage a safety culture within the school and provide staff with up to date information and training as necessary. All pupils, staff, and visitors are expected to abide by the school's Health and Safety Policy to ensure a safe and healthy working environment for all.

In fulfilling these duties and responsibilities the board of governors will:

- ensure that the Principal, Vice-Principal and Senior Leadership Team develop a safety management system throughout the school;
- monitor the effectiveness of the school's health and safety arrangements;
- develop and implement arrangements to ensure that:
  - all school risk assessments are completed and are implemented;
  - equipment and materials purchased by the school are safe and suitable for their intended use;
  - contractors carry out their work in a safe manner;
  - prompt and efficient maintenance is carried out on:
    - all non-structural repairs;
    - all equipment;
- ensure that arrangements are developed for the annual inspection of the school premises and the preparation of a report for the Board of Governors; and
- ensure that both teaching and non-teaching staff are issued with a copy of the health and safety policy.

### **Objective**

The objective of this policy is to ensure, so far as is 'reasonably practicable' that no person is placed in a situation where injury or ill health may be caused as a result of the school and that all such risks are assessed and appropriately controlled.

### **Rationale**

The school recognises and accepts its responsibility for health and safety as an employer, and in particular the duties laid down in Article 4 (Employer's Duties) of the Health & Safety at Work (Northern Ireland) Order 1978, Article 5 and 6 of that Order in respect to persons other than its employees and Article 88 of the Education and Libraries (Northern Ireland) Order 1986.

So far as is reasonably practicable, we will provide and maintain up-to-date information for all staff on the hazards and risks of substances, equipment and systems used at work including the recommendations of relevant risk assessments. The school will rely on the EA and CCMS to provide competent technical advice on all health and safety matters and, where necessary, to assist in effecting improvements.

Members of staff are reminded of their duties under Article 8 of the Health and Safety at Work (Northern Ireland) Order, 1978: to take reasonable care for their own safety and that of others.

### **The Board of Governors**

Governors have a statutory responsibility under the Health & Safety at Work (Northern Ireland) Order, 1978 for ensuring that the Health & Safety Policy is understood and implemented and that assessments are carried out to address significant risks.

The Schedule to the Scheme for the Membership, Procedure and Functions of the Board of Governors and the Scheme for Local Management of Schools assign to Boards, duties and responsibilities in respect of Health & Safety, including the preparation of a policy on fire safety. In the discharge of their statutory responsibilities Governors must ensure:

- that all teaching staff recommended for appointment by them hold appropriate qualifications, both to teach the subjects required of them and to use the necessary equipment and machinery;
- that both teaching and non-teaching staff are kept up-to-date with whatever training is required for their safe working;
- the maintenance of procedures for the safety of both teaching and non-teaching staff under their control;
- the maintenance of procedures for the safety of all persons using the premises under their control;
- that an inspection of the school premises and equipment is carried out at least once a year;
- the prompt and efficient maintenance of all equipment and all non-structural repairs as defined in the relevant Annex to the Scheme for the Local Management of Schools;
- that contractors who are carrying out work on behalf of the Board of Governors carry out their undertakings in a safe manner so as to ensure the health and safety of all personnel on the premises;
- that all equipment and materials either purchased or acquired by them are suitable and safe for their intended use; and,
- that teaching and non-teaching staff are issued with a copy of the school's health, safety & welfare policy

### **The Principal**

The Principal has overall responsibility for the health, safety and welfare of all children and staff and for ensuring that members of the general public who may be affected by any activity undertaken by or on behalf of the school are not exposed to reasonably foreseeable risks to their health and safety.

The Principal is responsible for the day-to-day application of the Health and Safety Policy. In discharging this responsibility, the Principal will:

- ensure that all teaching staff hold appropriate qualifications both to teach the subjects required of them and to use the necessary equipment and machinery;

- that both teaching and non-teaching staff are kept up-to-date with whatever training is required for their safe working;
- ensure the provision and maintenance of procedures for the safety of all the teaching and non-teaching staff;
- ensure that all staff are aware of any instructions or safety advice pertaining to their particular discipline;
- ensure that all safety reports pertaining to the school are understood and that the detailed work has been completed;
- ensure that adequate arrangements exist for carrying out regular emergency evacuation (fire) drills and that all staff are aware of, and participate in, such arrangements;
- report to the Board of Governors all defects and hazards that are its responsibility;
- ensure that safe systems of working are used by contractors or persons carrying out inspections or non-structural repairs that are the Governors' responsibility as set out in the Scheme for the Local Management of Schools;
- report to EA all defects and hazards which cannot be dealt with under the Scheme for the Local Management of Schools;
- ensure that serious accidents to children, teaching staff and non-teaching staff are reported promptly to the EA; and,
- ensure that in the absence of the Principal, the Vice-Principal, or member of the Senior Leadership Team will assume the role.

### **Teaching Staff**

Each member of the teaching staff has a responsibility to exercise care and attention regarding the safety of themselves and pupils under their control. In the discharge of this responsibility all teachers shall:

- ensure that they take responsible care during work activities to avoid accident or injury to themselves, other members of staff and pupils;
- ensure that classrooms, stairs, corridors are free of hazards and that coats, bags, books and equipment is safely stored to prevent falls, trips and slips.
- observe all safety instructions and advice issued by the EA, DE and CCMS and all safety rules relating to specific machinery or processes;
- ensure that all necessary protective clothing and equipment is both available and used by themselves and pupils;
- report all potential hazards affecting health and safety to the Principal and make recommendations on the provision of safety equipment and on improvements to plant, tools and equipment which are dangerous, or potentially so;
- report all accidents to the Principal, other than minor cuts and bruises, and ensure that accident or incident report forms are fully completed;
- co-operate fully with the Principal on all matters pertaining to health and safety;
- exercise effective supervision of pupils and know emergency procedures in respect of fire, first aid etc.;
- know any special safety measures to be adopted in their own teaching area and ensure they are applied; and,

- give clear instruction and warnings to children as often as is necessary and follow safe working procedures personally.

### **All Employees**

All employees have a responsibility to exercise personal care and attention for the safety of themselves and others and to co-operate with their employer in the execution of this policy. In the discharge of this responsibility all employees shall:

- ensure that their workplace is free from hazards before commencing work;
- report all potential hazards and defects in equipment and protective clothing to the Principal;
- ensure that any equipment or machinery known to need repair is not used until the necessary work has been carried out;
- use only those electrical appliances owned by the school or EA;
- co-operate with any health and safety training considered necessary and reasonably practicable;
- perform their duties in a safe and tidy manner;
- ensure that all toxic and flammable substances are correctly used, stored and labelled;
- ensure that they are aware of any safety precautions to be taken when undertaking potentially hazardous procedures;
- ensure that all necessary protective clothing and equipment are available;
- include safe working methods in instruction to pupils;
- report all accidents and injuries, other than minor cuts and bruises, to the Principal as soon as possible;
- obtain adequate treatment as soon as practicable if injured;
- assist in the investigation of injuries and accidents as necessary; and,
- observe the safety rules of the EA and school.

### **The School Curriculum**

We teach the children about health and safety in order to equip them with the skills, knowledge and understanding to enable them to live positive, successful and healthy lives. Teachers take every opportunity to educate children in this regard in the normal school curriculum. For example, in the World Around Us curriculum we teach children about the danger of fire, road safety and how to avoid accidents. The children are taught about hazardous substances and how to handle equipment safely. We teach children respect for their bodies, and how to look after themselves. We also show them how to move and play safely in PE lessons.

### **Safety of Children**

It is the responsibility of each teacher to ensure that all curriculum activities are safe. If a teacher does have any concerns about pupil safety they should draw them to the attention of the Principal before the activity takes place.

Teachers, classroom assistants, coaches and supervisors must ensure that the children behave appropriately at all time to ensure their safety and the safety of others. Teachers must teach the Golden Rules carefully, revise them regularly and apply sanctions calmly and consistently in line with

our Promoting Positive Behaviour Policy, to ensure that the children understand how to keep themselves and others safe.

Appropriate supervision in classrooms, corridors and stairs is essential and staff on duty in the playground must supervise with vigilance at all times to ensure that no dangerous behaviour takes place.

When teachers have particular concerns about the behaviour of a child this should be discussed with the SENCo, VP and/or Principal and outside agencies when appropriate. An appropriate Risk Assessment and Behaviour Management/Positive Handling Plan will be drawn up and implemented.

We do not take any child off the school site without the prior signed permission of the parent.

If an accident does happen, resulting in an injury to a child, the staff will do all he/she can to aid the child concerned, in line with the First Aid Policy. We keep a First Aid Kit and materials in the main school office. A list of staff trained in Emergency First Aid at Work is displayed in the office and around the school.

We record all incidents involving injury, other than minor scrapes and bruises, in the school Accident Book, and we inform parents of any 'bump to the head' type injuries. If necessary, we contact the parents immediately. If emergency medical treatment is deemed necessary and the parents cannot be contacted the child should be taken to hospital by 2 adults. If necessary, an ambulance will be called without delay.

Parents or guardians will be telephoned if the Principal or Vice Principal believe a child is not well enough to stay at school.

During icy and snowy weather, the playground will be inspected by the building supervisor and the Principal/Vice Principal. Icy areas will be coned off. The building supervisor will ensure that a path from the gates to the door is gritted to ensure safe entry to school. Children will not be permitted to use the playground in icy conditions.

### **Dogs**

For health and safety reasons dogs, with the exception of assistance dogs, are not permitted on to any part of the school grounds or buildings.

### **Seat Belts**

All EA buses are now fitted with seat belts and pupils are instructed to use the belts provided at all times when the buses are moving. When we hire buses from private operators we ensure that they also have seat belts.

### **School Security**

While it is difficult to make the school site totally secure, we will do all we can to ensure the school is a safe environment for all who learn and work here. Gates to the playground and car park are closed/locked as soon as possible in the mornings and opened at certain times during the day. We

endeavour to keep them locked as far as is practicable when the children are on the premises. Doors to the school are locked and staff are equipped with fobs to gain access.

All visitors to the school who arrive in normal school hours are required to report to Reception, or to the Principal, on arrival and to sign the visitors book. Visitors will be escorted to meetings, in line with our Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy. Teachers will not allow any adult to enter their classroom unless sanctioned by the Principal or Vice Principal.

If any adult working in the school has suspicions that a person may be trespassing on the school site, they must inform the Principal immediately. The Principal will warn any intruder that they must leave the school site straight away. If the Principal has any concerns that an intruder may cause harm to anyone on the school site, the police will be contacted.

### **Incident Reporting**

In the case of a death or serious injury the school agrees to:-

- 1 Report the incident to both the CCMS Health and Safety Officer and the EA's safety manager immediately.
- 2 Record all the relevant details on an accident report form (name, address, occupation, details of accident).
- 3 In the case of teaching staff the school agrees to send the completed form to CCMS's Health and Safety Officer and the EA's legal section immediately. In the case of non-teaching staff and pupils the school will forward the report directly to the EA.
- 4 The school will keep a copy of the completed form for record.

### **All Other Serious Injuries**

- 1 The school will record all the relevant details on an accident report form (name, address, occupation and details of the accident).
- 2 The school will send the completed report form to the CCMS (teaching staff only) and a copy to the EA's legal department immediately. In the case of non-teaching staff, the school will forward the report form directly to the EA.
- 3 The school will keep a copy of the completed form for record purposes.

### **Non-injury Incidents**

- 1 The school will record all the relevant details on an accident report form (name, address, occupation, details of accident etc).
- 2 The school will send the completed report form to the CCMS and a copy to the EA's legal section immediately.
- 3 The school will keep a copy of the completed form for record purposes.

### **Occupational Disease**

The school will seek advice from the CCMS or the EA's Safety Manager.

## **Infectious Diseases**

The school follows PHA advice on Infectious Diseases as detailed in the 'Guidance on Infection Control in Schools' poster displayed in the staffroom and in the main office. This poster details the recommended period a person with certain infectious conditions/ diseases should be kept away from school and the outbreaks that should be reported to the Health Protection Duty Room. If a child is sent to school with these conditions within the specified period staff will phone the parent/carer to discuss the condition/quarantine period. Staff can also phone the PHA Health Protection Duty Room for advice on 0300 555 0119.

The 'Guidance on Infection Control in Schools' Poster can be accessed online at [https://www.publichealth.hscni.net/sites/default/files/Guidance\\_on\\_infection\\_control\\_in%20schools\\_poster.pdf](https://www.publichealth.hscni.net/sites/default/files/Guidance_on_infection_control_in%20schools_poster.pdf)

## **Fire Safety**

The school has a separate Fire Evacuation Policy and Procedures. All members of staff must familiarise themselves with this policy and ensure that a copy of the fire evacuation procedure is displayed prominently in their classroom. In the case of a fire in the school building the school alarm will ring continuously. All teachers, pupils and non-teaching staff will be made aware of this signal through regular fire drills.

In the case of a child with special needs the child's classroom assistant will ensure that the child is safely evacuated from the building in accordance with their Personal Evacuation Plan.

Fire warning systems will be tested regularly (once per month) and a record kept of these tests. To ensure the fire alarm system remains operational all break glass points will be checked regularly. Any glass points that are cracked or broken will be repaired.

## **Provision and Maintenance of Extinguishers**

The EA is responsible for the initial provision of fire extinguishers. Annual maintenance is an EA responsibility. Extinguishers must be inspected once every twelve months and a certificate of inspection attached.

Principals and Governors must ensure that this contract is carried out and that inspection records are maintained. A weekly examination of extinguishers will be made by the Building Supervisor.

## **Control of Substances Hazardous To Health (COSHH)**

Definition of a Hazardous Substance

A substance maybe defined as hazardous to health if it contains any of the following characteristics:

- 1 Any substance that is classified as being very toxic, toxic, harmful, corrosive or irritant.
- 2 A micro-organism which creates a hazard to health.
- 3 Dust of any kind, when present at a substantial concentration in the air.
- 4 Any substance which creates a comparable hazard to those above.

A substance hazardous to health can be in the form of a solid, liquid, gas powder, fibre, vapour, fume, aerosol, mist or dust.

The school will restrict the purchases of substances to those which appear on the ES's Tender, as they have been vetted by the EA's officers and the appropriate hazard data information is available.

The Building Supervisor and cleaning staff will be made aware that they must:

- read container labels properly and use contents as recommended.
- take part in safety training programmes
- practice safe working habits
- store equipment and tools properly
- use Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) properly
- co-operate in any health surveillance programme which may be introduced
- use control measures properly
- report any defects in equipment, PPE or control measures immediately

### **Visual Display Units (VDUs)**

The school will ensure that all those who work with VDUs for continuous spells of an hour or more will do so in a healthy environment. Staff working at a desk will have ample space to carry out the work. The desk or work station will be of a sufficient height to allow for postural changes. Office chairs will have height and back adjustment and also have lumbar support. The computer screen will be adjustable and easy to read. Window blinds and curtains will be fitted in offices where VDUs are used.

If a member of office staff requests an eye test due to the use of VDUs the school will facilitate them. The school will at all times seek guidance from the EA's Human Resources Department.

### **Portable Appliance Testing**

The school will fully participate in the EA's scheme for the testing of all portable equipment. Under this scheme all portable equipment will be tested once a year and an appropriate certificate attached. Staff will be encouraged to report any faults in electrical equipment. Any faulty items will be withdrawn from service and sent to the EA's approved electrical contractor for repair.

Electrical equipment will be withdrawn if:

- 1 the plug is damaged, e.g. the casing is cracked or the pins are bent
- 2 the outer sheath of the cable is not effectively secured where it enters the plug or equipment. Obvious evidence would be if the coloured insulation of the internal cable covers were showing.
- 3 there is damage to the external casing of the equipment or there are some loose parts or screws.
- 4 there is damage to the cable sheath or taped joints.

- 5 the equipment has been subjected to conditions for which it is not suitable e.g. it is wet.
- 6 there is evidence of overheating.

An inventory of all Portable Electrical Appliances will be kept together with the type, serial number and location.

### **Staff Property**

Electrical items owned by staff members are not to be brought into the school unless they have a current Test Certificate. In all cases the Principal is to be made aware of the intention to use 'private' electrical equipment in school.

### **Management of Contractors**

The school management will control and manage the interface between school activities and contractor's work in such a way that the risk is reduced significantly. Those contracted to carry out work will be on the EA's approved list of contractors. Prior to beginning any work the contractor will report to the principal and indicate the following:

- What work is to be carried out at where.
- How long it will last.
- How many persons and who will be involved.
- What are the significant risks involved.
- What precautions will be taken to avoid risks.

If there is any risk to the health and safety of pupils and staff the Principal will remove staff and pupils from the area and consult the contractor. If the Principal still has doubts regarding safety aspects of the work being carried out he will consult the EA's safety manager.

For further information, refer to Section 7 of the EA's Health and Safety Manual.

### **Caretaking and Cleaning**

It is the intention of the School Management that all those engaged in the cleaning of the school will do so in an environment which is safe and that the appropriate materials and safety clothing are provided for them.

### **Risk Assessment**

Our separate Risk Assessment Policy gives detailed guidance on how to carry out Risk Assessments to ensure that safety is a priority at all times.

The school will apply the EA's recommended five basic steps to risk assessment.

- 1 Identify the hazards
- 2 Decide who might be harmed
- 3 Evaluate the risks and decide whether existing precautions are adequate
- 4 Record your findings

5        Review your assessment from time to time

Risk Assessments must be carried out before children are taken on any trips to ensure risks are minimised and discussed with the Principal or Vice Principal.

**Links to other policies**

This policy should not be seen in isolation and should be read in conjunction with the Fire Evacuation Policy, the First Aid Policy, the Risk Assessment Policy, the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, the Administering Medications in School Policy, the PE Policy and Critical Incident Management Plan.

**Monitoring and Review**

This policy will be reviewed annually after the Health and Safety Coordinator and the Principal carry out an annual Health and Safety monitoring exercise (appendix 2), after any health and safety concerns/issues or advice from the EA/CCMS regarding Health and Safety.

## **Appendices**

- 1. Class Health and Safety Checklist**
- 2. Great Health and Safety Myths Poster**
- 3. Step Ladder Safety Checklist**
- 4. Risk Assessment-Use of Stepladders for Light Work of Short Duration**
- 5. Risk Assessment-Putting Up Displays**
- 6. Risk Assessment-Use of Leaning Ladders**
- 7. Risk Assessment-Child Leaving School Grounds Without Permission**
- 8. Risk Assessment-Entering and Leaving School Site During Freezing Weather Conditions**
- 9. HSE Guidance – Stepladders Safety Check**
- 10. HSE Guidance –Leaning Ladders Safety Check**
- 11. Health and Safety Monitoring Proforma**