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## **Health, Safety and Welfare Policy**

### **Health & Safety Statement**

#### **1. Introduction**

A Health & Safety statement is required by law under the Safety, Health & Welfare at Work Acts (1989 & 2005). This Statement is prepared by the Board of Management (BOM) of Scoil Náisiúnta Loch Guir to set out in writing a programme for safeguarding Safety, Health & Welfare of staff in Scoil Náisiúnta Loch Guir.

School settings are complex from a health and safety perspective. On one hand, the teachers are considered as 'employees of the school, with the Board of management being responsible for their safety as their 'employer'. On the other hand, teachers have a group of students who they are responsible for as guardians of minors. Both the teachers and the students are subject to risks that need to be managed. This policy represents the commitments of the BOM to provide a workplace, which is as safe and as healthy as possible for its employees who are in turn responsible for our student community. It specifies the organisation and the manner necessary for maintaining and reviewing safety and health standards.

#### **1.2 School Profile**

S.N. Loch Guir was built in 1960 with an extension added in 2012. There are three classrooms on site, two mainstream classrooms and one support classroom. Toilets are located in the main corridor separate from the classrooms. One of these is wheelchair accessible. There is a secretary's office, the Principal's office and a cleaning cupboard within the school building. The schoolyard surrounds the school with two grass areas available for playing on when the weather permits. All external doors to the school are secured with a keycode required to enter through the main entrance.

At present, there are 19 pupils attending the school. There are two mainstream class teachers, a full time SNA, a part time SET, a part time secretary and a part time caretaker working in the school.

### **1.3 Resources for Health, Safety and Welfare**

- Security: All staff have a keycode to access the secure site
- Security: Alarm system monitored by HKC Security and maintained by GTA Systems
- Fire Safety: Fire alarm monitored and maintained by GTA Systems
- Fire Safety: Fire extinguishers are checked annually by Limerick Fire Protection LTD
- Fire Safety: Fire drill procedures provided to all staff
- First Aid: All staff trained in general first aid.
- First Aid: stock of first aid materials stowed in shelves in corridor near main entrance. Stock is replenished on a regular basis,

Antiseptic wipes, plasters and larger plasters, scissors, antiseptic gel, gloves, one use ice packs, triangular bandages and safety clip, wound dressings, tweezers.

- First Aid: Medical Noticeboard in Staff room informing use of medicines in Medicine Cabinet in secretary's office. Details of students' medical needs are displayed.
- Defibrillator, for parish/community use, is stored in a case on the school wall adjacent to the Honey Fitz Theatre beside the school. The defibrillator is set up with the National Ambulance Service. All information is on display on the box and on the noticeboard in the Church. The school has a record of the access code on file.
- First Aid: Staff record accidents on First Aid Accident report form. A copy is kept on file in the school and a copy is sent home to the parents/guardians of the injured child.
- Accidents: Yard Assessment termly, Critical Incident Policy, Aladdin software for recording
- Hazards: Locked cupboards and Safety Statement for all potential hazards

### **1.4 Roles and Responsibilities for Health Safety and Welfare**

The B.O.M. of S.N. Loch Guir brings to the attention of staff, the following arrangements for safeguarding health, safety and welfare at work. Staff are

reminded yearly to read and review the policy and once complete this is recorded. (Appendix 3) If new staff join during the year, Principal Denis Kennedy will invite them to read the policy. The policy may be emailed in these cases for ease of access and referral. The policy is to be reviewed annually, or more frequently if necessary, in light of experience or changes in legal requirements. The safety statement will be re-examined by the Board on at least an annual basis. The safety statement requires the co-operation of all employees in order to be effective. All records of accidents and ill-health are monitored in order to ensure that any corrective measures required can be put in place to reduce the recurrence of such accidents and ill-health. The Principal will give the Board a summary of incidents as they arise.

The B.O.M. of S.N. Loch Guir wishes to ensure, as far as is reasonably practicable, that:

- the design, provision and maintenance of all places in the school are safe and without risk to health
- there is safe access to, and departure from, places of work.
- equipment may be operated safely
- work systems are planned, organised, performed and maintained so as to be safe and without risk to health
- staff are instructed and trained as necessary to ensure health and safety
- protective clothing or other appropriate clothing are provided as necessary to ensure health and safety
- plans for emergencies are complied with and revised as necessary
- employees are consulted on matters of health and safety

The B.O.M. recognises that its statutory obligations under legislation extend to employees, pupils, student- teachers, to any person legitimately conducting school business off-site or legitimately conducting other business on the school premises. The B.O.M. of S.N. Loch Guir undertakes to ensure that the provisions of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005 are adhered to.

#### Duties of Employees

It is the duty of every employee while at work:

1. 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. Each employee has a duty to look after him/herself.

2. 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.
3. To use, in such manner so as to provide the protection intended, any suitable appliance, protective clothing, convenience, equipment or thing provided for securing his/her safety, health or welfare at work.
4. To report to the BOM without unreasonable delay, any defects in equipment, place of work, or system of work, which might endanger safety, health or welfare.
5. The Chairperson of the BOM has a responsibility to ensure that all employees are not putting themselves in harm's way of the duties being undertaken.
6. Staff will inform school community of outings via Whatsapp
7. Members of staff who are pregnant will, with the Principal, discuss and complete the risk assessment for pregnant staff (Appendix 2).
8. Staff will carry out a risk assessment of the yard at the start of each term.

No person will intentionally or recklessly interfere with or misuse any appliance, protective clothing, convenience or other means or thing for securing safety, health or welfare at work. Employees using available facilities and equipment provided, must ensure that work practices. are performed in the safest manner possible.

### **Role of ISM Team**

Health and Safety Officers	Denis Kennedy and Carole Cleary
DLP / Principal	Denis Kennedy
DDLDP / Deputy Principal	Carole Cleary

BOM will liaise with staff and consider further reasonable representations made on behalf of the staff.

### **Contractors**

Caretaker Niall Malone	087 227 2190
GTA Systems	086 601 7506
HKC Security	01 456 7007

Limerick Fire Protection LTD	086 2479155 086 8248214
O'Neill's Hardware	061 383114

**Contractors**

Anyone entering the school premises must:

- identify themselves to a member of staff before gaining admittance to the school
- provide a copy of their current schedule of insurance.

Any contractor must make direct contact with the Principal or Deputy Principal, before initiating any work on the premises and be shown a copy of the Health & Safety statement applying to the school and must agree to its provisions. While work is in progress, noise shall be avoided wherever possible during school hours. The contractor and his/her work team shall not create any hazard, permanent or temporary, without informing the Principal or Deputy Principal and shall mark such hazard with suitable protection or at least with warning signs.

Any parent/guardian must make an appointment via the school secretary. This ensures all interactions between visitors and staff/children come through safe channels.

**1.5 Risk Assessments**

**Hazards**

Hazards shall be divided into two categories. Those which can be rectified, will be dealt with as a matter of urgency. Those that cannot, will be clearly indicated and appropriate procedures listed beside them. All hazards shall be eliminated in so far as resources and circumstances allow.

The following hazards and recommendations were identified during a health, safety and welfare risk assessment with a representative from Allianz in September 2023. These can be rectified and are considered by the BOM to be a source of potential danger and are brought to the attention of all concerned with the following safety/ protective measures to be followed by all/relevant staff .

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<b>Internal Risks</b>	<b>Risk Review Recommendations/Comments</b>
Working at Height	<p>A procedure for safely hanging items within the school should be established, included in the safety statement, and communicated to all relevant staff. It is very important that this is adhered to by all staff.</p> <p>A suitable 2 or 3 step stepladder(s) should be available and use of same compulsory. Using chairs and/or tables is not an acceptable practice. The need for hanging items above this height should be strongly questioned but, if necessary, then a referral procedure to the principal should be in place.</p> <p>Any work requiring elevation from the ground should be risk assessed. Staff expected to carry out such work should be adequately trained, and the school should facilitate the employee(s) in completing a working at height training course.</p>
Art 'washing lines'	<p>Where teachers like to hang artwork on "washing lines" in the classroom, it's very important that working at height guidelines are followed and that teachers are aware of fire hazards around light fittings etc. Furthermore we recommend that all such lines should be on a "pulley system" to allow the line be dropped to an accessible level thus removing the need to use a step ladder.</p>
Shelving / Storage	<p>Teachers/Employees should be advised not to store heavy items on or near the top of storage shelves. Heavy items should be stored from the bottom up. Storage areas need to be kept tidy to prevent items falling and allow for safe access to each item.</p> <p>Free standing shelving in hallways/classrooms should be reviewed &amp; secured where possible to prevent capsizing.</p>
Cleaning Room Supplies	<p>The cleaning supplies room should be locked at all times when not in use. Chemicals/Liquids that can cause</p>

	injuries or burns should be replaced with safer alternatives.
Mats	Mats in the school should be regularly checked to ensure they are not becoming unravelled or upturned and therefore a trip hazard. Furthermore, embedded mats need to be monitored to ensure a “lip” does not develop between the mat & the rim, as this would be a trip hazard once again.
Clear Corridors	The corridors should be free from tables, chairs and other such objects that could impede safe exit from the building in an emergency.
Fire Extinguishers	You have an annual service contract on your fire extinguishers. You should request training from the company who service the fire extinguishers. This training should be provided at little or no cost when they are carrying out the regular service as a certain percentage of fire extinguishers need to be released.
Toilet Floors	It is important that toilet floors are checked at least once a day for surface water and that staff are aware of the procedure for what to do next. Claims for slips on wet bathroom floors are common and in order to defend them adequately the school needs to be able to prove they are taking reasonable precautions in this regard. Furthermore, pupils should be encouraged to report any spillages immediately.
Hot Drinks from Staff Room	Staff should not take hot drinks outside of the staff room unless they are suitable containers with secured lids (not just pop on lids). Disposable coffee cups should not be allowed on the school premises.
Floor Condition	The floor in the school should be continuously monitored to ensure there are no uneven areas, broken tiles, cracked vinyl, upturned carpet etc. that may cause a trip and fall.

Classroom Tidiness	The walking floor area of classrooms should be kept free of clutter. School & PE bags should be stored under tables if no specific area is available. Coats & Jackets should be stored on hooks and not hanging on the back of chairs.
Manual Handling Course	You should ensure that employees, that are required to perform tasks lifting/moving objects, have completed a manual handling course.
Fire Doors	If not already in place, the school should consider replacing all internal corridor doors with fire doors. Fire doors will prevent the passage of fire and smoke in the event of a fire, allowing for a safer emergency exit from the building.
CCTV	If the school has CCTV you should ensure that you have a CCTV policy in place to regulate the use of your CCTV. Both the IPPN and <a href="http://www.dataprotectionschools.ie">www.dataprotectionschools.ie</a> can provide detailed information on compiling a CCTV policy.
Electrics Review:	Depending on the date of the previous inspection, I would recommend that you arrange to have a full inspection of the electrical installations carried out by a qualified electrician (a member of RECI or ECSSA) and an appropriate certificate issued. Any defects in the installation found by the electrician and/or any recommendations made by the electrical contractor must be rectified and/or implemented immediately. For schools, once every 5 years is the recommended interval between such inspections as laid down under regulations of the Electro Technical Council of Ireland.



<b>External Risks</b>	<b>Risk Review Recommendations/Comments</b>
Bins:	Refuse and recycling bins should be kept in a secure compound or alternatively secured by a padlock and chain to a post sited no less than ten metres from the building. This will prevent them being moved against the building and set alight or used as climbing aids.
Debris Removal	Dis-used objects, such as old furniture, blocks, slabs, metal poles or frames, tyres etc. should be securely stored if needed or removed from the school grounds. These can cause injury along with being used to cause damage or gain access by vandals and thieves.
Step Nosing	The nosing on steps should be painted using a non-slip coating in order to highlight changing levels. Gloss paint should not be used as it will make the surface slippery under wet conditions.
Gutters / Drains	Ensure the gutters & drains are free from a build up of debris and leaves to ensure they can work to their optimum during periods of heavy rain.
Surface Condition	The external surfaces should be continuously monitored to ensure there are no uneven areas, broken, rough or areas of pooled water that may cause a trip and fall. Particular attention should be paid to large concrete sections where they join one another & "patched" tarmac areas.
Timber Benches & Flowerbeds	A checklist of all the timber items in the yard, such as benches & flowerbeds, should be created and the caretaker should check these each term, confirming they are safe, secure & free from splinters/rot/rusting nails etc. Any damaged items should be removed or repaired.
Goal Posts & Pitch Condition	The goal posts should be checked regularly to ensure they are in a good state of repair, adequately anchored into the ground and safe to use. The field should be

	checked regularly for holes, rough areas and large stones to reduce the possibility of injury.
Basketball Poles	The upright stands for the basketball rings should be padded to soften impact in the event of pupils falling against them. These should be checked regularly to ensure they remain at a sufficient height.
Drain / Manhole Coverings	Drain caps, shore covers & manhole covers need to be monitored to ensure they do not become a trip hazard when loose, jagged or upturned. Any missing items must be replaced promptly.
Boiler Room	To reduce the risk of fire in the event of malfunction, combustible items must be removed from the boiler room and stored elsewhere or suitably disposed of. Furthermore, a Powder Fire Extinguisher should be directly above the burner unit of the boiler, secured by a bar not a chain.
Step Handrails	Where there is 3 or more steps of up to 1m in width, current building regulations require a single handrail to be fitted. Any steps wider than this should have at least two handrails fitted.
Oil Tank	The oil tank should be in a bund enclosure capable of containing 110% of the maximum contents of the tank. The bund base and walls must be impermeable to water and oil and be checked regularly for leaks. There should be no drains or outlets within the bund. Rainwater should be pumped out periodically and contaminated water disposed of safely. Any taps and pipe work should be lockable to prevent tampering and a drip tray container beneath the tap to collect drips is advisable. Alternative to a concrete bund, there are “self-bunded” oil tanks available also.
Window Openings	The windows which open outwards should be fitted with restrictors to prevent them from being opened wider than the recess of the window so as to prevent injury to pupils playing outside.

Flat Roof Access	A risk assessment should be conducted on the flat roof in relation to access to same. If the caretaker is accessing same, it should only be for simple maintenance (clearing gutters) or retrieval of balls. A risk assessment should be carried out, as often accessing & dismounting can be the more dangerous aspect. Reviewing how that is done is important along with reviewing if there is the right equipment available and if any training is required. The Board of Management should be aware of this risk assessment and a procedure should be communicated to the staff members involved and referenced in the safety statement.
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A detailed Risk Assessment has been undertaken by staff in 2023-2024 and approved by the BOM. This should be viewed in conjunction with the Health and Safety Statement.

**Fire Hazard and measures the BOM has taken:**

1. The Board/Principal/Deputy Principal ensure all alarms are tested regularly and staff trained to deal with use of said alarms.
2. The Board/Principal/Deputy Principal ensure all alarms are tested regularly and staff trained to deal with use of said alarms.
3. The Principal/Deputy Principal ensures that fire drills take place at least once per term. 2 designated members of staff are responsible for the running of said fire drill. Staff may receive notification and details of fire drill in advance of drill and sometimes they will not be notified.
4. All classroom doors and corridor doors are fire doors.  
All doors, corridors, and exits are kept clear of obstruction and are able to be opened at all times from within the building. Each teacher, who has an exit in the classroom, must ensure it is kept clear. Back and main doors must be free of obstruction.
5. The assembly point is in the yard.
6. In an effort to prevent a fire, all electrical devices should be left unplugged, when unattended for lengthy periods and when the building is empty, where practical. Teachers are responsible for their own classrooms. The Principal and the school secretary are responsible for their offices. The general kitchen area is each staff members' responsibility. The Deputy

Principal will remind all staff in advance of breaks: Halloween, Christmas, Easter and Summer to unplug devices.

7. Any recommendations made by a Fire Officer in addition to these provisions will be implemented.
8. Any recommendations made by a Fire Officer in addition to these provisions will be implemented.

### **Constant Hazards**

#### **Machinery, Kitchen Equipment, Electrical Appliances**

It is the policy of the BOM that machinery, kitchen equipment and electrical appliances are to be used only by competent and authorised persons. Such appliances and equipment are visually checked at each use.

#### **Chemicals**

It is the policy of the Board that all chemicals, photocopier toner, detergents, etc be stored in clearly identifiable containers bearing instructions and precautions for their use. These are kept in a closed cupboard (secretary's office and cleaning cupboard) and where needed, protection is provided to be used when handling them.

#### **Security**

All entrance doors are secured with staff only having access using a keycode. Principal/Deputy Principal and the Caretaker has access to make the building secure in emergency situations.

#### **Smoking**

The entire school premises, both indoors and outdoors, is deemed a non-smoking premises to avoid any hazard of passive smoking and fire.

#### **Broken Glass**

Staff are asked to carefully remove broken glass. Class teachers should ensure that children are instructed to report broken glass to a teacher and are warned never to pick up broken glass or foreign items they may find on the yard.

#### **Visual Display Units**

The advice contained in the Health & Safety Authority's (HAS) guidelines on the safe operation of visual display units is followed. Any up-to-date information regarding hazards relating to the use of VDUs will be studied and recommendations and directives implemented.

## **Infectious Diseases and Head lice**

It is the policy of the BOM that all infectious diseases should be notified to the school. Steps shall be taken to ensure the safety of staff and students against such diseases e.g. covid, measles etc. The BOM will endeavour to minimise the risk by adherence to the principles of cleanliness, hygiene and disinfection. ISM team and secretary will inform class groupings as necessary with health guidelines. The BOM will provide disposable gloves for use in all First Aid applications, cleaning tasks. Toilets and washrooms are provided at all times with a facility for the safe disposal of waste.

## **First Aid**

The first aid equipment is stored in a shelf in the main corridor near in the old building, as outlined in 1.3 Resources.

All staff are trained in General First Aid (revision training 24/25 & ongoing).

One permanent staff member is certified in the use of Defibrillator. Other staff to be trained in 24/25 academic year.

1. All incidents, no matter how trivial and whether to employees or to students or to members of the public, must be reported immediately to the member of staff on duty and/or the Principal. This is necessary to monitor the progress of safety standards and to ensure that the proper medical attention is given where required. Staff members record medical incidents in the First Aid Accident Log Form.
2. Some students may need to be administered medication during the school day. This information is relayed through the Deputy Principal. A database of medications for each academic year is stored digitally and displayed on Medical board. Each class teacher must familiarise themselves with their students' medication and administration of said medication.
3. A termly review of use by dates is carried out on medical supplies

## **Student Drop Off Zone / Car Park**

Both the drop off zone and the car park pose risks for our school community. Our school drop off area is a well observed reverse parking only system. The Principal observes an 8:50 a.m. drop off time each morning to facilitate safe entry to the school. Students are dismissed to their parents/guardians every evening by their class teacher. Students are encouraged to be road safe and take their time.

## **Staff Facilities**

Tea and lunch breaks are taken in either the classroom (when the teacher is on out/inside supervision duty) or in the support classroom.

Members of staff are reminded that:

1. A person, who is under medical supervision or on prescribed medication and who has been certified fit for work, should notify the school of any known side effect or temporary physical disabilities, which could hinder their work performance and which may be a danger to either themselves or their fellow workers. The school will arrange or assign appropriate tasks for the person to carry out in the interim.
2. Staff members are not allowed to attend the premises or carry out duties whilst under the influence of illicit drugs or alcohol

### **1.6 Emergency Procedures – Fire Safety, First-Aid, Accidents and Dangerous Occurrences**

- Security emergency: Principal can lock all external doors until the issue is resolved
- Fire Drill carried out termly
- First Aid Administration: Wear gloves and record on First Aid Accident Log
- Accidents and Dangerous Occurrences – See Critical Incident Policy
- Maintenance issues logged in Maintenance book

### **1.7 Instruction, Training and Supervision**

- Health, Safety and Welfare statement addressed at first staff meeting every year
- Health, Safety and Welfare report at every staff meeting
- First Aid – General training in the 24/25 academic year and ongoing
- First Aid – Defibrillator certification for one permanent staff member. Other staff to be trained in the 24/25 academic year
- Fire extinguisher training 2024/25 provided by Limerick Fire Protection Ltd
- Maintenance book kept containing a record of all works to the school

### **1.8 Communication and Consultation**

It is the policy of the BOM, or the BOM representative, to consult with staff in an annual review of risk assessments at the beginning of each school year. A copy of the safety statement is made available to all staff at the beginning of the school year.

Health, Safety and Welfare at work will be considered in any future staff training and development. The Health & Safety Statement is displayed in a public place in the school. All staff members will be asked to read the Health & Safety Statement at the start of each school year and this will be recorded and dated. All work experience students and long term substitutes will be asked to read the Health

and Safety Statement before commencing their role in our school. This will also be recorded (Appendix 3).

**Contact Phone Numbers**

Emergency Services	999 / 112
Mid-West Regional Hospital	061 301111
Bruff Garda Station	061 382940
Roxboro Garda Station	061 419555
ESB	061 414592
HSE Live	1850 241850

**1.9 Review of Health, Safety and Welfare Statement**

This statement shall be regularly revised by the Board of Management of S.N. Loch Guir in accordance with experience and the requirements of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005 and the Health and Safety Authority.

The Health and Safety Statement is also made available to all staff, who have been forwarded a copy and requested to read same.

Chairperson B.O.M.	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Rev. Fr. Eddie Cleary</b></p> <hr/> <p>Date: 2/10/23</p>
Secretary B.O.M. / Principal	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Denis Kennedy</b></p> <hr/> <p>Date: 2/10/23</p>

\*This Health and Safety Statement was prepared by Principal Denis Kennedy in accordance with the Safety, Health and Welfare Act at Work Act 2005