


# *Scoil Náisiúnta Béal Átha Grean*

# Safety Statement

# Issue and Revision Record

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Signed: 

Fr. David Gibson
Chairman of the Board of Management on behalf of the BoM.

Date 5/vi/24

Ballyagran National School Safety & Health Policy

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# Safety Health and Welfare Policy

The Board of Management (BoM) and Staff at Ballyagran National School are committed to safeguarding the safety, health and welfare of our students, employees, visitors and contractors, by providing and maintaining a safe and healthy workplace. This will be accomplished through a proactive, measurable and constructive safety management program. We are committed to providing and maintaining a safe environment to educate and work, safe access and egress, safe systems, safe equipment and safe and competent people as required by present and future legislation and best safety practice. To support this commitment, we will provide competent leadership and training for every employee.

The objectives of our Safety Management Program are to:

- Proactively monitor the workplace to identify all occupational safety and health hazards. When elimination of any such hazards is not feasible, every possible measure will be taken to control them.
- Assign Management the responsibility for the implementation of our safety management program.
- Provide resources to educate and support both our employees and any contractors on safe work practices.
- Ensure safety, health and welfare issues form an integral part in the evaluation and decision-making process in capital expenditure, maintenance and purchases of goods and services.
- All employees and contractors are expected to work safely, participate in risk assessments and implement control measures, report hazards and defects and to cooperate with the school in the achievement of a Safe environment.
- The objectives of this policy can only be achieved through the dedication and total commitment of everyone in the school.
- This policy is issued under the authority of and with the full support of the Board of Management (BoM). It will be reviewed annually to ensure it remains up to date.

## 1 Introduction

Under the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005 every employer is required to carry out a risk assessment to identify any hazards present in the workplace, assess the risks arising and specify the steps to be taken to deal with any risks.

The employer must also prepare a safety statement which is based on the risk assessment. The statement should also contain the details of people in the workforce who are responsible for safety issues. Employees should be given access to this statement and employers should review it on a regular basis. The employer shall tell employees about any risks that require the wearing of protective equipment and provide such equipment free of charge.

This Safety Statement has been written in consultation with all the staff, the principal as well as the Board of Management (BoM) of Ballyagran National School. This revision has been written in compliance with the requirements of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005, the General Application Regulations 2007 and all other relevant safety legislation applicable to its operations. As such the Safety Statement applies to the welfare, health and safety at work of all employees under the guidance, provisions and training provided by the Board of Management (BoM) of the school.

This Safety Statement is intended to assist in reducing the possibility of accidents and ill health by bringing to the attention of the management and staff identified hazards and associated risk levels. The statement sets out how the Board of Management (BoM) aims to meet its legal obligations while acknowledging that a Primary School environment is unique and challenging.

The Board of Management (BoM) of Ballyagran N.S aims to always ensure a safe working environment for both staff and pupils and to improve our safety standards, where possible. This can only be accomplished by the persistent efforts of all. Responsibility for health and safety rests with the Board of Management (BoM). However, all staff at all levels within the school have personal responsibility for their own health and Safety and the Health and Safety of others.

The Safety Statement will be revised on an ongoing basis by the Health and Safety Representative on the Board of Management (BoM) to achieve the overall objective of improving safety awareness. All employees of the school will be briefed initially on this Safety Statement and thereafter on a yearly basis as required by current legislation.

There will be one un-controlled copy of the Safety Statement held in the school office. It will be available for viewing by any employee. The Safety Statement will be reviewed with all new employees at their Induction prior to beginning work in the school. The Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act, 2005 requires employers, their representative management and employees alike to consider safety as a joint responsibility. The safety and health of all Ballyagran National School employees is an important objective of the school.

We will achieve and maintain the highest possible standards of occupational health and safety in compliance with the requirements of all Irish and European legislation as it pertains to our activities. The Safety Statement specifies the way the safety and health of persons employed by and attending the school will be addressed.
Any Health or safety concern should be raised with the principal in the first instance. If after consultation any person believes that their concern is not being properly addressed, they should bring it to the attention of the Health & Safety Representative on the Board of Management (BoM). The Board will record this formally and seek to address the concern within a reasonable time frame.
Ballyagran National School will dedicate the appropriate resources and welfare facilities necessary, whether time, finances, equipment, or personnel necessary to ensure in so far as is reasonably practicable the safety, health and welfare of all its employees and pupils as well as others who may be affected by its operations and activities. If necessary, it will seek additional resources through Department of Education funding.
As well as periodic safety inspections, the Health & Safety Representative with the assistance of the members of staff will complete a thorough safety Inspection of the school. This will provide an ongoing upgrade of safety awareness within the school and provide the information necessary to upgrade and maintain the Safety Statement. It is recognised that the writing of a Safety Statement will not increase safety awareness or improve safety standards on its own. The Safety Statement provides a baseline for management to build on. To increase safety awareness, it is necessary for management and staff to have hands-on involvement in support of the Safety Statement. Employers have extensive duties under the Act.

## 2 General duties of the employer (Part 2, section 8) include:

- Ensure, so far as reasonably practicable, the safety, health and welfare at work of all employees.
- Manage and conduct work activities in such a way as to prevent any improper conduct or behaviour likely to put the safety, health, or welfare of employees at risk.
- Design, provide and maintain the workplace in a safe condition.
- Provide safe access and egress to and from the place of work.
- Provide safe equipment and maintain safe systems of work.
- Ensure the safe use of articles or substances or the exposure of noise, or any other physical agents.
- Provide and maintain welfare facilities and arrangements.
- Carry out risk assessments for all identified hazards.
- Seek to identify hazards on a regular frequency.
- Provision of P.P.E. where risks cannot be eliminated or adequately controlled.
- Ensure that emergency plans are in place, tested and updated.
- Report accidents and dangerous occurrences as prescribed in the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (General Application) Regulations 1993 (S.I. No. 44 of 1993)

- The provision of a competent person for the purpose of ensuring the safety, health and welfare employees.
- Provide employees with training, information and supervision in a form, manner and, as appropriate, a language that is reasonably likely to be understood.
- Maintain a constant and continuing interest in health and safety matters pertinent to all the school's activities.
- Carry out assessments of school Assets and activities through the medium of audits and inspections.

***Every*** employee has a legal duty under the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act, 2005 to take reasonable care of the safety, health and welfare of ourselves and of others who may be affected by our acts and omissions. It is also the specific duty of any employee to report to their immediate supervisor any defects in the procedures, systems of work, structure or equipment which might endanger the safety, health or welfare of anyone on the school site.

## 2.1 Actions by the Board of Management (BoM) to ensure Safety, Health & Welfare

**Ballyagran National School** is committed to providing the resources necessary for ensuring the health, safety and welfare of its employees. These resources include:

- Appropriate ongoing safety and health awareness training.
- Periodic safety meetings.
- Provision of welfare arrangements including, toilets and suitable staff room.
- Equipped First Aid station suitable for school premises.
- Trained First Aiders.
- Policies on harassment, bullying, stress.
- Other resources as identified as necessary for the safe operation of the school.

# 3 Safety Representative appointment.

The 2005 Act provides for consultation between employers and employees to help ensure cooperation in the prevention of accidents and ill health. Under Section 25 of the 2005 Act, employees are entitled to select a safety representative to represent them on safety and health matters with their employer. This is a key provision of the 2005 Act and a central part of the preventive system of promoting safety and health at work.

## 4 Board of Management (BoM) Responsibility.

The Board of Management (BoM) has the overall responsibility for the establishment and maintenance of an effective policy for Health, Safety and Welfare at work. The members of the Board of Management (BoM) will be supported by School management and all other staff within the school. Health and safety will be a fixed agenda item on 2 No. Board of Management (BoM) meetings per year (or as required) ensuring that Health, Safety and Welfare is always discussed.
Specifically, the Board of Management (BoM) will:

- Appoint a Health and Safety officer from within the Board of Management (BoM).
- Arrange for the appointment of a Health and Safety representative from within the staff.
- Support the principal in their role as the 'day-to-day manager' of the school.
- Take a direct interest in health and safety to ensure compliance with all statutory requirements.
- Endeavour to ensure that there are sufficient funds and facilities available for the control of hazards.
- Ensure that the safety rules and procedures are adequately communicated to staff.
- Ensure that all equipment in their area of responsibility is properly maintained and safe to use.
- Arrange to review the Safety Statement bi-annually.
- Ensure that responsibility is properly assigned, understood and accepted at all levels.
- Ensure that appropriate emergency equipment is available, tested on an annual basis and replaced when used or defective.
- Ensure that an appropriate number of Fire Wardens and First Aiders have been appointed and trained.
- Ensure employers from whom the school contracts services to have an up-to-date safety statement.
- Procure advice and assistance wherever necessary from a Health and Safety Specialist.
- Review, report and act as appropriate in a timely fashion on any matters brought to the attention of the Board of Management (BoM).

## 5 Board of Management (BoM) Health and Safety officer.

The Health and Safety Officer on the Board of Management (BoM) (BOM) shall keep the BOM informed of concerns and updates to the Health and Safety policy.

The principal as the line Manager shall

- Ensure all staff are fully aware of potential hazards in their job to themselves and others.
- Bring this safety statement to employees' attention on commencement of employment and annually.

- Have the safety statement available in the school office.

## 6 School Staff responsibility

All School Staff are responsible for creating a genuine *"safety culture"* within the school.

Specifically, they will:

- Be encouraged to take a direct interest in Health, Safety and Welfare.
- Ensure that the safety rules and procedures are adequately communicated and fully understood by all. Including explaining to children as necessary in a language that is age appropriate.
- Ensure that all activities under their control are planned so that they may be carried out in a safe manner.
- Ensure that all equipment in their area of responsibility is properly maintained and safe to use.
- Regularly inspect their areas to ensure the standards of Health, Safety and Welfare and are being complied with.

It is the responsibility of all School employees to cooperate with management in the implementation of the objectives of the Safety Statement within their areas of influence. Safety must be seen by all employees as a teamwork strategy. All employees shall cooperate fully with all the provisions taken by Ballyagran National School to ensure the Health, Safety & Welfare of all its employees, students, contractors and visitors. Each employee is required to report immediately all accidents, dangerous occurrences, unsafe conditions and unsafe acts to the principal.

## 7 Statutory responsibilities of every employee

Employees have a specific statutory responsibility under Section 13 of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act, 2005, for their own safety. They are expected to discharge their work in a safe manner, to avoid injury to themselves, other employees or anyone present in the school Under Section 13 of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act, 2005, the statutory responsibilities of every employee are:

***It shall be the duty of every employee while at work to:***

- ***Take reasonable care for his/her own safety, health and welfare and that of any other 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 other person to comply with any of the relevant statutory provisions***
- ***To use in such a manner, so as to provide the protection intended, any suitable appliance, protective clothing, convenience, equipment or other means or thing 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.***

- ***To report to his/her employer, without unreasonable delay any defects in plant, equipment, place of work or system of work which might endanger health, safety, or welfare of which he/she becomes aware.***
- ***To not intentionally or recklessly interfere with or misuse any appliance, protective clothing, convenience, equipment or other means or thing provided in pursuance of any of the relevant statutory provisions or otherwise for securing the safety, health and welfare of persons arising out of work activities.***
- ***Ensure that he/she is not under the influence of an intoxicant/toxicants to an extent of endangering their health & safety.***
- ***Submit to any reasonable tests for intoxicants.***
- ***Attend such training as may be reasonably required by the employer.***
- ***If suffering from a disease or illness that adds to risks, to tell their employer promptly.***

## 8 Health & Safety Representative main functions

A safety representative may consult with, and make representations to, the employer on health, safety and welfare matters relating to the employees in the place of work. The employer must consider these representations and act on them if necessary. The intention of these consultations is to prevent accidents and ill health, to highlight problems and identify means of overcoming them. Consultations are particularly important when changes are taking place, for example when drawing up a safety plan, for school events or introducing new technology or systems, including new substances. They also have a part to play in hazard identification.

## 9 Resources available related to Health Safety and welfare.

- The Health and Safety officer on the Board of Management (BoM) with the assistance of the School Principal and the Health & Safety Representative will develop appropriate health and safety programmes, inspections, maintenance programmes and training activities etc.
- Ballyagran National School, through the principal, will provide each new employee, on commencement of employment, with the necessary information and guidelines on the basic safety knowledge they require before they begin work.
- New employees, temporary or full time shall be made aware of the Safety Statement.
- A fully stocked First Aid kit for use in any accident on site is available.
- Appropriate Firefighting equipment has been positioned throughout the school.
- Relevant Statutory Signage is provided throughout the school and maintained.
- All Emergency exits are checked quarterly and maintained free of obstruction.

## 9.1 Training

Ballyagran National School is committed to providing appropriate health and safety training for all employees applicable to their function within the school. This training will begin with induction training on commencement of employment. The purpose of induction training is to ensure that new employees fully understand the potential hazards of their respective work activity and the safety precautions and emergency preparedness required ensuring a safe place of work.
Training will also be given on the job in specialised areas where staff may require the skills to ensure the high level of safety is maintained. The principal shall have the authority to organise any training identified. This does not remove the responsibility from the Board of Management (BoM) to ensure adequate training is being carried out. A detailed plan will be prepared annually by the principal and agreed with the Board of Management (BoM).
Some training topics will be:

- Safety Statement review
- First aid
- Fire Extinguisher identification and use
- Fire Marshall Training
- Specialised equipment uses
- Manual Handling*

** Costs associated with Manual Handling training are substantial and so provide a difficulty in repeat training exercises*

# 10 General consultation with employees

A general obligation is placed on every employer under Section 25 & 26 of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005 to consult with their employees on matters of health and safety. It is the policy of Ballyagran National School to consult with their employees on matters of health and safety and welfare and to encourage a team strategy for safety. Each employee will be given the opportunity to discuss any topic of health, safety and welfare of concern at staff meetings. As well as this, the Safety Representative will be available for regular contact with all employees. Any matter that requires the urgent attention of the Board of Management (BoM) will be brought to it immediately by the principal.

# 11 Risk Assessment

The school risk assessments are held separately from this document and are based on an identification of the hazards and an assessment of the risks and the control measures necessary for the elimination or reduction of the risk to an acceptable level. All risk assessments are based on the probability of the accident occurring and an assessment of the accident consequences if it occurs. All risk assessments are evaluated on a criticality matrix which determines the level of action priority. All risk assessments will be reviewed biannually or when changes occur that affect the risk outlined in the assessment.

# 12 School Emergency

## 12.1 Emergency Evacuation

An Emergency Evacuation Procedure has been established at Ballyagran National School that will cover all operations of the school. Since every incident is unique, the procedure will illustrate the principles to be followed.

The most likely emergency to occur on the premises is a fire. An "Evacuation Procedure in case of fire" has been drawn up to ensure a coordinated response to any on site fire or other emergencies. School Staff have been trained in the Emergency Fire procedure to ensure safe evacuation of the school. Fire drills are carried out once per school term to ensure effectiveness of the Fire drill. Records of all drills will be maintained and learning documented.

All employees will be instructed in and shall make themselves aware of the location of all fire points and the minimum requirements on how to initiate the alarm and ensure that they are capable of a controlled evacuation, should an emergency arise in the school. Several selected staff will be trained as **fire wardens**. This will include practical training on the use of fire extinguishers. All fire points will be wall mounted, indicated with fire point signs and always kept clear of obstructions.

## 12.2 Emergency Site Controller

In the Event of a school emergency occurring The Emergency Site Controller will assume overall responsibility for the management and control of any emergency on site until the arrival of the emergency services. In the case of Ballyagran National School the emergency site controller will be the school principal.

## 12.3 Deputy Emergency Site Controller

If the Emergency Site Controller is not present, the Deputy Emergency Site Controller (Deputy Principal) will assume overall responsibility for the management and control of any emergency on site until the arrival of the Emergency Services.

## 12.4 Emergency Services Site controller

Once the Emergency Services arrive on site the most senior officer has control of the complete site for the duration. By the time emergency services arrive at the site and as part of the Evacuation Procedure, the **teaching staff** will have already called the class roll at the assembly points. Assuming everyone is accounted for, pupils & staff will await direction from the Emergency Site Controller or Deputy Site Controller.

## 13 Statutory Testing of Emergency Equipment

In accordance with the statutory requirements, certain examinations, testing and inspections must be completed.

| Test/Inspection/Examination | Frequency | Inspector |
|---|---|---|
| Fire Fighting Equipment | 12 Monthly | External – Contractor |
| Fire Alarm System | 12 Monthly | External – Contractor |
| Emergency Lighting | 12 Monthly | External – Contractor |

Records of these statutory examinations or tests shall be filed in the Fire Register.

## 14 School Policies

All School Policies retained in the principal's office under separate cover. All policies are revised and updated as required. All staff and the Board of Management (BoM) should ensure that it is aware of what policies exist. The following is a non-exhaustive list of policies held:

- Safety, Health and Welfare Policy
- School Admissions Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Storm warning and weather policy
- VDU Policy
- Stress at work
- Manual Handling
- Administration of Medicines Policy
- Staff training policy
- Dealing with Infectious Diseases Policy
- Grievance Procedure and Complaints Procedure Policy

## 15 Teacher Practice and Work Experience

Included in this group are students on teaching practice, adults on SNA training, people on the Work Placement Programme (WPP) and may include Transition Year secondary school students on work experience. The Board of Management (BoM) delegates the authority to the principal to decide what personnel allowed on work experience / work placement in the school. All persons entering the school for these programmes will be provided with the standard school induction.

## 16 Accident Reporting & Investigation

All accidents/near misses to persons (staff/contractor/visitor), however slight, must be reported to the Principal or Assistant Principal in their absence and recorded on the accident report form. The principal shall be informed within 24 hours of all accidents and incidents and where possible all accident reporting will be completed before the end of the day in which the accident or incident occurred.

All notification of accidents or dangerous occurrences to the enforcement authority (Health and Safety Authority) will be completed by the principal on Form IR1 or IR3 (www.hsa.ie). **Note**: An IR1 must be completed if a person is away from their place of work for 3 consecutive days or more after the day of the accident.

### 16.1 Accident Reporting & Investigation

- Upon notification of an accident, the Health & Safety Representative and Principal / Deputy Principal should go immediately to the scene of the accident, bringing with them a copy of the injury and accident form to record details.
- The teacher/person in charge shall ensure that first aid treatment has been given and that outside medical assistance has been summoned (doctor or ambulance), where necessary.
- Photograph the scene extensively for records.
- The person reporting on the incident should complete the accident form as much as possible at that point.
- Interview anyone involved and witness as soon as possible.
- Recording of all facts at this point is an important step in preventing future occurrences.
- Completion of the accident report should strive to identify the underlying causes of the accident and identify the appropriate corrective action to avoid a recurrence. This should be completed within five working days of the incident occurrence.

### 16.2 Accident Reporting & Investigation

In the event of injury sustained from physical contact with a pupil other than accidents and in particular assault:

(i) seeking medical assistance, where necessary
(ii) immediate reporting of incidents to School Management
(iii) recording of incidents in an Incident Report Book
(iv) reporting of the incident to the Health and Safety Authority
(v) reporting to the Gardaí, where appropriate
(vi) ensuring that all appropriate safeguards have been put in place to protect persons at risk and to prevent, in so far as is practicable, the occurrence of assault.

## 17 School Opening Closing Time

A school Opening / Closing schedule will be made available to all parents and guardians at the beginning of the school year. School opening and closing times may vary depending on weather or other events from time to time. The school will communicate any changes to parents / guardians as promptly as possible.

## 18 Storage & Administering of Medication

Parents are asked to inform the school in writing if their child suffers from any long term or short-term illness, allergy(s) and if their child is on any prescribed medication. No staff member will be mandated to administer medicine if the requirements are beyond what can be considered reasonable.
Parents of pupils who are on medication or inhalers are asked to complete a **consent form** (available from the school office) for school records.
It is the policy of the Board of Management (BoM) of Ballyagran N.S. that all drugs, medications required by pupil(s) will not be stored on site if avoidable. Arrangements must be made by the parent to either administer before or after school or if required, send the medication in a secure manner in the child's bag daily. A list of the pupils with a possible need for medication is kept in the office. Procedures for administering medication are contained in each pupil's medical file which is also stored using internal systems. These procedures are agreed in advance, demonstrated and explained to staff by the parent of the child before the school enters into the "Administration of Medicines" agreement.

## 19 Infectious Diseases

It is the policy of Ballyagran National School that all infectious diseases shall be notified to the relevant authority. Any controls required following identification of any such disease shall be put in place immediately to ensure the safety of staff and students. The school will endeavour to minimise the risk by adherence to sound principles of cleanliness, hygiene and disinfection. Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) such as disposable gloves are available and shall be used during all first aid applications, cleaning tasks, etc. Toilets and washrooms shall be always provided with an adequate supply of hot water, soap, paper towels/hand-dryers/clean towels and a facility for the safe disposal of waste.

## 20 Electrical Appliances

Before using any appliance, the user should check that:

- All safety guards which are a normal part of the appliance are in working order.
- Power supply cables/leads are intact and free of cuts or abrasions.
- Unplug leads of appliances (e.g. interactive whiteboards, internet cables, microwaves, heaters) every evening.
- Microwave is turned off at the socket when not in use.
- Stand-alone heaters in teachers' rooms are turned off when the teacher is not in the room.
- Suitable undamaged fused plug tops are used and fitted with the correct fuse.
- Instructions for use of interactive whiteboards are given to each teacher.
- Visual Maintenance checks are carried out by the BOM Safety representative bi-annually.

## 21 Chemicals

Photocopier toner, detergents, cleaning products, disinfectant etc. must be stored in clearly identifiable containers bearing instructions and precautions for their use. If deemed necessary products shall be kept in a locked area and protection provided for using and handling them.

Cleaning products will be kept in storage under lock and key. The key will be kept in a secure location accessible only to authorised persons. An up-to-date SDS will be available for all products.

This policy was reviewed in June 2024. It will be reviewed annually or sooner if a need arises.

Signed: _____ Date: 5/vi/24

Chairperson

Signed: _____ Date: 5/6/24

Principal

Appendix 1:
Important points for BoM consideration (**click here**)