

Gaelscoil Eoghain Uí Thuairisc

Health and Safety Policy

Rationale

The Board of Management of Gaelscoil Eoghain Uí Thuairisc 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 of Gaelscoil Eoghain Uí Thuairisc and sets out the means to achieve that policy. The Board of Management's objective is to endeavour to provide a safe and healthy work environment for all our employees and pupils and to meet our duties to members of the public with whom we come 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 Board of Management will undertake to carry out a safety audit annually and report to staff. This inspection/safety audit will be carried out more frequently if requested by either staff or the Board of Management. All records of accidents or ill health will be monitored in order to ensure that any safety measures required can be put in place, wherever possible, to minimise the recurrence of such accidents and ill-health.

RELATIONSHIP TO SCHOOL ETHOS:

In line with the ethos of our school, each child's personal, emotional and social development is a priority. We aim to provide a safe and secure environment for our pupils and for all in the school community. We also seek to support those who are experiencing difficulties.

SCHOOL INFORMATION

School Name: Gaelscoil Eoghain Uí Thuairisc
to be referred to throughout this Safety Statement as 'Gaelscoil Eoghain Uí Thuairisc' or 'the School'

School Address: Garrán na Fuinseoige, Ceatharlach.
Tel: 059 9131634

Principal: Aingeal Uí Dhálaigh

Deputy Principal: Treasa Uí Néill

Assitant Principals: Majella Ní Riain, Móna Ní Liatháin

Fire Officers: Treasa Uí Néill, Móna Ní Liatháin

Safety Rep (staff): Art Ó Grifín

Safety Officer (BoM): Bredeen Keane

First Aid Personnel: All staff members

This Safety Statement is Gaelscoil Eoghain Uí Thuairisc's program in writing to manage the health, safety and welfare of our employees, pupils, contractors, visitors to our school and any other person that may be affected by the day to day work activities of our School. This Statement shall be made available to our employees, outside service providers and Inspectors of the Health and Safety Authority as required.

Policy Statement on Safety, Health and Welfare at Work of the Board of Management of Gaelscoil Eoghain Uí Thuairisc:

1.1 The members of the Board of Management of Gaelscoil Eoghain Uí Thuairisc are:

Chairperson: Maria Mhic Dhiarmada

Secretary: Mícheál Ó Rinn

Treasurer: Clár Uí Cheallaigh

Other Board members:

Aingeal Uí Dhálaigh (Principal)

An tAthair Conn Ó Maoldomhnaigh

Bredeen Keane

Sean Laffey

Micheál Abbey

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:

- (a) The design, provision and maintenance of all places 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 places of work
- (c) The design, provision and maintenance of plant and machinery
- (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 the 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 continuing updating of the *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 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 to the public.

1.5 The Board of Management of Gaelscoil Eoghain Uí Thuairisc undertakes to ensure that the provisions of the Safety, Health and welfare at Work Act 2005 are adhered to.

1.6 A Safety Committee may be established to monitor the implementation of the Safety and Health Policies of Gaelscoil Eoghain Uí Thuairisc and the requirements under the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act, 2005.

Statement of Responsibilities

School Principal

The School Principal has the following safety responsibilities:

- allocate the necessary financial, time and human resources to ensure the effective implementation and administration of the School's Safety Statement.
- ensure that all School staff are briefed on their responsibilities as required by the Safety Statement and that they receive the necessary information, training and supervision so that they may conduct their work in a safe manner.
- ensure a safety induction is provided to all new employees on their commencement of work in the School.
- ensure that a risk management approach to all school activities is adopted and that safe systems of work are established and maintained for particular equipment and tasks.
- ensure regular health and safety inspections are carried out in the School and submit inspection reports to the School Board as appropriate.
- ensure that all School plant and equipment are maintained in safe working order, regularly inspected and tested and records of the same maintained.
- carry out an annual training needs assessment to identify staff health and safety training requirements, coordinate training programs and ensure training records are maintained.
- ensure the provision of appropriate toilet and canteen facilities for staff and pupils, ensure staff facilities are segregated from student facilities.
- coordinate the establishment and maintenance of fire prevention and emergency response systems for the School, ensure that staff are trained in fire prevention and emergency response measures.
- be informed of any health and safety issues, accidents or dangerous occurrences that may occur in the School, coordinate accident investigations in conjunction with the relevant teacher and implement corrective actions where required.

- maintain the accident report register for the School and report accidents and dangerous occurrences to the Health and Safety Authority (H.S.A.) and the Department of Education & Science as required.

Deputy Principal

The Deputy Principal has the safety responsibilities as set out below. In addition, in the absence of the Principal at any time the deputy principal shall also assume the health and safety responsibilities of the Principal as listed previously on this safety statement.

The health and safety responsibilities of the Deputy Principal are:

- assist the Principal in the day to day implementation and administration of the School's Safety Statement.
- provide a safety induction to new teachers on their commencement of work in the School.
- assist the Principal in maintaining a risk management approach to all school activities, ensure that safe systems of work are maintained for particular equipment and tasks.
- maintain the fire register for the school, have the fire register up to date and available for inspection by the Fire Services, Health and Safety Authority, the Department of Education & Science or independent health and safety consultants at any time.
- provide support to any elected or selected safety representative in carrying out their duties.

Duties of Assistant Principals

The responsibilities of the Assistant Principals are:

- day-to-day management of health and safety in accordance with the Schools health and safety policies, procedures and safety rules.
- demonstrate at all times an exemplary approach to safety and health in order to engender in their pupils a total commitment to safety and health.

Duties of Teachers

Teachers will ensure that a reasonable account of health and safety is taken in all procedures and arrangements. In addition to their responsibilities as employees under the Safety, Health & Welfare at Work Act 2005, Teachers also have the following responsibilities:

- day-to-day management of health and safety in their classrooms and in School activities with their pupils in accordance with the Schools health and safety

policies, procedures and safety rules.

- relaying relevant health and safety information and safety rules to pupils particularly in relation to any medium or high risk class activities.
- providing adequate instruction and supervision to pupils in classroom activities.
- daily visual inspections of classrooms/work areas to ensure they are safe, take corrective action as required.
- visual inspections of equipment before use to ensure it is in safe operational order, take corrective action if required.
- ensuring protective equipment is used when needed and that where such protective equipment is required to be worn by pupils, that those pupils are trained in its safe and correct use.
- participating in inspections and the health and safety committee meetings, if appropriate.
- bringing health and safety matters that can not be resolved locally to the attention of the Principal.
- reporting accidents, incidents or dangerous occurrences that may occur in the classroom directly to the Principal.
- lead by example in relation to the adherence to safety rules in the classroom.

Contractors, Sub-contractors, Self-employed persons

Contractors, Sub-contractors, Self-employed persons hired by the school to carry out maintenance, repair, renovation, upgrade or construction works have the following responsibilities while working for the school:

- provide evidence of their employer's responsibility and public liability insurances as well as their safety statement for viewing, when requested to do so by the school principal.
- Prior to their commencement of work with this school, provide the school principal with copies of relevant competency that may be required for the work they are about to carry out.
- Bring to the attention of the principal and anyone else that may be affected by any process or use of materials, which may endanger health and safety while working in the school.
- Comply with the requirements of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005 and the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (Construction), Regulations 2006 as well as the requirements of this safety statement.
- Cooperate with the school in providing a safe work place for employees and safe school for pupils as well as a safe system of operation for staff and pupils during any repair, maintenance, upgrade or construction works carried out.

- Supervise their own employees at all times while working in the school to ensure that all work is conducted in a safe manner and that appropriate behaviour and languages observed around staff and pupils of the school.
- Comply with the requirements of the Department Of Education and Skills and of “Schools’ Safety Rules for Contractors”.
- Report any accident, incident, defect in the plant and equipment, place of work, or system of work without unreasonably delay, or in the principals, tot the deputy principal.

Safety Representative

Under the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005, employees have the right to elect a safety representative at the workplace. The role of the employee safety representative is to represent employees at the place of work in consultation with their employer on matters related to safety, health and welfare at the place of work.

This person shall undertake the following:

- Receive the appropriate training in health and safety to enable them to carry out their role as safety representative at no personal cost.
- Make representations to BOM on behave of the staff on any aspects of workplace health and safety.
- By prior arrangement with the principal, conduct school safety inspections and review safety information.
- Inspect the whole or any part of the school in the event of an accident, dangerous occurrence or imminent danger or risk to the safety, health and welfare of any person, including pupils, as long as this does not interfere with or obstruct the performance of any statutory obligation required to be performed by any person under any of the relevant statutory provisions.
- Carry out duties in accordance with the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005 without prejudice with school management.
- Promote safe work and practices in the school and lead by personal example in relation to the adherence to safety rules.
- After giving reasonable notice to the principal, investigate complaints relating to safety, health and welfare at work made by an employee whom they represent.
- Accompany a HSA inspector who is carrying out an inspection of the school, other than an inspection for the purpose of investigating an accident or dangerous occurrences.

Consultation and Information

It is the policy of the Board of Management of Gaelscoil Eoghain Uí Thuairisc:

- to consult with staff in preparation and completion of the Health and Safety Statement and of Hazard control forms
- 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.

General Safety, Health and Welfare Provisions

Safety Monitoring and Review: School Management is committed to constantly reviewing the necessity for further safety measures in equipment and activities, safe work procedures for such equipment and safety instruction and training for all employees to enable them to conduct their work in a manner that is safe and without risk to themselves, pupils or any other personnel working or visiting our School.

Monitoring and review of our health and safety system will be carried out as follows:

The Principal will ensure that the Safety Statement and associated risk assessments are reviewed annually, as required by changes in legislation, work processes or the introduction of new equipment, or in the event of an accident or dangerous occurrence in the School. The review shall assess the level of implementation of the Statement and work towards continuous improvement of safety in all aspects of the school's activities.

Cooperation, Consultation and Communication in the School

School Management will endeavour at all times to promote cooperation, communication and consultation on health and safety matters with all school staff.

Consultation and communication with staff shall take place through:

- Management and staff consultation with the elected Safety Representative
- Day to day discussions between the Principal, Deputy Principal, Assistant Principals and staff and
- Formal staff meetings at which safety is an agenda item.

Cooperation

School Management at all times wish to encourage co-operation in Safety, Health and Welfare matters with all personnel.

The law requires that staff must report defects of which they become aware without delay so that remedial action can be taken. Teachers should report defects to caretaker/principal/safety Rep/safety officer.

Suggestions for improvements in Safety and Health matters should be conveyed to caretaker/principal/safety Rep/safety officer where applicable.

Consultation

Bredeen Keane is the Safety Officer, and also has the responsibility as a Parent Representative on the Board of Management.

Bredeen has the full support of School Management & Board of Management in her role.

Members of staff have the right to approach Bredeen at any time with any workplace health and safety concerns that they may have. Bredeen in turn will document all health and safety concerns raised and liaise with the Principal to resolve such matters.

The Principal shall consult with all staff in any matter that may have the potential to affect their health and safety or that of pupils. Consultation shall be through informal day to day discussions with staff and also formal staff meetings at which safety will be an agenda item.

Communication

All staff are encouraged to communicate their views, health and safety complaints or recommendations for improvement to an elected safety representative and/or alternatively, time will be allotted at the staff meetings for such matters to be raised and discussed openly.

At the first staff meeting of the year safety will be an agenda item. The Principal will take the opportunity at the meeting to review safe operating procedures and risk assessments and disseminate School health and safety information.

Hazards

The safety officer of the Board of Management in conjunction with the staff safety representative will complete Hazard Control Forms. Some hazards can be rectified but others remain constant. 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. The Board of Management in consultation with the employees will review and make recommendations on the elimination of Hazards.

Specific Hazards

Fire

It is the policy of the Board of Management of Gaelscoil Eoghain Uí Thuairisc that:

- There is an adequate supply of fire extinguishers which will deal with any type of Fire
- All fire equipment is identified and regularly serviced
- Regular Fire drills take place at least once a term
- Instruction is given in the use of Fire Extinguishers for specific materials/equipment
- Fire alarms are clearly marked
- Signs will be clearly visible to ensure visitors are aware of exit doors
- All electrical equipment will be turned off outside office hours and when offices are vacated for lengthy periods (as appropriate)
- Assembly areas are designated outside the building
- Pupils/caretaker/ cleaners leaving/returning to the school should fill in the 'in-out book' at the office
- Exit signs are clearly marked
- There will be named persons responsible for fire drills and evacuation procedures
- The school and equipment have been checked by a Fire Officer and all recommendations made by him/her have been implemented where possible and/or practicable.

Constant Hazards

Machinery, Kitchen Equipment and Electrical Appliances

It is the policy of the Board of Management of Gaelscoil Eoghain Uí Thuairisc that: Machinery, Kitchen Equipment and Electrical Appliances are to be used only by competent and authorised persons. Such appliances and equipment will be subject to regular maintenance checks.

Chemicals

It is the policy of the Board of Management of Gaelscoil Eoghain Uí Thuairisc that all chemicals, detergents etc., be stored in clearly identifiable containers bearing instructions and precautions for their use and shall be kept in a locked area, and protection provided to be used when handling them.

Drugs Medications

It is the policy of the Board of Management of Gaelscoil Eoghain Uí Thuairisc that all medications, drugs, etc be kept in a cabinet in the office, access to the cabinet is limited to staff only.

C/f the school's policy regarding Administration of Medicine.

Highly Polished Floors

It is the policy of the Board of Management of Gaelscoil Eoghain Uí Thuairisc that:- Floors will not be polished or made slippery (or specify a non slip polish). That washing of floors is conducted after school hours to ensure, as far as is reasonably practicable, elimination of the danger of slipping. To this end warning signs regarding wet floors will be used.

Code of Discipline

The Code of Behaviour in the school provides for a level of behaviour to minimise personal risk or stress to any employee.

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.

Trained First Aid Personnel

It is the policy of the Board of Management of Gaelscoil Eoghain Uí Thuairisc that: -

An employee will be trained to apply First Aid to other employees.

All required remedies and equipment are made available for first aid function.

There will be an adequate supply of properly equipped First Aid Boxes available at all times to staff which will contain:

Elastoplast plasters

Wasp Eze

Tape

Cotton Bandage

Antiseptic Wipes

Scissors

Disposable gloves must be used at all times when administering First Aid.

Hot water and soap will be available and should be used before and after administering First Aid.

Other

When the Patron is making nominations to the Board of Management and when parents are electing parents' representatives to the Board of Management they are requested to bear the Health and Safety Act in mind and, where possible, to ensure that the Board of Management should contain at least one member with skills in this area.

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 Vice Principal before initiating any work on the school premises. Visitor ID badges are available from the office if necessary.

It is the policy of the Board of Management Gaelscoil Eoghain Uí Thuairisc 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 earmuffs. 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.

All flammable, toxic and corrosive substances must be kept in the locked press/room provided. All the above substances must be clearly and accurately labelled at all times.

When a child who needs to be lifted is enrolled in the school, suitable support services must be provided, arrangements made and training provided for the lifting of the child in order to minimise strain on staff.

Arrangements will be made to ensure the protection of staff from violent or disturbed children.