

Safety Statement

1. Introduction

This document has been prepared in compliance with Section 20 of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005 and the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act (General Regulations 2007, as amended by the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work 9 General Applications) (Amendment) Regulations 2007.

2. Board of Management Rationale for this Safety Policy

The Board of Management recognises and accepts not only its statutory responsibility but also its obligations as an employer to direct, manage and achieve the Safety, Health and Welfare of Work of every employee and guest alike. The Board of Management believes that each employee accepts his or her legal and moral responsibilities for improving and maintaining Safety, Health and Welfare in the workplace and for behaviour which does not jeopardise the individual's personal Safety, Health and Welfare or that of others. The Board of Management also accepts the requirement by law to complete the following:

- Identify the hazards
- Carry out a Risk Assessment
- Prepare a written Safety Statement

This Safety Statement represents a commitment to the Health and Safety of all the school's employees, students and others who visit the school or work in it. It will influence all work activities including:

- The selection of competent people, equipment and materials
- The method in which work is done
- How goods and services are designed and provided

3. Relationship to the Ethos of the School

Our ethos statement includes the following:

“We strive towards making the school a centre of excellence in which the highest professional standards are maintained and where pupils enjoy learning in a safe, caring and happy environment”

The Board of Management recognises the link between the school’s ethos and this Safety Statement and the intrinsic link between the two documents.

4. The Aims of the Statement

- To create a safe and healthy school environment by identifying, preventing and tackling hazards and their accompanying risks
- To ensure an understanding of the responsibility of the entire school population of a duty of care towards pupils, staff, management and all those with business within the school and its grounds or in close proximity to it
- To protect the school community from workplace accidents and ill health at work
- To comply with, in so far as is possible, all relevant legislation including the following areas:
 - The provision of a safe workplace for everyone associated with the school
 - The employment of competent employees who will carry out safe work practices
 - The provision of safe access and egress routes
 - The safe handling and use of hazardous substances and equipment
 - The provision of safe equipment with appropriate maintenance
 - The provision of appropriate personal protection equipment

5. Responsibilities of the Employer

The Board of Management is responsible for:

- Drawing up a Health and Safety Statement
- Displaying the Statement clearly in the school

- Appointing one or more competent persons to oversee protection from and the prevention of risks to safety, health and welfare at work
- Consulting regularly with employees in drafting and updating the Safety Statement
- Providing and maintaining a workplace that is safe
- Managing work activities to ensure the health, safety and welfare of employees
- Ensuring risks are assessed and hazards are eliminated or minimised as far as is practically possible
- Ensuring that the Critical Incident Plan is regularly reviewed and communicated to everyone
- Providing training and information to workers in a format and language that is appropriate
- Reporting serious accidents to the H.S.A.
- Requiring an up to date Health and Safety Policy from employers who are contracted by the school e.g. painters, contractors, bus companies etc

The Principal shall:

- Ensure that each new employee upon commencement of employment shall obtain a copy of the Safety Statement and be familiar with its contents
- Bring the Safety Statement to the attention of all employees at least annually, or when it is amended due to changes in light of experience, legal requirements and operational changes
- Bringing the Safety Statement to the attention of others who may be exposed to specific risks at the place of work to which the statement applies
- Organising for the review of the policy at one Board of Management each year, generally in the second term
- Organising that the statement be brought to the attention of all staff members at one In-School Management meeting and one staff meeting each year
- Ensuring it will also be brought to the attention of visitors where it is deemed necessary and people who are employed by the Board of Management to carry out maintenance work within the school and its grounds or in close proximity to the school.

6. Responsibilities of Employees

Safety is a line management responsibility. The school staff is responsible for safety in their area and the implementation of relevant safety procedures. Health and safety is the business of everyone. Everyone who works in St. Louis GNS has legal duties designed to protect them and their colleagues as follows:

- Comply with safety and health legislation, both in the 2005 Act and elsewhere
- Co-operate with the employer or others to ensure that the Health and Safety Plan is implemented
- Take reasonable care to protect their own safety, health and welfare and that of any other person
- Not to be under the influence of an intoxicant which will endanger their own or other people's safety
- If reasonably required by the employer, submit to any appropriate, reasonable and proportionate tests, by or under the supervision of a registered medical practitioner who is a competent person, as necessary, to assist that person in complying with safety and health legislation as appropriate.
- To co-operate with an employer or other people to ensure that the Health and safety law is implemented
- Not to engage in improper conduct or together behaviour such as violence, bullying or horseplay, which could endanger another person at work or their safety, health and welfare
- To attend Health and Safety Training when organised and to correctly use equipment at work
- To use protective clothing and equipment provided
- To report any dangerous practices or situations that they are aware of to an appropriate person
- Not to interfere with or misuse any safety equipment at the workplace
- To advise their employer of any medical condition they have and/or medication they take that may influence their performance at work

- To adhere to the school's policies and ethos
- To abide by the Child Protection deadlines adopted by the school
- To report to the employer, or other appropriate person, as soon as they become aware of any instance-
 - Where work being carried on, or likely to be carried on, in a manner which may endanger their safety, health or welfare or that of another person,
 - Of any defect in the place of work, the systems of work or in any article or substance likely to endanger them or another person, and
 - A breach of safety and health legislation likely to endanger them or another person which comes to their attention.
- Employees may not intentionally or recklessly interfere with, misuse or damage anything provided under safety and health legislation, or provided to protect the safety, health and welfare of persons at work, or to place at risk the safety, health or welfare of persons in connection with work activities without reasonable cause.

7. Safety Officer

Mrs Bernie Farrell, assisted by Mrs Tina Mc Kenna, shall be responsible for overseeing the safety provisions on behalf of the school and is the Safety Representative elected under Section 25 of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005 until the new BOM is elected in autumn of 2011. They shall be consulted if any of the employees have queries regarding any of the safety provisions outlined in this Safety Statement.

Their main duties and responsibilities are as follows:

- a) To guide and advise on all Health, Safety and Welfare matters
- b) To represent the employees at the workplace in consultation with the employer on matters in relation to Health and Safety
- c) To receive appropriate training

- d) To ensure that the school fulfils all statutory requirements on respect of the Factories Act 1955, the Safety in Industry Act 1980 and the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005.
- e) To undertake regular and appropriate revision and auditing of the school safety procedures and methods of operation, to ensure that they are kept up to date.
- f) To ensure that adequate fire protection and prevention measures are provided.
- g) The Safety Officer shall investigate all accidents and dangerous occurrences and shall ensure that appropriate statutory notification is properly completed. Causes of accidents shall be determined as far as practicable and where appropriate, remedial action shall be specified.
- h) They will carry out a risk assessment each June and provide a report in writing to the Board of Management.
- i) Assist in the investigation of complaints made by employees
- j) Make representation to the employer on matters relating to safety, health and welfare
- k) Make representations to and receive information from a Health and Safety Inspector

8. Safety Training

All employees will be

- a) Instructed in the content of the Safety Statement
- b) Instructed in lifting and handling methods
- c) Advised of the nature and location of fire equipment and how it is safely operated
- d) Notified of any changes in safety procedures
- e) Receive First Aid, C.P.R. and Bereavement Counselling Professional Development

9. Hygiene

Hygiene is the concern of every one in our school. Good hygiene practice is essential for the health and welfare of all in the school. For this reason, any infringement of the Code of Behaviour in this regard will be viewed with hygienic practice. The staff, teaching and

support, is requested to be vigilant in this regard and to bring to the notice of the Principal any correction action which may be deemed necessary.

- Head-lice: Parents are informed if head lice are detected by a teacher or other staff member. Letters are then sent to the parents of the child's class, obviously without the child being named. In extreme cases, advice will be sought from the HSE
- Bathroom hygiene in the school: Soap dispensers, towels on rollers and toilet roll dispensers have been installed in all toilet areas. The caretaker cleans each toilet area at the end of each day
- The caretaker also cleans each classroom at the end of each day
- Each class and teacher has the responsibility of maintaining their room in a neat and tidy manner and of alerting the caretaker to any hygiene problems which arise
- The Green School Committee has the responsibility for ensuring that our waste is placed safely in the appropriate bins provided. Hygiene procedures around this are explained to the committee at the beginning of each school year
- Mrs Ronnie Dowd, Mrs Laura Dunlop and Mrs Rose Murray have the responsibility of maintaining the staff-room and ensuring the cleaning of equipment, dishes and cooking utensils is completed to the necessary standards

10. Welfare

To ensure the continued welfare of employees, toilet and cloakroom areas are provided. Staff must co-operate in maintaining a high standard of hygiene in these areas. All members of staff are reminded that:

- Any person who is under medical supervision or on prescribed medication and who has been certified for work should notify the Principal of any known side effects or temporary physical disabilities which could hinder their work performance and which may be a danger to either themselves or their fellow workers or pupils
- Illicit drugs and alcohol: Staff are not allowed to attend the premises or carry out duties under the influence of illicit drugs or alcohol. Any person found breaking this rule will be liable to instant dismissal
- Pupils are allowed access to the school from 8-35am each morning. They are supervised in the school hall until 8-50a.m. and then they walk to their classrooms where their teacher is waiting

- Supervision is provided and timetabled for each break time with one teacher and one Special Needs Assistant on each yard and one teacher in charge of the Sick Bay area. The supervision roster is clearly displayed in the staff-room and in each classroom
- Pupils are trained to move around the school in a quiet, calm and orderly fashion. Difficulties with this are addressed at Assembly time
- When a teacher is absent without certification, her class will be divided up. When certification is provided, a qualified substitute teacher will be employed when possible
- When children have to leave school early, they must be picked up by their parents. They will not be allowed to meet their parents outside of the school grounds. The parent is asked to write a note to the teacher to inform her of such a necessity
- A record is kept of all significant accidents and incidents. The Deputy Principal, Sr.Máire Cannon, has the responsibility for supervising the written reporting of accidents and follow up procedures. This record is kept in the principal's office and each accident recorded is also signed by her
- All parents are asked to supply emergency contact numbers on enrolment. These contact details are fed into the Student Management System used by the school (Aladdin Schools). The parents of St. Louis GNS sign up to an agreement to be contacted about a medical or other emergency but that if this contact is impossible, the staff of the school are given permission to send the child for emergency treatment without delay. An explanation as to how simple injuries are dealt with is also included on the enrolment form. All members of staff are trained in basic First Aid
- Parents are also asked to inform the school of any medical difficulties or issues their child has, the name of their doctor and how best these health issues can be dealt with when they arise. These issues may be directly related to our Administration of Medication Policy to which parents must abide by in all matters relating to medication. When a child presents with a serious medical difficulty, all members of staff are informed
- St. Louis GNS has a Healthy Eating policy. From this, the pupils are encouraged to bring a healthy lunch to school each day and to take a single treat on Fridays. Crisps, fizzy drinks and nuts are banned. At social gatherings, staff ensure that healthy treats are always on offer
- Drinking water is available throughout the school and from the water cooler in the staff-room
- All adults and children are expected to abide by the School's Code of Behaviour. Behaviour which causes a risk to others will not be tolerated. Serious assaults on members of staff or pupils will be taken very seriously and dealt with according to the code. All new parents are given a copy of this to be signed at the beginning of each school year
- All members of staff have been made aware of the Child Protection Guidelines adapted by the school. The principal is the Designated Liaison Person while the Deputy Principal is her assistant. These details are displayed in the front hall

- The policy on school tours is reviewed each school year and discussed at a staff meeting prior to when the tours take place
- All new members of staff, voluntary workers, work experience students over 16, tutors from outside the staff and teaching practice students will be asked to produce a copy of their Garda vetting certificate
- Positive Staff Relations are essential in every school. To ensure happy and fulfilling working relationships, the staff will regularly work with the INTO 2000 Working Together resource. Regular reviews of the Adult Bullying Policy and the Stress Management Policy will assist in this process. All members of staff will be made aware of the correct use of the Grievance Procedure
- Teachers with an illness or pregnant will be dealt with sensitively and according to advice from their doctor and Medmark
- All staff members are trained in the use of fire equipment and the lifting of heavy equipment

11. Accident/ Incident Reporting

All accidents, no matter how trivial, and whether to employees, pupils or members of the public must be reported immediately to the Principal. This is necessary to monitor the progress of safety standards and to ensure that proper medical attention is given where required. Sr. Máire Cannon is responsible for the recording of accidents as explained above. When a serious accident occurs and directly after accessing emergency services and ensuring the patient is in appropriate medical care, the accident will be reported to the Board of Management and the H.S.A. The following types of accidents will be reported:

- An accident causing loss of life to any employed or self-employed person if sustained in the course of their employment
- An accident sustained in the course of their employment which prevents any employed or self-employed person from performing their normal duties for more than 3 days, not including the date of the accident
- An accident to any person not at work caused by a work activity which causes loss of life or requires medical treatment

10. Fire Prevention & Evacuation

- a) Fire safety inspections and analysis of potential fire hazards are regularly carried out
- b) Liaison with relevant authorities takes place as necessary
- c) All fire exits and emergency paths of egress are marked using standard symbols
- d) First Aid Boxes are available to deal with minor injuries

An evacuation procedure has been prepared and is provided to each employee. Evacuation drills take place at least once a term or more often if required. The first evacuation drill takes place in early September to ensure that newly enrolled pupils are familiar with the drill. Employees are reminded to familiarise themselves with the procedures so that a fast and effective evacuation of the premises can be completed in the event of an emergency. Exits and assembly points are clearly marked, doors are easily used for this purpose and all employees and pupils are made aware of the designated assembly points. The procedures for evacuation are displayed in each classroom and in the staff-room and front hall. The procedures will be revised at least once a year. All new members of staff and new pupils are made aware of these procedures in early September.

11. Smoking

Smoking is not permitted in the school. Under the Public Health (Tobacco) Act, 2002 (Section 470 Regulations 2003, **smoking is forbidden** in enclosed places of work in Ireland.

12. Critical Incidents

A Critical Incidents Policy was formulated in June 2009. All staff members have a copy of this policy which is kept in a special coloured file in each classroom. The policy is revised every second year and the staff is reminded of its contents at one staff meeting each year. New members of staff have an outline of the Critical Incidents Plan in their folders.

13. Hazard Identification and Risk Control Measures

The Board of Management in consultation with the Teaching Staff has identified the following areas of school life and activity as requiring special care in order to prevent injury or damage to members of the school community.

1. Activity outside of the Classroom (areas include steps, back of prefabs, boundary walls/fences, car parking areas, grass areas, the area around the language rooms)
2. Activity within the Classroom (items include movable furniture, materials, equipment)
3. Restricted areas- main fuse board room, power distribution board, boiler house, cleaning stores, equipment and materials
4. Hygiene

5. Fire Drill
6. First Aid
7. Other areas and equipment (G.P. Room and equipment, corridors, photocopier, guillotine, trailing leads)

To minimise these dangers, the following safety/ protective measures must be adhered to:

- a) Access to and operation of plant/ equipment is strictly restricted to members of staff whose job function is that of running, maintaining, cleaning and monitoring of particular items of plant in the course of their normal duties.
- b) In addition all such equipment and machinery is to be used in strict accordance with the manufacturer's instructions and recommendations;
- c) Where applicable members of staff have been instructed in the correct use of machinery and equipment
- d) All machinery and electrical equipment are fitted with adequate safeguards
- e) Precautionary notices, in respect of safety matters are displayed at relevant points.

The school opens for school business at 8-35a.m. and in accordance with Rule 124 (4) all teachers will be present to exercise the required supervision over their class at 8-50am. Each member of staff is aware that the break which take place from 10-45-11-00 and from 12-25 – 1:00 p.m. requires special attention and care. Attention of the teaching staff is directed to Rule 12 (4). In all pupil activity involving games of whatsoever kind, teachers will exercise prudent judgement on the level of safety required and bring to the notice of the Principal any matters requiring corrective action.

Within the classroom and school building during normal school business, the hazards for potential injury for all within the school are:

- a) Activity involving the use of tools of any kind e.g. scissors, pointed implements etc.
- b) Activity involving the use of electrical power
- c) Activity involving the use of I.T. equipment
- d) Moveable furniture

Teachers and support staff are requested to conduct a periodic safety check of their classrooms and / or workplace and to effect or to request immediate corrective action. For this purpose, the Board of management recommends that the teacher gives a written record of the safety concerns to Mrs Bernie Farrell, which will then be used to complete the June Risk Assessment as mentioned above. Members of the Support staff are requested to assist with the Risk Assessment by notifying the Safety Officer of hazards and potential hazards.

Electrical Appliances

Arrangements will be made for all electrical appliance to be checked on a quarterly basis by a competent person i.e. maintenance person, the supplier or his agent. Before using any appliance, the user should check that:

- a) All safety guards which are a normal part of the appliance are fitted and in working order
- b) Power supply cables/ leads are intact of cuts or abrasions
- c) Suitable undamaged fused plug tops are used and fitted with the correct fuse.

Chemicals, Solvents, Detergents, Copier Toner etc.

Material Safety Data Sheets are supplied with all such materials. Members of staff using these materials should familiarise themselves with the hazards associated with the materials and precautions to be taken in the event of spillage, splashes, etc.

All of these substances are kept in a locked store-room which the students have no access to.

14. Concluding Comment

This Safety Statement has been prepared based on conditions existing in the premises of the School at the time of writing. It will be revised at least annually, or as required, so as to comply with any changes in conditions.

15. Success Criteria

The success of this policy will be based on Safety being provided for our students, the entire staff and school visitors. It is hoped that as hazards are brought to the Safety Officer's attention, and as accidents and emergencies are reported, proof will be provided about the safe environment of our school.

16. Roles and Responsibility

The people who have particular responsibility for aspects of this policy are:

- The B.O.M
- The Safety Officer
- The Safety Representative

- All members of staff
- The parents
- Our students

17. Other Policies

Other policies or procedures which have a bearing on this policy include:

- Administration of Medication
- Acceptable Use Policy
- Stress Management Policy
- Adult Bullying Policy
- Child Protection
- Our Code of Behaviour
- Our Anti- Bullying Policy
- Substance Use Policy
- School Tour Policy
- Complaints Procedure
- Critical Incidents Policy
- Curriculum Policies

18. Implementation Date/ Timetable for Review/ Ratification

This policy was partially reviewed in January 2010 but was reviewed again between Easter and summer 2011. It was ratified at the BOM meeting on Tuesday, June 14th 2011.

19. Communication

This Health and Safety Policy is available in the office at all times and copies of the Revised Policy will be signed by staff and distributed to parents after the 2011 Review.

Signed: (Chairperson/ Manger) _____

Date: _____