

Scoil Phroinsiais Naofa

Health & Safety Statement 2023

Review Date: Sept 2024

Health & Safety Policy Statement

Introductory Statement

This policy statement was adapted to the current format in accordance with the guidelines of the Primary Professional Development Service. Our previous Safety Statement was reviewed and updated to take into account the most recent legislation in regard to Health and Safety. It was disseminated to the wider school community through the school website and ratified by the Board of Management on the 26th of November, 2018.

Rationale

It is a legal requirement under the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act, 2005 for every employer, in conjunction with employees, to prepare a Health and Safety Statement. It represents the Board of Management (BOM)'s commitment to safety and health, and specifies the manner, the organisation and the resources necessary for maintaining and reviewing safety and health standards.

The BOM wishes to document their health and safety programme and make it available to all employees, outside services providers and Inspectors of the Health and Safety Authority.

Relationship to Characteristic Spirit of the School

According to our Mission Statement Scoil Phroinsias Naofa strives to provide a well-ordered, caring, happy and safe environment for our pupils. In keeping with this philosophy our Health and Safety policy emphasises the importance of the health and safety of our pupils and that of all school employees. The Board of Management, Scoil Phroinsias Naofa 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, Scoil Phroinsias Naofa 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 into 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.

Aims

- to create a safe and healthy school environment by identifying, preventing and tackling hazards and their accompanying risks
- to ensure understanding of the school's duty of care towards pupils
- to protect the school community from workplace accidents and ill health at work
- to outline procedures and practices in place to ensure safe systems of work
- to comply with all relevant health and safety legislation (so far as is reasonably practicable) to include the following areas

- *Provision of a safe workplace for all employees - teachers, SNAs, secretary, caretaker, etc.*
- *To ensure competent employees, who will carry out safe work practices*
- *Safe access and egress routes*
- *Safe handling and use of hazardous substances and equipment*
- *Safe equipment including maintenance and use of appropriate guards*
- *Provision of appropriate personal protective equipment.*

Success Criteria

Our success criteria will be based on the achievement of our aims to provide a safe environment for our employees, pupils and visitors. We will use staff observation and parental feedback in addition to Health Inspector's Reports and our safety record as our benchmark for success or otherwise of the policy.

Roles and Responsibility

DUTIES OF ALL EMPLOYEES

1. It is the duty of every employee while at work:
 - (a) 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.
 - (b) To co-operate with his/her employer and any other person to such an extent as will enable his/her employer and the other person to comply with any of the relevant statutory obligations.
 - (c) To use in such manner so as to provide the protection intended, any suitable appliance, protective clothing, convenience, equipment or anything 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.
 - (d) To report to the Board of Management without unreasonable delay, any defects in plant, equipment, place of work or system of work, which might endanger safety, health or welfare, of which he/she might become aware.
2. No person will intentionally or recklessly interfere with or misuse any appliance, protective clothing, convenience, equipment or anything provided in pursuance of any of the relevant statutory provisions or otherwise, for securing safety, health and welfare arising out of work activities.
3. Employees will, by using available facilities and equipment provided, ensure that work practices are performed in the safest manner possible.

DUTIES OF SAFETY REPRESENTATIVE

- Conduct an assessment to identify all hazards on the appropriate form (Appendix 3). A Sample Checklist is included as Appendix 4.
- Assess the risks associated with these hazards.
- Detail arrangements made, resources supplied, and responsibility required to deal with the hazards and to keep them under review.

DUTIES OF SAFETY OFFICER

- To liaise with the Safety Rep on matters of Health and Safety.
- To make recommendations for the alleviation of potential hazards.
- To monitor progress in relation to dealing with hazards.
- Report on all of the above at appropriate BOM meetings.

Timeframe for Implementation

The revised policy will be implemented from January 2019.

Timeframe for Review

This policy is reviewed bi-annually

Responsibility for Review

The BOM will be responsible for reviewing the policy.

Ratification and Communication

The Board of Management ratified this policy on the 17th of October '23.

Signed: Mary Ledwith, (Chairperson, BOM)

Scoil Phroinsias Naofa does not have adequate resources to disseminate all of its policies to all the concerned members of the wider school community. The policy is communicated to the members of the BOM and is available to the wider school community through the parents' representatives on the BOM. All Scoil Phroinsias Naofa policies are available for inspection in the school.

APPENDIX 1

FIRE EVACUATION PROCEDURE

Sequence

- Alarm
- Call the fire brigade
- Evacuation
- Assembly
- Roll Call
- Tackle the fire

Aim

To prevent panic and ensure the safe, orderly and efficient evacuation of all the occupants of the school using all the exit facilities available and to train the mind to react rationally when confronted with a fire or other emergency at school or elsewhere.

Alarm

Anyone discovering an outbreak of fire will raise the alarm at once by informing a teacher. The teacher will immediately sound the fire alarm.

Call the Fire Brigade

The Fire Brigade will be called at the discretion of School Management.

Evacuation

On hearing the alarm, pupils will stand to attention by their desks and, when instructed by the teacher in charge of the class as to the exit route to be followed, will leave the classroom in single file. Classes will then proceed at a steady uniform pace to the place of assembly followed by the teacher who will bring the Roll Sheet and close the classroom door and any other doors used to exit. The Safety Officer and Safety Representative will, if safe to do so, 'sweep' the main building to ensure no pupils remain in toilet or other areas. He/She will carry the school register to the assembly area. The Deputy Principal will, if safe to do so, 'sweep' the Junior Block to ensure no pupils remain in toilet or other areas.

Assembly

The place of assembly is the Grass Area behind the Main Building and all classes will stand together in lines according to class. If this area becomes unsafe, supervised evacuation from the school grounds will be by a safe escape route identified by the Principal.

Roll Call

Immediately the classes have mustered at the place of assembly, a roll call or count will be taken, from the roll sheet. If anyone is missing an immediate search by the staff will be made. As far as is practicable, no place to which pupils have access being overlooked. The officer in charge of the Fire Brigade will be met on arrival and immediately informed whether or not all persons have been safely evacuated.

Attacking Fire

Circumstances will dictate whether fire-fighting operations will be attempted. Fire fighting will always be secondary to life safety. While small fires may be dealt with summarily, in the case of a sizeable fire, safe evacuation will be the primary concern.

Fire Drills and Testing Alarms

A Test fire drill will be held once per term. It will be carried out according to the above procedure with the exception of 'Calling the Fire Brigade' and 'Tackling the Fire'. A record of all fire drills will be kept. It will include details of drills including date, time, weather conditions, time taken for evacuation and any other relevant information. Fire Alarms will be tested once a term outside of school hours. After a fire drill and quick meeting of Principal, Safety Officer and Safety Representative will be held to discuss any problems and queries which arose from drill.

APPENDIX 2

ADMINISTRATION OF MEDICATIONS

As a general rule, teachers will not be involved in the administration of medication to pupils. There are, however, exceptional circumstances where there is an ongoing condition such as diabetes, epilepsy etc. or a condition necessitating emergency treatment. In such circumstances and where a teacher or SNA is willing to become involved in the administration of medication a set procedure will be followed:

- The parents of the pupils concerned will write to the board of management requesting the board to authorise a teacher to administer the medication. The request should also contain written instructions of the procedure to be followed in administering the medication.
- The board of management, having considered the matter, may authorise a teacher to administer medication to a pupil. If the teacher is so authorised s/he should be properly instructed by the board of management.
- A teacher should not administer medication without the specific authorisation of the board.
- In administering medication to pupils, teachers should exercise the standard of care of a reasonable and prudent parent.
- The board of management will inform the school's insurers accordingly.
- The board of management will seek an indemnity from the parent(s) in respect of any liability that may arise regarding the administration of medication.

Arrangements will be made for the safe storage of medication.

APPENDIX 3

HAZARD CONTROL FORM			
Hazard	Action Taken	Date Remedied	Person Responsible

--	--	--	--

APPENDIX 4

SAFETY REPRESENTATIVES' CHECKLIST

1 CIRCULATION AREAS

1.1 Stairways

Check that:

1.1.1. stairways are fitted with sound banisters or rails;

1.1.2 stairways are adequately lit;

1.1.3 steps are not worn or broken or slippery.

1.2 Passages

Check that:

1.2.1 floor surfaces are even and are not slippery;

1.2.2 passages are adequately lit;

1.2.3 litter or rubbish has not been allowed to accumulate;

1.2.4 mats, etc, are not positioned in such a way as to be tripping hazards;

1.2.5 there are no areas of loose, flaking or damaged paint, plaster or plasterboard.

1.3 Doors and Windows

Check that:

1.3.1 doors are unobstructed;

1.3.2 doors with glass windows have toughened or laminated glass;

1.3.3 doors with a fire resistance requirement have wire reinforced glass;

1.3.4 there are no doors with:

- loose or broken hinges;
- damaged or sticking catches;
- broken wood panels or glass panels;
- loose or stiff handles;

1.3.5 doors are not allowed to swing freely without restraint;

1.3.6 windows are not broken or cracked;

1.3.7 windows open easily without undue force being applied;

1.3.8 windows do not jut out dangerously when open;

1.3.9 windows are cleaned regularly;

1.3.10 windows do not have broken fastenings or cords;

1.3.11 where necessary, a window pole is available.

2 HEATING AND VENTILATION

Check that:

2.1 the heating system is regularly serviced and maintained in good order.

2.2 the heating system is adequate to comply with the requirements of circular 24/82;

2.3 where there are large areas of glass facing direct sunlight, there is provision for shading, e.g. Venetian blinds;

2.4 windows can be easily opened to allow for adequate ventilation.

Further advice on heating and ventilation is given in the next section.

3 FIRE SAFETY

Check that:

3.1 the fire exits and escape routes are clear from obstructions;

3.2 fire doors are kept unlocked and unobstructed whilst people are on the premises;

3.3 all designated fire exits are clearly marked;

3.4 evacuation procedures are clearly displayed;

3.5 staff and children are familiar with evacuation procedures;

3.6 staff are familiar with and have been adequately trained in the procedure to be followed when using fire fighting equipment;

3.7 there have been practice evacuations/fire drills held at least once per term;

3.8 fire doors open outwards and are not held or wedged open;

3.9 fire extinguishers and fire blankets are checked and maintained in accordance with manufacturer's instructions;

3.10 the fire fighting equipment available is that recommended by the local authority's fire officer and is located in accordance with the fire officers recommendations;

3.11 the fire alarm system is tested at regular intervals whilst the school is in session to ensure that it works and is audible in all parts of the building;

3.12 flammable substances e.g. cleaning fluids, photocopying chemicals etc, are stored correctly, away from any sources of heat.

More detailed advice on fire safety is given in the next section.

4 ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT

4.1 General

All electrical equipment should be maintained and checked regularly by a competent person. Such maintenance should include checking that:

- equipment is correctly wired and earthed;
- plugs are correctly wired;
- use ratings that are correct for the type of equipment being used (fuse ratings should be marked on the equipment and the plug).
- the mains supply is still capable of meeting the maximum demand;
- the distribution system (i.e. sockets, bench supplies etc) is suitable for the type of work being carried out;
- the isolating switches are marked, well-sited, accessible and known to staff;
- residual current (earth leakage) circuit breakers are used where appropriate.

4.2 Lighting

Visually check that:

4.2.1 all the light fittings are working and are kept in a clean condition;

4.2.2 light switches are not broken and appear to be in a safe condition;

4.2.3 the lighting is adequate for the type of work being undertaken as specified in Circular 24/82.

4.3 Plugs/Sockets/Leads

Visually check that:

- 4.3.1 plugs are in good condition with no cracks or pieces missing;
- 4.3.2 sockets are in good condition with no cracks or pieces missing;
- 4.3.3 socket screws and mountings are secure;
- 4.3.4 sockets are situated in safe positions, convenient for the equipment to be used and not subject to damp;
- 4.3.5 indicator lights on sockets function correctly;
- 4.3.6 insulation on leads is not cracked or frayed;
- 4.3.7 leads are without knots or joins and are reasonably free of 'kinks';
- 4.3.8 Leads are the correct length for the equipment being used;
- 4.3.9 there are no trailing leads;
- 4.3.10 surge protection adaptors are being used and not overloaded;
- 4.3.11 leads and flexible cable are securely fixed at both equipment and plug ends.

4.4 Equipment

Check that:

- 4.4.1 fixed and portable electrical equipment is not damaged and, as far as you are aware, is operating correctly;
- 4.4.2 copies of manufacturers' instructions/operating manuals are easily accessible;
- 4.4.3 equipment is only being used for purposes for which it was intended;
- 4.4.4 where appropriate, all electrical equipment is switched off and, unplugged when not in use;
- 4.4.5 mains isolating switches are easily accessible and known to staff;
- 4.4.6 on/off indicator lights function correctly;
- 4.4.7 equipment incorporating heating has a thermal safety cut-out in addition to a thermostat;
- 4.4.8 equipment containing liquid has a leakage detector;
- 4.4.9 all items of electrical equipment are properly and regularly maintained and serviced.

5 USE OF GAS

There are currently no gas installations in the school.

6 FIRST AID

Check that:

- 6.1 notices are posted in prominent positions detailing:
 - procedure for calling ambulances etc;
 - telephone number of local doctor, gardai, hospital.
 - procedure for dealing with individual pupils emergencies due to known conditions/allergies etc
- 6.2 first aid boxes are readily available and adequately stocked
- 6.3 the accident book is readily available and kept up-to-date.

7 GENERAL PURPOSE CLASSROOMS

7.1 look again at sections 1-4;

Check that:

- 7.2 hazards are not arising from overcrowded classrooms;
- 7.3 all cupboards, fixed blackboards, display units are stable;
- 7.4 classroom furniture is not damaged;
- 7.5 wherever possible, there are no sharp edges or corners on the furniture;
- 7.6 furniture is positioned safely;

7.7 all shelf mountings are secure.

8 ART FACILITIES

Check that:

- 8.1 safety rules are clearly displayed in all art rooms;
- 8.2 chairs and stools are sound;
- 8.3 floors are in good condition and are non-slip;
- 8.4 guillotines are fitted with an approved safety guard which can be locked;
- 8.5 floors are swept regularly and studios washed down at least every term;
- 8.6 materials and partly finished work are stored safely.

9 COOKERY ROOM/STAFF ROOM

Check that:

- 9.1 floors are in good condition and are non-slip;
- 9.2 working surfaces are in good condition and are impermeable;
- 9.3 refrigerators and freezers are operating within safety temperature ranges and are only used for the storage of foods;
- 9.4 there is a wash basin with hot water, soap and disposable towels for washing hands prior to handling foods;
- 9.5 all cleaning materials and other potentially dangerous substances are stored correctly, clearly labelled and the shelf life is known and kept in check.

10 HALLA

Check that:

- 10.1 floors are clean, even, non-slip and splinter proof;
- 10.2 all brackets securing ropes, wall bars etc are sound;
- 10.3 PE equipment is stacked securely and positioned so as not to cause a hazard;
- 10.5 there is a regular routine for inspecting furniture, floors, apparatus, equipment and fittings;
- 10.6 wooden beams, benches etc are free from splinters and generally sound;
- 10.7 vaulting horses, beams and benches are stable and do not wobble when in use;
- 10.8 where there is a stage:
 - steps are not damaged;
 - steps have an adequate handrail;
 - stage lighting is properly wired and earthed, and stored correctly when not in use;
 - curtains run freely.

11 NON-TEACHING AREAS

11.1 Offices

Check that:

- 11.1.1 substances for use with photocopying/duplicating machines are stored correctly, and that the room where photocopying/duplicating machines are operated is adequately ventilated;

11.2 Kitchen Areas

- 11.2.1 the kitchen/dining area is kept clean;
- 11.2.2 the kitchen floors are sound and non-slip, especially when wet;
- 11.2.3 first aid boxes are available in the kitchen area;
- 11.2.4 equipment is adequately guarded.

11.3 Boiler Rooms

- 11.3.1 there is no combustible waste stored in boiler rooms or elsewhere (e.g. oily rags);
- 11.3.2 all safety devices in the boiler room are in proper working order;
- 11.3.3 the boiler is regularly maintained by a competent person;
- 11.3.4 all cleaning materials, particularly those which might be hazardous, are securely stored;
- 11.3.5 in the case of solid fuel boilers, there are covered containers to enable ashes to be removed without delay to an area where pupils are not liable to come into contact with them.

11.4 Staff Facilities

- 11.4.1 the staffroom is clean, warm and well lit;
- 11.4.2 there are adequate cloakroom facilities and storage facilities for personal belongings, books etc;
- 11.4.3 the staffroom is large enough for the numbers to be accommodated and sufficient seating is provided, both with upright chairs and tables or desks for working and with comfortable seating;
- 11.4.4 there is provision for tea and coffee to be made;
- 11.4.5 staff sanitary facilities are suitable, sufficient and properly cleaned.

11.5 Hygiene

Check that the following are available:

- 11.5.1 soap
- 11.5.2 hand drying facilities
- 11.5.3 hot water
- 11.5.4 toilet paper
- 11.5.5 litter bin per classroom
- 11.5.6 provision for disposal of sanitary towels
- 11.5.7 safe, suitable, sufficient and properly cleaned sanitary facilities.

11.6 Outside Areas

- 11.6.1 there are no uneven/broken/cracked paving slabs;
- 11.6.2 outside steps are secure, with a firmly fixed handrail;
- 11.6.3 roofs, guttering, drain pipes etc are, as far as can be seen, sound and well maintained;
- 11.6.4 all play areas, are kept clean and free from glass;
- 11.6.5 outside play/PE appliances are securely anchored;
- 11.6.6 holes for goalposts, netball posts, tennis posts are covered when posts are not in position;
- 11.6.7 outside lighting works and is sufficient;
- 11.6.8 all parking facilities for cars and cycles are safe in regard to the presence of pedestrians;
- 11.6.9 all builders' materials, caretakers' maintenance equipment etc are kept securely.

APPENDIX 5

PROCEDURE IN THE EVENT OF AN ACCIDENT/SERIOUS ILLNESS

When a teacher witnesses an accident involving a pupil or other employee, or when an accident or serious illness is brought to the notice of a teacher the following procedure will be followed:

- The teacher will ascertain the seriousness of injury or illness.
- Minor injuries will be dealt with in a manner consistent with what any prudent parent would do in a similar situation. However, this treatment will not generally include administration of medication (See Appendix 2).
- In a case where serious injury or illness is suspected, the teacher will take a decision as to whether or not the injured/ill person can be moved. Where it is felt a breakage or other such serious injury has occurred, the injured/ill person will be made comfortable and kept warm in situ until the emergency services can be contacted.
- If the injured/ill person is a pupil, the parents or guardians will be contacted immediately in all instances.
 - If it is felt the pupil needs to be brought to casualty, parental permission will be sought. If a parent/guardian cannot be contacted a decision will be made by a member of staff in the best interests of the child. This may involve a trip to casualty or the calling of an ambulance. Written parental consent for such action will be a prerequisite for enrolling a child in the school.
 - In such circumstances, repeated attempts will be made to contact parents.
 - Where a pupil is carried in a member of staff's vehicle, it is policy to carry additional pupils to ensure that a pupil will not be alone in the vehicle with a staff member at any time.
- If the injured/ill person is an adult, the next of kin will be contacted immediately in all instances. The procedure will follow the same lines as with a pupil adapted to an adult's circumstances having regard to the health & safety of the injured/ill person.
- A written report will be kept of all serious accidents.

APPENDIX 6

Goalpost Safety Plan

Guidance for the general procurement, installation, maintenance, storage and other related matters.

- 1 Before use, ensure that the goalpost is secured at all times by means of the appropriate supplied anchoring system. This applies to all posts whether they are fixed, portable or free-standing. All goalposts should be anchored, weighted, pinned, chained, pegged or otherwise made secure so as to prevent overturning.
- 2 Before assembly of equipment check that it is not damaged and that it is fit for use. Check for damages to nets, joints and that locking devices are in good working condition.
- 3 Check that the equipment for securing the product is intact and in good working order.
- 4 When goalposts that are tall or heavy are being erected/assembled, it is recommended that heavy lifting equipment is used and that correct tools for the job are used at all times. Assembly and erection of goals should be carried out by sufficient number of persons.
- 5 Consideration should be given to the proximity of overhead electrical cables during the erection and transportation of goalposts.
- 6 When dismantling goalposts follow the assembly instructions and recommendations. Ensure all ground sockets have been suitably blanked off when goalposts have been taken out to eliminate trip hazards.
- 7 Portable goalposts should be dismantled or removed to a secure area when not in use following the recommended storage instructions by the manufacturer/owner.
- 8 Moving: If a piece of equipment must be moved, and no transportation wheels are provided, the equipment should be lifted by a sufficient number of competent persons to prevent injury and to prevent damage to the product.
- 9 Procurement: All new goalposts should be purchased from manufactures/suppliers that comply with the following standards I.S.EN 748, I.S.EN 749, I.S.EN 750 and BS 8462. All products should carry a manufactures label and safety warning label. The manufacturers label should include instructions for installation, storage, dismantling, inspection and maintenance.
- 10 Maintenance: Regular maintenance of goalposts is essential to ensure that it is fit for use. In the absence of a standard, it is recommended that the user follow the guidelines set out by the manufacturer.
- 11 Alterations or additions/appendages (such as target sets) to parts of a goalpost that could affect the essential safety of the equipment should not be carried out.

APPENDIX 7

Dignity at Work:

Building & Maintaining a Positive & Effective Work Environment

- The Board of Management of Scoil Phroinsias Naofa has adopted the following as part of the school's Health & Safety Statement.
- This document was formulated in light of a number of background documents, including the Health & Safety Authority's *Code of Practice for Employers and Employees on the Prevention and Resolution of Bullying at Work* (2007) and the Equality Authority's *Code of Practice*, given legal effect in the Statutory Instrument entitled *Employment Equality Act 1998 (Code of Practice) (Harassment) Order 2002* (S.I. No. 78 of 2002).

A. Core Principles

This school is committed to a positive work environment where work is done in an atmosphere of respect, collaboration, openness and equality.

Adult bullying and harassment in the workplace are phenomena which this school will seek to prevent and will not tolerate. All employees have the right to be treated with dignity and respect. Management is committed to intervening in an appropriate manner - utilising one of the accepted Management/INTO procedures - to investigate and deal with allegations of bullying or harassment. The provisions of Circular 40/97 on *Assaults on Staff in Primary Schools* will be utilised as appropriate.

B. What is Workplace Bullying and Harassment?

The Board of Management adopts the definition of adult bullying as set out by the Task Force (2001):

"Workplace Bullying is repeated inappropriate behaviour, direct or indirect, whether verbal, physical or otherwise, conducted by one or more persons against another or others, at the place of work and/or in the course of employment, which could reasonably be regarded as undermining the individual's right to dignity at work. An isolated incident of the behaviour described in this definition may be an affront to dignity at work but, as a once off incident, is not considered to be bullying".

Harassment is covered by Employment Equality legislation and is based on a person's standing within one of the nine categories (or grounds) specified in that legislation (gender, marital status, religion, sexual orientation etc.) Harassment is defined in law as "unwanted conduct" related to one or more of the discriminatory grounds which "has the

purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity and creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for the person."

It is recognised that bullying and harassment complaints may arise among work colleagues but may also arise in relation to visitors to the school. In either case, the commitment to a positive workplace, where dignity at work is respected, prevails.

C. A Positive Work Environment

It is agreed that we will all work to make this school a happy place to work. A happy place to work has a positive work environment characterised by

- Our Catholic Ethos and our Ursuline Philosophy
- A supportive atmosphere
- Good and open communication (e.g. through opportunities at regular staff meetings)
- Appropriate interpersonal behaviour
- Collaboration
- Open discussion and resolution of conflict
- Recognition, feedback and affirmation as appropriate
- Fair treatment of all staff (including fair systems of selection and promotion in line with agreed procedures)

Every person has a responsibility to play his/her part in contributing to a positive work environment. In this regard, a person who is a witness or bystander has a clear responsibility to raise concerns about dignity at work and threats to this, in an appropriate and timely manner.

The Safety Statement - as mandated under the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005 - will also include a commitment to a positive work environment, in light of the Employer's obligations as outlined at Section 8 of that Act, including the duty to manage work activities in such a way as to prevent "improper conduct or behaviour" likely to put health and safety at risk.

It is agreed that the adoption of this policy in our school will be accompanied by a number of steps to examine our work environment and, as necessary, to agree changes which reflect a commitment to dignity at work. These steps will be initiated by Management, and be repeated by way of review at appropriate intervals.

The actions to be undertaken may generally be described as Identification, Assessment, Implementing Strategies and Monitoring.

D. Adult Bullying as a Problem

Our school recognises that Adult Bullying and Harassment are problems where they occur in any workplace.

Bullying behaviour generally amounts to psychological abuse which causes serious pain and suffering. Studies have shown that any person may become a target, irrespective of their personality or ability. In addition to its unacceptable effects on persons who are its targets, workplace bullying and harassment is extremely detrimental to organisational effectiveness.

Bullying may include behaviours such as:

- Verbal abuse/insults, undermining remarks
- Excessive monitoring of work
- Withholding work-related information
- Exclusion with negative consequences.

Such behaviours need not and should not be part of a workplace. This policy aims to ensure that a positive environment prevents such behaviours from occurring. Where bullying or harassment does occur or is alleged to have occurred, there are means of tackling it through the agreed procedure.

E. What Happens if there is an Allegation of Bullying or Harassment?

Without prejudice to an individual's right to take such advice or steps as they themselves may decide, the Board of Management will take seriously any allegations or workplace bullying or harassment.

Supportive and effective procedures, in accordance with nationally-agreed practice, are in the place in this school. These procedures to address and investigate allegations will focus on the earliest possible resolution, will proceed as necessary from informal to formal stages and will have a stress on confidentiality.

F. Summary

Management has a duty of care towards employees. Similarly, employees have a duty of care towards one another. This policy seeks to set out principles and practices to support the exercise of that duty in our school.

Just as inappropriate and undermining behaviour among work colleagues is taken seriously, so is such behaviour when perpetrated against an employee of this school by any other person.

Together we are committed to building and maintaining a work environment where respectful, open and equal relationships are the norm.

In summary, we are committed to having a positive, happy place to work.