



HEALTH & SAFETY POLICY

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Our Community provides a caring, happy and safe environment, which strives to foster a love of life-long learning.

We endeavour to develop each person's academic physical, moral, cultural and spiritual potential based on mutual respect, fairness and honesty.

We want our students to emerge as confident, adaptable, responsible and caring citizens.

Introduction

St. Colmcille's Community College recognises and accepts that every one of its employees, students and visitors to the school is entitled to a safe and healthy environment.

It is the intention of the Board of Management of the school that all appropriate steps will be taken to meet statutory requirements, recognised codes of practice and guidance notes in establishing a safe and healthy environment.

The overall high quality of the environment will be evidence of a strong ethos of housekeeping, which will permeate the school community and an awareness of the fabric and appearance of the building will be demonstrate by students and employees on a daily basis.

All employees have both a duty and a responsibility to take reasonable care to avoid injury to themselves and others and to co-operate to ensure statutory duties and obligations are fulfilled. The school's Health and Safety Policy can only be successfully implemented with the full co-operation of everyone concerned.

Roles and Responsibilities

- **Responsibilities of the Board of Management**

In discharging its responsibilities, the Board of Management will:

- make itself familiar with the requirements of the appropriate legislation and codes of practice;
- create and monitor a management structure for Health and Safety;
- ensure that there is an effective and enforceable policy for the provision of health and safety throughout the school, and that it is implemented;
- periodically assess the effectiveness of the policy and ensure that any necessary changes are made;
- identify and evaluate risks relating to possible accidents and incidents connected with -sponsored activities, including work experience.

In particular, the Board of Management undertakes to provide as far as is reasonably practicable:

- a safe place for all users of the site to work, including safe means of entry and exit;
- school, equipment and systems of work that are safe;
- safe arrangements for the handling, storage and transportation of articles and substances;
- safe and healthy working conditions that take account of appropriate statutory requirements, code of practice and guidance;
- supervision, training and instruction so that all staff and students can perform their related activities in a healthy and safe manner; and
- provide safety and protective equipment and clothing, with associated guidance, instruction and supervision when appropriate.

The board of management may delegate some of the above responsibilities to the principal or another person.

- **Responsibilities of the Principal**

The Principal has responsibility for the day-to-day development and implementation of safe working practices and conditions for all staff, students and visitors. The Principal will take all reasonably practicable steps to ensure that the Health and Safety policy is implemented.

- **Responsibilities of the Health & Safety Co-ordinator**

The Principal will appoint a special duties post holder to be the School's Health and Safety (H&S) Co-ordinator. The H&S Co-ordinator will be responsible for the day-to-day implementation of the Health and Safety Policy.

The job description of the H&S co-ordinator is attached as appendix 1.

- **Responsibilities of all members of staff**

All staff are expected to familiarise themselves with the Health and Safety aspects of their work and avoid conduct which would put themselves or anyone else at risk.

In particular, members of staff will:

- be familiar with the Health and Safety Policy and all safety requirements laid down by the Board of Management;
- ensure that staff, students, visitors and contractors are applying Health and Safety regulations, rules, routines and procedures effectively;
- see that all school machinery and equipment are in good and safe working order and adequately guarded, and not make or allow improper use of such school machinery and equipment;
- use of equipment may be specific to a subject department. It is the responsibility of subject departments to outline how such equipment (and practical rooms) are to be used, in their subject department policy.
- use the correct equipment and tools for the job and any protective equipment or safety devices that may be supplied;
- ensure that toxic, hazardous and highly flammable substances are correctly used, stored and labelled;
- report any defects in the premises, school, equipment and facilities that they observe to the appropriate person. This may be the principal, caretaker or H&S co-ordinator.
- take an active interest in promoting Health and Safety and suggest ways of reducing risks.

- **Responsibility of Care-taking Staff**

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The care-taking staff will undertake any area of maintenance with which they are competent. They will report any defects in school machinery and facilities to the relevant person. This may be a subject teacher, department head or the principal. They may arrange for an external company to come onto the premises in consultation with the principal.

- **Safety Education**

The DES has published guidance for schools on Safety Education. This guidance shows how the curriculum for Social Personal and Health Education (SPHE) and CSPE can address the issue relating to personal safety.

One of the aims of SPHE is to enable students to apply personal and social skills to a range of contexts in their lives. Skills in risk assessment learned in relation to preventing accidents are transferable to other issues.

There is DES guidance that sets out the general teaching requirement for health and safety in relation to practical subjects, information and communication technology, art and design, and physical education. Each relevant department is responsible for developing and implementing a safety statement in compliance with these guidelines.

- **Healthy Eating**

It is the policy of the School to encourage students to adopt eating habits that are conducive to a healthy lifestyle. To this end the School works with the school canteen staff, the student council, and any other relevant bodies in providing menu options that support these aims.

Health & Safety Arrangements

- **Fire Safety**

Appropriate procedures for ensuring that safety precautions are properly managed are formulated and disseminated to all staff. These procedures will include Fire Drills (see Appendix 2) and the use of Fire Extinguishers (see Appendix 3).

The School's evacuation procedure are prominently displayed in all teaching rooms, offices and curriculum areas. All staff and students are fully conversant with the procedures for evacuation of the premises in case of a fire. Evacuation procedures will be tested each term. The evacuation and safety of visitors and contractors will be the responsibility of the person who they are visiting or working for.

All fire fighting equipment is checked annually by an approved contractor and records maintained. The fire alarm is tested regularly from different points when the site is not in use and records maintained. All emergency lighting is tested six-monthly and records maintained.

- **Reporting Accidents**

All accidents to staff, students and visitors must be reported, in writing, using the accident report form. The completed form should be retained by the reporting staff member and a copy given to the health and safety co-ordinator, to be kept on file (see appendix 4).

- **First Aid**

First aid can save lives and prevent minor injuries becoming major ones. Under health and safety legislation, employers have to ensure that there are adequate and appropriate equipment and facilities for providing first aid in the workplace. The school addresses this area in the First Aid policy document.

- **Equipment**

Protective clothing/gloves/masks/helmets must be provided and used by staff when required. Staff and students must be provided with and use protective glasses/eye shields in all workshops and laboratories.

Subjects and departments that have specialised equipment have a clear written policy to ensure regular checks are carried out on the following;

- fume cupboards
- all electrical appliances
- workshop equipment, e.g. lathes, kilns
- fixed gymnasium equipment
- When new equipment is purchased, it is the responsibility of the department to ensure that it meets appropriate educational standards and that its installation and use conforms to Health and Safety requirements.
- Equipment, materials and chemicals must be stored in the appropriate storage containers and areas. All containers must be labelled with the correct hazard sign and contents label

- **Housekeeping**

The senior caretaker will monitor the cleaning standards of the cleaners. The standard required is laid down in the cleaning specification. Special consideration will be given to hygiene areas.

The senior caretaker will monitor the efficiency of the waste collection service. Separate provision must be made for the collection and disposal of laboratory materials (chemicals, broken glass etc.), clinical waste and normal refuse.

- **School Trips**

Educational trips and visits must be organised in accordance with the School's *Trips and Outings* policy

- **Visitors to the school**

- All parents should report to the School Office.
- All other visitors to the School should sign in at the School Office. Visitors will be collected from office by the member of staff concerned or escorted to the appropriate area of the School. Visitors should sign out on leaving the premises.
- No contractor may undertake work on the School site without permission from the principal other than in an emergency, e.g. fire, flooding or to make safe following theft/vandalism.
- Contractors are responsible for the Health and Safety of their employees and for their safe working practices, which must not constitute a hazard to staff, students and visitors to the School.
- Hirers of the School premises must use school, equipment and substances correctly and use the appropriate safety equipment. They must operate within the school's health and safety guidelines
- Whilst on site and during the course of the normal school day, all visitors and contractors must wear a School visitor's badge and/or an identifiable uniform at all times.
- Temporary teaching staff on cover duties will be required to indicate their presence in the School by reporting to reception.
- If a member of staff meets someone on site who they do not recognise and is not wearing a visitors badge, they should, enquire if the person needs assistance and direct them either to the School reception or off the site, as appropriate.

- **Security**

All staff should be conscious of all aspects of the security of people and property. In particular, the emergency exit doors on the outer perimeter of the buildings should only be used in the event of emergencies and kept secure at all other times.

Maintaining security is aimed at reducing the opportunity for unauthorised persons to enter the buildings through non-designated access points. It is also necessary to be alert to the possible presence of unauthorised persons on site who may constitute a threat to staff, students and bona-fide visitors and contractors.

The school is monitored by CCTV cameras. In the event of a security issue arising, staff members have access to recorded footage. Overseeing the upkeep and maintenance of this security system is the responsibility of the senior caretaker.

- **Critical Incidents**

As part of its commitment for the well being of staff, students and visitors, the school has set out a procedure which is to be adopted in the event of a critical incident occurring either on the school premises or on an activity away from the school site. These procedures are outlined in the Critical Incident policy.

- **Monitoring and Review**

As part of the Development Planning process St. Colmcille's Community School will monitor, review and evaluate this Policy and all related work and procedure on an ongoing basis to ensure legal compliance and the maintenance of best practices.

