



Safety Statement

Ratified at BOM Meeting on xxxxxxxxxxxx, 2021

Signed Chairperson of Board of Management

Signed Principal

Date

Date of next review

1. Safety, Health and Welfare Policy

In accordance with the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005, it is the policy of the Board of Management to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the safety, health and welfare at work of all staff and to protect children, visitors, contractors and other persons at the school from injury and ill health arising from any work activity. The successful implementation of this policy requires the full support and active co-operation of all staff, children, contractors and visitors to the school.

It is recognised that hazard identification, risk assessment and control measures are legislative requirements which must be carried out by the employer to ensure the safety, health and welfare of all staff.

The Board of Management, as employer, undertakes in so far as is reasonably practicable to:

- a) promote standards of safety, health and welfare that comply with the provisions and requirements of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005 and other relevant legislation, standards and codes of practice;
- b) provide information, training, instruction and supervision where necessary, to enable staff to perform their work safely and effectively;
- c) maintain a constant and continuing interest in safety, health and welfare matters pertinent to the activities of the school;
- d) continually improve the system in place for the management of occupational safety, health and welfare and review it periodically to ensure it remains relevant, appropriate and effective;
- e) consult with staff on matters related to safety, health and welfare at work;
- f) provide the necessary resources to ensure the safety, health and welfare of all those to whom it owes a duty of care, including staff, children, contractors and visitors.

The Board of Management is committed to playing an active role in the implementation of this occupational safety, health and welfare policy and undertakes to review and revise it in light of changes in legislation, experience and other relevant developments.

Signed:

Date:

Chairperson, Board of Management

2. School profile

Background to our school

In early 2003 a group of parents from the Rush/Lusk area met with the Educate Together organisation with a view to setting up an Educate Together school in the area. The Scout Den in Kenure Park became the first premises where the school could be established. The school opened on 1st September 2003 in Rush. It began with 24 pupils and two teachers. In March 2004 the school moved to the Teagasc training centre on Hanna's Avenue where it continued to grow. Very quickly the school outgrew this site, needing several prefabs to accommodate classes. In August 2008, it moved yet again – to the present site.

Current building

The school is now housed in a temporary purpose-built building, provided by the Department of Education and Skills. The current building has classrooms that are far smaller than the recommended size and has very limited space for large groups – there is one prefab which can accommodate up to four classes at a time for assemblies. Over the years there have been several issues with fire proofing, windows and doors, leaks and dampness. The fire safety issues necessitated substantial remedial work in 2013. The school has also been undergoing remediation work since 2018 on behalf of the DES.

Future plans

By September 2021, our enrolment will be around 440 children.

Construction is due to start on a new three-storey permanent school building in the summer of 2021. The new school will be located on the current site and will share a campus with the adjoining Community College. It will accommodate all 16 classes and have a general purpose hall. It will also include 2 classrooms for children with Additional Needs in Autism.

During the first building phase, vehicular access to the school will be severely limited. Yard space for the children's playtime will also be restricted. This will necessitate ongoing planning, taking into account the safety, health and welfare of all school users.

3. Organisational Structure.

| Board of Management (2019 – 2023) | |
|---|--|
| Chairperson: Ellen Keane Cope | |
| Treasurer: Claire Covey | |
| Secretary: Noel Reilly (Principal) | |
| Leo McKittrick, Claudia Kemna Lee (Parent Nominees) | |
| Helen O'Reilly (Teacher Representative) | |
| Ellen Keane Cope, Claire Covey (Patron Nominees) | |
| Mícheál Garvey, Emma O'Neill (Community Nominees) | |

| Principal and Deputy Principal | |
|--|--|
| Noel Reilly and Helen O'Reilly | |
| Safety Representative/ Lead Worker Representatives | |
| Ciara Dermody, Siobhán Mulholland, Maeve Sweeney, Marian O'Brien | |

| Teachers 2020-2021 | |
|---------------------------|---------------------|
| Irene McCormack | Eva Kelly |
| Joanna Durham | Conor Bredin |
| Simon McConkey | Iona Sweeney |
| Jennifer McQuaid | Sinead McDyer |
| Michelle O'Keeffe | Aodhan O Cnáimhsí |
| Louise Arigho | Deirdre Hurley |
| Louise Dubos | Gráinne Craig |
| Áine Ryan | Grainne Corcoran |
| Marian O'Brien | Amy Redmond |
| Anne Wearan | Christine Lennon |
| Maeve Sweeney | Darragh Smith |
| Fiona Meehan | Ciara Dermody |
| Sarah Enright (sub) | Katie Rivelli (sub) |

| Special Needs Assistants | |
|---------------------------------|------------------|
| Noreen Devine | Melissa Daly |
| Deirdre O'Loughlin | Sinead Brennan |
| Siobhan Mulholland | John Finnegan |
| Deirdre O'Connor | Patricia Nealon |
| Karen Howlett | Rachel Taaffe |
| | Barbara Wojdyla |
| Secretaries | Caretaker |
| Wendy Williams | Herby Donnelly |
| Ann O'Donoghue | |

| Regular Sub Contractors |
|--------------------------------|
| Perfecto Cleaning Company |

4. Roles and Responsibilities for safety, health and welfare

4.1 Board of Management:

The ultimate responsibility for the implementation of this Safety, Health and Welfare policy and ensuring its compliance with Health and Safety legislation rests with the Board of Management. The Board of Management recognises its express responsibilities under Section 8 of the *Safety, Health and Welfare at work Act 2005*, which outlines the employer's duties. These include:

- Ensuring that the school has written risk assessments and an up to date Safety Statement;
- Reviewing the implementation of the safety management system and the Safety Statement;
- Setting safety, health and welfare objectives;
- Receiving regular reports on safety, health and welfare matters;
- Reviewing the safety, health and welfare statement at least annually and when changes that might affect worker's safety, health and welfare occur;
- Reviewing the school's safety, health and welfare performance;
- Allocating adequate resources to deal with safety, health and welfare issues;
- Appointing competent persons as necessary, to advise and assist the Board.

4.2 Designated persons acting on behalf of the Board:

The designated persons include the principal and deputy principal. Their responsibilities include:

- Complying with the requirements of the 2005 Act;
- Reporting to the BOM on safety, health and welfare performance;
- Managing safety, health and welfare in the school on a day-to-day basis;
- Communicating regularly with all members of the school community on related matters;
- Ensuring all accidents and incidents are investigated and all relevant statutory reports completed;
- Organising fire drills, training etc.;
- Carrying out safety audits.

4.3 Safety Representative

The Safety Representative is appointed by staff. The functions of this role include:

- Representing employees on safety, health and welfare issues;
- Conducting inspections (with reasonable notice to management);
- Investigating accidents and dangerous occurrences;
- Liaising with Health and Safety Authority inspectors;
- Participating on the safety committee.

4.4 Staff

This includes all teaching staff, Special Needs Assistants and ancillary staff. Responsibilities include:

- Complying with all statutory obligations on employees as designated under the 2005 Act;
- Cooperating with school management in the implementation of the Safety Statement;
- Informing children of the safety procedures associated with individual subjects/rooms/tasks;
- Ensuring that children follow safety procedures;
- Checking classroom/work environment regularly to ensure it is safe and free from fault or defect;
- Checking that equipment is safe before use;
- Ensuring that risk assessments are conducted for new hazards;
- Selecting and appointing a safety representative;
- Cooperating with school safety committee where one is established;
- Reporting accidents, near misses and dangerous occurrences to the relevant person.

4.5 Other school users

All school users are required to comply with school regulations and instructions relating to safety, health and welfare.

This category includes anyone involved in coaching/teaching/volunteering but who is not a member of staff (e.g. coaches from local sporting organisations). It also includes anyone organising after-school activities and clubs (e.g. Sherpa Kids).

4.6 Contractors

Contractors must comply with statutory obligations as designated under the *Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005*, the *Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (General Application) Regulations 2007* and any other relevant legislation such as the *Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (Construction) Regulations 2006*.

When the school shares a workplace with a contractor, they must cooperate and coordinate their activities in order to prevent risks to safety, health and welfare at work. As the principal is responsible for the day to day running of the school, he is generally the point of contact for the contractor.

The principal (on behalf of the BOM) must:

- Ensure that the contractor is suitably qualified and experienced and is registered;
- Ensure that communication links are established before work starts and throughout the contract;
- Advise the contractor about necessary precautions that need to be considered, particularly if work is being carried out during school time;

- Make available the relevant parts of the safety, health and welfare policy and safety files to any contractors working in the school on behalf of the school;
- Provide to contractors the school regulations and instructions relating to safety, health and welfare.

The contractors must:

- provide all appropriate safety documents (including any relevant risk assessments) for approval prior to their commencement of any work activities on behalf of the school;
- Advise the principal about the likely duration of the work and any possible hazards, and how these will be addressed.

Where there is substantial building work lasting more than 30 days, the BOM takes on the responsibility of "client". The client must:

- Familiarise itself with its legal health and safety responsibilities as detailed in the *Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (Construction) Regulations 2006*;
- Appoint a Project Supervisor for the Design Process who has adequate training, knowledge, experience and resources;
- Similarly appoint a Project Supervisor for the Construction Stage;
- Cooperate with the project supervisors;
- Notify the HSA of the appointment of the supervisors;
- Retain and make available the safety file for the completed structure.

5. Risk Assessment

In Rush and Lusk Educate Together NS, we have adopted the Risk Assessments outlined in the *Guidelines on Managing Safety, Health and Welfare in Primary Schools Part 2 (2013)*: pages 20 - 111.

- The BOM ensures that relevant Risk Assessments are carried out by the appropriate people (e.g. classroom teachers/caretaker etc.) at the beginning of each new school year.
- All hazards are identified and control measures are put in place to ensure that risk of incident/accident is reduced.
- When new equipment presents a new hazard to the work environment, a revised risk assessment is completed.

6. Emergency procedures, fire safety, first aid, accidents and dangerous occurrences

6.1 Emergency procedures

The BOM has a ***Critical Incident Management policy*** which was updated in June 2020. This policy includes the procedures to be followed in the event of an emergency situation. It outlines the roles and responsibilities of all those involved in dealing with an emergency situation.

6.2 Fire Safety

As part of the school's remediation programme, since 2018, the BOM has been liaising closely with AFEC in relation to fire safety in the school.

- At the beginning of the school year, staff are given clear instructions as to the procedures to follow in the event of a fire or drill (see ***Appendix 2***).
- Fire drills are carried out frequently (at least once per term). The Safety Officer, along with the principal, reviews each drill and provides feedback/suggestions to staff on the future operation of the evacuation procedures.
- The outcome of fire drills is recorded in the Fire and General Register.
- Fire assembly points are clearly marked.
- All fire doors are kept closed and escape routes are kept clear. Emergency exits are activated by a push bar.
- Emergency lighting systems are in place.
- Appropriate fire-fighting and detection equipment is provided. All fire installations and equipment are inspected and serviced as per legal requirements.
- Staff receive training in the use of the school's fire-fighting equipment.

6.3 First Aid

- The BOM provides for training of an appropriate number of occupational first-aiders.
- The staff are all made aware at the beginning of each school year of the fully qualified first-aiders for that year.
- At the moment there are three fully qualified first-aiders: Helen O'Reilly, Siobhán Mulholland and Karen Howlett.
- There are agreed procedures for the administration of first aid (see ***Appendix 3***).
- First aid supplies are fully compliant with legislation and guidance. Supplies are stored in a locked first aid cabinet on the Junior Infant corridor. The deputy principal checks the supplies regularly, and replenishes when necessary.
- A defibrillator is located in the secretary's office. This is checked monthly by the deputy principal to ensure the battery is functioning. 10 staff completed training in the use of a defibrillator in 2018.

6.4 Incident/Accident Reporting Procedure

- There is a clear procedure for investigating, reporting and recording accidents and near misses/dangerous occurrences in Rush and Lusk Educate Together NS.
- Accident report sheets for minor injuries to children are in each teacher's/SNA's First-Aid packs (see **Appendix 3: First Aid** for further details). Once completed, these are retained in the child's individual file in the principal's office.
- The BOM is aware of its legal obligation to report specific accidents and incidents to the Health and Safety Authority (*Guidelines on Managing Safety, Health and Welfare in Primary Schools Part 1* p.51-53). The IR1 Incident/Accident Report Sheet included in **Appendix 4** is an important tool in the preventing of accidents and ill health in all the activities of this school.
- All incidents and accidents must be reported to management, who carry out investigations on the circumstances with a view to implementing action to prevent a similar incident/accident in the future.
- Records of all accidents are kept according to the requirements of the school's Data Protection policy.

7. Instruction, training and supervision

The BOM ensures that all individuals are provided with the safety training necessary to enable them to carry out their duties (see **Appendix 7: Training Chart**).

In line with Section 10 of the *Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005*, training is provided:

- On recruitment (induction training is provided to all staff, and this includes training on all safety, health and welfare procedures and practices in the school);
- In the event of a change of task assigned to a staff member (e.g. replacing a first-aider);
- On the introduction of new systems of work or equipment;
- On the introduction of new technology.

A training needs analysis is completed annually in order to identify and address any deficiencies. Once training needs have been identified, they are incorporated into the school's training plan.

A record of attendance at training sessions is kept, as well as a schedule of dates when refresher training falls due.

8. Communication and consultation

In accordance with Section 20(3) of the *Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005*, the BOM brings the Safety Statement to the attention of:

- All staff, at least annually and following any amendments;
- Newly recruited staff on commencement of employment;
- Substitute and temporary staff, who have all relevant sections brought to their attention;
- Other persons at the place of work who may be exposed to any specific risk to which the Safety Statement applies (e.g. contractors, visitors, parents/guardians).

Staff Consultation

- The management of Rush and Lusk Educate Together National School consults regularly with staff to ensure that the policy and procedures for promoting safety, health and welfare are effective.
- Staff are encouraged to bring safety, health and welfare matters to the attention of management.
- Any representations with regard to Safety, Health and Welfare made by staff are taken into account, and whatever is reasonably practicable to protect them is done.

9. Ratification and Dissemination

The Safety Statement was originally adopted by the Board of Management in 2017, with a substantially revised version being ratified in June 2021.

It is made available to school staff and published on the school website. A copy will be made available to the DES, HSA and the patron body Educate Together if requested.

The policy and its implementation is reviewed by the Board of Management once in every school year. This takes the form of an annual Safety, Health and Welfare Audit (**Appendix 5**). Written notification that the review has been completed is made available to staff, along with details of any amendments.

All staff are required to sign the Safety Statement acknowledgement (**Appendix 9**) to confirm that they have read the updated policy. They will also be asked to confirm receipt of any further amendments.

10. List of Appendices:

Appendix 1: Risk Assessments (taken from *Guidelines on Managing Safety, Health and Welfare in Primary Schools Part 2* p.20 -111)

Appendix 2: Fire/Emergency Evacuation procedures

Appendix 3: First Aid

Appendix 4: Incident/Accident report forms

Appendix 5: Safety, Health and Welfare Annual Audit

Appendix 6: Safety, Health and Welfare Action Plan

Appendix 7: Training Chart

Appendix 8: Guidelines for lone workers

Appendix 9: Safety Statement acknowledgement

