



Gaelscoil Bhaile Brigín

Polasaí Sláinte agus Sábháilteachta

(Health and Safety Statement)

This document contains the Health and Safety Statement of Gaelscoil Bhaile Brigín (GSBB).

Introductory Statement

This statement was formulated in consultation with all the partners in the GSBB school community i.e. staff, Board of Management and parents. We in Gaelscoil Bhaile Brigín are fully committed to protecting the Health and Safety of our staff, students and contractors. Safety is a core value in Gaelscoil Bhaile Brigín.

This statement was first formulated in 2009-10 as there was no such policy available. It is essential to write down the safety statement and put in place the arrangements needed to implement and monitor it.

This policy has been reviewed in March 2014

This policy has been reviewed in March 2015

This policy was reviewed in September 2016

This policy was reviewed in September 2017

This policy was reviewed during the 1st term of 2020-21

This policy was reviewed during the 2nd term of 2021-22

Rationale for this statement

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's commitment to safety and health, and specifies the manner, the organisation and the resources necessary for maintaining and reviewing safety and health standards.

As a result of this legal requirement, and the need for such a policy in the school, the Board of Management has documented its health and safety programme and is making it available to all employees, all members of its community, outside services providers and Inspectors of the Health and Safety Authority. The Board of Management also recognises its 'duty of care' role to the students in the school and this is an integral part of Gaelscoil Bhaile Brigín's Health and Safety Statement.

Relationship to characteristic spirit of the school

This policy has been created to ensure that the Board of Management and all members of staff provide a safe and healthy working and learning environment for all members of the school community.

Aims of this statement

Gaelscoil Bhaile Brigín ideally hopes to achieve the following with this statement:

- 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, for example administration of medicines, fire drill, lifting and carrying
- to appoint a Safety Officer on behalf of the school. This officer will have the responsibility of keeping abreast of all safety issues in the school and keeping the Board informed as such. However, having said that, it is important to recognise here, the duty that rests with all Board members and members of staff in this area and their responsibility to adhere to this policy and other good practices in the school.
- 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.
 - To promote awareness in students of the importance of being careful and being aware of hazards
 - To provide a safe environment for all students in the school.
 - To appoint a Health and Safety Officer within the school. The officer will have a duty to be informed about safety issues within the school and also to inform the BOM of same. It is important to note, however, that all members of staff and the BOM have a duty regarding health and safety and must adhere to policies and procedures laid out by the school.

Responsibilities of employer - Board of Management

(Reference : Solas, December 2005):

Provide and maintain a school that is safe and do likewise for all machinery and equipment etc.

Manage school activities to ensure the safety, health and welfare of employees and students alike;

Ensure that risks are assessed and hazards are eliminated or minimized as far as is reasonably practicable;

Prepare a safety statement and regularly update it, particularly when there have been significant changes or when the risk assessment is no longer valid;

Provide and maintain decent welfare facilities for employees and students;

Prepare and update procedures to deal with an emergency situation and communicate these procedures to employees

Appoint a competent person to oversee the functions of the Board in relation to Health & Safety; Gary Hitchcock has been appointed as the Health & Safety officer for the school

Provide training and information to workers in a format and language that is appropriate, including training on the commencement of employment; Clodagh Ní Mhaoilchiaráin

Report serious accidents to the Health and Safety Authority;

Consult annually with employees, parents and all members of GSBB community, students included, and provide them with information in relation to safety, health and welfare;

Require employers from whom services are contracted to have an up to date safety statement

Responsibilities of employees:

Health and safety is everyone's business. As a worker you have legal duties designed to protect you and those with whom you work (*Reference: Solas, December 2005*).

Responsibilities of employees include:

Not to be under the influence of an intoxicant to the extent that they endanger your own or other persons' safety. To submit to tests for intoxicants as and when regulations specifying testing procedures are adopted

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 that will endanger you or anyone else

To attend Health and Safety training and correctly use any equipment at work

To use protective clothes and equipment provided

To report any dangerous practices or situations that you are aware of to an appropriate person

Not to interfere or misuse any safety equipment at your workplace

If you are suffering from a disease or illness that adds to risks, to tell your employer.

NB: all staff have a legal duty to adhere to the Health and Safety Policy. If any member of staff breaches health and safety protocol, the relevant policies will be invoked.

Entitlements of safety representative

(Reference: Section 25 of Safety, Health & Welfare at Work Act 2005):

The safety representative has the right to:

Represent the employees at the place of work or school in consultation with the employer on matters in relation to health and safety

Inspect the place of work or school on a schedule agreed with the employer or immediately in the event of an accident, dangerous occurrence or imminent danger or risk to the safety, health and welfare of any person

Receive appropriate training

Investigate accidents and dangerous occurrences

Investigate complaints made by employees or any member of the school community

Accompany an inspector carrying out an inspection at the workplace

Make representations to the employer on matters relating to safety, health and welfare

Make representations to and receive information from, an inspector

Consult and liaise with other safety representatives in the same undertaking.

Gary Hitchcock, the school caretaker has been appointed the school health and safety officer.

Performance of Risk Assessment

Each year, the Board of Management will arrange to carry out a risk assessment, identifying hazards, assessing the risks and specifying the actions required to eliminate or minimize them. Hazards may include physical, health, biological, chemical and human hazards.

The school, from 2020 will use the Guidelines on Managing Safety, Health and Welfare in Primary schools, produced by the HSA when preparing the yearly risk assessment. This will enable to BOM to carry out its legal obligations regarding Health and Safety.

The BOM will prepare an Action Plan resulting from the risk assessment, with dangers and risks identified and a plan, to include who will carry out the work and a time frame.

There will be a book outside the office where staff can log any risks that they have identified. The school caretaker, in consultation with the BOM will carry out or arrange to have work carried out to rectify the risk.

The BOM is committed to providing a safe working environment for staff and as result, it will produce an action plan on the foot of each risk assessment reduce risks as far as is possible.

Staff members have a duty to adhere to any policies, new or revised, arising from the risk assessment.

In the case of an accident resulting in serious injury, a risk assessment will be carried out to identify any underlying health and safety deficiencies and to identify any corrective actions required.

A safety audit should be carried out every September, to ensure that a safe, working and school environment is being provided for the whole school community.

HSA example of risk assessment

The following example may be of use. A blank copy is included in Appendix I.

Identification of Hazards, Risk Assessment and Action(s) Taken					
Hazards	Low/ Medium/ High	Risk to persons	Action Taken	Date	Person responsible
Tiled floors in corridors which get slippy when wet	Low	Fall	Mats placed on corridor and at each entry door	Nov '05	Caretaker and BoM Treasurer
Cleaning agents stored under classroom sink	Medium-High	Ingestion by children	Removed to other storage area	Dec '05	Principal and cleaner
Aggressive or violent behaviour by employees, pupils or parents	Medium-High	Bodily harm or ill health	Implementation of Code of Behaviour, Anti-bullying policy, Positive staff relations, Grievance procedure (CPSMA Handbook Appendix 20)	Sept '05	School community

GSBB Health and Safety Policies and Practices

As part of the general approach to safety, other policies & practices, which have a bearing on safety, health and welfare will need to be put in place and communicated to employees, pupils, parents and others using the premises who may be exposed to any risks covered by the safety statement. Some examples are given below. These will need to be monitored and updated regularly e.g. an annual fire safety audit or school environment audit (*See appendices*).

Health and safety will also be considered when any policy/plan is being drawn up e.g. Physical Education, Visual Arts, School Excursions, etc. Our duty of care will be considered in all areas and aspects of school life.

From 2020/21 the Guidelines on Managing Safety, Health and Welfare in Primary Schools will be used as a tool to carry out the yearly risk assessment. This will enable the identification of risks/hazards and the implementation of procedures to reduce said risks.

The risk assessments, along with the action plans will be kept in the school.

Procedures to deal with emergencies

Emergency contact procedures

- Contact details are updated annually. A reminder is sent home every September and is to be returned to GSBB via newsletter, that all details that have changed are to be update. The details are kept in the students' files, and a list is given to each class teacher with contact details of his/her class. A master copy of these details is kept in the office near the phone. Staff has access to these details. Parents/guardians can update their details via Aladdin. Teachers can access their students details via Aladdin.
- In case of an emergency, parents will be contacted. If parents/guardians are unavailable, every effort is made to contact those who have been nominated as Loco-parentis. There should be a minimum of three people nominated on Aladdin, between parents/guardians and loco parentis. If no one can be contacted, the school will contact the necessary authorities eg doctor, unless otherwise stated by parents **in writing**

Fire-drill and school evacuation procedures

(Reference: Pages 45-49 A Guide to Insurance, Safety and Security in the School, Church and General – as ref at end of this policy)

- Fire-drills are carried out 3 times a year. They are done in September to teach new students/teachers and to remind returning students of procedures. They are done again in January and after the Easter holidays.
- Teachers and pupils are aware of the designated assembly points following evacuation of the building(s) – teachers at first staff meeting of the year and students are shown through the drill and by class teacher. The places have been identified and are in the process of being clearly marked
- The procedures for evacuation will be posted in each classroom and at entrances and exits.

- These evacuation procedures will be revised on a yearly basis, or more regularly if the case arises,
- New staff and pupils are notified of these procedures through staff meeting and the mentoring scheme (teachers) and through class instruction and the weekly Assembly (students).

Serious Accident Procedure & Accident Report Form

A report must be made to the HSA in respect of the following types of incident:

- 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 the normal duties of their employment for more than 3 calendar 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.

Critical incident policy

Refer to Responding to Critical Incidents, NEPS Advice and Information pack for schools

- Refer to school's Critical Incident Policy

Emergency closures

- In the case of emergency closing, parents will be notified by the school text system and through Aladdin. Notification will be put on the school website and the school Twitter account. If parents cannot be notified, those who have been nominated as Loco-parentis will be notified.
- The Dept. of Education will be notified through the Inspectorate
- The Chairperson of the Board of Management will also be informed/reasons for closure will be discussed with him.

Health issues

- Enrolment Form
 - Staff are informed of allergies/illnesses etc through a section on enrolment form.
- Managing specific health issues
 - Staff are made aware of the health issues in relation to certain pupils in a discreet, respectful manner. There is a system in place on Aladdin to share medical details.
 - In cases where all members of staff need to be aware of an issue, this again will be done with respect and understanding.
 - In the case of issues such as diabetes/anaphalaxia etc, parents will be asked to provide training for staff who have opted to administer medication when necessary.
 - Medicines : please see school policy on the administration of medication.

- **Sickness or Injury**
 - When dealing with children who are sick or injured, staff will ensure that the child is comfortable and warm. If the teacher feels that the child is quite sick, parents will be contacted and asked to bring child home. If this happens, parents/guardians must sign the student out at reception. A note should be made in the “Leabhar Poncúlachta” in the office and the principal should be informed as soon as possible.

A useful reference for first-aid guidelines is the Dept. of Health Guidelines/First Aid Chart which is available in the office.

The Board of Management has agreed to subsidise the cost of First Aid Responder courses and at present, there are 3 members of staff who are FAR. Their training is updated when necessary.

 - Parents are reminded regularly that if their child is too sick to go out at break then they are too sick to be in school and should be kept at home (exception – broken bones etc) and that children aren’t kept in at lunch time.
 - A member of staff does supervision in the hall everyday and has responsibility for dealing with accidents and supervising the toilets. This teacher keeps a record of accidents when necessary. The teacher reports information back to the class teacher. The class teacher makes contact with parents/guardians, if necessary.
- **Illnesses and contagious infections rubella, chicken pox etc: See ‘Infectious diseases in the Primary School:**
- **Head-lice :** See School Policy
- **Eye-testing for staff:** the BOM will provide funding for teachers/clerical staff for eye-sight testing (max of 1 per year) if needed due to screen usage.
- **School hygiene**
- **Both hot and cold water are available in the school.** There is hot water available from the burco in the kitchen and the taps. No child should handle hot water in school. There is soap available in the toilets and there are hand- towels available. It is the care taker’s responsibility to ensure that there are clean handtowels. It is the cleaner’s responsibility to ensure that there is soap and toilet paper in the toilets. **General cleanliness of school environment**
 - There are procedures in place to ensure the school environment is kept clean –classrooms, toilets, playground, collection of refuse. In the class room, a notion of shared responsibility is promoted. All rubbish to be picked up and classrooms are to be left tidy. Chairs are to be stacked at the walls, so the cleaners can clean the tables.
 - Only one student at a time may go to the toilet – this will help to eliminate horseplay and messing. This will also help to ensure that toilets are kept clean, as there will be no messing.
 - Floors are mopped outside of school hours to ensure no accidents. The floors are only polished during holiday periods to ensure that they are not slippy.
 - The students are not allowed to eat food with wrappers/rubbish outside at any stage. This is to help us keep the school environment clean. Only food which creates no rubbish may be eaten outside eg sandwich
 - The cleaners is in charge of putting out the rubbish.
- **First Aid**

- A number of staff are trained in First Aid. This will be reviewed regularly. Training will be provided when possible,
- Healthy eating: there has been a healthy eating policy implemented since the first day of school. No student is allowed to eat crisps, sweets, biscuits, chocolate or fizzy drinks in school. This is for the health of all students. From our own experience, we find that students work better when eating healthily and we are also promoting healthy eating habits for later life.
- Water - Drinking water is available from the drinking taps in the classrooms and staff room.
- Clothing/protection
 - Using sun protection e.g. use of sunscreen/hat. Parents are advised to put sunscreen on children when coming to school

Safety and welfare issues

Pupils

- Assembly and Dismissal of Pupils
 - Doors open at 8.50. Students from 3rd-6th may line up in yards from 8.45. Parents are not allowed on grounds with them. Infants & 1st class line up beside the school and 2nd class on the Quad. Infants to 2nd may not be on school grounds before 8.50 without a parent. M, Clodagh will supervise the yards for 3rd-6th from 8.45. There is a teacher in the yard from this point for this Assembly. They are put into their lines and are collected by their class teacher at 8.50. At the end of the day, the class is walked, by teacher, to door/gate and dismissed into care of parents there. The teacher must wait with class until all students have been collected.
 - - To ensure pupil safety on the grounds – children are collected at dropped by the side door of the school. This will avert bottle necking at the front door. The Staff car-park is located at the back of the building. Parents are not allowed to park in staff car park.
- These procedures are reviewed yearly, or more often, if the need arises.
- Pupils leaving the school premises during the school day e.g. dentist or doctor appointment
 - parent/guardian collect the pupil from the Reception.. They must sign them out at the office /other member of staff will collect from class.
 - a note is required if the child is not going to be collected by a parent/guardian.
 - There will be a folder in each class and a note must be made of any unexplained absences. These notes will be kept as reference. All absences require a note (or other form) of explanation on Aladdin. Parents/guardians may send an email, phone or input reason on Aladdin, even those without a reason.
- Supervision of Pupils: See Appendix 146(A) p.176-180, p. 36-42 Church and General Guidelines (in teacher packs provided at start of year and as reference in Health and Safety file)
 - In the event of a teacher’s absence, the principal must be informed by 8.00 in the morning, to attempt to locate a sub. The principal should have easy

access to the teacher's notes in the case of unexpected absences to ensure continuity in case of a sub. Every teacher should have, at least 2 days emergency work prepared and kept in folder in office, in case of unexpected absence.

- Due to Covid-19, no classes will be split this year and therefore teachers notes will be needed for sub or SET. There is a decision to be made on this based on government guidelines.
- There is a file for all subs with the class and school information on procedures prepared in each class. This should be kept up to date.
- In the event that a teacher knows that he/she will be absent eg Course day, a schedule of work must be prepared. In the event that the teacher is on the yard, he/she must make arrangements to swap with another member of staff. In the case of unplanned absences, the procedures laid out in the Covid-19 Response Plan are to be followed.
- There is a supervision rota drawn up and teachers are expected to carry out their duties accordingly..
- As teachers, we have a duty of care to our students to ensure that there are no incidents of dangerous behaviour in the yard (or anywhere in the school). We are in **Loco-parentis** and the measure of duty on the teacher is “to take such care of his/her pupils as a careful parent would of his/her children”.
- In the event of an accident, the injured party is to be brought to the hall and the teacher on duty there will tend to the student.
- Incident / accident book
 - In the event of an accident in the yard, the student is sent to the hall and the teacher there will make a note of the incident – what happened/what was done /date/who was involved etc. This book is kept in the hall and is to be filled in after all breaks. If an accident happens in the classroom, note will be made in the class folder. In the event of a serious incident or accident, the report is to be filled out by the teacher (s) present, in conjunction with the principal. This record is to be kept in the Health and Safety section of the filing cabinet. The Health and Safety officer in the school is to be aware of the incident, as is the board of management. The H.S.A will be informed per to the procedures mentioned above.
 - Parents/guardians are contacted if there is a serious accident or when a child hurts their head.
- Code of Behaviour and Anti Bullying Policy: Refer to school's policy for dealing with behaviour which causes a risk to others
- Allegations or Suspicions of Child Abuse:
 - The school's Child Protection Policy, in line with Child Protection Guidelines, must be followed in the case of an allegation or suspicion of child abuse
- Mobile phones: Please refer to Mobile Phone Policy
- Garda clearance
 - the school conducts a garda check before a person is employed – in the event of a non-qualified teacher/non-trainee teacher being employed eg secretary/sna etc. Garda checks have been/are in process of being carried out on all qualified teachers and those in teacher training colleges.

- Positive Staff Relations: See Working Together. Procedures and Policies for Positive Staff Relations. INTO 2000. Also refer to Appendix 20 p.116-121, Appendix 21 Bullying and harassment pg.122-125, Appendix 22 Grievance Procedure p.126-128 CPSMA Management Board Members' Handbook
 - As and when new members of staff join the school, a mentoring system will be implemented to help guide this teacher through the practice in the school. Through this system, and through the support of the principal and members of the middle management, every support and guidance will be offered to the teacher. This also, will ensure a level of friendship and “getting to know one another” from early on. Through our open policy of shared-ownership in the school, a sense of responsibility for the school will be instilled in new staff members and, thus feel that they are important to the success of the school.
 - staff made aware of the procedures to address cases of adult bullying/harassment or to initiate a grievance procedure as part of the above scheme. Also, as part of the class file, all policies and procedures in the school will be made accessible on the school G-Suite. Also, these processes will be covered at the first staff meeting of the year.
 - Regular training is provided for staff in areas such as first aid, manual handling, CALM,. Needs are identified as part of the yearly risk assessment.
- Keys will be available within the school in case anyone gets locked inside.

Equipment and materials

- lawnmowers, drills, ladder and any other equipment associated with school maintenance is stored in a safe area, not accessible to children. the storage area is locked during the school day and only employees have access.
- solvents, chemicals, cleaning agents etc. are stored in locked area, which only members of staff have access to .

Success criteria

some practical indicators of the success of the policy. – minimizing of accidents/a safe school environment/a clean school environment/

Roles and Responsibility

Name the people who have particular responsibilities for aspects of the policy and how they fulfil their role

- Board of Management – to be appointed
- Each member of staff - Gary Hitchcock

Timetable for Review

The Health and Safety Statement is to be reviewed on a yearly basis. A review will be conducted when any changes have been made to work practices, personnel, where a practice is no longer valid or under the direction from the HSA inspector.

Ratification & Communication

The Board of Management officially reviewed and ratified this policy on _____ Dec 2010_____. The Health and Safety Statement will be communicated to the school community through the Newsletter and through Coiste na dTuistí after ratification.

This policy was reviewed and the reviewed document was ratified on the 7/4/14. This will be reviewed again in school year of 2014/15

This policy was reviewed and the reviewed document was ratified on the 28/9/16. This will be reviewed again in school year of 2017/18

This policy was reviewed and the reviewed document was ratified on the 25/9/17. This will be reviewed again in school year of 2018/19

This policy was reviewed and the reviewed document was ratified on the 23.11.20. It will be reviewed again in September 2021. As part of this review the HSA guidelines were used and will be used moving forward.

This policy was reviewed and the reviewed document was ratified on the 25/4/22 . This will be reviewed again in the second term of the school year of 2022/23.

Siniú an Chathaoirligh: _____

Dáta: _____

Reference Section

- Guidelines on Preparing your Safety Statement, HSA
- www.safework.ie
- A short guide to The Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005 (www.hsa.ie)
- Report of the Advisory Committee on Hhealth & Safety Statement for Schools. HSA. This report contains a format for a Safety Statement.
- INTO Guidelines for compiling a Safety Statement
- INTO Safety Representatives Checklist for School Inspections (Under H &S Background information on www.sdps.ie)
- CPSMA Management Board Members' Handbook. Appendix 36, 37, 38
- A Supplementary Handbook for Primary Schools under Protestant Management. Second Edition. p.22 - 27 Compiling a Safety Statement
- A Guide to Insurance, Safety and Security in the School. (2002). Church & General p. 24-32
- Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act, 2005 (www.hsa.ie)
- "The Report of the Advisory Committee on Health and Safety in Schools." Health and Safety Authority, 10 Hogan Place, Dublin 2. Tel.: 01 - 6147000
- A Short Guide to Health and Safety Law. HSA
- Round Hall's Primary Education Management Manual CD – ROM
- Glendenning D. (1999) Education and the Law. Ch. 9 The Teacher's Duty of Care: Negligence
- Mahon O. (2002) The Principal's Legal Handbook.IVEA.Ch.3 Safety, Health & Welfare in School
- Guidelines on Countering Bullying Behaviour in Primary and Post Primary Schools (DES1993)
- Working Together. Procedures and Policies for Positive Staff Relations. INTO 2000
- Code of Practice on the Prevention of Workplace Bullying. HSA 2002
- Guidelines for developing a School Substance Use Policy. DES Oct. 2002
- Child Protection. Guidelines and Procedures. DES 2001
- Children First. National Guidelines for the Protection and Welfare of Children. Department of Health and Children 1999
- Guidelines on First Aid (Index chart) from the regional Health Promotion Units
- "Infection in School". A manual for school personnel, available from regional Health promotion units on www.healthpromotion.ie
- Responding to Critical Incidents - Advice and Information Pack for Schools from The National Educational Psychological Service, Frederick Court, 24-27 North Frederick Street, Dublin 1

Websites:

DES	www.education.ie
SPDS	www.sdps.ie
INTO	www.into.ie
IPPN	www.ippn.ie

Health and Safety Authority

www.has.ie/osh

Church and General

www.cg-online.ie

Identification of Hazards, Risk Assessment and Action(s) Taken				
Hazards	Low/Medium/ High	Risk to persons	Action Taken	Date

Annual School Audit
A. Fire Safety. School Record for School Year

Fire Drill			Fire Equipm	
Date of Fire Drill	Observations	Areas identified that need to improve next time	Date Checked	Improvements made & date

Annual School Audit
B. School Environment. School Record for School Year

Date	Identified Damage/Hazard	Location in school	Reported to... Date	Action taken	C m

Report on Accidents in the school environment *(For School's Internal Records)*

Name: _____

Class: _____

Date of Accident: _____

Time of accident:

Location of Accident:

Staff on supervision duties at time of accident:

Information regarding circumstances of accident (NB must note what happened just before, during and after accident):

Witness 1 _____

Witness 2 _____

Any further information:

Action Taken:

Any actions required to prevent further occurrence:

Signature: _____

Date: _____

(NOTE: By law, the Health & Safety Authority must be notified when an accident causes death or prevents an employed person from working for more than 3 days. This is explained in detail in the CPSMA Handbook (p.159) and is accompanied by a standard reporting form. The school's insurance company should also be notified about serious accidents that occur in the school or while on school related activities.)