

Rineen N.S.



Health, Safety & Welfare Policy

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This Health, Safety and Welfare Policy approved by the Board of Management of Rineen National School under the 'Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005' sets out the policy and organisation of safety, health and welfare in the school. The school seeks to make every effort to preserve and promote the safety, health and welfare of our school community.

The Board of Management of Rineen National School is committed to securing high standards of health and safety in and around the school. It strives at all times to create a working and learning environment that is safe and healthy for all that use it, namely staff, pupils, parents/guardians and relevant members of the public.

The school will apply the provisions of all applicable health, safety and welfare legislation and codes of practice to ensure that places and systems of work are safe and without risk to health. Continuous improvements in health and safety performance will be sought, but interventions will reflect the reality of identified risks.

Aims

The aim of the policy is to:

- Ensure that all reasonably practical steps are taken to ensure the health, safety, welfare and wellbeing of all members of the school community while on the school grounds
- Ensure that all reasonably practical steps are taken to ensure the health and safety of staff, pupils and other supervising adults participating in off-site visits
- Establish and maintain safe working procedures amongst staff and pupils
- Develop safety awareness amongst staff, pupils and other supervising adults.
- Formulate and implement effective procedures for use in the event of fire and other emergencies

Responsibilities

Board of Management

- The Board is the employer of the school's staff. As such, it has overall responsibility for ensuring healthy and safe places and systems of work for staff, as well as a duty of care to all other building users.
- The Board will ensure that an up-to-date Safety Statement is in place. It will undertake a regular risk assessment and will ensure that identified hazards are eliminated or minimised as far as is reasonably practical. The Board will devote sufficient resources to ensuring the health and safety of all members of the school community and will ensure that there is adequate insurance in place to cover the activities of the school.
- The Board of Management will appoint Ian Flanagan to the role of Safety Officer to ensure Health and Safety compliance.

Principal and Deputy Principal

- The Principal is the link between the BOM and the staff.
- The Principal will ensure that all staff, including temporary and part-time staff, receive induction, on-going training and regular information on health and safety matters and will consult with them, on behalf of the BOM, at least annually on such matters.
- The Principal will support and assist staff to enable them to reach correct decisions about health and safety and will check at intervals that safe working methods are being observed that are in accordance with school and statutory procedures.
- The Principal will also receive and deal initially with any health and safety concerns that she receives from staff, parents, guardians and others.
- The Deputy Principal will take on the duties of the Principal in her absence.

Other Employees

- All staff, including temporary and part-time staff are required to cooperate with the Board and others to ensure health and safety law in general, and this policy in particular, are implemented.
- Specifically, in terms of child welfare, teachers are *in loco parentis* and are expected to do what a reasonably careful parent would do in any situation involving risk.

- Being mindful of their role in loco parentis, if any member of staff suspects that a parent/guardian may be under the influence of medication and/or an intoxicant to the extent that it endangers their own or another person's safety, the principal must be informed immediately.
- They have responsibility to take reasonable care of their own safety, health and welfare and that of any person who may be affected by their acts or omissions. This applies to any work they do on behalf of the school, both within the school premises and outside.
- Staff are required to attend any health and safety training that is deemed essential by the BOM and are encouraged to undertake appropriate additional training. All training must be delivered by individuals/organisations competent to do so.
- Records of all health and safety training completed by staff will be maintained by the school. Staff must use available facilities and equipment and other forms of protection to ensure work practices are performed in the safest manner possible.

Staff Safety Representative

This Health and Safety Policy names Ian Flanagan as the Staff Safety Representative and the duties associated with this position this include but are not limited to:

- Represent employees on health and safety matters
- Inspects the place of work on health and safety grounds
- Investigate accidents and dangerous occurrences
- Investigate health and safety complaints made by employees
- Accompany a health and safety inspector carrying out an inspection if and when required
- Make representations to, and receive information from, an Inspector
- Make representations to the Board on health and safety matters
- Liaise with other relevant persons engaged in health and safety matters
- Receive appropriate training for this role.

Parents and Guardians

- Parents and guardians are requested to cooperate with the Board and others to ensure health and safety law in general and this policy in particular, are implemented.
- Once a pupil enters the school building, the teachers and specifically assigned Special Needs Assistants are *in loco parentis* and thus primarily responsible for the children's health, safety and welfare.
- Parents and guardians are requested to report any health and safety concerns to the Principal and/or the Chairperson of the Board. High risk concerns must be reported promptly to the Principal.
- Parents and guardians are also entitled to receive information on, and be consulted on, the school's health and safety policy and procedures.
- Pupils will be advised of any relevant health and safety procedures and are required to comply with the staff and Board in implementing these.

Members of the Public

- Members of the public who visit the school will be informed of any relevant health and safety regulations in place and will be required to abide by these.
- Reasonable efforts will be made to ensure that any outside contractors used by the school are covered by adequate insurance and comply with health, safety and welfare legislation.

Access and Leaving Routes

- Every effort will be made to ensure that all building users can safely access, leave and move around the school grounds and building where necessary.
- Entrances and corridors will be kept free from obstruction.
- Fire exits will be kept free from obstruction.

Health, Wellbeing and Hygiene

- Parents/guardians should not send a child to school who is sick or who may have a contagious infection.

- While the Board of Management encourage full attendance, parents/guardians should use their best judgement in deciding if a child is sick and therefore should not be in school.
- Should a teacher, acting *in loco parentis*, determine that a child is sick and should not be in school, he/she will inform the principal for a second opinion. The parent/guardian will, if necessary, be contacted to collect the child during the school day. If the parents/guardians are not available, the emergency contact will be contacted to collect the child. If the emergency contact is not available, medical assistance may be sought by the school.
- Parents/guardians are required to inform the school of any on-going health problems that the child may have and the medications being used.
- If a child has been diagnosed by a doctor as having an infectious illness such as chicken pox, measles, impetigo etc. parents/guardians should inform the school as soon as possible.
- In case of a food allergy, please inform the school.
- If pupils have a medical condition which may affect their work at school, parents should inform the principal.
- All children must wash their hands after using the toilet.
- Female pupils in 5th and 6th class are informed of where to find a store of female sanitary products should they need them and how to dispose of these correctly.
- Please see Administration of Medicine Policy for more details

Long-term Health Conditions

- So that our school can provide the best level of care for all children, parents/guardians must inform the school if the child has any long-term health conditions.
- Examples of such long-term health conditions include but are not limited to asthma, epilepsy, diabetes, etc.
- This information is requested via the enrolment form.
- If such a long-term health condition is diagnosed after a child has been enrolled, it is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to inform the school of any such diagnosis immediately.

Medicines

- Parents/guardians must inform the class teacher if their child is on any form of medication either short term or long term.
- Examples of short term medications include but are not limited to antibiotics, medicine's containing paracetamol, antihistamines, etc. Examples of long-term medications include but are not limited to inhalers, Ritalin etc.
- Non prescriptive medicines will neither be stored nor administered to pupils in school.
- Prescribed medicines will not be administered in school without the written consent of parents and specific authorisation of Board of Management.

Head Lice

To prevent the possibility and spread of head lice, parents/guardians are reminded that their child's hair should be tied back.

- The school will regularly remind all parents/guardians to check for head lice.
- Parents/guardians must inform the class teacher if their child has head lice so that the rest of the school can be notified. All such information received will be treated anonymously when informing the rest of the school community.

Accidents

- Parents/guardians are reminded that although children will be supervised by designated teachers and other staff who are *in loco parentis* during breaks and at all other times, accidents can occur.
- The Board of Management and all parents/guardians recognise that members of staff are not medical professionals but rather act *in loco parentis*.
- Minor accidents are treated at school, such as slight cuts and abrasions etc. The supervising staff or other designated staff members at the school will deal with these by washing the affected area with cold water.

Parents/guardians are expected to check injuries when the child returns home from school.

- Plasters will only be used at the discretion of the supervising teacher.
- It is the policy of Rineen National School not to use disinfectant, salves or any such products on cuts or grazes in case child is allergic to any of these products.
- If the injury requires more attention than a wash with cold water or the use of an ice pack, then the parents/guardian will be notified.
- A member of staff will never administer medication due to an accident.
- When a child receives a blow to the head, no matter how minor it may be deemed by the supervising teacher, parents/guardians will also be notified.
- When an accident occurs during the school day that the supervising teacher deems more serious than a minor accident, an entry into the Incident Report Form must be made and signed by the supervising teacher and by any other members of staff who witnessed or attended the accident as a true and accurate reflection of what occurred.
- An accident deemed serious involving a child will also be notified on the day itself to the relevant parent/guardian, by the class teacher.

Emergencies

Exits

- The school has routes and exits, which meet statutory regulations.
- These will be kept free from obstruction at all times.
- School evacuation will be practised as part of regular fire drills.

Emergency contact details

- Emergency contact details of the parents and guardians of all children in the school as well as the next of kin of all staff, will be kept in the school office.
- The responsibility lies with parents and guardians to inform the school of any changes to the emergency contact details.

Fire Protection

- The school has, and will maintain, appropriate fire detection and fire-fighting equipment, which meets statutory obligations.
- Fire drills will be held at least three times per school year and a record will be maintained of all such drills.
- Staff will be trained in the use of fire-fighting equipment on a regular basis.

Emergency closures

- In the event of, for instance, heavy snowfall, high winds, thunderstorms, disconnection of services, death or critical incident, the Principal will consult as soon as feasible with the Chairperson of the BOM to decide whether it is in the interests of all parties to close the school.
- If it is decided that it would be unsafe to keep the school open, an exceptional closure will be deemed to have been granted by the BOM.
- Exceptional closures will be kept to an absolute minimum.
- Parents and guardians will be informed at the earliest opportunity of any such closure using a range of communication techniques.
- If school is open when an incident occurs, staff will remain on the premises until all children have been collected.

Yard Supervision

- Children are supervised by the school from 8.40 am until school opens at 8:50 am.
- During yard time, our school operates a weekly yard timetable of supervising staff - one rostered teacher will always be on duty and will be assisted by a Special Needs Assistant.
- The teacher rostered for yard duty on any given day is responsible for deciding whether or not the weather is suitable for going to yard. If unsure the teacher must check with the Principal for a second opinion.

School Excursions

- As part of the annual consent form parents are asked to provide permission for the children to take part in age-appropriate, relevant and educational excursions and field trips.

Covid 19

Rineen National School will be proactive in order to protect the health of the school community and minimise the risk of the virus being introduced and spread within the school. This is an evolving health emergency, which will require regular review in order to best manage and address health and safety issues. Please see Rineen National School Covid Response Plan and Risk Assessment for further information.

Ratification and Implementation

This policy was reviewed in consultation with parents and staff. It was reviewed by the Board of Management in 20th October 2021.

Signed on behalf of the Board of Management:

Chairperson: Ann O'Brien

Date: 20/10/21

Principal: Nicola Sheehan

Date: 20/10/21

Signed: Ann O'Brien

Reviewed on: 19/10/23

Chairperson

Signed: Nicola Sheehan

Reviewed on: 19/10/23

Principal