

Health & Safety Document

Introduction

This document sets out our approach to Safety, Health and Welfare matters in ACS. Ashbourne Community School is firmly committed to safeguarding the Safety, Health and Welfare at work of all our staff, our pupils and visitors to the school.

Success will depend on your co-operation. **It is therefore important that you read this document carefully and understand the role you can play in ensuring Health & Safety at work.**

Board of Management Philosophy:

The BOM recognises and accepts not only its statutory responsibilities, but also its obligations as an employer to direct, manage and achieve the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work of every employee, contractor, student and guest alike. The BOM further recognises the statutory rights of staff representatives as set out in section 13 of the Act (www.irishstatutebook.ie/1989_7.ie) and is committed to co-operating with such safety reps. The BOM believes that each employee accepts his/her responsibilities for improving and maintaining Safety, Health and Welfare in the workplace and for behaviour which does not jeopardise the individual's personal Safety, Health and Welfare or that of others.

Ashbourne Community School is committed to meeting its obligations under Section 13 of the Safety, Health and Welfare Act 1989, on consultation. Staff will be consulted regarding Safety, Health and Welfare policy through the established Representative structure. The principal will meet with staff representatives as often as is needed, and not less than once a term to discuss and review the health & safety aspects of the school's operations.

In addition, individual staff members are encouraged to put forward suggestions, which will contribute to the achievement of the Board's policy on safety, health and welfare at work. Such suggestions should be made to the principal or to the staff representative.

Responsibility for Health and Safety:

The staff of Ashbourne Community School is responsible for ensuring a safe and healthy work environment within their own areas.

Principal

In addition, the Principal, Ms Aine O' Sullivan, has executive responsibility for the day to day management & co-ordination of all occupational health & safety matters throughout Ashbourne Community School and in particular for:

- Liaising with the board of management on policy issues and any problems in implementing the health and safety policy
- Fire/Emergency procedures and training
- Ensuring action is taken to put necessary controls in place when identified
- Identifying staff training needs
- Routine maintenance of a safe physical environment through the Caretaker, Mr Tony Gough, and through the Safety Representative Mr Declan Sheerin.

The Principal may delegate all of the above functions except his/her role in respect of the Board of Management.

Employees

It is the duty for all employees while at work to:

- Take reasonable care for the safety, health and welfare of themselves and others
- Co-operate with the board and with any other person to comply with any of the relevant safety statutory provisions
- Use any items or means for securing their safety, health & welfare while at work, in manner intended
- Report to the principal or the health & safety rep any defects of which they become aware which might endanger safety, health & safety

Health & Safety Committee

This committee was established in 2005/06 with responsibility for assessing and appraising health and safety concerns that may arise. At present the committee is comprised of the Principal, the Deputy Principal and representatives from the Board of Management, Mr Declan Sheerin, Safety Rep., caretaking staff and students.

Safety Rep

Ms Rhona Gannon has been elected by staff to represent staff in consultation with management on all health & safety matters.

General Safety Rules

- *Reception procedures:* All visitors to our school are required to report to the secretary in the reception office
- Arrangements will be made by the school secretary to have *visitors on business* met by the appropriate member of staff
- *Outside normal working* hours access to school premises cannot be guaranteed to staff without prior clearance from the principal
- *Care of property:* The care and safekeeping of personal property is the owner's responsibility. Ashbourne Community School cannot accept liability for loss of or damage to any item of personal property.
- *Bags and parcels* should not be left on the ground or in any area where they might cause an injury. In particular they must not be left unattended in toilets, classrooms, the staffroom or any of the offices. Appropriate storage above ground has been provided for students.
- Full details of any *lost or found property* should be reported to the school secretary.

Fire Emergency Plans/Evacuation Procedures

In case of a fire, the total evacuation of our premises is our first priority. Evacuation drills will take place once per term or more often if required.

Procedures have been developed for orderly evacuations, which are designed to protect staff, students and visitors in the event of a fire or other emergency happening on the premises. Staff members are reminded to familiarise themselves with procedures so a fast and effective evacuation of the premises can be completed in the event of an emergency. Fire drill procedure is posted in every classroom.

An alert to evacuate the building will be given by the sounding of the alarm bell.

All staff and students are required to evacuate the building every time the alarm sounds.

Procedure for Fire Drill/Role of staff

Class teacher/staff member in charge of class

- Instructions for exiting the school are available in every classroom and teachers should make themselves aware of these (especially those who do not have a base classroom).
- Included in these instructions is notification of your exit door and a map indicating your exit route.
- Class group to be escorted to the assembly point and line up within tutor group at assigned number. Each tutor group is assigned a number (posted in every room).

Class Tutor

- A register of each tutor group will be made available by office staff. Tutor collects the register from office staff located at central position.
- Tutor to call register. Absentees to be noted.
- Late/sign out book for queries with office staff
- On completion of register, tutor reports to year head with absentees. The tutor must also return class register to year head.

Non tutors

- Each non-tutor will be assigned a year group to assist in the event of absent tutors.

Year Head

- monitors own year group and remains with year group until dismissed by principal/deputy principal
- calls register in absence of a tutor
- collects register from each tutor
- reports absentees to deputy principal/office staff who approach each year group individually

Principal/ Deputy Principal

- After registers have been called the D.P will consult with each year head to ascertain if anyone is unaccounted for.
- Grants permission to re-enter building
- Deputy Principal to be responsible for a staff attendance list.

Office Staff

- Will be located in a central position
- Will bring out all registers handed in that morning along with sign out/late book.
- Distributes registers to tutors.
- One member of office staff to accompany D.P when consulting with year heads
- Office staff will have in their possession Fire pack, class registers, emergency phone numbers, mobile phone, first Aid kit (fire drills only)
- Visitors book

Caretakers

- Immediate responsibility: Locate area fire alarm triggered. Damage limitation.

Assembly Point: Outdoor Basketball courts located beside science labs in white area.

Procedure when alarm sounds

- Follow instructions of staff member in charge
- Walk through designated fire exit (each room is assigned a particular exit which is posted in each classroom).
- Do not stop to collect personal items & do not return to your classroom.
- All staff, students and guests to assemble at the large tarmac area to the rear of the school. Each tutor class will line up quietly at their designated number (see classrooms).
- Registers to be collected by each tutor from members of the administration staff.

- Fire Prevention
- Fire extinguishers (and hose reels) are provided and correctly sited to meet statutory and insurance requirements.
- All fire fighting equipment is regularly tested and serviced by specialised contractors.
- All fire and emergency exits are marked using the standard symbols.
- Fire safety inspections and analysis of potential fire hazards are regularly carried out.
- Liaison with relevant authorities takes place as is necessary.
- Training regarding the operation of fire extinguishers to be provided to all staff.

Fire extinguishers are mounted throughout the building. Instructions are printed on the metal casing. Please familiarise yourself with the ones nearest your own workstation.

Because not all fires can be dealt with by the same extinguisher, a number of types are provided. The metal casing is red in all cases, with colour-coded strips on the non-water extinguishers. All extinguishers carry clear instructions stickers indicating what fires they may be used on:

- Red extinguishers with no coloured strip contain WATER and are for use against fires in paper, wood, textiles etc... They must not be used where there is a danger of live electric wire becoming exposed.
- Extinguishers with a black strip contain CO₂ gas and are for use against electrical fires and on burning liquids
- Extinguishers with a green strip are also for use against electrical fires and on burning liquids

- Extinguishers with a blue strip contain dry powder and are for use against fires involving burning liquids or chemicals.

Fire blankets are installed in the kitchen/cooking rooms and science labs.

Fire alarm bells are located on each corridor and in each social area. If you discover a fire, activate the nearest alarm bell by breaking the glass as indicated.

Fire hoses are located in all the main areas of the school.

Fire fighting equipment is provided for the safety of staff and students and must not be removed, obstructed or interfered with in any way. If an extinguisher is damaged or discharged for any reason, details must immediately be reported to the principal or the safety rep.

All fires, however insignificant must be reported to the principal.

Identification of Hazards

Ashbourne Community School is committed to meeting its obligations under Section 13 of the Safety, Health and Welfare Act 1989, on consultation. Staff will be consulted regarding Safety, Health and Welfare policy through the established Representative structure.

The Principal and safety representative will carry out regular yearly Hazard Audits. Ashbourne Community School is committed to make use of the advice available through the National Authority for Safety Health and Welfare at work. Where necessary, the Board of Management will employ competent consultants and bodies with special skills and services to augment the internal Hazard Audits.

The Safety Officer will advise the Principal if, in his opinion, there is a need for outside assistance in the area of hazard identification or risk assessment.

Instructions for Specific Practical Rooms

Woodwork / Engineering Rooms.

A keyed switching system is installed on the main electrical supply to the Woodwork/Engineering Rooms. The electrical supply may be activated only when a responsible teacher is present. If the teacher has to leave the room, he will ensure that the electrical supply is inoperative before his departure

All woodworking/engineering machinery is dangerous. Each piece of equipment in the rooms has specific instructions for its use attached. Each pupil is instructed, in detail as to how to operate the equipment and how to prevent accidents. No person should be allowed to use machinery unless supervised. No equipment may be used without the teacher's permission.

Home Economics Rooms.

Each piece of equipment in the Home Economics Room has specific instructions for its use attached. Each pupil is instructed, in detail as to how to operate the equipment and how to prevent accidents.

Science Laboratories.

Pupils will not use any glassware, chemicals, electrical equipment or gas in the laboratories except under direction of the teacher. No teacher should, in as far as is possible leave pupils in an unsupervised laboratory.

Students are instructed about laboratory rules at the start of each year. Each student and parent/guardian is obliged to sign a science contract every year.

Lab rules are posted on lab walls

Chemical storage

There are substances that have dangerous properties such as being toxic, corrosive, highly flammable, explosive etc.

Dangerous substances are stored in a safe manner having regard to their properties. Any hazards and associated precautions in the handling of and storage of dangerous should be understood

All dangerous substances should be kept in labelled or suitable containers. Each set of labs is equipped with flammable containers and storage facilities, which should be kept locked at all times

Never use dangerous substances for purposes other than for which they were supplied.

Information sheets listing the properties of these substances are provided in both sets of labs. From these sources the teacher should know the hazards of materials or products and students must adopt the precautions stated for their safe handling.

Ensure adequate ventilation when using volatile substances or operating processes which emit fumes. Always use protective equipment in a proper manner.

Art Rooms.

Art Room equipment such as guillotine, wax heater and kiln are dangerous if misused. Each piece of equipment in the Art Rooms has specific instructions for its use. Each pupil should be instructed, in detail as to how to operate the equipment and how to prevent accidents.

Computer Rooms

Details of the existing arrangements for the supervision of pupils and procedures for student behaviour is published separately and continually updated.

Grounds Equipment

Grounds maintenance equipment in use at the school includes:

Cylinder Lawnmower

Rotary Lawnmower

Ride-on Lawnmower

Strimmers

Hedge Trimmers

Each operator is instructed, in detail as to how to operate the equipment No unauthorised person may use the grounds maintenance equipment or machinery at any time.

Storage areas for grounds equipment and machinery are strictly out of bounds to pupils at all times.

Computer Screens

Computer screens in the Administration Department are of the correct specification.

In as far as possible, no person should operate a computer unit for more than one hour continuously without a break.

Adjustable chairs have been provided for all administrative staff and every effort is made to ensure that these are adjusted to the most comfortable position for the user.

Sturdy desks are provided to ensure that office equipment can be operated comfortably and safely.

Elimination of Hazards

The Board of Management will commit themselves to dealing, where practicable, with the hazards identified. This approach will take into account the norms accepted and the expert advice available.

The person responsible for this area of safety will examine the options available for dealing with the problems that have been identified, taking account of the extent of the problem. If the problem can only be overcome with significant expenditure, the person responsible will present a report on the options available.

To augment this policy, the person responsible for maintenance in the particular areas will have the responsibility of carrying out full preventative maintenance programmes, paying special attention to safety as an aspect of the buildings, plant and equipment.

Pupil behaviour - Hazards identified

Hazard	Means to reduce risk
Running along corridors can be the cause of accidents.	Pupils are instructed that running inside the building is not allowed. In as far as possible, staff will enforce this rule.
Paper darts and other missiles can cause injury.	Paper darts and other missiles should never be thrown. In particular, paper darts can ricochet off windows and cause damage to eyes.
Long hair can get caught in equipment, causing injury.	Pupils are instructed that long hair must be tied back, particularly during Science and any technology based class.
Vehicle Traffic outside school	Pupils entering or leaving the school must be aware of traffic, with particular attention being paid to school buses
School and P.E bags, left in corridors cause an obstruction and can result in falls.	Pupils should keep corridors clear of bags, coats and other belongings at all times. All bags should be put on racks/cages provided. Bags left on corridors may be removed by staff members
Congestion in Corridors	Pupils are instructed if at all possible to walk on the right hand side of the corridors throughout the school building.

Building – Hazards Identified

Hazard	Means to reduce risk
Litter on floors can be the cause of falls and injury.	All staff and pupils should ensure that litter throughout the school is kept to a minimum
Desks and chairs out of line in classrooms, blocking exit route.	Classroom layout should be kept in order at all times.
Drawers and cupboard doors not closed, thus becoming an obstacle to movement.	Drawers and doors should be closed when not in use.
Doors of Pupil lockers not kept closed	Doors should be closed when not in use. Can cause injury to heads.
Wet Floor in White Area due to rain	Mats are placed at the main entrance to assist

CCTV System

A Digital CCTV system has been installed in the school (July 2005). It is hoped this investment greatly improves the overall security and safety of both the school building and the immediate surrounding areas.

Sporting Activities / Extra Curricular

Sporting activities create a special category in relation to risk of injuries that are inherent in any sport. The School recognises this inherent risk and is committed to implementing the latest advice on safety measures, equipment use, sporting rules and practice.

In sporting activities, the Teacher in charge is responsible, in consultation where necessary with the Safety rep, for identifying appropriate protective equipment and the safest practice and guidelines available at the time.

Identification of Hazards

Continuous safety reviews will cover areas of possible hazard, including:

- Access and egress problems including floors, steps, ladders.
- Machinery safety including both utility and educational.
- Electrical safety standards including wiring and fuse-boards.
- Lighting and ventilation both natural and artificial.
- Manual handling operations.
- Posture at place of work.
- Handling and storage of chemical substances.
- Use of protective equipment.
- Noise and vibration.
- Systems of work.
- Systems governing the use of VDU screens.

- Maintenance operations.
- First Aid.
- Heat and humidity.
- Substances or atmospheres hazardous to health.
- Fire safety.

First Aid

First Aid training will be made available to a number of staff in an effort to ensure that key areas within the school building have access to a member of staff with knowledge of first aid.

Comprehensive first aid boxes are available in key locations such as technology rooms, labs, P.E area & kitchens to deal with minor injuries.

First aid supplies are available in the staff room beside the main staff room door.

Any enquiries regarding first aid supplies should be made to the health and safety representative.

Accident/Incident Reporting

All staff members must fill out an accident report form when dealing with any accident/incident, no matter how trivial. Accident report forms are available below the first aid station in the staff room. Completed forms to be returned to the same location.

Safety Training

In service courses relevant to the safety training of all employees will be organised on an ongoing basis by the Board of Management.

General Safety

1. The aim of the Board of Management is to provide a healthy and safe working environment. This can be achieved with the help and assistance of all employees and pupils by:
2. Observing the general rules of safety.
3. Using all plant, machinery and equipment in a safe and proper manner.
4. Employing the proper procedures when carrying out tasks and ensuring that no practices are used which may act as a source of danger to themselves and/or others.
5. Keeping work areas clean and tidy at all times.
6. Making sure all corridors and passageways, particularly those leading to escape routes, are kept free of obstructions at all times.
7. Taking care that fire points are not blocked or covered up in any way and that they are ready for use if the need arises.