

BLESSINGTON EDUCATE
TOGETHER NATIONAL
SCHOOL

HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY

Ratified by Board of Management on:	
Signed:	
Date:	
Chairperson, Board of Management	

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STATEMENT ON GENERAL HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY

The Board of Management of Blessington Educate Together National School recognises the importance of the legislation enacted in the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act, 2005.

This Safety Statement sets out the Safety Policy of the Board of Management of Blessington Educate Together National School and sets out the means to achieve the policy.

The Board of Management is committed to ensuring the health, safety and welfare of the employees, children, and all others involved in the running of the school.

The Policy requires the co-operation of all the employees of the school.

It is our intention to undertake regular reviews of the statement in the light of experience, changes in legal requirements and the changing nature of the school.

The Board of Management will undertake to carry out a safety audit annually and report it to staff and Board of Management. This inspection/safety audit will be carried out more frequently if requested by either staff or the Board of Management.

All records of accidents or ill health will be monitored in order to ensure that any safety measures required can be put in place, wherever possible, to minimise the recurrence of such accidents and ill health.

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1.0 RATIONALE

The Board of Management of Blessington Educate Together National School recognises and accepts that every one of its employees, pupils and visitors to the school is entitled to a safe and healthy environment.

The Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005 replaced the provisions of the Safety, Health and Welfare Act, 1989 when it came into operation on 1st September 2005. The Act consolidates and updates the existing law. It is the intention of the Board of Management of the school that all appropriate steps will be taken to meet the statutory requirements, recognised codes of practice and guidance notes in establishing a safe and healthy environment.

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 (referred to in the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005 as a safety statement) can only be successfully implemented with the full co-operation of everyone concerned.

2.0 SCHOOL PHILOSOPHY AND ETHOS

Children enrolled in Blessington Educate Together National School will be supported in reaching their full potential: mentally, physically, spiritually, emotionally and socially. This support will be differentiated in an atmosphere and environment in which children feel safe, valued and secure and in which respect for self and others is the norm.

Our school operates under the direct patronage of Educate Together. The four underlying principles of our ethos are:

- Co-educational
- Child-centred
- Multi denominational
- Democratically run

3.0 RESPONSIBILITIES

3.1 BOARD OF MANAGEMENT

In fulfilling 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.
- Appoint a Health and Safety (H&S) Co-ordinator for the school.

- Ensure that there is an effective and enforceable policy for the provision of health and safety throughout the school, and that it is implemented.
- Provide supervision, training and instruction so that all staff and pupils can perform their related activities in a healthy and safe manner. Health and Safety at work will be considered in employee Training and Development plans.
- Periodically assess the effectiveness of the policy and ensure that any necessary changes are made and effectively communicated to the school community.
- Identify and evaluate risks relating to possible accidents and incidents connected with school related activities, including fundraising activities.
- Identify and evaluate hazards in the school or school grounds through the use of written risk assessments.
- Prepare and revise, as appropriate, adequate plans and procedures to be followed and measures to be taken in the case of an emergency or serious and imminent danger. These procedures are outlined in the **Critical Incident** policy.

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

- A safe place for all users of the school to work without risk to health.
- Safe means of access to and egress from the school.
- 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.
- Implement any improvements considered necessary in relation to risk and hazard assessments.
- 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.

3.2 PRINCIPAL

In fulfilling its responsibilities, the Principal will:

- Ensure the day-to-day development and implementation of safe working practices and conditions for all staff, pupils and visitors.
- Take all reasonably practicable steps to ensure that the Health and Safety policy is implemented.

3.3 HEALTH AND SAFETY CO-ORDINATOR

In fulfilling its responsibilities, the H&S co-ordinator will:

- Be responsible for the day-to-day implementation of the Health and Safety Policy.

3.4 EMPLOYEES

All employees (teachers, secretarial staff, special needs assistants, cleaning staff etc.) 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, all safety requirements and attend safety training as required by the Board of Management.
- Ensure that he or she is not under the influence of an intoxicant to the extent that he or she is in such a state as to endanger his or her own safety, health or welfare at work or that of any other person.
- Ensure that staff, pupils, 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 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 labeled.
- Report any defects in the premises, school, equipment and facilities that they observe to the appropriate person. This may be the principal, maintenance officer or H&S co-ordinator.
- Take an active interest in promoting Health and Safety and suggest ways of reducing risks.

4.0 HAZARDS

These are divided into two categories:

- Hazards that can be rectified or minimised will be dealt with as a matter of urgency.
- Hazards that cannot be rectified will be clearly indicated and appropriate procedures listed beside them.

All identified hazards are detailed in the Hazard Control Book. All personnel and Board of Management can complete the Hazard Control Book, which is held by the Health and Safety Co-ordinator.

All hazards shall be eliminated in so far as resources and circumstances allow.

4.1 FIRE

It is the policy of the Board of Management of that:

- The Board of Management will ensure that an adequate supply of fire extinguishers, suitable for the type of fires likely to occur in each area, is available, identified and regularly serviced by authorised and qualified persons. Each fire extinguisher shall have instructions for its use.
- The principal will be responsible for fire drills and evacuation procedures and ensure that fire drills shall take place at least once a term.
- Instruction is given in the use of fire extinguishers for specific materials/equipment.
- Fire alarms shall be clearly marked. (Responsibility of Board of Management Safety Officer)
- Signs shall be clearly visible to ensure that visitors are aware of exit doors and routes.(Staff Safety Officer)
- All doors, corridors, and entries shall be kept clear of obstruction and shall be able to be opened at all times from within the building. Each teacher who has an exit in her classroom must ensure it is kept clear. main door – Principal will see they are free of obstruction.
- A plan of the school shows assembly points outside the school.
- Assembly areas are designated outside each building, and the locations specified.
- Exit signs shall be clearly marked.
- All electrical equipment shall be left unplugged when unattended for lengthy periods and when the building is empty. Teachers are responsible for their own classroom. The secretary/Principal, as appropriate, is responsible for the office. Staff room is every teacher's responsibility. Cleaner to check when cleaning.

- All recommendations made by a Fire Officer in addition to these provisions shall be implemented.

4.2 POTENTIAL HAZARDS

The following hazards (in so much as can be identified) are considered by the Board of Management to be a source of potential danger and are brought to the attention of all concerned.

- Wet corridors
- Climbing frames
- Trailing leads
- Typewriters, Computers
- Guillotine
- Fuse Board
- Electric kettles
- Boiler house
- Ladders
- Excess Gravel on school yard
- Protruding units and fittings
- Flat roof of storage unit
- External storage unit to be kept locked
- Slabs around perimeter of school
- Icy surfaces on a cold day
- Windows opening out

To minimise these dangers the following safety/ protective measures must be adhered to (see duties of employee Section 3.4):

- Access to and operation of plant/equipment is restricted to qualified members of the staff, whose job function is that of running, maintaining, cleaning and monitoring particular items of plant in the course of their normal duties. Copies of this Safety Statement will be sent to all contractors prior to contract by the Principal/Board of Management. Any other contractors entering the school must be shown a copy of the schools Safety Statement and shall adhere to its provisions.
- In addition all such plant and machinery is to be used in strict accordance with the manufactures instructions and recommendations.
- Where applicable Board of Management will ensure that members of the staff will have been instructed in the correct use of plant, machinery and equipment.
- All machinery and electrical equipment are fitted with adequate safeguards.
- Precautionary notices, in respect of safety matters are displayed at relevant points.
- Ladders must be used with another person's assistance.

- Avoid use of glass bottles where possible by pupils. Remove broken glass immediately on discovery
- Board of Management will check that floors are clean, even, non-slip and splinter-proof.
- Principal will check that PE equipment is stacked securely and in positioned so as not to cause a hazard.
- Check that all PE equipment is in good condition.
- An annual routine for inspecting furniture, floors, equipment and fittings. Board of Management Safety Officer and Staff Safety Representative.
- Check that wooden beams, benches etc. Are free from splinters and generally sound Vice Principal.
- Check that there are no uneven/broken/cracked paving slabs.
- Will check that roofs, guttering, drain pipes etc as far as can be seen are sound and well maintained. Board of Management Safety Officer.
- Teachers check that manholes are safe.
- Check that all play areas, especially sand pits, are kept clean and free from glass before use.
- Check that outside lighting works and is sufficient. Board of Management.
- Check that all builder's materials, caretakers' maintenance equipment, external stores etc are stored securely. Principal and Board of Management Safety Officer.
- Check that refuse is removed from building each day and is carefully stored outside. Caretaker.
- All video display units should have a screen in front of the computer.

5.0 AIMS

The members of the Board of Management of Blessington Educate Together National School are:

Chairperson:	Charlie Brophy
Principal:	Rosemary Lynch
Treasurer:	Ian McDonnell (Parent Representative)
Secretary:	Lorraine Hennessey (Community Representative)
Teacher Representative:	Adele McGuirk
Parent Representative:	Allison Starns
Community Representative:	Dan Kenny

Health and Safety Representative and Maintenance Officer positions held by Adele McGuirk.