

Scoil Mhuire na Dea Chomhairle,

Headford, Co. Galway.

Safety Statement

The members of the Board of Management of Scoil Mhuire na Dea Chomhairle, Headford are:

Chairperson: Joan Connolly

Secretary: Mary Mc Nelis

Treasurer: Conor Carey

Other members: Fr. Ray Flaherty

Clodagh Rafferty

Caroline Mc Donnell

Sandra Schalks

James Moran

Safety Officer of Scoil Mhuire na Dea Chomhairle: Mary Mc Nelis

Introductory Statement:

The Board of Management and Staff of Scoil Mhuire na Dea Chomhairle have prepared this Health and Safety Policy in accordance with the requirements of the Safety, Health and Welfare Act 2005. The Board of Management of Scoil Mhuire na Dea Chomhairle will ensure that in so far as is practicable, the highest standards of safety shall prevail.

Rationale:

The Board of Management of Scoil Mhuire na Dea Chomhairle 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 and the means to achieve that policy. The Board of Management's objective is to endeavour to provide a safe and healthy work environment for all our employees and pupils and to meet our duties to members of the public with whom we come in contact. This policy requires the co-operation of all employees. It is the Board's intention to undertake regular reviews of the statement in light of experience, changes in legal requirements and operational changes.

Relationship to Characteristic Spirit of the school:

The Board aims –

- To create a safe and healthy working environment for all members of the school community 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 put practices in place to ensure safe systems of work
- 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
 - Provision of a safe environment for all employees, pupils and members of the public with whom we come in contact.
 - To ensure that all employees will carry out safe work practices.
 - To provide safe access and egress routes.
 - To ensure safe handling / lifting and use of hazardous substances and equipment.
 - To ensure all equipment is safe and well maintained.
- To provide appropriate personal protective equipment when necessary.

Responsibilities of Employer-The Board of Management

The Board of Management of Scoil Mhuire na Dea Chomhairle 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 in the school of every employee, pupil and visitor alike. The Board believes that each employee accepts his/her legal and moral 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. The Board of Management of Scoil Mhuire na Dea Chomhairle will ensure that the provisions of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005 are adhered to.

Specifically the Board of Management of Scoil Mhuire na Dea Chomhairle wishes to ensure in so far as is reasonably practicable-

- The design, provision and maintenance of all places in a condition that is safe and without risk to health.
- The design, provision and maintenance of safe means of access to and egress from the school.
- The design, provision and maintenance of equipment and machinery.
- The provisions of systems of work that are planned, performed and maintained so as to be safe and without risk to health.
- The provision of information, instruction, training and supervision necessary to ensure safety and health at work of its employees.
- The provision and maintenance of suitable protective equipment necessary to ensure the safety and health at work of its employees.
- The preparation and revision as necessary of adequate plans to be followed in emergencies e.g. fire drills, serious injuries etc.
- The safety and prevention of risk to health at work in connection with use of any article or substance.
- The provision and maintenance of facilities and arrangements for the welfare of employees at work.
- Obtaining where necessary, the services of a competent person for the purpose of ensuring the safety, health and welfare at work of its employees.
- The continuing updating of the Safety Statement.
- The provision of arrangements for consultation with employees on matters of Health and Safety.

The Principal

The Principal, Ms. Mary Mc Nelis, shall be responsible for overseeing the safety provisions on behalf of the school. She shall ensure that each employee shall obtain a copy of the Health and Safety policy and shall be familiar with its contents.

The Safety Representative

The Safety Representative Ms. Mary Mc Nelis should be consulted if any of the employees have queries regarding any of the provisions contained in the Health and Safety Policy. Her main duties and responsibilities are as follows-

- To consult with and make representations to the Principal/Board of Management on health, safety and welfare matters relating to the employees in the place of work.
- To ensure that the school fulfils all statutory requirements in respect of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act, 2005.
- To undertake regular and appropriate revision and auditing of the school's safety procedures and methods of operation and ensure that they are kept up to date.
- To ensure that adequate fire protection and prevention measures are provided.
- The Safety Representative shall investigate all accidents and dangerous occurrences. Causes of accidents shall be investigated and where appropriate, remedial action shall be taken.

Duties of Employees

It shall be the duty of each employee while at work:

- To take reasonable care of his/her own safety, health and welfare and that of any person who may be affected by his/her acts or omissions while at work.
- To cooperate with his/her employer and others to fulfil the requirements in respect of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005.
- To use in such a manner so as to provide the protection intended any suitable appliance, protective clothing, convenience, equipment or other means or thing provided for securing his/her safety.
- To report to the Principal or Safety Representative any defects in plant, equipment, place of work or system of work which might endanger safety, health or welfare of which he/she becomes aware.
- To make a written report in the school's Accident Report Book in the event of a serious accident. This Accident Report Book is kept in the Secretary's Office.
- To discuss with the Principal any health condition/illness that adds to risks at work.
- No person will intentionally or recklessly interfere with or misuse any appliance, protective clothing, convenience, equipment or anything provided in pursuance of any of the relevant statutory provisions or otherwise, for securing safety, health or welfare of persons arising out of work activities.

RISK ASSESSMENT

Having completed a Risk Assessment of Scoil Mhuire na Dea Chomhairle, the Board of Management and Staff have divided the risks into two categories- those risks/hazards that can be rectified and those that remain constant. Hazards that can be rectified or minimised will be dealt with as a matter of urgency. Appropriate procedures shall be put in place to deal with constant hazards.

The following areas of school life and activity require special care and attention in order to prevent injury or damage to members of our school community;

- A. General Activity outside the classroom
- B. General activity within the classroom
- C. Restricted areas
- D. Access to the school & employees
- E. First aid
- F. Hygiene & health
- G. Smoking
- H. Fire
- I. Mobile phones
- J. Internet use & access
- K. Machinery/ kitchen equipment/ electrical appliances
- L. Chemicals
- M. Code of behaviour & anti- bullying
- N. Physical education
- O. Internal hazards
- P. External hazards
- Q. Incident/ accident reporting
- R. Other safety & welfare issues
- S. Safety in science

T. School tours

U. Radon levels on school premises

A. General Activity Outside the Classroom

- Our school opens at 8:50 a.m. and finishes at 2:30 p.m. It is recognised that the short break from 10:50 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. and the Lunch break from 12.30 p.m. to 1:00 p.m. require special attention and care. The Principal shall ensure that a rota for Supervision of these breaks shall be in place.
- Note due to Covid 19 Pandemic additional lunch breaks have been added and are staggered to reduce the number of children in the school yard at any one time. Classes from Junior Infants-2nd Class have lunch breaks at 10.30am-10.40am and 11.55am-12.25am. Children from 3rd-6th class have lunch breaks at original times above. The yard areas are assigned weekly to each class and a revised supervision rota has been created to accommodate the change in lunch time supervision duties. See Covid Plan for more info.
- In all pupil activity, involving games of whatsoever kind, teachers will exercise prudent judgement on the level of safety required and bring to the notice of the Principal Teacher/Safety Representative any matter requiring corrective action.
- Activities which involve pupils travelling from the school i.e. School Tours, School Sports activities, Swimming classes, visits to local Library, Christmas Pageant, Confirmation practices in Parish Church, Nature Walks, Field Trips etc. will require specific rules to ensure the safety of all participating. In these instances the rules will often be specific to the nature of the places being visited and the activities being engaged in. (*See Section T. School Tours*)

B. General Activity Within the Classroom

Within the classroom and the school building during normal school business, the potential hazards for all within the school are:

- Activity involving the use of tools, sprays, solvents of any kind, e.g. scissors, craft knives, pointed implements, Science equipment, glue, paints, hot water etc. (For specific safety considerations for Science see *Section S. Safety in Science*)
- Activity involving the use of electrical power.
- Moveable furniture.

C. Restricted Areas

The restricted areas in and around Scoil Mhuire na Dea Chomhairle are:

- The drive- through area and road at front of school. (*See Assembly & Dismissal Policy*) (*See also Introductory Letter sent to all parents at the beginning of each school year – Appendix I*)
- The area at the front and side of the school during break-times.
- The Area fenced off by Footsteps Preschool in the school yard
- The school shed
- The boiler house
- The area around the school's oil tank
- The roads to the front and side of the school.
- The grounds of Presentation College Headford and Headford Boys' National School.

Children must have permission before entering these areas and they must be supervised if doing so.

D. Access to the School and Employees

- Persons coming onto the school premises must identify themselves clearly.
- Contractors should make direct contact with the Principal before initiating any work on the school premises.
- All salespersons must have a prior appointment.
- There is a 'no trespassing sign' displayed at front of school.
- If an employee feels at risk from or threatened by a particular person on school property this must be drawn to the attention of the Board of Management. The Board must ensure that in such circumstances all appropriate measures are taken to protect the employee.
- A burglar alarm has been fitted in the school and operates with a special code which is known by all staff.

E. First Aid:

- In the event of some accidents, it may be necessary for the class teacher, teacher on supervision duty or other staff member, to administer First-Aid.
- In light of Covid 19 Pandemic, appropriate PPE will be worn by member of staff when administering First Aid during this time.
- In the case of a more serious accident/illness, parents are informed and the pupil is taken home.
- Information on the procedures followed by staff in the event of a pupil needing first aid attention will be communicated to parents/guardians when it is deemed necessary.

Health & Safety Statement Scoil Mhuire na Dea Chomhairle

- The principal/staff must be informed of a pupil's medical condition that may require extra care/attention.
- First aid kit; the first aid kit is on the wall near the entrance/exit to the school yard. It will be properly equipped at all times and will contain the following;
 - ✓ Plasters/bandages
 - ✓ Wasp-ease
 - ✓ Antiseptic disinfectant
 - ✓ Antiseptic cream
 - ✓ Burn cream
 - ✓ Antiseptic wipes/cotton wool/gauze
 - ✓ Scissors
 - ✓ Disposable gloves

NOTE: a portable first aid kit shall be brought on school outings when deemed necessary

- Disposable gloves **MUST** be used at all times when administering First Aid.
- Hot water and soap are available and should be used before and after administering First Aid.
- An ice pack is available in the Staffroom fridge.
- All contact phone numbers in the case of a serious accident are displayed on the notice board in the Secretary's Office. These are updated annually and when necessary.
- Parents will be asked, when completing the school Enrolment Form, to include a second contact name and number, in the event that it was not possible to contact a parent.
- Parents will also be asked to give the name of the family doctor, for the same reason.
- Parents will also be asked to give consent for their child to be taken directly to a doctor or to hospital in the event that all attempts at the above contacts fail and where the child needs urgent medical attention.
- Children suffering from food allergies who may get anaphylactic shock have a supply of injections for emergencies which are kept in the Staffroom. The injections are checked regularly by their parents, to see that they are not out of date. It is the policy of the B.O.M of Scoil Mhuire na Dea Chomhairle that all necessary medications (for ongoing serious medical conditions) be kept in a safe designated area. (*See Administration of Medicines Policy* as above)
- All serious accidents/ illnesses are to be reported to the Principal Teacher/Safety Representative. The details of accidents happening within the school premises are to be entered in the Accident Report Book which is kept in the Secretary's Office.

Accident Report book- The following information should be noted:

- Date and time of accident.
- Where the accident happened and who witnessed it.
- Description of the accident.
- What First Aid was administered and by whom.
- Any other relevant information, e.g. if the pupil needed to be taken to a doctor or hospital.
- Any follow-up information on the incident.

If a pupil or employee is seriously injured as a result of a school related activity (including school trips) and requires medical treatment by a registered medical practitioner, this is reportable, by law, to the Health and Safety Authority online at www.hsa.ie or on the Incident

Health & Safety Statement Scoil Mhuire na Dea Chomhairle

Report Form (IR1). The school must keep records of all accidents that occur for a period of 10 years.

F. Hygiene & Health

- Hygiene is the concern of everyone in Scoil Mhuire na Dea Chomhairle. Good hygiene practice is essential for the health and welfare of all in the school.
- Teachers are requested to train their pupils in good hygiene practice.
- The Staff (Teaching and Ancillary) is requested to be vigilant regarding good hygiene practice and to bring to the notice of the Principal/Safety Representative any corrective action which may be deemed necessary.
- As far as reasonably practicable, pupils and staff will be protected against infectious diseases/illnesses. For further details on safety precautions in relation to Covid 19 protocols and restrictions, please refer to Covid 19 Response Plan, Safety Statement and Risk Assessment Documents of Scoil Mhuire na Dea Chomhairle.
- There will be adherence to sound principles of cleanliness, hygiene and disinfection and provision of disposable gloves to be used for all First-Aid applications, cleaning jobs, etc.
- In the case of accidents/illness where there are blood/bodily fluids, the area is covered with bleach and is thoroughly mopped. The person cleaning up is expected to wear rubber gloves. Hot water and soap are available.
- Soap and electric hand driers are provided in children's and staff toilets.
- There are safe, suitable, sufficient and properly cleaned sanitary facilities for all.
- A specially adapted toilet for disable persons is provided.
- Hygienic hand sanitising gels/sprays are provided when necessary.
- There must be a sufficient supply of toilet paper in all toilets.
- The provision for disposal of sanitary towels is available in the staff toilets.
- Litter bins are provided in all classrooms and in the Staffroom and are emptied regularly.
- If an outbreak of headlice occurs in the school a letter is sent home to parents advising them of correct procedures.
- Information regarding a child's ongoing medical condition/medication required is requested on the pupil enrolment form (*See Pupil Enrolment Form; Appendix 2*). The principal Ms Mary Mc Nelis, will ensure that all staff members are aware of same.
- If a child falls ill during school hours, the parents/designated person are contacted and the child is taken home.
- The general cleanliness of the school environment is considered a high priority. All classrooms and toilets are cleaned regularly by the school cleaner. The playground and grassy area are checked and monitored by the school caretaker who also has responsibility for collection of school refuse and recycling.

G. Smoking:

- Inside the school building of Scoil Mhuire na Dea Chomhairle has been designated a Smoke Free Zone.

H. Fire

The Board draws attention to the dangers of fire and to the loss of life that may be caused in the event of a fire in the school.

It is the policy of the Board that-

- There is an adequate supply of fire extinguishers which will deal with any type of fire.
- All fire equipment is identified and regularly serviced.
- Instruction is given in the use of fire extinguishers for specific materials/equipment.
- Regular fire drills take place (once a term)
- Smoke alarms have been installed and are in working order.
- Unnecessary electrical equipment is unplugged or turned off outside school hours and when school is vacated for lengthy periods.
- An assembly area is designated outside the school building (See Evacuation Procedures)
- Exit signs are clearly visible
- The Principal is responsible for Fire Drills and evacuation procedures.
- The school and relevant equipment have been checked by a fire officer and all recommendations made by him/her have been implemented.
- Staff are familiar and have been trained in the procedure to be followed when using fire fighting equipment.

It is the responsibility of principal and staff to ensure that-

- The fire exits and escape routes are clear from obstruction.
- Fire doors are kept unlocked and unobstructed whilst people are on the school premises.
- Staff and children are familiar with evacuation procedures
- Fire drills are held at least once per term.
- Fire doors open outwards and are not held or wedged open.
- The fire alarm system is tested at regular intervals whilst the school is in session to ensure that it works and is audible in all parts of the building
- Flammable substances eg. cleaning fluids, photocopying chemicals are stored correctly, away from sources of heat.

Evacuation Procedure

An evacuation procedure has been prepared for Scoil Mhuire na Dea Chomhairle. Evacuation drills take place at least once per term. All staff members are reminded to familiarise themselves with the procedure so that a fast and effective evacuation of the premises can be completed in the event of an emergency. Each teacher shall instruct her/his pupils in the fire drill procedure to be observed in the event of fire.

Assembly Points: School football pitch at designated assembly points of C, D, E, F and G.

Alarm: any member of staff discovering an outbreak of fire should raise the alarm **at once**. Pupils should be taught to inform the nearest teacher or adult. The sounding of the fire alarm is the signal for the complete evacuation of the building.

*An immediate attack on the fire by staff members with the available fire appliances should be carried out only where this can be done **without personal risk**.

On hearing the alarm, pupils should:

- Stand in silence by their tables.
- Leave the classroom row by row in single file.
- Proceed in silence to the designated Assembly Point. The teacher will follow taking with him/her the laminated class list, closing all doors and checking toilets on their escape route.
- No talking should be permitted during the evacuation in order that any instructions given and calling of each class roll may be heard.
- Any pupil not with his/ her own class group when the alarm sounds e.g. in the toilets, staff room, corridors, etc., should go immediately to the Assembly Point and join his/ her appropriate class.
- Any pupils attending Learning Support/ Resource must stay with the support Teacher and proceed in silence to the assembly point.
- No one is allowed to re-enter the building for clothing, books, etc.

On hearing the fire alarm, the Principal should –

- Arrange for the Fire Brigade to be informed.
- Go at once to the Assembly Point with her class and remain there until a report has been received.
- When the Officer of the Fire Brigade arrives he/ she should be immediately informed whether all persons have been safely evacuated.

Senior pupils should be appointed to assist in the proper execution of all drills. They should be instructed to hold open doors in the line of march, to close doors where necessary to prevent spread of fire or smoke and, if time permits, to close windows.

Scoil Mhuire na Dea Chomhairle has a service contract with Corrib Fire Protection Company Ltd. for maintenance and repair of Fire Extinguishers. (*See copy of the Certificate of Inspection and Service; Appendix 3*)

I. Mobile Phones

Pupils of Scoil Mhuire na Dea Chomhairle are not allowed to bring mobile phones to school. (*See Code of Behaviour Policy*)

J. Internet Use/Access

The aim of the school's Acceptable use Policy is to ensure that pupils will benefit from learning opportunities offered by the school's Internet resources in a safe and effective manner.

- Pupils of Scoil Mhuire na Dea Chomhairle will only have access to the Internet under the strict supervision of a teacher.
- Filtering software and/or equivalent systems are used on all computers.
- Uploading and downloading of non-approved software will not be permitted.
- Virus protection software is installed.
- Proper procedure regarding the use of Visual Display Units is to be followed carefully.
- Any up-to-date information regarding hazards relating to the use of VDU's will be studied and recommendations and directives implemented.
- The use of personal CDs/DVDs in school requires a teacher's permission.
- Students will observe good 'netiquette' (i.e. etiquette on the Internet) at all times.

(For specific strategies relating to the World Wide Web, Email, Internet Chat, School web Site, Support Structures and Sanctions please refer to the school's ICT Policy.)

K. Machinery/Kitchen Equipment/Electrical Appliances

It is the policy of the board of management of Scoil Mhuire na Dea Chomhairle that machinery, kitchen equipment, electrical appliances are only used by competent persons. Such appliances and equipment will be subject to regular maintenance checks by the school's Safety Representative.

Such maintenance should include checking that

- Equipment is correctly wired and earthed
- Plugs are correctly wired
- The mains supply is capable of meeting the maximum demand.

Plugs/Sockets/Leads

Visually check that -

- Plugs are in good condition with no cracks or pieces missing.
- Sockets are in good condition with no cracks or pieces missing.
- Socket screws and mountings are secure
- Sockets are situated in safe positions, convenient for the equipment to be used and not subject to damp.
- Indicator lights on sockets function correctly.
- Insulation on leads is not cracked or frayed.
- Leads are without knots or joins and are reasonably free of 'kinks'
- Leads are the correct length for the equipment being used.
- There are no trailing leads
- Multipoint adaptors are not being used

Health & Safety Statement Scoil Mhuire na Dea Chomhairle

- Leads and flexible cable are securely fixed at both equipment and plug ends.

Equipment-

Check that-

- Fixed and portable electrical equipment is not damaged and, as far as you are aware is operating properly.
- Copies of manufacturer's instructions/operating manuals are easily accessible
- Equipment is only being used for purposes for which it is intended.
- Where appropriate, all electrical equipment is switched off and unplugged when not in use.
- Equipment incorporating heating has a thermal safety cut-out.

*All equipment associated with school maintenance is stored in a safe area.

The electrical mains isolating switches should be easily accessible and known to all staff.

L. Chemicals

It is the policy of the B.O.M of Scoil Mhuire na Dea Chomhairle that all chemicals, detergents etc. be stored in clearly identifiable containers bearing instructions and precautions for their use and kept in a safe area and protection provided for use when handling them. Members of Staff using these materials should familiarise themselves with the hazards associated with the materials and the precautions to be taken in the event of spillage, splashes etc.

RISK ASSESSMENT OF SOLVENTS/CLEANING PRODUCTS

used in Scoil Mhuire na Dea Chomhairle, Headford.

Cleaner	Always wear PVC/Rubber Gloves. Avoid contact with eyes. Eyes: Wash out with water. Skin: Wash with water. Ingestion: Do not induce vomiting. Drink plenty of water. Seek medical help.
----------------	--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

<p>Floor Maintainer X Irritant</p>	<p>Irritating to eyes. Keep out of reach of children. Ingestion: Seek medical advice immediately.</p>
<p>Floor Cleaner X Irritant</p>	<p>As above.</p>
<p>Sanisorb X Irritant</p>	<p>Eyes: Wipe clean with dry cloth before rinsing with copious amounts of water. Seek medical advice.</p>
<p>Cleaner and Degreaser X Irritant</p>	<p>Eyes and Skin: Rinse immediately with water. Seek medical advice. Wear protective gloves</p>

M. Code of Behaviour and Anti-Bullying

The code of Behaviour and Discipline Policy and Anti-Bullying Policy of Scoil Mhuire na Dea Chomhairle provide for a level of behaviour in order to minimise personal risk or stress to any pupil or employee in the school.

(See Code of Behaviour and Anti-Bullying Policies)

N. Physical Education

The students of Scoil Mhuire na Dea Chomhairle must always be supervised when at PE. All PE equipment must be stored carefully, maintained regularly and appropriately used. Children wear suitable footwear and clothing for PE classes.

Indoor: GP Room .

The floor of GP Room must be clean, even and non-slip.

PE equipment must be stored securely and positioned so as not to cause a hazard.

PE equipment must be regularly inspected

Wooden benches/platforms must be free from splinters and generally sound.

First Aid box and ice pack is located in the staff room.

Outdoor: School Yard/ Grassy Pitch area

All play areas must be kept clean and free from litter such as glass.

Outside equipment eg. Goalposts, basketball posts, etc. must be securely anchored.

Special care must be employed on retrieving balls from outside school yard areas.

(See Section C Restricted Areas)

O. Internal Hazards

There are many potential hazards within the school building of Scoil Mhuire na Dea Chomhairle.

The board of Management and Staff have identified the following areas as requiring special care and attention in order to prevent injury or damage to members of our school community.

- Activity involving the use of tools, sprays, solvents of any kind, e.g. scissors, craft knives, pointed implements, Science equipment, glue, paints, hot water etc. (For specific safety considerations for Science *See Section S Safety in Science*)
- Activity involving the use of electrical power.
- Moveable furniture.
- Wet floors in toilet areas or in corridor in wet weather.
- Floors must not be polished with a slippery finish. Washing of floors will take place after school hours to ensure as far as is reasonably practicable, the elimination of the danger of slipping.
- Non-slip mats must be used on all floors.
- All spills must be cleaned promptly.
- Running is not allowed inside the school (except during P.E in the G.P room).
- Stairway to upper room
- Sloping ceiling in upper room.
- Power press in front hallway
- Cleaner's Storeroom

The following will be checked on an on-going basis-

Stairways: Check that;

- Stairways are fitted with sound banisters or rails
- Stairways are adequately lit
- Steps are not worn or broken or slippery

Floors/Passages: Check that-

- Floor surfaces are even and are not slippery.
- Passages/corridors are adequately lit.
- Litter and rubbish is not allowed to accumulate.
- Mats are not positioned in such a way as to be tripping hazards
- There are no areas of loose, flaking or damaged paint, plaster or plasterboard.

Doors: Check that-

- Doors are unobstructed
- Fire exit doors are clearly signed
- Doors with glass windows have toughened or laminated glass
- Doors with a fire resistance required have wire re-enforced glass
- There are no doors with loose or damaged hinges, catches, broken wood or glass panels, or loose or stiff handles.
- Doors are not allowed to swing freely without restraint.
- Signs are clearly visible to ensure that visitors are aware of the Exit doors

Windows: Check that-

- Windows are not broken or cracked.
- Windows open easily without undue force being applied.
- Windows do not jut out dangerously when open.
- Windows are cleaned regularly.
- Windows do not have broken fastenings or chords.
- Where necessary a window pole is available
- Where possible blinds are fitted on windows

Heating and Ventilation: Check that-

- The gas heating system is regularly serviced and maintained in good order.
- The room thermostats are set to a comfortable setting.
- Blinds are provided for shading.
- Windows can be easily opened for adequate ventilation.

Lighting: Check that-

- All light fittings are working and are kept in a clean condition.
- All light switches are working and kept in a safe condition.
- The lighting is adequate for the type of work being undertaken.

Classrooms: Check that-

- Hazards are not arising from overcrowded classrooms
- All cupboards, fixed blackboards/whiteboards/Interactive whiteboards and wall-mounted projectors/magnetic boards/display units etc. are secure and stable.
- Classroom furniture is not damaged.
- Wherever possible there are no sharp edges or corners on the furniture
- Furniture is positioned safely.
- All shelf mountings are secure.
- Work areas are clean and tidy at all times.
- Children do not bring drinks to school in glass bottles.

Non-teaching Areas: Check that

Health & Safety Statement Scoil Mhuire na Dea Chomhairle

- Substances for use with the photocopier are stored correctly and that the photocopying room has adequate ventilation.
- The staffroom/lunch area is kept clean, warm and well lit.
- The staffroom is large enough for the numbers to be accommodated and sufficient seating is provided.
- There is provision for tea and coffee to be made.
- Staff sanitary facilities are suitable, sufficient and properly cleaned.

Note it is the policy of the B.O.M of Scoil Mhuire na Dea Chomhairle to minimise sound pollution-room to room, yard to room.

P. External Hazards

The grounds of Scoil Mhuire na Dea Chomhairle are attended to by our caretaker on a regular basis. The Board of Management and Staff have identified the following areas as requiring special care and attention in order to prevent injury or damage to members of our school community-

- Drain pipes and gutters
- Sloping (wheelchair) exit onto yard from back door.
- Porch at back door exit.
- Gates leading to Boys' N.S., and Presentation College Headford.
- Dividing walls between the school grounds and Headford Boys' N.S., and Presentation College Headford.
- Wall to front of school.
- Goal posts and basketball ring.
- Sloping yard area
- Banks of field
- Area around/behind Primary School Prefab
- Door and entrance at front of school.
- Walkway and 'Pick-up' area in front of school.
- Windows opening onto the school yard and walkways

(See Section C Restricted Areas)

It is important that the following are checked on an on-going basis-

- Condition of the school building, dampness, leaks etc
- Roof slates, drain pipes and guttering
- Yard surface, pathways and drive-thru area (free from surface cracks, stones, litter etc)
- In wintertime efforts to be made to de- ice the above areas by applying salt.
- That there are no uneven, broken or cracked pathways.
- Grassy pitch (even and well maintained)

- That outdoor lighting works and is sufficient.
- That the 'drive thru and pick-up' facility is safe in regard to the presence of pedestrians.

Q. Incident/Accident Reporting

All incidents, no matter how trivial, and whether to pupils, employees or members of the public **must be reported immediately to the Principal.**

This is necessary to monitor the progress of safety standards and to ensure that proper medical attention is given where required. An accident Report book is retained in the Secretary's Office for recording all accidents. (*See Responding to Critical Incidents Policy*)

A report must be made to the HSA (Health and Safety Authority) in respect of the following type of accident/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 three 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.

R. Other Safety and Welfare Issues

- For information on the procedures in Scoil Mhuire na Dea Chomhairle for assembly and dismissal of pupils refer to corresponding policies
- Children leaving the school for any reason during the school day must have the permission of their class teacher or principal. A pupil must inform someone in authority as they leave the premises.
- Supervision of pupils- In the event of a class teacher being absent his/her class will be supervised by another staff member/members until a substitute teacher is employed.
- The Supervision Rota for breaktime / lunchtime supervision is displayed on the Staffroom wall.
- Allegations or suspicions of child Abuse- (*Refer to Scoil Mhuire na Dea Chomhairle's Child Protection Policy and Guidelines, and the CPSMA Management Board Members' Handbook*)
- 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
- Staff: Scoil Mhuire na Dea Chomhairle conducts a Garda check before a new member of staff is employed.

S. Safety in Science

Everyone involved in Science activities (i.e. teachers / helpers / children) should be aware of the hazards that may be encountered and the procedures to be adopted in the event of an accident.

Children will be encouraged to observe safety procedures during all tasks.

Science activities should not involve the use of chemicals or other hazardous materials.

Teachers will consult the Principal (and if necessary the Board of Management) whenever it is proposed to engage in activities in the environment. The following safety rules also apply to Fieldwork in other subjects e.g. Geography and History. Safety precautions cannot remove all risks but should eliminate unnecessary hazards.

Risk Minimisation -Outdoor Exploration of the Environment/Fieldtrips

- All areas to be investigated should be safe and easily accessible for children, teachers and helpers. This may involve a preliminary visit to the site by the teacher/helper in order to identify potential hazards.
- Parents will be given advance notification of any out of school activities.
- In any investigations involving water e.g. pond /river/lake/seashore, the children will be made aware of the position of life belts, safety notices etc.
- Only safe areas of the river bank/pond/lake/seashore will be used.
- Ponds with algal bloom/pollution/chemical contamination will be avoided.
- Only one group (4 to 6 children) should be dipping into the water at a time; the other groups must stand well back from the edge.
- Fishing rods will not be used near overhead electrical power lines. Kites will not be flown near overhead electrical power lines. Children will not be allowed near electricity sub-stations.
- Protective rubber boots must be worn by all children/adults.
- Teachers should be aware that some children may be allergic to certain animals or plants. Any skin infections/grazes/cuts should be covered.
- Children should not handle anything that may be hazardous.
- All hands must be washed before and after handling animals, plants, soil etc.. Children should not look directly at the sun or through any lenses. Children shall be reminded of the dangers of sunburn.

Risk Minimisation -Classroom Activities (Science, also History, Geography, Art etc.)

- Children will work under the supervision of the teacher/designated adult at all times.
- As moving objects can cause injuries, due care will be taken during work on forces.
- To minimise the risk of scalding, hot water will only be used under adult supervision

Health & Safety Statement Scoil Mhuire na Dea Chomhairle

- Demonstration of the safe use of tools (e.g. craft knives, glue, staplers etc.) will be given before allowing their use in designing tasks.
- Tools must be stored in a secure area and children will only have access to tools when supervised.
- Children will be made aware of the dangers associated with mains electricity and electrical appliances.
- Electrical appliances will only be used under adult supervision.
- Batteries only, will be used for activities based on electric current. Mains electricity is never used. Re-chargeable batteries will not be used. Batteries will never be cut open.
- Batteries will be disposed of properly.
- Stripping of electrical cable of plastic covering should only be undertaken by teacher/designated adult.
- Children must be warned of the danger of touching electrical switches or bare metal in plugs when hands are wet.
- Children should not look directly at any bright beams of light.
- Plastic lenses (not glass) will be used.
- All magnets will be stored properly (i.e. with 'keepers' across their poles and unlike poles together) to preserve their magnetism.
- Magnets should not be dropped, hammered or heated.

T. School Tours

Tour organisers/teachers organising school tours have overall responsibility for the supervision and conduct of the visit and should have regard for the health and safety of the group.

The Tour Organiser ensures-

- That a risk assessment has been completed and all appropriate safety measures are in place.
- Ratio of supervisors to pupils is adequate.
- BOM has approved the tour.
- Parents have been informed of all necessary tour information e.g. tour venue, costs involved, dates, times of departure and expected return, required clothing/food/pocket money etc.
- Parents have signed the consent form.
- Adequate First Aid provision will be available.
- Arrangements have been made for the medical needs and special educational needs of all pupils.
- The mode of travel is appropriate and has adequate insurance cover
- That they have the address/phone number of the tour venue and have a contact name.

Health & Safety Statement Scoil Mhuire na Dea Chomhairle

- That they have a database of names of all pupils and adults travelling in the group and contact details of parents/next of kin.
- That all teachers and other supervisors are fully briefed in what the tour involves and know of any emergency procedures.

The Tour Organiser should make it clear to pupils that they must

- not take any unnecessary risks
- follow the instructions of the leader/supervisor including those at the tour venue.
- dress and behave sensibly and responsibly
- look out for anything that might hurt or threaten themselves or anyone in the group and tell the group leader/supervisor about it.

U. Asbestos Levels on school Premises

Remediation work was carried out on the old school premises in (*See results from The Radon Institute; Appendix 4*).

An Annual Risk Assessment

Each year the Board of Management of Scoil Mhuire na Dea Chomhairle will carry out a risk assessment, identifying hazards, assessing risks and specifying the actions required to eliminate or minimise them. Hazards may include physical, health, biological, chemical and human hazards. (*See a blank copy of the HSA Risk Assessment format; Appendix 5*)

Consultation and Information

It is the policy of the Board of Management of Scoil Mhuire na Dea Chomhairle

- To consult with staff in the preparation and completion of the Health and Safety Statement
- To give a copy of the Health and Safety statement to all present and future staff
- That any additional information or instructions regarding Health, Safety and Welfare at work not contained in this document will be conveyed to all staff as it becomes available.
- That Health, Safety and Welfare will form an integral part of any future staff training and development plans.

Roles and Responsibilities

The implementation of this policy is the responsibility of the Board of Management, school employees and parents.

Success Criteria

The success of this policy is dependent on its full implementation.

Date for implementation

This policy will be implemented from December 2020 following ratification by the Board of Management.

Date for Review

This Safety Statement has been prepared based on conditions in the school premises at the time of writing. It shall be reviewed annually, as recommended by the Health and Safety Authority. However, it may be altered, revised or updated at any future date so as to comply with any changes in conditions.

Ratification and Communication

The Board of Management of Scoil Mhuire na Dea Chomhairle, Headford, Co. Galway has ratified this policy on 10th November 2021.

All parents have access to this policy as part of the School Plan.

Health & Safety Statement Scoil Mhuire na Dea Chomhairle

Signed: *Jean Connolly*
(Chairperson)

Date: 10/11/2021