



GAELSCOIL MHICHÍL UÍ CHOILEÁIN

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— “Ar scáth a chéile a mbairimid” —

Health & Safety Policy

Safety Statement

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that adequate policies are in place and that those policies are regularly monitored. In preparation of the policy, every effort has been made to offer the most current, correct, and clearly expressed information possible. Nevertheless, inadvertent errors in information may occur and to the extent that the law allows we will not be held responsible for any loss, incidental or consequential damage, or loss arising out of this policy or the risks identified herein.

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Statement of Intent

Gaelscoil Mhichíl Uí Choileáin wants to ensure that employees, pupils, contractors and visitors are able to carry out their work in safety and free from harm. Following the risk assessment process this document will set out our safety policy and will specify the manner in which the health and safety of everybody is to be secured. Gaelscoil Mhichíl Uí Choileáin will commit resources to tackling identified hazards so as to eliminate, control and minimise the risk of injury. Where an accident occurs, we are committed to investigating it and following up issues to ensure prevention in the future. Parents or visitors to the school are expected to report to the school any incident or accident in a timely manner. The General Principles of Prevention will be given consideration in health and safety matters; these are:

- a) *avoidance of risk*
- b) *evaluation of unavoidable risk*
- c) *combat risks at source*
- d) *adaptation of the work to the individual*
- e) *adaptation of the place of work to technical progress*
- f) *replacement of dangerous articles/substances with non/less dangerous ones*
- g) *development of an adequate prevention policy*
- h) *give collective protective measures priority over individual protective measures*
- i) *give appropriate training and instruction to employees.*

Gaelscoil Mhichíl Uí Choileáin serves a wide range of pupils from diverse backgrounds with varying abilities and the respect for diversity is a fundamental value in our interactions. The management further commits compliance to the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005, the 2007 Regulations and all health and safety legislation that governs employees, pupils, contractors and visitors. The co-operation

of employees and others will be required and encouraged with both information and training.

Introduction

Gaelscoil Mhichíl Uí Choileáin is located off the Fernhill Rd. in Clonakilty, Co. Cork. Founded in 1994, the school has had numerous locations until we moved to a purpose built school in 2013. The school is a two storey building with adequate yard space for recreation. There are currently (2020) 355 children attending the school with a staff of 46. The school has been approved planning for 2 extra ASD specific classrooms while another 4 mainstream classrooms are to be added in the near future. School begins each morning at 9.00am, with finishing times of 1.30pm for the Naíonáin classes and 2.40pm for the remaining classes.

The school is a two storey building with adequate yard space for recreation. There is ample lighting in the school and heating is provided by a gas boiler. The school organises a number of evacuation drills during the school year with all of the pupils being led to the assembly points by the teachers. The school has had fire-safety training for staff, has smoke detectors in each room and ensures that fire extinguishers are maintained and serviced regularly.

All of the rooms have suitable furniture for the staff and children in the school. The classrooms have toilets for boys and girls. These are cleaned on a daily basis. There is a staff kitchen and seating area provided in the school away from the classrooms. A burco boiler, microwaves and cookers are provided for staff. Any members of staff carrying outwork at a height are provided with step-ups to gain access with ease.

Part of the safe system of work in the school is that parents and visitors call to the reception area first and then go to meet their host, normally in the Meeting Room at reception. At the front of the school there is parking provided for staff vehicles. Parking spaces are provided for persons with a disability where necessary beside the school.

The school has developed numerous Policy Documents for the benefit of the children, parents and school staff etc and these are on the school website. Hard copies are

available at reception. During the school year the children and parents are updated on various issues by email, the school website, text-a-parent or the school Facebook page.

SECTION 1

AIMS AND SCOPE OF THE STATEMENT

1.1 The aims of this Safety Statement are to:

- involve everybody in the maintenance of safety
- identify the hazards and outline the necessary actions to be taken
- identify and outline clearly health and safety responsibilities
- establish a systematic follow-through on problems
- gain commitment from everyone to ensure safety.

To ensure that all regulations and legislation are adhered to, up-dated and acted upon promptly, Gaelscoil Mhichíl Uí Choileáin wishes to take the following approach by having a

- **safe place**
- **safe equipment**
- **safe systems**
- **safepeople.**

1.2The safe place approach will include:

- a) follow emergency procedures at work
- b) keep all access routes free
- c) follow good housekeeping practices

1.3 The safe equipment approach will include:

- a) equipment suitable for the jobs being undertaken
- b) good ergonomic detail with adherence to safety specifications
- c) maintenance procedures carried out and records kept.

1.4 The safe systems approach will include:

- a) procedures to be followed in health and safety matters

- b) adherence to safe methods for any employee or member
- c) appropriate working environment- lighting, ventilation, etc.

1.5 The safe people approach will include

- a) training of employees and others in safe methods
- b) ensuring the appropriate skills are available
- c) providing supervision for the pupils when in the school
- d) resistance to unsafe behaviour
- e) provision of information regarding safety
- f) as far as reasonably practicable to reduce or eliminate the risk and provide any personal safety equipment as a last resort when required.

When compiling this safety statement, the General Safety and Health Provisions of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act of 2005 were taken into account. These duties refer to the general employer duties, providing safety information for employees, providing instruction, training and supervision for employees, have adequate emergency plans, duties of contractors, duties of employees, to provide protective and preventative services, carry out a risk assessment, provide an up-to-date safety statement, cooperate with others in the workplace and provide health surveillance with the purpose of protecting the health of any employee.

1.6 On an on-going basis we wish to follow

1. Best practice in health & safety in Primary Schools
2. HSA guidelines
3. Acts of the Oireachtas
4. Codes of practice
5. Any advice/directive given by competent persons.

As identified in the above we will review and if necessary up-date this safety statement on an annual basis. If a change occurs that affects this statement it will be updated without delay. To comply with the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act of 2005, this safety statement is brought to the attention of employees on a yearly basis. It is included as an item on the Agenda of the first meeting of the Board of Management every September

1.7 SAFETY OBJECTIVES

1.7.1. General duties

Gaelscoil Mhichíl Uí Choileáin will ensure that necessary measures are taken to protect the health and safety of any employee working or pupil attending our school by having a safe work place in accordance with best practice. None of the safety measures will involve a financial cost to employees.

1.7.2 Provide Information

Disclosure will be made of general safety and health information to any person working in our business.

1.7.3. Provide Instruction, Training and Supervision

Gaelscoil Mhichíl Uí Choileáin will provide instruction and training where appropriate in a language and manner that is understood by the employee in health and safety matters. Suitable supervision will be provided.

1.7.4 Fire protection and evacuation

We will have appropriate emergency measures and a Critical Incident Plan in place to deal with any fire, danger or serious event affecting the school.

1.7.5 Persons other than employees

Suitable prevention measures will be put in place to ensure that none of the tasks in the school will put pupils or other persons at risk of injury.

1.7.6 Personal Protective Equipment

Where a risk requires personal protective equipment to be provided, Gaelscoil Mhichíl Uí Choileáin will ensure that the appropriate equipment is made available, ensure its correct use and provide appropriate supervision in its use.

1.7.7 Risk assessment

On an ongoing basis a risk assessment will be carried out by a Health and Safety Adviser or a competent person and any appropriate measures required will be taken to reduce or eliminate risks and protect the safety and health of any employee, pupils, visitors etc.

1.7.8 Safety Statement

This Safety Statement will be brought to the attention of employees yearly and other relevant persons where necessary. The Safety Statement will be updated with changes in the hazards and perceived risks to employees, pupils or others.

1.7.9 Duty of the Employer to Co-operate

Gaelscoil Mhichíl Uí Choileáin will cooperate with others in any work that is being carried out in the school.

1.7.10 Reporting of Accidents and Incidents

Accidents and incidents (near misses) will be reported and recorded in the accident logbook. Any reportable accidents to the H.S.A. will be documented.

1.7.11 Employees' duties

Employees will be informed of their duties regarding health and safety under the Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005. We will encourage employees to take part in health and safety issues by sharing ideas, discussions and participation. No employee or other person will interfere with or damage any item provided for securing the safety of persons in the workplace.

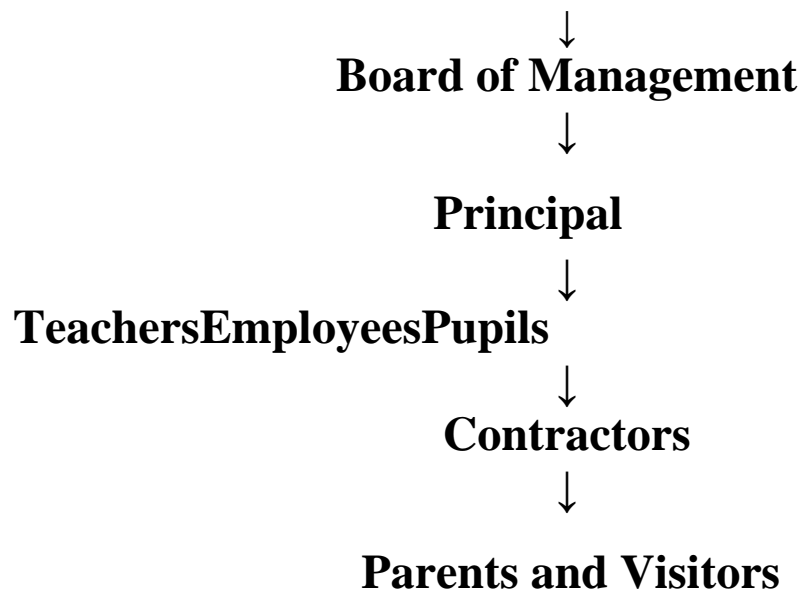
1.7.12 Health surveillance

Any issues affecting the health and safety of an employee or others will be identified as early as possible and the appropriate measures put in place at the earliest opportunity.

SECTION 2

ASSIGNMENT OF RESPONSIBILITIES

2.1 Structure of Gaelscoil Mhichíl Uí Choileáin



2.2 Emergency Phone Numbers

| Title | Phone number | Other |
|---------------------------------------|---------------------|--------------|
| Pádraig Ó hEachthairn/Safety Officer: | 023 - 8834882 | n/a |
| Gardaí: | 023 - 8821570 | |
| Ambulance | 999 | 112 mobile |
| Fire Brigade | 999 | 112 Mobile |
| Doctor | Contact Office | |
| Clonakilty Medical Centre | 023 – 8833386 | n/a |
| Waterfront Medical Centre | 023 – 8835102 | n/a |
| Clonakilty Family Health | 023 - 8858774 | |
| SouthDoc | 1850 335 999 | n/a |
| ESB – Emergencies | 1850372999 | n/a |
| Cork County Council | 021 – 4276891 | |
| (Out of Hours – Emergency Number) | 021 – 4800048 | |
| Emergency No. For Water & Wastewater | 1850 278 278 | |
| Health & Safety Authority | 01-6147000 | 1850 289 389 |

2.3 Allocation of Health, Safety and Welfare Responsibilities.

The Health, Safety and Welfare of employees and pupils are the responsibility of all at Gaelscoil Mhichíl Uí Choileáin. However, specific duties are invested in the

Board of Management

Principal -

Staff

Safety Officer: Pádraig Ó hEachthairn

Contractors

Parents/Visitors.

2.3.1 The Board of Management

The Board of Management has overall responsibility for health and safety within Gaelscoil Mhichíl Uí Choileáin and for the implementation, monitoring, auditing and reviewing of the arrangements for the safety and health of everybody.

2.3.2 The Principal/Safety Officer

The Principal on behalf of the Board of Management carries out duties in compliance with health and safety legislation. The Principal/Safety Officer's duties may include the following but are not limited to these:

- as far as reasonably practicable to ensure the safety, health and welfare of the staff and pupils and to provide a safe place by good design and a maintenance programme
- ensure that a safe system of work is in place
- to provide training, instruction, supervision and information to ensure the safety of everybody in the school
- to critically assess the hazards and eliminate or control these and where this is not practicable provide personal protection and suitable equipment.
- to ensure that the safety statement is brought to the attention of the staff and to provide and maintain welfare facilities for the staff, pupils and others
- develop an emergency plan and to communicate this to the staff and pupils – have a Critical Incident Plan in place
- where necessary, when a specific hazard is identified within the school that the risk be assessed and measures of control acted upon.
- when an incident or accident occurs, report the occurrence in the accident log-book and take the necessary action to prevent a reoccurrence

- ensure that staff attend any internal or external health and safety training
- make the Board of Management aware of any new or impending legislation
- organise a risk assessment from time to time of any work system which is deemed likely to cause a hazard
- inform the parents or guardians of the pupils of activities in the school that may affect safety such as restricting access or parking, half days and so on through an email, text-a-parent, Facebook page or website update etc.
- be responsible for any activity within the school that may lead to an accident and take the necessary steps to stop or cease this activity
- ensure contractors/visitors comply with the school's Health and Safety rules
- in the case of contractors, where appropriate, that a health and safety statement or a method statement is made available. The Principal/Safety Officer will follow up on contractors' activities by including measures such as restricting access, provide training and information, ensuring that personal protection is used and so on.

2.3.3 Duties of Teachers

Teachers at Gaelscoil Mhichíl Uí Choileain have the following duties but they are not limited to these. Teachers need to ensure that

- pupils are given suitable information and instruction in health and safety matters pertaining to their classroom and are encouraged to report any defects
- a safe system of work is being adhered to
- they provide a suitable level of supervision
- good housekeeping is maintained in their classroom
- they understand the school's policies and procedures regarding safety
- they are responsible for actions in their classroom or in the school which may lead to an accident and take the necessary steps to stop the activity
- they report accidents or incidents and assist in any accident investigation
- they attend any internal or external training provided in health and safety
- defective equipment is reported and taken out of use

2.3.4 Duties of Staff

Staff have a duty to:

- take reasonable care of their own safety and that of any other person affected by their acts
- co-operate fully with the Principal/Safety Officer and others in order that Gaelscoil Mhichíl Uí Choileáin meets its statutory health and safety obligations
- use any protective clothing and equipment provided by Gaelscoil Mhichíl Uí Choileáin in the prescribed manner
- use all equipment for the intended purpose and in the specified manner
- report defects in equipment or the system of work to the Principal/Safety Officer.
- attend any safety training organized for employees
- to comply with the new legislation employees are obliged to ensure that they are not under the influence of an intoxicant that may endanger their safety or that of others at work
- employees are not to misrepresent their level of training in health and safety issues

2.3.5 Duties of the Safety Representative

A person appointed as a Safety Representative at Gaelscoil Mhichíl Uí Choileáin will have a function to provide information to fellow employees on safety matters under the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act of 2005, Section 25. The Safety Representative will:

- represent employees' concerns to management on safety issues
- be involved in the investigation of accidents or dangerous occurrences
- get information from a Health and Safety Inspector on matters of safety, health and welfare within Gaelscoil Mhichíl Uí Choileáin
- work to reduce the risk of accidents to the staff, pupils etc
- accompany an inspector of the HSA when visiting the school .
- attend training and instruction provided by the school under Section 25 of the Safety , Health and Welfare at Work Act of 2005.

2.3.6 Duties of Contractors

Contractors provide services to Gaelscoil Mhichíl Uí Choileáin that may entail hazards and risks and are expected to carry out their work by complying with the 2005 Safety Health and Welfare at Work Act, the Construction Regulations of 2006 and the (General Application) Regulations of 2007. Contractors are required to:

- ensure that at no time is the health, safety or welfare of any person/pupil put at risk
- satisfy the Principal/Safety Officer that the staff being employed are suitably qualified and competent to carry out the task
- get the permission of the Principal before interfering with the plant, equipment or services of Gaelscoil Mhichíl Uí Choileáin
- if the work involves construction and working at heights, the contractor needs to comply with the Construction Regulations of 2006/Work at a Height Regulations. '07
- cordon off their work area where applicable with tape or warning signs etc
- report to the Principal/Safety Officer any accident or a near miss situation
- follow all Gaelscoil Mhichíl Uí Choileáin procedures and regulations regarding safety and welfare when in the school
- provide an up-to-date safety statement/method statement if requested

2.3.7 Duties of Parents/Guardians or Visitors

Parents/guardians and others who visit are expected to

- report to reception when entering the school
- in the case of an emergency, fire drill, alarm, etc. leave the building immediately in the company of your host and go to the nearest assembly point
- never interfere with any of the school's equipment or services
- park vehicles in the designated locations
- report any incident or accident to the school in a timely manner

3.0 Securing the Health and Safety of Everybody at Gaelscoil Mhichíl Uí Choileáin.

As part of Gaelscoil Mhichíl Uí Choileáin's organisation of safety in the workplace the staff, pupils, contractors and visitors, where appropriate, will be made aware of

the safety arrangements, the school's planning and follow through of these and the need to maintain vigilance against accidents all the time.

Gaelscoil Mhichíl Uí Choileáin is committed to providing the resources to secure safety and to provide a safe place, safe equipment, safe work systems and people approach. The Principal will listen to queries and concerns, acting swiftly to ensure that safety concerns are acted upon and where necessary seek the advice of a competent person.

3.1 SAFE PLACE

3.1.1 Design of the School

Gaelscoil Mhichíl Uí Choileáin is fully aware that the design of the place of work plays an important role in the elimination of hazards. Gaelscoil Mhichíl Uí Choileáin is committed to a safe design policy through both a place of work and the methods of work used. Where a new system of work, arrangements for pupils' education or sport etc is being introduced that has a potential effect on health and safety, consideration will be given to the hazards involved by carrying out a risk assessment, putting controls in place and adding responsibility. In all situations the Principal and the teachers will decide on the safest method or system and ensure that staff, pupils and others where necessary, follow this method and procedure.

3.1.2 School Building

The present school building was built and opened in 2013. The school is a two storey building with adequate yard space for recreation. The school has been approved planning for 2 extra ASD specific classrooms while another 4 mainstream classrooms are to be added in the near future.

The flooring in the school is a combination of industrial carpet, timber flooring and tarpaulin. The flooring is kept clean and tidy with cleaning taking place on a daily basis. The staff ensure that any spillages are cleaned without delay and good housekeeping is maintained. Pupils are required to consume food items in the classroom. When cleaning of the floors is taking place, both contract cleaners and direct employees of the school are used. Any cleaning agents used must not make the floor area slippery. When entering the school there are numerous mats on the ground inside each door to reduce the risk of trips and falls.

3.1.3 Reception, Offices and Classrooms

When parents or visitors enter the school, they must go to the reception area first to meet their host, make an appointment and so on. The reception area is in the front of the school with ease of access for teachers, pupils etc. The room has suitable office furniture for an employee. Stationery supplies are also stored in the reception area. There is a Meeting Room located opposite the reception area which allows for meetings to take place without persons needing to enter the main school area. The CCTV in the school can be monitored from the reception office. Other School rooms include classrooms and other rooms used as Special Education rooms, store rooms and so on. Every effort is made to keep store rooms clean and tidy with debris removed. Items stored at a height need to be accessed using a step up and electrically controlled boards must be easily accessible.

The classrooms provided are standard classrooms to accommodate about twenty five pupils, the teacher and other staff where necessary. Generally pupils use tables and chairs that accommodate two pupils evenly dispersed around the room. Storage trays are in place for pupils to hold books etc if not required. Hangers are located for coats, playing gear, swimming gear etc. The teachers use computers and other electrical equipment in the rooms with every effort made to keep cables away from walking areas because of the risk of trips and falls. Where a cable has to pass a walking area it should be covered with tape or a suitable cover put in place. All of the classrooms have a toilet for boys and girls and these are cleaned on a daily basis.

There are a number of teachers and staff working in offices that have desks and chairs that meet with best ergonomic practice. The desks are at a reasonable height and have ample space. The chairs need to be adjustable and provide back support. Windows in the school are provided with blinds that reduce the risk of glare.

3.1.4 School Yard and Drop-Off Area

The system in place for the children during break time is that they are free to use the school yard. The junior yard is located to the front of the school whereas the senior yard is located to the rear of the school. Both the senior and junior yards consist of a tarmacadamed surface while our ASD specific yard has a rubber based safety surface . There is perimeter fencing surrounding the school boundaries, with another around the school yards. The fencing is maintained and checked at regular intervals to ensure that any gaps are sealed and to keep the pupils secure during their break times.

Teachers and other staff members park their vehicles in the designated spaces provided at the front of the school. Spaces are also reserved for vehicles of a disabled or injured member of staff, pupil or parent. A drop and go system operates in the morning. Parents/guardians are also encouraged to park their vehicles outside the graveyard, located on the Fernhill Rd., and walk with their children to school. When school is finished the children walk to their designated exit points to be collected by their parents/guardians. Parents/Guardians are informed of these arrangements by email, at the start of the school year, with updates, if necessary, during the year.

When visitors are calling to the school, sales people, maintenance personnel e.g. there may be a need to ensure that their vehicle is appropriately parked and is not moved when children are coming or leaving the school. If a large vehicle needs to come to the school yard, these vehicles need to be scheduled at a time that children are in class or the school is closed. Every effort will be made to ensure vehicles are kept away from the children.

3.1.5 The Hall and Kitchen Area

The hall in the school is used for in school activities such as PE, choir practice, assembly etc. The hall is also used to accommodate any visiting groups such as musicians, speakers etc. Christmas concerts and various presentations for parents are also held in the hall. Any events taking place in the hall are supervised by the teachers, Cairde na Scoile (Parent's Association) or the organising members. Beside the Hall is a kitchen area with a cooker, microwave and oven. These are used occasionally, for school activities, but under the supervision of staff members.

3.1.6 Catering for events in the Hall.

If the school is organising an 'event' when the hall is likely to be full and/or have a large gathering suitable precautions will be required to reduce the risk of accidents. The normal practice is to have a person separate from the event looking after the safety at the event. The maximum number of persons allowed in the gym for the event should be clearly identified before hand and only that amount allowed in the building. The layout must allow access via aisle ways to the doors. Leads from any equipment need to be taped down and any portable lighting equipment must be secured to

prevent it toppling over and spotlights fixed with safety chains. Any sound equipment needs to be located so it cannot slip and appropriate emergency lighting and torches provided if dark. Extra attention needs to be given to the fire and evacuation procedures where patrons may not be familiar with the surroundings and the lights are turned off. The school will ensure that a staff member has been trained/designated to take specific action when

- making safety announcements
- what to do on discovering a fire
- what to do on hearing the alarm
- emergency announcements

At all times the provisions of the Fire Services Act 1981 will be taken into account when using the hall and with large numbers of people involved. When the hall is being rented or loaned to a group, society, club etc, the Board of Management will ensure that suitable precautions are in place for the tasks being carried out. If an 'event' is being organised with a large number of people, actions associated to the Fire Services Act of 1981 will be necessary.

3.1.7 Housekeeping Issues

Because of the large numbers of students moving around the school and using the yards there are increased risks of trips and falls. The school will ensure every effort is made to have a surface that is clean, dry and free from obstructions. There is regular checking and supervision of the corridors with any spills or debris cleaned without delay. The other area of danger is of pupils leaving the bags in the walking aisles or in a walking area in the classroom with a risk of this becoming a trip hazard.

Appropriate supervision will be provided by the school to ensure the risk of trips and falls is reduced and pupils' bags, training gear are left in classrooms. Items such as broken chairs and old equipment are removed to the storage room or other appropriate areas. Where cables are used with electronic equipment they will be checked and every effort made to eliminate the risk by reducing the use of cables where possible in the classrooms and offices. Most of the cables are connected with laptops, printers, Interactive screens etc and are kept in a neat and tidy manner.

When spillages take place they should be cleaned up immediately. Cleaning personnel will also be careful that the cleaning of the floor will be in a manner that does not lead to a trip hazard. Cleaners will ensure that the cleaning agents are used appropriately

with polishing or other cleaning methods appropriate for the floor. Floor mats are located inside the main doors to reduce the risk of falls. Good lighting and ventilation is provided at all times in the classrooms and throughout the school.

3.1.8 Work at a Height

Teachers may at times need to access work items at a height and need to take suitable precautions to stop a fall. Most classrooms have nothing at a height and children's paintings are put at shoulder height. In other situations the school has provided step-ups for staff to reach items at a height such as presses and shelves.

On occasions staff of the school may need to work at a height to carry out some maintenance work, cleaning of the roofs, windows etc. If using a ladder for access, regularly, checks are needed to ensure that rubber grips at the bottom are large enough to allow safe use, it needs to be at an angle of 4up and 1out, be tied or footed and be about a metre beyond the landing place. If work is being carried out on the roof of the school a specialised company will be employed who will be fully compliant with all the safety measures necessary for working at such heights.

3.1.9 Caretaker's Store and Boiler House

The store is used to hold items such as ladders, lawnmower, strimmers, angle grinder, paints etc. Any paint or liquid spills are cleaned without delay. The school plans to locate liquids that are flammable etc in containers in the store and reduce the risk of accidents. The store and boiler house are always kept locked when not occupied. Regular maintenance is carried out on the boiler. Suitable fire protection is in place with a fire suppressor located in front of the burner.

3.1.10 Using the Hall

The hall in the school is used by the teachers and pupils of Gaelscoil Mhichíl Uí Choileáin for sports classes, large gatherings, music events and so on. Teachers will use the facilities of the hall in a safe manner with any games, training etc suitable for the class. Equipment being used in the hall will to be used for the intended purpose, stored in a tidy manner with regular checks of the equipment to reduce the risk of injuries from sharp or protruding pieces. Teachers/SNAs will provide supervision for pupils using the hall.

3.1.11 After School Activities

An after school club, Le Chéile, takes place in the school hall each day. This club is run under the auspices of the Board of Management of Gaelscoil Mhichíl Uí Choileáin. A separate Club Obair Bhaile, Homework Club, is also run under the auspices of the Board of Management. Both of these clubs are covered under the school insurance.

A number of classrooms are rented to individuals from outside the School to provide music classes. The Principal will agree the safety issues around the rooms usage including the activities taking place, the numbers involved and so on.

3.1.12 Fire and Emergency Planning

Gaelscoil Mhichíl Uí Choileáin has a fire and emergency plan and when being formulated the emergency considerations were:

1. Fire
2. An accident with severe injuries or loss of life
3. Other

The present arrangement is that following the alarm being raised each class teacher takes their class to their designated assembly point, pupils form into lines and have the list checked immediately by the teacher. In the event of an emergency a team led by the Fire Officer or his/her Deputy will ensure that all staff, pupils, contractors and visitors go to the assembly point and wait there for further instruction. There are numerous exit routes from the school and these are maintained clear at all times. The team will decide on the course of action to be followed such as:

- evacuate the building if not already cleared
- contact the emergency services required, if not done
- give instructions to staff and pupils- **see Fire Safety Policy**

To deal with any fire or any emergency situation that may arise the Board of Management will ensure the following issues are addressed on a continuous basis

- clearly marked escape routes through emergency doors
- clear routes of access at all times
- all combustible material removed where possible
- holding a fire drill every term, evaluate results and repeat if required to ensure all staff, pupils and contractors comply
- give training in fire extinguishers to a core group- teachers/maintenance staff

- testing of the fire alarm
- ensure all fire extinguishers are filled, checked regularly (yearly)
- inspection of all equipment required regularly
- smoke detectors are installed in the classrooms and maintained
- get advice and information via the Fire Brigade/local Fire Officer
- consideration for any person with hearing difficulties, wheelchair users, pupils with Special Needs and so on.

The school wishes to follow all safety issues as laid out in the Fire Services Act 1981 and the Code of Practice for the Management of Fire Safety in Places of Assembly as set out by the Department of the Environment. The School has an alarm switchboard and a protocol to phone the Fire Service and the Emergency Services. This allows the zone where the alarm is activated to be checked immediately. The Principal, Safety Officer and staff will be vigilant to sources of ignition and any combustible materials where a fire could get hold easily leading to a rapid spread.

3.1.13 Critical Incident Plan

To help the Management and staff at Gaelscoil Mhichíl Uí Choileáin deal with critical incidents involving the pupils or staff, this policy outlines how incidents can be dealt with effectively and in a timely manner. Gaelscoil Mhichíl Uí Choileáin recognises that critical incidents may have a severe impact on the pupils, staff or the wider community and want to have a plan in place to deal with these events.

A ‘team’ has been identified within Gaelscoil Mhichíl Uí Choileáin to deal with critical incidents that may arise. The ‘team’ is comprised of staff members who will meet at a designated location and coordinate the response of Gaelscoil Mhichíl Uí Choileáin to a critical incident that has taken place. The ‘team’ includes the Principal, Deputy Principal and other senior staff members. The Critical Incident Plan is available to view on the school website or a hard copy is available from reception.

3.2 SAFE PLANT AND EQUIPMENT

3.2.1 Suitable Equipment and Machinery

Gaelscoil Mhichíl Uí Choileáin will ensure that the equipment being used is suitable for the task and is being used appropriately for the intended task. All equipment being purchased or acquired by other means must be assessed and brought to CE Standards (Directive 2006/42/EC). Equipment not reaching or accredited with the CE standard should be phased out if not complying with Department of Education and Science best practice. All equipment must meet the safety specifications and must be suitable for the job and the task. The equipment must be of good ergonomic design with ease of access, ease of viewing taken into account. At no time should equipment from a contractor or another source be used without permission from the Principal. The manufacturer's instruction and safety procedures need to be followed during the set up, use and maintenance of any machinery or equipment.

Staff will be trained in any equipment that they would use on a day-to-day basis. For other equipment requiring set up and checks a trained technician or maintenance person will carry out the work. The equipment in use in the school includes the laptops, desktops, tablets, projectors, interactive screens, photocopiers and the equipment in the kitchen. The caretaker uses a number of battery and electric tooling to carry out day to day repairs.

3.2.2 Computers, Printers, Electrical Equipment etc

There are computers, printers and other electrical equipment located in each classroom and teachers ensure they are kept in a safe manner. Each piece of equipment needs to have a deliberate start, have any guarding kept in place and must be at a suitable height for the user. Each teacher is provided with a suitable seat. Televisions are secured to the wall with the pupils unable to reach them. Care will be taken to avoid trip hazards and cables need to be secured behind the equipment. If this is not possible cables need to be tied down or secured with a cover. In the reception area, the photocopiers are used by staff and printers, shredders etc are located here. The equipment is located at a comfortable height for the user and cables are kept in a secure manner. Supervision is provided when any pieces of equipment is being used.

3.2.3 Cookers and Kitchen Equipment

Teachers use cookers, microwaves, the burco boiler etc during their breaks. The risk is of burns and scalding from the tasks. Pupils generally are not allowed in the kitchen area of the hall. Signs to highlight the dangers of boiling water are in place in the

kitchen and the staff room. Following a number of events during the year the kitchen area in the hall is used to serve tea, coffee and so on. The safe system of work involves personnel filling the cups from inside the counter and restriction to the kitchen area. A first aid box, fire extinguishers and smoke detectors are in place. Enough space needs to be provided for the tasks and a safe work system needs to operate. The dish washer in the staff room is used on a daily basis but only when personnel are in the school.

3.2.4 Lawnmower and Caretaker's Equipment

The Caretaker may use equipment such as drills, grinders, strimmers, saws and the lawnmower to carry out general maintenance around the school grounds and so on. All of the equipment will be kept in good working order, be maintained regularly and the safety instructions of the manufacturer obeyed. Personal protection equipment will be provided and worn when required. When the spraying can is used suitable masks need to be worn.

When using the lawn mowers the equipment should be used for the intended purpose and in the intended manner. Specific risks are associated with the ride-on mower. There is a risk of it rolling on an incline that is too steep and of overturning when cutting near kerbing and so on. Gaelscoil Mhichíl Uí Choileáin will ensure that there is safety maintenance of the equipment as the safety mechanism will shut the machine down in dangerous situations such as cutting on a slope or near the kerbs. Appropriate supervision will be provided in the tasks being carried out.

3.2.5 Electricity

All checks on equipment and electrical systems will be carried out for the school by a competent and recognised electrical contractor who is a member of RECI or ETCI and a cert giving clearance will be filed.

Control boxes need to be kept locked and clear of obstructions with a clear area for the electrician, fire personnel etc to reach the controls. Cables from the machines and work equipment will be kept neat and tidy to avoid trips and falls. Trip switches and the RCDs need to be checked on a regular basis.

3.2.6 Maintenance Programme

Equipment will be maintained as per the manufacturers' instruction, usually at about one year intervals. Examples include the boiler, fire extinguishers, electrical equipment, photocopiers and so on. Some of the fire safety equipment may need checks more frequently. The start of the academic year in September is the normal schedule point but maintenance will be carried out when necessary and according to manufacturer's specification at any time. Planned maintenance is used to improve the safety of equipment and also leads to better reliability and cost efficiency.

The form and nature of the maintenance programme may vary significantly. In many cases such as buildings, maintenance may take the form of a 'walk-about' while some of the equipment may require maintenance from an outside source on an annual basis at least. On an ongoing basis where a piece of equipment or furniture is found to be broken or in an unsafe condition it will be moved immediately to a repair area or clearly marked that it is not for use until repaired. This may apply to such items as chairs, electrical items etc. Any item that is worn or defective will be scrapped. The history and records of all maintenance and repair work that is carried out on buildings and on equipment will be kept and filed.

3.3 SAFE SYSTEMS of WORK

3.3.1 Accident/Incident reporting

Accidents, incidents or 'near misses' are reported and logged when they occur, by a teacher or member of staff. An accident log book is kept for each yard and teachers give details of the accident, what the teacher or pupil was doing at the time, type of injury and so on. The appropriate details will give as much explanation as possible as to the cause and allowing preventative controls and measures to be enacted.

Following a pupil falling in the yard with cut knees, scrapes etc the normal practice is to bring the pupil to the staff room/ waiting area, clean the wound and allow the pupil go back to the yard. If the teacher considers the wound or accident more serious there may be a need to call a parent/guardian. In an extreme case where a child may need to be brought to a hospital with a fracture etc a parent/guardian will be contacted or an ambulance will be called to the school.

Following an accident/incident the Principal/Safety Officer will check each entry separately to analyse which system, place etc. failed and to allow the Management of Gaelscoil Mhichíl Uí Choileáin take the necessary steps to prevent a re-occurrence. The Principal or Safety Officer will sign off on all accidents/incidents entry/forms.

In more serious cases, where there is a serious injury, the Principal/Safety Officer will be called immediately and will conduct an investigation. The main purposes of the accident investigation is to discover what happened? why it happened?, what should have happened? and prevention methods to reduce the risk of this type of accident happening again.

3.3.2 Safety audits

As part of Gaelscoil Mhichíl Uí Choileáin's commitment to safety the Principal/Safety Officer will, on an ongoing basis, organise safety audits/walks of the school. This will entail a walk through of the buildings and rooms every September and may involve some teachers or senior staff members. Areas outside the buildings and the car park area will also be checked. The main areas for consideration on the checklist will be

- walkways, fire exit, methods of egress and house-keeping
- the use of equipment, maintenance, guarding and design
- vehicles in the school car park, pupils coming and going from the school,
- parent collection points,
- the supervision of the children during break times, coming and leaving the school
- control and supervision of all electrics,
- carrying out work at a height,
- the use of the hall and the yards
- the use of contractors, safety statements and method statements
- training records and the training programme
- actions from the previous audits, accident logbook etc.

During the audit the staff may participate by explaining a hazard or an associated risk. A key feature of a good safety audit is to concentrate on a safe person approach by emphasising good safe practices.

3.3.3 Safe Systems of Work in the School

In order to reduce the risk of accidents and injury for staff and pupils, Gaelscoil Mhichíl Uí Choileáin has numerous safe work systems in place. Some of these include

- parking arrangements for vehicles
- reception area at the entrance
- supervision at all times
- wide corridors, good lighting and exit routes through the school
- accepted behaviour expected from pupils and staff in the school, in the school yard and during any trips away from the school

When parents, visitors or others come to the school they are required to report to reception and wait for instruction from the school secretary.

Teachers supervise in the school from 9.00am to 2.40pm each day. This supervision involves pupils when in their class, during breaks or other school activities. There is also supervision provided in the yard 20 minutes before school begins and for 20 minutes after school until children are collected by their parents/guardians. When pupils are away from the school at games, school tours etc there is supervision until returned to their parents. Activities away from the school are highlighted to the parents/guardians in advance.

All school personnel are obliged to act in a courteous manner to staff and other pupils. A Code of Behaviour and policies on discipline, bullying and harassment exist in the school and this is brought to the attention of staff, parents and pupils if relevant.

When there is a breach of the policies or guidelines the principal and the school authorities will take appropriate action in accordance with the school rules and in the interests of safety for everybody. When school rules are broken the teachers and principal will decide on any issues of discipline that may follow. When pupils and teachers are away from the school for trips, games etc school rules will apply with pupils expected to follow the school's Behaviour Policy. Issues that arise will be dealt with by the teachers and principal.

3.3.4 Environmental Issues

Gaelscoil Mhichíl Uí Choileáin would like to play its part through being pro-active with staff and pupils in highlighting awareness and taking action where possible in reducing waste and using recycling methods. The school has a strong emphasis on recycling methods and there are bins available to collect paper, cardboard, batteries etc. The school will heighten awareness of environmental issues through the use of posters, art competitions, notices and projects involving the reduction of waste and the

measurement of waste reduction over time. The school has numerous Green Flags for work being carried out and having a process in place to deal with environmental issues.

All other waste from the School is collected and disposed as per the guidelines of Cork County Council.

3.4 SAFE PERSON

3.4.1 Safe Working Environment

Gaelscoil Mhichíl Uí Choileáin commits to providing a safe and healthy working environment for staff, pupils etc. The heating system in the building is from a gas burner to avoid extremes in temperature. Lighting is provided throughout the school building and any problems that arise will be corrected as soon as is practicable. Suitable lighting is also provided in the immediate area surrounding the school building.

Every effort is made not to have school staff or contractors on their own in the school. Cleaning personnel are usually the last group to leave the school and they have more than one person on duty.

3.4.2 First Aid

Under Chapter 2 of Part 7 of the (General Application) Regulations 2007 the school will continue to monitor the need for first aid facilities. There are a number of first aid boxes located in the school. The school principal will delegate a person in the school to ensure that the first aid boxes are stocked on a regular basis.

To comply with the regulations, the school endeavours to give training in first aid to a number of staff members. To comply with the First Aid Regulations the school will display a list of the trained first aid personnel and emergency numbers at reception and on School notice boards.

3.4.3 Pregnant, Post Natal and Breastfeeding Employees

Gaelscoil Mhichíl Uí Choileáin wishes to comply at all times with the Pregnant Employees Regulations of 2000 and the Extension of the Periods of Leave of 2001 regarding a pregnant employee and will make the following arrangements accordingly. On receiving notification from an employee of pregnancy, post natal or breast feeding the Principal/Safety Officer will arrange to oversee the duties of the

employee and carry out a risk assessment of her work. The Principal and the Safety Officer assess the risks and any appropriate action deemed necessary will be taken. General hazards of shock or movement, posture, handling of loads, and extremes of heat and cold are the main hazards that may arise within the school. Other hazards are identified in the First Aid second schedule of the 2000 Pregnant Employees Regulations. Gaelscoil Mhichíl Uí Choileáin will

- endeavour to reduce or eliminate any of the above risks if such a risk is found.
- inform the woman of any potential risk involved for her or her developing child
- ensure that the woman is given a different duty if a risk is identified

3.4.4 Personal Safety Equipment (PPE)

Gaelscoil Mhichíl Uí Choileáin has a legal duty to provide personal safety equipment for staff exposed to a risk that cannot be avoided (Part 2 Chapter 3 of the Regulations 2007). Gaelscoil Mhichíl Uí Choileáin will provide personal safety equipment where (i) it is a statutory requirement to do so and (ii) where a risk requires this.

Personal safety equipment will be given where it is not reasonable or practicable to eliminate or control the hazard. Gaelscoil Mhichíl Uí Choileáin will provide and maintain personal safety equipment as is required for the safety, health and welfare of staff. The school may train employees in the use of personal safety equipment where required and will provide refresher courses where necessary. Under legislation SHWW (General Applications, Regulations 2007) employees are obliged to use the equipment provided where appropriate, use the equipment for the intended purpose and to report any faults that they find.

The personal protection equipment used in the school includes the gloves, eye, ear and face protection used by staff working in the maintenance functions of the buildings and the school grounds, cleaning staff need to wear suitable gloves etc when using solvents and chemicals in toilets, floor cleaning, polishing etc. Gaelscoil Mhichíl Uí Choileáin will ensure that appropriate supervision is provided when using PPE.

3.4.5 Manual Handling

As part of the SHWW Part 2 Chapter 4 (General Applications, Regulations 2007) Gaelscoil Mhichíl Uí Choileáin will ensure that appropriate risk assessments are carried out before tasks are undertaken. Following the assessments appropriate

controls need to be put in place. For most employees the main risks come from lifting books in the school, lifting A4 paper, moving furniture and lifting or moving material and equipment. For the maintenance staff lifting of equipment, lifting items to and from a height may lead to extra strain on the back. Others at risk include cleaning personnel due to the lifting and putting down of loads and pushing and pulling of loads. Teachers are at risk when lifting items or reaching to a height if they are not following appropriate manual handling methods. Where appropriate good ergonomic practices will be followed by having suitable trolleys, a hand truck and using a step-up when working at a height.

The school may in the future provide training to some employees involved in manual handling duties so that they can carry out a lifting task without causing damage to their safety and health, to that of others and reduce the risk of back strain or injury. The training makes employees aware of the prolonged damage to the spine that may result from not adhering to the principles of manual handling, encourage the use of equipment where possible and not take a short-cut when lifting a load.

- Where possible Gaelscoil Mhichíl Uí Choileáin will provide lifting equipment to minimise the risk of injury. Hand trucks and step-ups will be used.
- Boxes and loads that employees encounter on a daily basis need to be determined for weight, sharp edges, stability, centre of gravity before the lift can be safely carried out. Employees lifting a box of A4 paper should risk assess the task and consider taking one ream at a time.
- Employees when carrying out a two-person or more lift need to be especially vigilant of the risks involved and use safe manual handling techniques.
- Employees need to be aware of other physical factors when carrying out lifting tasks, namely space, floor type, evenness, temperature, humidity, distance etc.

3.4.6 Prevention of Bullying, Harassment and Dignity in the Workplace.

At Gaelscoil Mhichíl Uí Choileáin any form of workplace bullying, harassment or behaviour that infringes upon the right of the individual to dignity will not be accepted or tolerated. An environment shall be maintained to preserve and protect the tolerance, dignity and respect for the member of staff or pupil. Gaelscoil Mhichíl Uí Choileáin recognises its responsibility in promoting a school and a workplace without bullying. The Principal and teachers will be alert to bullying behaviour and deal with any allegation of bullying that may arise. Examples of bullying behaviour are

- Undermining a member of staff or a pupil
- Targeting a person in a negative manner
- Manipulation by rumour, gossip, innuendo
- Intimidating a person or pupil, using obscene language or jokes etc
- Using e-mail to undermine a person

Gaelscoil Mhichíl Uí Choileáin has taken preventative steps to deal with issues of bullying. The school has an Anti-Bullying Policy as well as a Dignity in the Workplace Policy . There is also a Code of Behaviour that pupils are requested to abide by. A pupil (through their parent/guardian) or teacher that may feel they are being bullied, are made aware of the reporting mechanism and how to bring their complaints to a ‘person in authority’.

The principal of Gaelscoil Mhichíl Uí Choileáin (or appointed nominees) will investigate any allegation of bullying or harassment thoroughly without reprisals being visited upon the complainant. Confidentiality will be maintained at all times. Any action taken will be in accordance with the school’s Anti-Bullying Policy.

3.4.7 Violence in the Workplace

At no stage will any violent act by any person in Gaelscoil Mhichíl Uí Choileáin be tolerated whether a member of staff, a pupil, a contractor or a visitor. Violence is regarded as any incident where persons are abused, threatened or assaulted in circumstances relating to their work, involving an implicit or explicit challenge to their safety, well being or health. The main contributors to violence in the workplace are persons who have a violent personality, where drugs and alcohol are involved, where there are violent expectations and where there is immaturity.

The school has a Code of Behaviour that all pupils and their parents/guardians sign. If a violent incident occurs involving a pupil the school will follow the Code of Behaviour Policy in dealing with that issue.

Any risk to an employee or pupils in Gaelscoil Mhichíl Uí Choileáin will be assessed and precautions taken to avoid and eliminate any such risk.

3.4.8 Child Protection Issues

Gaelscoil Mhichíl Uí Choileáin has a policy document on Child Protection and how to ensure best possible practice in protecting the child when in the school environment.

The school has appointed a Designated Liaison Person (Pádraig Ó hEachthairn) and a Deputy Liaison Person (Máire Ní Chróinín) to deal with issues that may arise and advice on best practice. All of the teachers and school staff are required to comply with the conditions of employment outlined in DES Circular 0063/2010 on Garda Vetting and recruitment. Following any changes in legislation or guidance from the Department of Education and Skills the policy will be updated.

3.4.9 Training and Instruction

Staff at Gaelscoil Mhichíl Uí Choileáin will receive basic health and safety instruction as part of the ongoing health and safety plan. The aim of the training is to help employees and teachers:

- a) identify the hazards they may encounter at work
- b) build an awareness of safety rules and regulations
- c) communicate the correct message to employees and pupils

When the risk assessment of a procedure / process / machine is carried out any training requirements specific to health and safety will be identified and procedures put in place to carry out such instruction. The following are specific health and safety training and instruction courses both internal and external (off site, or conducted on site by an external competent person) that may be carried out by Gaelscoil Mhichíl Uí Choileáin.

- I. Induction safety
- II. Fire Safety and the Fire Drill
- III. Prevention of bullying and violence
- IV. Child Protection Issues
- V. First Aid training
- VI. Safe use of VDU equipment
- VII. Other Specialist training

Employees are asked to undertake safety training and to use their knowledge for the benefit of their own safety, that of their co-workers, the pupils and all others with whom they come in contact during their work. Each member of staff has a duty to ensure he/she attends safety training and that the training benefits his/her work. New employees to the School go through an induction process ensuring familiarization with the School policies. All employees who attend safety training are required to sign the attendance sheet and a training record is kept of all courses in health and safety.

3.4.10 Trainee Teachers and Students in the Classroom

Gaelscoil Mhichíl Uí Choileáin works with the various Education Colleges to give training experience in the classroom to trainee students. When students arrive in the school they receive induction regarding the school's policy documents, are made aware of fire safety issues, code of behaviour, child protection policy and any other safety issue that may be relevant. Each trainee student is allocated a class and they work with the classroom teacher for a number of weeks. The school provides reasonable supervision of the trainee students when in the classroom and during their time in the school.

3.4.11 Resources for those with a disability

The school welcomes and facilitates pupils and visitors with varying abilities. To this end all possible measures are taken in ensuring that the facilities at the school are suitable and comply with legislation. The design and layout of the School is suitable for wheelchair users. Practically all parts of the building allow easy access for the wheelchair user if necessary with wide doors and wide aisles allowing for easy entry and exit. Light and electrical fittings are at a comfortable height. Outside the school a surface has been provided that allows the free and easy movement of wheelchair user, no steps to block movement, parking facilities close to the reception area etc. The school will ensure that any room where wheel chair access is required will have ample space for free and easy access and movement. The school has provided a toilet suitable for a wheelchair user. A car park space is marked for a person using a wheelchair or has a disability. It is the policy of the school to provide the resources and the services required by those with a disability when and where the need arises.

3.4.12 Welfare Facilities

Gaelscoil Mhichíl Uí Choileáin will ensure that reasonable welfare facilities are provided for staff and pupils and these are maintained in a clean and tidy manner. During lunch break teachers have a staff room away from their class. A kitchen area with a fridge, microwaves, toasters, toasted sandwich maker and dishwasher facilities is provided for staff with suitable chairs and tables. Pupils consume their food in the classroom and then go to the yard to play. There are two toilets attached to each classroom for boys and girls. Toilet facilities are available throughout the school with all facilities cleaned and maintained on a daily basis.

Heating is provided by a gas fired heating system in the building.

3.4.13 Enrolment Procedures and Policy

The Enrolment Policy will form an integral part of Gaelscoil Mhichíl Uí Choileáin's system of organisation and planning. The policy clearly states what the school entry procedures are and how they are to be followed. The school will follow the terms of the Education Act of 1998, the Education Welfare Act of 2000, the Equal Status Act of 1998 and any guidelines issued by the Department of Education. Where there is an enrolment of a pupil with a Special Need, medical requirement or other requirement as required by the enrolment form, the school may consult with other agencies or the Department of Education and Skills. On all occasions the school will follow the approach as laid out in the Enrolment Policy. Any advice received will be treated in strict confidence.

3.4.14 Access Rights for Children

From time to time issues may arise regarding the collection of children from the school. The issue may arise if the child spends time in two houses and so on. There may be issues of ambiguity of the situation for the class teacher and the school. The school asks that the principal and class teacher be kept informed of issues regarding child collection. Issues regarding access to the child will be treated in strict confidence by the school.

3.4.15 Administration of Medication

A number of children in the school may need to take prescribed medicines during the day for conditions such as asthma, diabetes etc. The school has in place a policy on the 'Administration of Medication', part of which is filled out by the parents giving a number of emergency contact details, doctor's phone number, the condition and so on.

The school also asks the parents/guardians to sign a letter of indemnity to allow a member of staff provide the medicine to the child if necessary. This documentation is kept in a safe manner in the principal's office.

3.4.16 Smoking Policy

To meet with current legislation Gaelscoil Mhichíl Uí Choileáin has a policy of no smoking in its building or on the school grounds. The policy clearly states that the

school aspires to the creation of a smoke free environment within the building, on the school grounds, on school trips and at school functions. The school further wishes to comply with all legislation including the Public Health (Tobacco Amendment) Bill 2004 that bans smoking in all enclosed places of work. If necessary signs will be added in the school to remind staff and visitors of their legal obligation. If an issue arises in the school with the enforcement of the smoking ban the contact person is the principal.

3.4.17 Supervision

As well as the teacher providing supervision during class the school will ensure that reasonable supervision is provided during all school activities, especially in the yard, at games, while eating lunches and in the hall. The school will provide reasonable supervision at all times when pupils are free from their classes, such as at 8.40am before school starts, and when pupils move within the School during and between classes. Adequate evening supervision will be provided as children leave the school premises at 1.30pm (Naíonáin) and 2.40pm. Gaelscoil Mhichíl Uí Choileáin will ensure that all yard and play surfaces are clean and tidy with hazards being removed or cordoned off. The teachers or supervisors will ensure that all locations are supervised and ‘blind spots’ will receive special attention. All pupils will be made aware of the rules that apply in the yards, what is and is not acceptable behaviour and how to deal with visitors, parents, the use of any equipment for games etc.

3.4.18 Using VDUs

The staff and pupils use VDUs in the classrooms and offices in the School during the day. Some of the common complaints that arise from VDU’s use are upper limb pains, the effect on the eyes, fatigue and stress. To meet the Safety Health and Welfare Regulations of 2007, the use of the VDUs is intermittent with constant use seldom exceeding one hour. Any safety risk to pupils using VDU is considered negligible as the times involved are short. Ample space is provided for computer use and there are blinds on the windows to allow users reduce the daylight reflecting on the screens. The school will ensure that appropriate supervision is provided in computer/laptop/tablet use as modern communication methods allow for unacceptable mail to be added, sent or received on computer screens. This practice may give rise to harassment and bullying and the school will be vigilant in tackling and putting

measures in place to deal with issues that arise. The school will ensure that suitable web security is provided and the school operate a policy on internet use.

3.4.19 School Trips

During the school year teachers and pupils take trips to various events, sports competitions, field trips, school tours etc. These trips require careful planning with all school procedures being followed. Gaelscoil Mhichíl Uí Choileáin will ensure that the ratio of staff to pupils is reflective of the risks involved. All trips should adhere with the agreed plan and no pupils or staff member should be put at unnecessary risk.

Trips are agreed in advance, with the principal giving the authorisation to travel and a list of the classes travelling being kept in the office. During any trip special attention will be given to the means of transport, boarding and alighting of buses, keeping regular checks of all the group members etc. Where a group is going on an adventure extra care is necessary to ensure children are not put in any danger. A first aid kit will always be taken on a trip and all school policies on safety must be followed.

3.4.20 Sports and Games

The teacher will be present where games are being played, for any training and so on. Other issues of safety will be the checking and maintenance of all sporting equipment on a regular basis, not wearing items of jewellery in certain circumstances, immediate attendance to blood injuries and pupils are only asked to perform tasks within their capacity. Gaelscoil Mhichíl Uí Choileáin will ensure that supervision is provided for all activities involving games, training, sports etc.

The types of games being played will be decided in conjunction with the teachers and pupils. When games are being played that have a higher risk of injury such as rugby, hurling, field games etc pupils need to follow the rules of the games and teachers need to be alert to dangerous situations and take appropriate precautions to deal with events as they arise. The wearing of helmets for hurling is an example of equipment that must be worn during games and training.

One of the issues that arises from games is the use of heavy metal goals with a risk of the cross bar falling on a child if not properly connected or the wind blowing down the goal if not correctly anchored. Gaelscoil Mhichíl Uí Choileáin will ensure that teachers using the goals are aware of the correct set up procedure of the goals and of the need to have the goal posts properly anchored.

3.4.21 Conflict Situations

There may be occasions when a staff member may have to deal with a conflict situation involving aggressive behaviour from parents, visitors or among pupils. The school Code of Behaviour that all pupils and parents sign up to outlines that aggressive behaviour is not tolerated and may lead to discipline being imposed by the school. When a parent or a visitor comes to the school for a meeting or to discuss an issue, teachers assess the situation and may take precautions in an extreme situation to ensure their safety. In the unlikely event that a teacher may feel that there is a risk of aggressive behaviour during a meeting it may be appropriate to consider a number of the following

- having two staff members at the meeting
- removing any items that could be used as a weapon
- having the meeting in a room with windows towards a hallway or leaving the door open during the meeting
- set up some alert system through other staff members

No member of staff is expected to put their own health and safety at risk and they are expected to take suitable precautions when dealing with parents, pupils or others.

3.4.22 Dealing with Cash Transactions

The school from time to time may collect money for school trips, events etc and the money is lodged in the bank on the day of collection. With cash comes the risk of a robbery or theft from within the school. Normal precautions such as the regular removal of the cash to the bank, being aware of local issues need to be taken into account. Staff members are made aware of not resisting in a robbery situation if money is the motive. The school has CCTV cameras in place. Advice from the Gardai and the bank will be followed when dealing with cash transactions issues.

SECTION 4

HAZARD IDENTIFICATION & RISK ASSESSMENT METHOD

4.1 Definitions

What is a hazard?

A hazard is considered to be any substance, article, material or practice, which has the potential to cause harm to the safety, health and welfare of staff, pupils or visitors at Gaelscoil Mhichíl Uí Choileáin.

Hazard Identification

Hazards are identified and assessed by the principal and staff at Gaelscoil Mhichíl Uí Choileáin. A comprehensive hazard identification process was carried out and may be carried out again if there is a large-scale change in the systems of work, the buildings etc.

What is a Risk?

In this case a risk means the potential of the hazard to cause harm.

Risk assessment

The risk of a hazard is the measure of the likelihood of an accident with the severity of the damage, injury or loss factored in. As part of the ongoing use of this safety statement Gaelscoil Mhichíl Uí Choileáin applied the HSA guidelines when

compiling its risk assessment. When carrying out the risk assessment some of the questions asked of each hazard were:

- Is anyone exposed to the hazard?
- Is the hazard likely to cause injury?
- How serious would that injury be?
- Is the hazard well controlled?
- Is the supervision adequate?

All the hazards and the associated risks have been identified and are ranked in accordance with the severity of the loss as high, medium and low.

High is taken to mean the possibility of serious injury, fatality, and serious loss and may include statutory regulations being broken. Controls need to be put in place as a matter of urgency.

Medium is taken to mean the likelihood of a fatality or serious injury or loss is unlikely. More probable is minor injury or loss. Controls should be put in place over a period of up to three months to ensure reduction of the risk and to meet statutory requirements.

Low is considered as a reversible minor injury or material loss. Controls can be added over a longer period, during maintenance etc.

It is the policy of Gaelscoil Mhichíl Uí Choileáin as far as is reasonably practicable to eliminate the hazard as a first step, followed by substitution, isolation, enclosure (machinery) or distance, and use PPE as a last resort.

The following pages set out the hazards and the risk that were identified during the risk assessment on the 10th of November 2020. The present controls are outlined and the new controls that Gaelscoil Mhichíl Uí Choileáin plan to put in place in the coming years. The level of risk associated with the hazard is added in each case.

| | | |
|---|--|--|
| Area; Gaelscoil Mhichíl Uí Choileáin | Workplace; Gaelscoil Mhichíl Uí Choileáin | Assessor; Pádraig Ó hEachthairn |
|---|--|--|

| Hazard | Risk | No of People | Level | Present controls | New controls required | Responsibility | Date/ review |
|---|--|---------------------|--------------|---|--|---|--|
| A fire breaking out in the school building | Risk of a fire in the building, burns and smoke inhalation | 380+ | High | Building is a new two storey building with fire doors & compartments to reduce fire spread Wide aisles, many exits Good housekeeping Safe practices in the staff room/kitchen Fire extinguishers Fire drill & assembly points Access/egress areas Records kept Maintenance Supervision | Ensure evacuation procedures are in place for school events, large meetings etc Check the smoke detectors regularly Plan fire extinguisher training for some staff members Control any use of candles in the School | Principal Safety Officer Teachers | During a fire drill or when an 'event' is taking place |
| A serious or tragic event taking place that may affect the school pupils, staff or the wider community. | Pupils/staff or others suffering emotional stress | 380+ | High | A number of staff form the Critical Incident Team Staff & Management awareness Supervision provided | Critical Incident Team members need to update their skills regularly. The plan needs to be brought to the attention of staff & others Ensure key staff know their duties | Principal Safety Officer | Review on a regular basis |

| Hazard | Risk | No of People | Level | Present controls | New controls required | Responsibility | Date/ review |
|---|---|--------------|-------|---|---|--|---|
| Large group attending an event in the halletc. | Persons being injured by tripping on a cable, dealing with over crowding issues | 250+ | High | Much organisation involved in having safety best practice Four exits from the hall& School People on duty during event& may need to restrict numbers Supervision | Ensure the 'event' is planned with a person taking the H & S issues – Fire Services Act 1981 Agree the detail Ensure a risk assessment for very young/elderly Have first aider Have a person on exits | Principal Safety Officer Organizer of the event | When an event is taking place |
| Carrying out work at heights, in store rooms, classrooms when adding posters, window cleaning etc | Risk of a person falling from a height with serious injuries Risk of back strain, leg and ankle injury | 20+ | High | Competent personnel carrying out work Suitable equipment being used- step ups Do not stand on chairs Supervision | Follow Work at Height Regulations of 2006/2007 Review the step ups available . Safety steps may be required | Principal Safety Officer Teachers carrying out work at a height | Assess each task at a height |
| Contractors working at a height, carrying out roof work, windows and gutter work | Risk of persons falling from ladders, scaffold or trestles when carrying out work in the School | 3+ | High | Restrict access to the work area by using tape, cones and signs to warn of the dangers Use suitable equipment Scaffolding or MEWP Inform the Principal Must have competent personnel Supervision | Get a method statement or other documentation from the contractor before work starts Agree safe work practices before task commences Keep ladders away from pupils – lock in a store Have a suitable induction process Competent staff required | Principal Safety Officer Contractor | Before each task starts Get paperwork correct before work starts |
| Hazard | Risk | No of People | Level | Present controls | New controls required | Responsibility | Date/review |

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| Pupils being away on school trips or for an adventure trip etc | Pupils in unfamiliar areas Risk of becoming separated from the group, involved in water sports, adventure, climbing etc. | 100+ | High | Plan in place for each trip with agreed routes & places being visited Sufficient ratio of teacher/adults to pupils Regular checks of the group to ensure all are accounted for First aid box & instructor if necessary with group Supervision throughout | All excursions & venues agreed in advance Familiarization of safety issues especially on & off the bus. School procedures to be adhered to all of the time Attention to fire safety & escape routes, bus safety and rules that apply to local events | Principal Safety Officer Teachers Trip Organisers | Review the safety aspects before each trip |
| Using metal goalposts for school games | Risk of the metal bar falling on a pupil or the wind blowing the goals down | 20+ | High | Goalposts are seldom used but the set up and the pinning down of these is as per guidance & best practice Checks carried out by the teachers Supervision | Ensure teachers are aware of the dangers | Principal Safety Officer Teachers | When the goals are being used |
| Pupils playing in the school yard | Falling, cuts and bruises | 350+ | Medium | Level tarmacadam surface throughout Supervision provided at all times Yard segregated for senior & junior pupils Rules concerning the games played | Ensure blind spots are covered by supervision Repair gaps in fencing Consider training of a number of staff members in first aid Keep pupils away from the yard if conditions are not suitable e.g. icy. | Principal Safety Officer Teachers | On a daily basis |
| Hazard | Risk | No of People | Level | Present controls | New controls required | Responsibility | Date/ review |
| Housekeeping Issues | Risk of slips, trips & falls | 380+ | Medium | All classrooms kept clear and free of debris | Issue with school bags, gear bags, music | Principal Safety Officer | Ongoing on a daily |

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| throughout the school | | | | Bins provided Cleaning on daily basis Good lighting Cables, wiring, leads safely secured in classrooms Supervision | instruments being left in the corridors Leave in the classroom or have in designated location – keep away from doorways | Teachers | basis |
| Using electricity in the school | Pupils, teachers or others receiving burns, a fire or electrocution | 380+ | Medium | Duties carried out by competent personnel Replacement of damaged/worn fittings Control boxes locked Principal informed of isolation issues etc Supervision | Regular check of electrical installations Ban adaptors & use surge protector sockets Repairs without delay Keep control boxes clear of obstruction | Principal Safety Officer Teachers | Review every six months |
| Using the ride on mower | Entanglement with the equipment, getting trapped, being hit by the mower, injured by moving parts | 2+ | Medium | Restricted access to the mower - keys removed Competent personnel Use of PPE Brakes, tyres, steering, etc checked Maintenance Supervision | Follow manufacturers instruction when using Turn off & remove keys when not in use Regular check on equipment safety features Extreme care when using on a slope | Principal Safety Officer | During safety audits |
| Hazard | Risk | No of People | Level | Present controls | New Controls required | Responsibility | Date/ review |
| Using sports fields for training, games and so on. | Pupils or others getting injured during sports events | 380+ | Medium | Teacher or competent person present for games and training First aid box available Pupils to carryout reasonable tasks | Teacher needs to be satisfied with the safety arrangements, follow rules & games regulations Availability of first aiders | Principal Safety Officer Teachers | Ongoing basis |

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| | | | | Suitable ground area Supervision | | | |
| The rubbish truck and other vehicles coming onto the school grounds during class | Pupils being knocked down by a vehicle | 380+ | Medium | Known time for vehicles coming onto the school grounds Space provided Bin truckmain issue - Supervision | Ensure trucks arrive between classes Trucks should not be allowed in school yard except at designated times agreed by the No vehicle movement while pupils are coming to or leaving the School | Principal Safety Officer Teachers | When trucks are due in the yard |
| Children carrying out tasks with persons from outside the School | Pupils at risk from unsupervised persons from outside the School | 100+ | Medium | Teachers present at all times during class activities in the School or at other locations Permission sought & received from parents/guardians Reasonable activity | Have the tasks cleared & approved by the Principal Ensure persons have received Garda clearance Cease any activity that is considered unsuitable for the children – sports, adventure etc | Principal Safety Officer Teachers | Tasks involving the children in the School or during a School outing |
| Hazard | Risk | No of People | Level | Present controls | New controls required | Responsibility | Date/ review |
| Manual handling | Employees or others hurting their back due to incorrect lifting or movements | 20+ | Low | Minimal amount of lifting by employees Hand truck used PCs, printers at a suitable height maintenance | Have a safe system in place when lifting A4 Consider training for persons carrying out lifts | Principal Safety Officer | Ongoing |

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| Hall being used for sports classes | Risk of injury from falls, jumping etc | 350+ | Low | Supervision of the hall by a teacher with a class of pupils Enough lighting Equipment maintenance Wearing rings, chains, may be curtailed Good housekeeping Supervision | Systematic checking of the equipment being used Record these checks Pupils asked to perform tasks within their capability | Principal Safety Officer Teachers | Each time the hall is used |
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| Hazard | Risk | No of People | Level | Present controls | New controls required | Responsibility | Date/ review |
| Rooms in the school being rented by clubs, societies etc for after school activities. | Injury from mis-use of equipment, sharp or protruding objects, poor lighting etc | 50+ | Low | Agreement of groups & clubs to use facilities Agreement on the type of activities being carried out School rooms locked Supervision | Ensure that activities are suitable to the facilities that are available Supervision must be provided by the groups Ensure reasonable first aid facilities | Principal Safety Officer | Ongoing |
| Using VDUs in the School | Risk of employees suffering back pain & injury from VDU use | 20+ | Low | Good ergonomic detail in the office furniture used by employees Chairs provided that give back support & allow flexibility Maintenance of these | Staff using computers or laptops for short periods with breaks away from the screen | Principal Safety Officer Teachers | When using screens |

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| Using cleaning chemicals & solvents, | Risk of dermatitis of the skin & inhalation of solvents | 2+ | Low | Follow appropriate safe procedures Put lids back on jars Keep in original containers Use as directed by the Manufacturer/Supplier Gloves & masks provided Tasks carried out by competent personnel when school is closed | Get MSDS sheets if required Ensure ample ventilation Store any solvents in a suitable container with restricted access | Principal Safety Officer | Ongoing |
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Reviewing and Evaluating the Policy

The policy will be reviewed and evaluated. On-going review and evaluation will take cognisance of changing information or guidelines. The policy will be revised as necessary in the light of such review and evaluation and within the framework of school planning.

Implementation

This policy has been in operation since 31.05.2021 and is next due for review in 2023.

A review of the above policy took place on 10.10.2022.

A review of the above policy took place on 05.10.2023.

A review of the above policy took place on 24.10.2024.

Signed: Traolach Ó Donnabháin
Chairperson of the Board of Management

Date: 24.10.2024

Signed: Pádraig Ó hEachthairn
Principal/Secretary to the Board of Management

Date: 24.10.2024

I have read this Safety Statement of Gaelscoil Mhichíl Uí Choileáin and agree to co-operate in the implementation of all Health and Safety policies.

Staff Signatures

Date _____

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