



St Catherine's National School

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Health and Safety Policy

1. Introduction

The Board of Management of St Catherine's National School undertakes to provide a safe and healthy environment for the staff, pupils and visitors to the school.

To this end:

- A formal risk assessment will be carried out once a year.
- Parents, staff and pupils will be asked to report promptly any hazard they notice to the school authorities (specifically, to the principal or caretaker).
- The school authorities will deal with such hazards as soon as practicable. If a hazard needs to be dealt with by an outside agency, procedures will be put in place to ensure that no-one comes into contact with the hazard during the waiting period.
- Working procedures will be put in place to ensure the minimum of risk from accidents or ill-health to pupils, staff and visitors during the normal day-to-day activities of the school.
- The Board of Management will appoint a Safety Officer who will be responsible for dealing expeditiously with any safety issues that may arise from time to time.
- A Safety Representative will be elected from among the staff, who will be responsible for reporting any hazard or safety concern to the Safety Officer.

Health and Safety Procedures

- Children are supervised by a responsible adult at all times during school opening hours. This ensures that dangerous play, fighting, bullying etc. are kept to a minimum and that any incidences of such behaviour are stopped at an early stage. A clear code of behaviour is in force which is strongly supported by the parents. Parents and children are encouraged to report any incidence of dangerous or violent behaviour, and all such reports are dealt with promptly either by the class teacher, the teacher on yard duty or the principal, depending on where the incident took place and its level of seriousness. For more details on procedures with regard to the playground, see our Playground Policy.
- Ingress and egress are carefully controlled. Children are not allowed to enter the school building unsupervised at break-time, except to go to the toilet. Classes enter and leave the school building in single file under the supervision of a member of staff. The children are frequently reminded of the safe behaviours expected at this time, i.e. no pushing, barging etc. Main doors to the building are locked at all times to prevent ingress of unwanted visitors. Doors are fitted with glass panels so that the identities of visitors can be checked. Children are strictly forbidden to leave the school grounds at any time. (On the very rare occasions when this rule is broken, the child's parents are immediately informed.) After school, children are supervised in the yard or hall by staff members until collected by parents or other responsible adults. An exception is made for pupils whose parents have informed school authorities that they have permission to make their own way home.
- Children are not permitted to operate the kettle, microwave or heaters. They may use the electric cooker under supervision by their teacher during cookery lessons.
- Cleaning fluids other than washing-up liquid are not accessible to children. Potentially dangerous inhalants such as Tippex, glue, aerosols, cigarette lighters etc. are either unavailable to the children or used, if appropriate, under the supervision of a staff member.
- Teachers are asked to ensure that (1) passage-ways are kept clear; (2) spills are promptly wiped up; (3) equipment in regular use by children is stored at "child height".
- All teachers have been trained to teach P.E. and are aware of safe practices in this subject area.
- Pupils are not allowed to climb on furniture. A step-ladder is available for staff members to use for putting up and removing displays.
- Fire-drills are held twice yearly. An up-to date fire-alarm system has been installed and there are smoke-alarms in every room.
- Radon and asbestos measurements have been carried out recently (June 2000).

- Computer use by the pupils is limited through time-tabling. Staff members are aware of the potential dangers of prolonged exposure to V.D.U.s particularly for pregnant women.
- Staff members are regularly reminded of the need to lift safely. Children are not permitted to lift heavy objects.
- A quiet working environment is encouraged in each classroom to obviate the need for raising voices. When all the children are assembled together, they are expected to listen quietly to any announcements, etc. If necessary, a bell or whistle may be used to command silence.
- Smoking is strictly forbidden within the school building or grounds.
- Children are trained to report any hygiene problem in the toilet areas immediately. Disinfectant and cleaning materials are available to teachers to use immediately if necessary. Toilets are cleaned every day.
- Reputable and properly insured firms only are used for school tours and trips. When classes leave the school for any reason, they are accompanied by at least two responsible adults, one of whom must be a teacher. Particular care is taken with trips that involve crossing roads or using public transport.
- An accident book is maintained on the premises and all responsible adults are asked to write a brief report on any incident requiring the administering of first aid.

Signed: _____ (Principal)

_____ (Chairman, Board of
Management)

Date: _____

Name of Staff Safety Representative: _____

Name of B.O.M. Safety Officer: _____