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Gurraneasig N.S.  
Kilbrittain,  
Co. Cork  
P72 YP78

Date: November 2024

## **Health & Safety Statement**

### **Introduction:**

This policy was recently redrafted through a collaborative school process and was ratified by the Board of Management (BoM).

### **Rationale:**

It is a legal requirement under the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act, 2005 for every employer, in conjunction with employees, to prepare a Health and Safety Statement. It represents the Board of Management (BOM)'s commitment to safety and health, and specifies the manner, the organisation and the resources necessary for maintaining and reviewing safety and health standards.

The BOM wishes to document their health and safety programme and make it available to all employees, outside service providers and Inspectors of the Health and Safety Authority.

### **In Relationship to Characteristic Spirit of the School:**

According to our Mission Statement Gurraneasig N.S. strives to provide a well-ordered, caring, happy and safe environment for our pupils. In keeping with this philosophy our Health and Safety policy emphasises the importance of the health and safety of our pupils and that of all school employees. The Board of Management recognises the importance of the Legislation enacted in the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act, 2005 and General Applications Regulations SI 299, 2007. This Safety Statement sets out the Safety Policy of the Board of Management, and sets out 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 into contact. This policy requires the cooperation of all

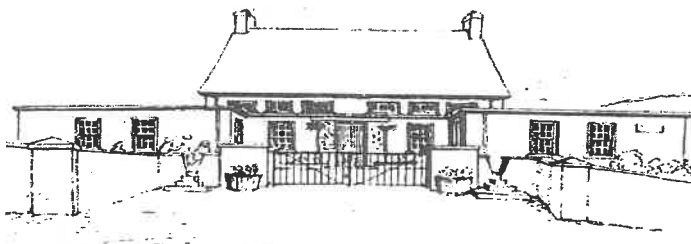
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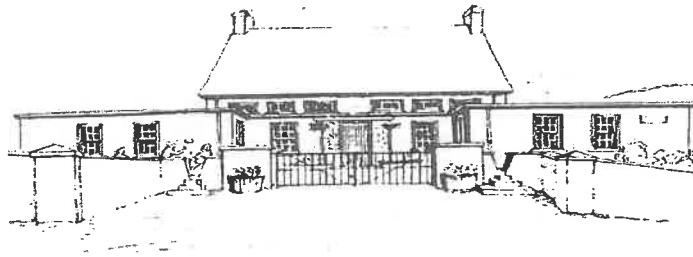
employees.

It is our intention to undertake regular reviews of the statement in light of experience, changes in legal requirements and operational changes. The Board of Management will undertake a safety audit annually and report to staff. All records of accidents or ill-health will be monitored in order to ensure that any safety measures required can be put in place, wherever possible, to minimise the recurrence of such accidents and ill-health.

## Aims

- to create a safe and healthy school environment 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 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 – teachers, SNAs, secretary, cleaner etc.*
  - *To ensure competent employees, who will carry out safe work practices*
  - *Safe access and egress routes*
  - *Safe handling and use of hazardous substances and equipment*
  - *Safe equipment including maintenance and use of appropriate guards*
  - *Provision of appropriate personal protective equipment.*

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## **Health & Safety Policy**

1.1. The members of the Board of Management of Gurraneasig National School are;

Chairperson: Mrs. Mary O'Driscoll

Secretary: Maeve Tighe

Treasurer: Ursula McCloskey

Other Board Members: Laura White, Ann Madden, Hugh Barry, Joanne Chambers, Jonny Vincent

1.2 The Board of Management will ensure that, in so far as is practicable, the highest standards of safety shall prevail and that, at a minimum, the provisions of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act, 2005 are applied.

1.3 Specifically, the Board of Management wishes to ensure 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 places of work.
- The provision of systems of work that are planned, organised, performed and maintained so as to be safe and without risk to health.
- The provision of instruction to staff on proper lifting techniques of pupils and dealing with pupils with challenging behaviour when such children are enrolled.
- The provision of such information, instruction, training and supervision as is necessary to ensure the safety and health at work of its employees
- The provision and maintenance of suitable protective clothing or equivalent as necessary to ensure the safety and health at works of its employees.
- The preparation and revision as necessary of adequate plans to be followed in emergencies. e.g. fire evacuation, 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.

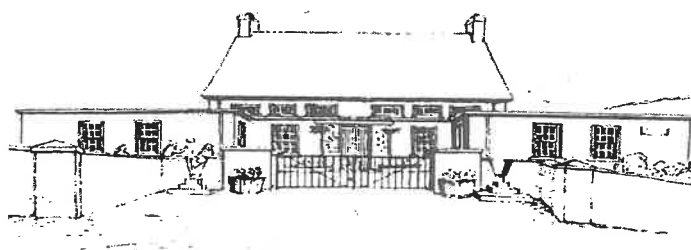
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- Obtaining where necessary, the services of competent persons for the purpose of advising on the safety and health at work of the employees e.g. Advisors from the HSE, Fire Officers, ICT Advisors re equipment etc.
- An annual review of this *Health & Safety Statement* and a log of issues raised and remediated.
- The provision of arrangements for consultation with employees on matters of Health and Safety
- The provision of arrangements for the selection from amongst its employees of a Health and Safety Representative.

1.4 The Board of Management recognises that its statutory obligations under legislation extend to employees, pupils, and any person legitimately conducting school business and the public.

1.5 The Board of Management of Gurraneasig N.S. will ensure that the provisions of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act, 2005 are adhered to.

1.6 The Board of Management will appoint a Safety Representative from the School Staff and a Safety Officer from the BOM to monitor the implementation of the Safety and Health policies of Gurraneasig N.S. and the requirement under the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act, 2005.

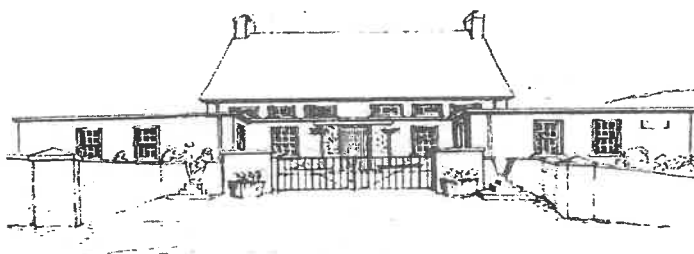
**(Jonny Vincent, is the Safety Officer and Board Member; Frances Harrington was appointed as Safety Representative for the term 2023-2027)**

## **CONSULTATION & INFORMATION**

It is the policy of the Board of Management of Gurraneasig N.S. :

- To consult with staff in the preparation and completion of the Health and Safety Statement.
- To make available the *Health & Safety Statement* to all present and future staff.
- That any additional information or instructions regarding safety, health and welfare at work not contained in the 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.

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## HAZARDS

All staff will complete Hazard Control Forms (Appendix 2) as hazards are identified. Some hazards can be rectified but others remain constant. The hazards have been divided into two categories.

Hazards that can be rectified or minimised will be dealt with as a matter of urgency. Hazard Control Forms will be posted on the Staffroom Noticeboard. When a Staff Member notices a hazard, he/she will use the form to notify the Safety Representative, who will rectify the issue and sign with the date and time of when the issue was resolved. Those hazards that cannot be rectified will be clearly indicated and appropriate procedures listed beside them.

The Board of Management in consultation with the employees will review and make recommendations on the elimination of hazards.

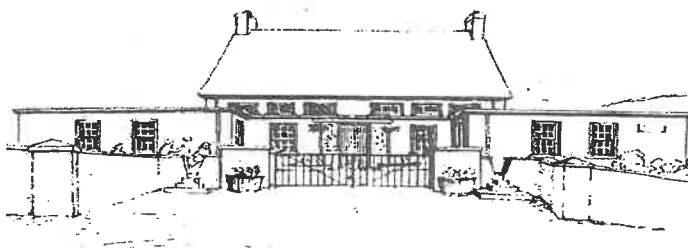
## SPECIFIC HAZARDS

### 1. Fire

It is the policy of the Board of Management of Gurraneasig N.S. 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.
- Regular fire drills take place at least twice a year. (See Appendix 1 for Fire Evacuation Procedure)
- Instruction is given in the use of fire extinguishers for specific materials/equipment.
- Electrical equipment is to be unplugged or turned off outside school hours and when classrooms are vacated for lengthy periods as appropriate.
- An assembly area is designated (Shelter)
- Those leaving buildings/classrooms should let someone know. (Sign out Register should be used by students if leaving before assigned home time)
- Exit signs are clearly marked.
- The teacher in each classroom will be responsible for fire evacuation and fire drills procedures.
- The Deputy Principal whose duty it is to act as Fire Marshall will oversee in conjunction with the Safety Officer and Representative the above aspects of the policy.

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## 2. Other hazards

- On wet days the tiled surface of hallways need to be monitored and dried as appropriate as they can become slippery due to general traffic and can pose a risk. Outdoor and indoor mats need to be maintained and replaced as appropriate.
- There are goalposts on the school football pitch which need to be regularly maintained so that they are fit for use.
- Pupils are not allowed to play in the school yard during weather which would pose a danger to their safety e.g. frost, snow, and ice.
- During particularly inclement weather the Board of Management reserves the right to keep the school closed if it is felt that a risk is posed to staff and pupils by travelling to or attending school.

## CONSTANT HAZARDS

### 1. Electrical Appliances

It is the policy of the Board of Management that only competent persons use Electrical Appliances. Such appliances and equipment will be subject to regular maintenance checks.

### 2. Chemicals

It is the policy of the Board of Management that all chemicals, detergents etc., be stored in clearly identifiable containers bearing instructions and precautions for their use and kept in a locked area, and protection provided for use when handling them.

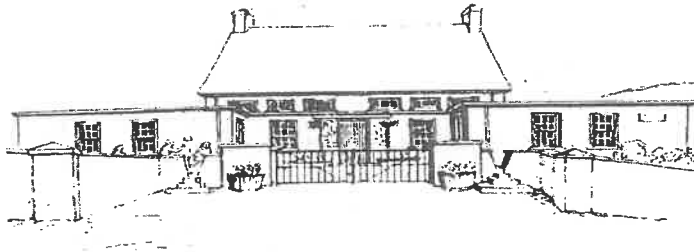
### 3. Drugs/Medications

The Board of Management outlines its approach to drugs/medications in our Administration of Medicines Policy.

### 4. Wet Floors

It is the policy of the Board of Management that the washing of floors is conducted after school hours as far as is reasonably practicable to eliminate the danger of slipping. During heavy weather, condensation and people traffic can cause tiled areas to become slippery.

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## 5. The Code of Conduct

The Code of Conduct in the school provides for a level of appropriate behaviour to minimise personal risk or stress to any employees.

## 6. Accidents and Injuries

However vigilant the school staff is in relation to pupil safety, accidents will happen and correct procedures will be followed in the event of accidents; preventing or minimising injuries. Accidents and Injuries will be recorded in the Accident book with the Incident Report Form being used for serious incidents.

## 7. Bullying

Our Anti-Bullying Policy is a stand-alone policy, which provides a framework for dealing with instances of bullying among pupils. The procedures for dealing with Adult Bullying are in accordance with the INTO publication '**Working Together, (2024)**' and our '**Dignity at Work Statement**' included as Appendix 4.

## 8. Access to Employees is by Consent

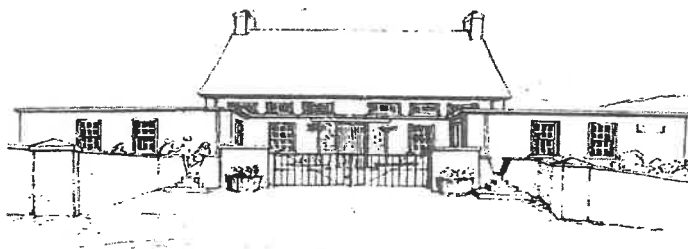
When an employee feels at risk from or threatened by a particular person on school property, this must be drawn to the Board of Management's attention. The Board of Management will undertake to ensure that in such circumstances all appropriate measures will be taken to protect employees.

## 9. Trained First Aid Personnel

The Board of Management will endeavour to ensure that: -

- At least one Employee will be trained to apply First Aid to pupils and other employees. Frances Harrington is our current trained First Aider, and is accessible to all students during class and break times.
- All required remedies and equipment are made available for first aid function.
- There will be an adequate supply of properly equipped First Aid Boxes available at all times to staff which will contain: plasters, Tape, Eye wash, Cotton Bandages, Burns treatment, Non- alcoholic Wipes, Scissors.

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## 10. Welfare Facilities

Welfare facilities at Gurraneasig NS include the following:

1. Boys and girls toilets in each classroom.
2. Male & female staff toilets located off the main corridor.
3. Visitors have use of the staff toilets upon request.
4. Full cooking facilities available in the staff canteen.
5. Pupils have access to drinking water and eat at their desks.
6. Drinking water is available in every classroom and the canteen.
7. Coat hanging area available in each classroom.

All areas are cleaned and inspected regularly. Responsibility for cleaning these areas lies with both staff and pupils. Cleaning staff clean daily also.

## 11. Pest Control

The presence of pests on the school grounds is monitored by teaching & cleaning staff. Food is stored safely and securely, bins are emptied regularly. Any pests that breach the building are disposed of promptly and safely without posing any risk of injury to the pupils or staff.

## OTHER PROCEDURES

### 1. Educational Visits

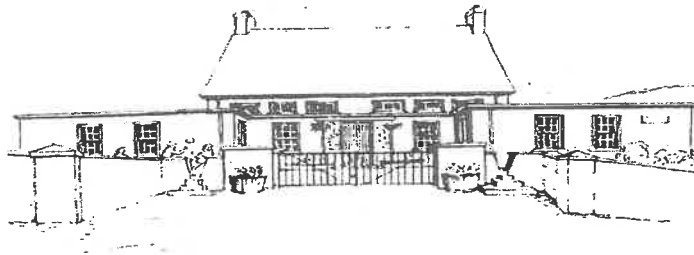
Educational visits will be booked with a reputable, properly insured coach service with fully seat-belted coaches. We will aim for a ratio of fifteen pupils per adult (teacher or parent). Every effort will be made to ensure the safety of the pupils at events or activities they are participating in i.e. the theatre, swimming pool, playground, etc. will be properly equipped and manned by qualified staff.

### 2. Visitors to the School

Persons coming onto the school premises must identify themselves clearly to whoever answers the door before gaining admittance to the school premises. Any contractor should make direct contact with the Principal, or Deputy Principal before initiating any work on the school premises. All outside facilitators, teachers, coaches etc. who are delivering workshops to pupils will do so under the supervision and direction of the class teacher. Any outside professionals working with children without such supervision must have appropriate qualifications and Garda vetting.



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### **3. Wet Days**

On wet days, children will be supervised indoors. The pupils stay in their classroom, where they read, draw, play board games, table tennis, watch a movie or chat.

### **4. Emergency Closures**

On occasions where school is in progress and it becomes necessary to close the school for safety reasons, the parents are contacted. Every effort is made to ensure that all parents are made aware of the situation through Text-a-Parent, local media, school website etc. Transport home is arranged and where there is nobody at home pupils can stay with neighbouring parents with their own parents' consent.

### **5. Staff on Site**

All members of staff are asked to remain on school premises during the school day unless otherwise agreed with the principal. This is to ensure that there are additional staff on site to assist in case of emergency.

### **Success Criteria**

Our success criteria will be based on the achievement of our aims to provide a safe environment for our employees, pupils and visitors. We will use staff observation and parental feedback in addition to our safety record as our benchmark for success or otherwise of the policy.

### **Roles and Responsibility**

#### **DUTIES OF ALL EMPLOYEES**

1. It is the duty of every employee while at work:

(a) To take reasonable care for 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.

(b) To co-operate with his/her employer and any other person to such an extent as will enable his/her employer and the other person to comply with any of the relevant statutory obligations.

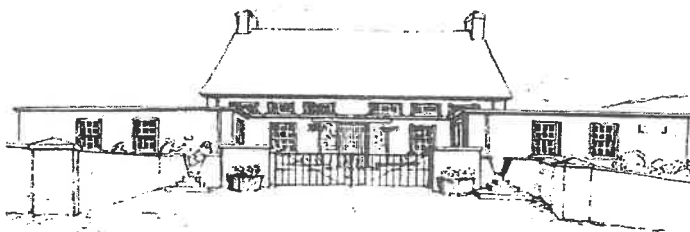
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(c) To use in such manner so as to provide the protection intended, any suitable appliance, protective clothing, convenience, equipment or anything provided (whether for his/her use alone or for use by him/her in common with others) for securing his/her safety, health and welfare while at work.

(d) To report to the Board of Management without unreasonable delay, any defects in equipment, place of work or system of work, which might endanger safety, health or welfare, of which he/she might become aware.

2. 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 and welfare arising out of work activities.

3. Employees will, by using available facilities and equipment provided, ensure that work practices are performed in the safest manner possible.

### **DUTIES OF SAFETY REPRESENTATIVE**

- Conduct an assessment to identify all hazards on the appropriate form (Appendix 2). A Sample Checklist is included as Appendix 3.
- Assess the risks associated with these hazards.
- Detail arrangements made, resources supplied, and responsibility required to deal with the hazards and to keep them under review.

### **DUTIES OF SAFETY OFFICER**

- To liaise with the Safety Rep on matters of Health and Safety.
- To make recommendations for the alleviation of potential hazards.
- To monitor progress in relation to dealing with hazards.
- Report on all of the above at appropriate BOM meetings.

### **Timeframe for Review**

This policy is reviewed annually.

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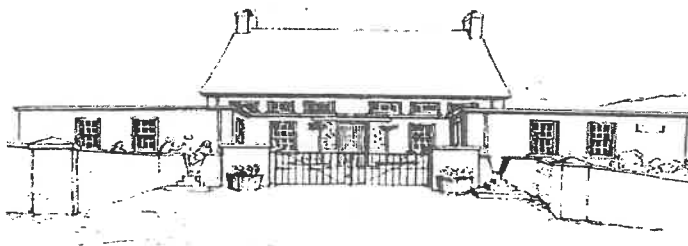
## Ratification and Communication

The Board of Management ratified this policy on 17-02-2025.

Signed: Mary O'Discoll, (Chairperson, BOM)

The policy is communicated to the members of the BOM and is available to the wider school community through our school website.

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## **APPENDIX 1**

### **FIRE EVACUATION PROCEDURE**

#### **Sequence**

- Alarm
- Call the fire brigade
- Evacuation
- Assembly
- Roll Call
- Tackle the fire

**Assembly Points:** 3 Assembly points.

1. Junior room assembly point is on the X's marked on the ground outside the small (equipment) shed.
2. Middle room assembly point in the main shed.
3. Senior room assembly point on the X's outside on the basketball court on the school side.

#### **Aim**

To prevent panic and ensure the safe, orderly and efficient evacuation of all the occupants of the school using all the exit facilities available and to train the mind to react rationally when confronted with a fire or other emergency at school or elsewhere.

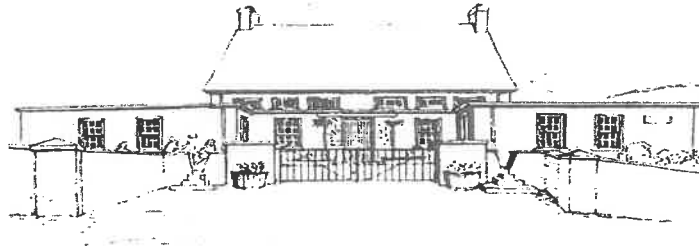
#### **Alarm**

Anyone discovering an outbreak of fire will raise the alarm at once by informing a teacher. The teacher will immediately activate the fire alarm.

#### **Call the Fire Brigade**

All outbreaks of fire however small, or any suspected fire will be reported immediately to the Fire Brigade by the emergency phone number.

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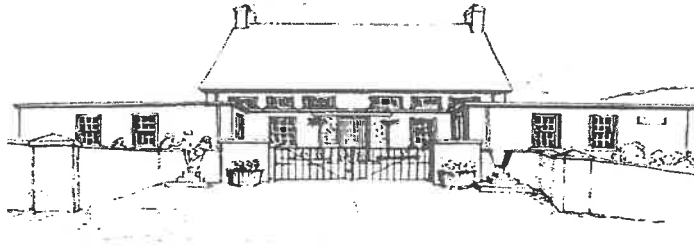
## Evacuation, Assembly & Roll Call

- Activation of fire alarm
- In all classroom/resource areas, children are to stand up, push their chairs under the tables and calmly walk in a single file to the door
- All teachers must check the class toilets before vacating the room and close the door on evacuating.
- The designated SNA(s) wherever they are will assist them in evacuating the students from the classrooms/resource rooms/library
- During evacuation and on assembly, absolute order and attention must be maintained. Pupils must be able to hear clearly any instructions given by the teacher.
- Secretary will bring a mobile or handset to the assembly (if she is present). Principal brings a mobile with her also.
- Each class is to assemble at the allocated fire assembly point in the yard, as outlined above.
- Each teacher will take the class list of their own individual class with them and call the roll on reaching the fire assembly point (NB) If anyone is missing an immediate search by the staff will be made. As far as is practicable, no place to which pupils have access being overlooked.
- Principal will remain in-between the assembly points and obtain the following information – name of teachers, room name and pupils missing report.
- Pupils can only return to the classroom once permission has been given to do so and the alarm is deactivated at the end of the drill. Return to room should be quiet and unhurried.
- If visitors are in the school it must be ascertained that they have evacuated the building.

## Notes:

- Pupils must not take personal property such as bags, coats etc during evacuation.
- All ancillary staff, parents and visitors must evacuate immediately on hearing the alarm.
- Special care should be given to children with special needs.
- The Principal should meet with the fire brigade and immediately inform whether or not persons have been safely evacuated.

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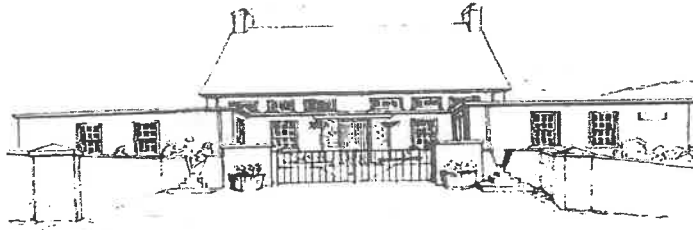
## **Attacking Fire**

Circumstances will dictate whether fire-fighting operations will be attempted. Fire fighting will always be secondary to life safety. While small fires may be dealt with summarily, in the case of a sizeable fire, safe evacuation will be the primary concern.

## **Fire Drills and Testing Alarms**

A Test fire drill will be held twice per year. It will be carried out according to the above procedure with the exception of 'Calling the Fire Brigade' and 'Tackling the Fire'. A record of all fire drills will be kept. It will include details of drills including date, time, weather conditions, time taken for evacuation and any other relevant information.

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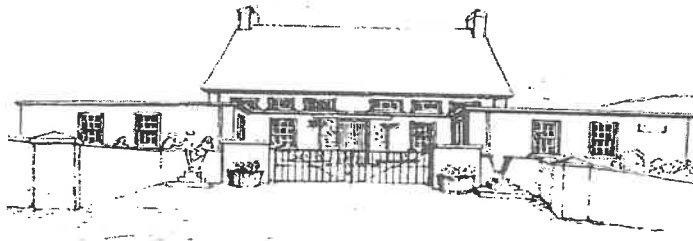
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Appendix 2

<b>HAZARD CONTROL FORM</b>			
<b>Hazard</b>	<b>Action Taken</b>	<b>Date Remedied</b>	<b>Person Responsible</b>
Floor surfaces - Hall - Tiles loose	Called maintenance to remedy	End Nov - heating has to be on in interim	M.T.
Classroom furniture damaged.	Students spoken to regarding upkeep. Broken articles removed	7/11/24	M.T
Fire Drill hasn't taken place this term to date.	Staff member (fire officer) reminded.	20/11/24	M.T

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### **APPENDIX 3**

#### **SAFETY REPRESENTATIVES' CHECKLIST**

<b>1 CIRCULATION AREAS</b>	
<i>Check that:</i>	
<b>1.1 Corridors/Halls</b>	
1.1.1 floor surfaces are even and are not slippery;	X
1.1.2 passages are adequately lit;	✓
1.1.3 litter or rubbish has not been allowed to accumulate;	✓
1.1.4 mats, etc, are not positioned in such a way as to be tripping hazards;	✓
1.1.5 there are no areas of loose, flaking or damaged paint, plaster or plasterboard.	✓
<b>1.2 Doors and Windows</b>	
<i>Check that:</i>	
1.2.1 doors are unobstructed;	✓
1.2.2 doors with glass windows have toughened or laminated glass;	✓
1.2.3 doors with a fire resistance requirement have wire reinforced glass;	✓



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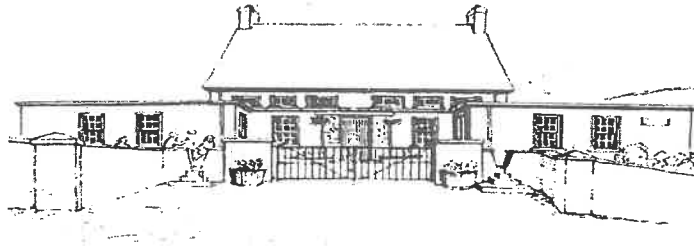


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1.2.4 there are no doors with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• loose or broken hinges;</li> <li>• damaged or sticking catches;</li> <li>• broken wood panels or glass panels;</li> <li>• loose or stiff handles;</li> </ul>	✓
1.2.5 doors are not allowed to swing freely without restraint;	✓
1.2.6 windows are not broken or cracked;	✓
1.2.7 windows open easily without undue force being applied;	✓
1.2.8 windows do not jut out dangerously when open;	✓
1.2.9 windows are cleaned regularly;	✓
1.2.10 windows do not have broken fastenings or cords;	
<b>2 HEATING AND VENTILATION</b>	
<i>Check that:</i>	
2.1 the heating system is regularly serviced and maintained in good order.	✓
2.2 the heating system is adequate	✓
2.3 where there are large areas of glass facing direct sunlight, there is provision for shading, e.g. Venetian blinds;	✓

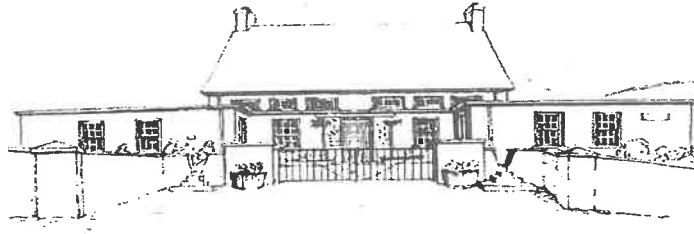
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2.4 windows can be easily opened to allow for adequate ventilation.	✓
<b>3 FIRE SAFETY</b>	
<i>Check that:</i>	
3.1 the fire exits and escape routes are clear from obstructions;	✓
3.2 fire doors are kept unlocked and unobstructed whilst people are on the premises;	✓
3.3 all designated fire exits are clearly marked;	✓
3.4 evacuation procedures are clearly displayed;	✓
3.5 staff and children are familiar with evacuation procedures;	✓
3.6 staff are familiar with and have been adequately trained in the procedure to be followed when using fire fighting equipment;	✓
3.7 there have been practice evacuations/fire drills held at least once per term;	✓
3.8 fire doors open outwards and are not held or wedged open;	✓
3.9 fire extinguishers and fire blankets are checked and maintained in accordance with manufacturer's instructions;	✓
3.10 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;	✓
3.11 flammable substances e.g. cleaning fluids, photocopying chemicals etc, are stored correctly, away from any sources of heat.	✓



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## 4 ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT

### 4.1 General

All electrical equipment should be maintained and checked regularly by a competent person. Such maintenance should include checking that:

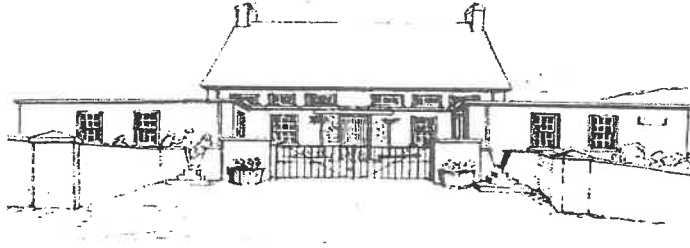
• equipment is correctly wired and earthed;	✓
• plugs are correctly wired;	✓
• use ratings that are correct for the type of equipment being used (fuse ratings should be marked on the equipment and the plug).	✓
• the mains supply is still capable of meeting the maximum demand;	✓
• the distribution system (i.e. sockets, bench supplies etc) is suitable for the type of work being carried out;	✓
• the isolating switches are marked, well-sited, accessible and known to staff;	✓
• residual current (earth leakage) circuit breakers are used where appropriate.	✓

### 4.2 Lighting

*Visually check that:*

4.2.1 all the light fittings are working and are kept in a clean condition	✓
4.2.2 light switches are not broken and appear to be in a safe condition	✓
4.2.3 the lighting is adequate for the type of work being undertaken	✓

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<b>4.3 Plugs/Sockets/Leads</b>	
<i>Visually check that:</i>	
4.3.1 plugs are in good condition with no cracks or pieces missing;	✓
4.3.2 sockets are in good condition with no cracks or pieces missing;	✓
4.3.3 socket screws and mountings are secure;	✓
4.3.4 sockets are situated in safe positions, convenient for the equipment to be used and not subject to damp;	✓
4.3.5 indicator lights on sockets function correctly;	✓
4.3.6 insulation on leads is not cracked or frayed;	✓
4.3.7 leads are without knots or joins and are reasonably free of 'kinks';	✓
4.3.8 Leads are the correct length for the equipment being used;	✓
4.3.9 there are no trailing leads;	✓
4.3.10 surge protection adaptors are being used and not overloaded;	✓
4.3.11 leads and flexible cable are securely fixed at both equipment and plug ends	✓
<b>4.4 Equipment</b>	
<i>Check that:</i>	

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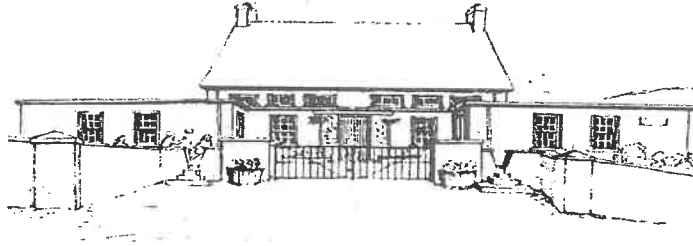


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4.4.1 fixed and portable electrical equipment is not damaged and, as far as you are aware, is operating correctly;	✓
4.4.2 copies of manufacturers' instructions/operating manuals are easily accessible;	✓
4.4.3 equipment is only being used for purposes for which it was intended;	✓
4.4.4 where appropriate, all electrical equipment is switched off and, unplugged when not in use;	✓
4.4.5 mains isolating switches are easily accessible and known to staff;	✓
4.4.6 on/off indicator lights function correctly;	✓
4.4.7 equipment incorporating heating has a thermal safety cut-out in addition to a thermostat;	✓
4.4.8 equipment containing liquid has a leakage detector;	N/A.
4.4.9 all items of electrical equipment are properly and regularly maintained and serviced	✓
<b>5 USE OF GAS</b>	
<i>There are currently no gas installations in the school.</i>	
<b>6 FIRST AID</b>	
<i>Check that:</i>	
6.1 notices are posted in prominent positions detailing:	✓

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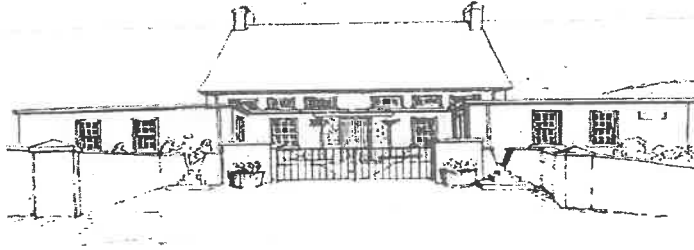


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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• procedure for calling ambulances etc;</li> <li>• telephone number of local doctor, gardai, hospital.</li> <li>• procedure for dealing with individual pupils emergencies due to known conditions/allergies etc</li> </ul>	✓
6.2 first aid boxes are readily available and adequately stocked	✓
6.3 the accident book is readily available and kept up-to-date.	✓
<b>7 GENERAL PURPOSE CLASSROOMS</b>	
7.1 look again at sections 1-4;	
<i>Check that:</i>	
7.2 hazards are not arising from overcrowded classrooms;	✓
7.3 all cupboards, fixed blackboards, display units are stable;	✓
7.4 classroom furniture is not damaged;	✗
7.5 wherever possible, there are no sharp edges or corners on the furniture;	✓
7.6 furniture is positioned safely;	✓
7.7 all shelf mountings are secure.	✓
<b>8 NON-TEACHING AREAS</b>	
<b>8.1 Offices</b>	

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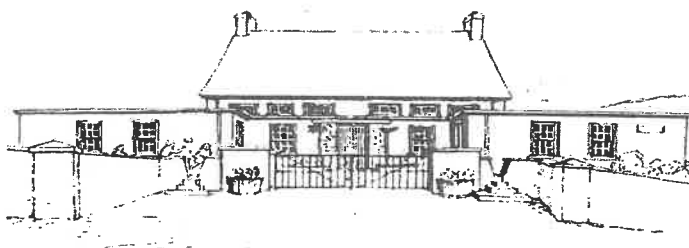


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<i>Check that:</i>	
8.1.1 substances for use with photocopying/duplicating machines are stored correctly, and that the room where photocopying/duplicating machines are operated is adequately ventilated;	✓
<b>8.2 Kitchen Areas</b>	
8.2.1 the kitchen/dining area is kept clean;	✓
8.2.2 the kitchen floors are sound and non-slip, especially when wet;	✓
8.2.3 first aid boxes are available in the kitchen area;	✓
8.2.4 equipment is adequately guarded.	✓
<b>8.3 Boiler Rooms</b>	
8.3.1 there is no combustible waste stored in boiler rooms or elsewhere (e.g. oily rags);	✓
8.3.2 all safety devices in the boiler room are in proper working order;	✓
8.3.3 the boiler is regularly maintained by a competent person;	✓
8.3.4 all cleaning materials, particularly those which might be hazardous, are securely stored;	✓
8.3.5 in the case of solid fuel boilers, there are covered containers to enable ashes to be removed without delay to an area where pupils are not liable to come into contact with them.	N/A

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<b>8.4 Staff Facilities</b>	
8.4.1 the staffroom is clean, warm and well lit.	✓
8.4.2 the staffroom is large enough for the numbers to be accommodated and sufficient seating is proved, both with upright chairs and tables or desks for working and with comfortable seating;	✓
8.4.3 there is provision for tea and coffee to be made;	✓
8.4.4 staff sanitary facilities are suitable, sufficient and properly cleaned.	✓
<b>8.5 Hygiene</b>	
<i>Check that the following are available:</i>	
8.5.1 soap	✓
8.5.2 hand drying facilities	✓
8.5.3 hot water	✓
8.5.4 toilet paper	✓
8.5.5 litter bin per classroom	✓
8.5.6 provision for disposal of sanitary towels	✓
8.5.7 safe, suitable, sufficient and properly cleaned sanitary facilities.	✓
8.5.8 Sanitiser	✓



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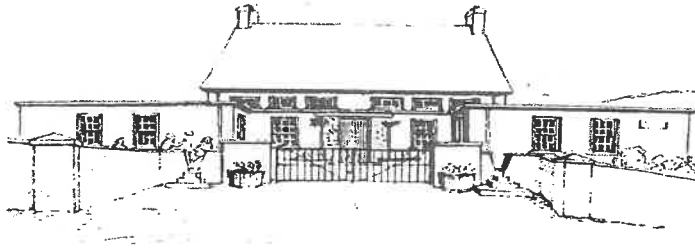
<b>8.6 Outside Areas</b>	
8.6.1 there are no uneven/broken/cracked paving slabs;	✓
8.6.2 outside steps are secure, with a firmly fixed handrail;	✓
8.6.3 roofs, guttering, drain pipes etc are, as far as can be seen, sound and well maintained;	✓
8.6.4 all hard play areas, are kept clean and free from glass;	✓
8.6.5 outside play/PE appliances are securely anchored;	✓
8.6.6 holes for goalposts, netball posts, tennis posts are covered when posts are not in position;	✓
8.6.7 outside lighting works and is sufficient;	✓
8.6.8 all parking facilities for cars and cycles are safe in regard to the presence of pedestrians;	✓
8.6.9 all builders' materials, caretakers' maintenance equipment etc are kept securely.	✓

Inspection undertaken by : Frances Harrington

Date: 20<sup>th</sup> / 11 / 2024

- Please ensure the Hazard Control Form is updated accordingly.

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## **APPENDIX 4**

### **Dignity at Work:**

#### **Building & Maintaining a Positive & Effective Work Environment**

- The Board of Management of Gurraneasig N.S. has adopted the following as part of the school's Health & Safety Statement.
- This document was formulated in light of a number of background documents, including the Health & Safety Authority's *Code of Practice for Employers and Employees on the Prevention and Resolution of Bullying at Work* (2007) and the Equality Authority's *Code of Practice*, given legal effect in the Statutory Instrument entitled *Employment Equality Act 1998 (Code of Practice) (Harassment) Order 2002* (S.I. No. 78 of 2002).

#### **A. Core Principles**

This school is committed to a positive work environment where work is done in an atmosphere of respect, collaboration, openness and equality.

Adult bullying and harassment in the workplace are phenomena which this school will seek to prevent and will not tolerate. All employees have the right to be treated with dignity and respect. Management is committed to intervening in an appropriate manner - utilising one of the accepted Management/INTO procedures - to investigate and deal with allegations of bullying or harassment. The provisions of Circular 40/97 on *Assaults on Staff in Primary Schools* will be utilised as appropriate.

#### **B. What is Workplace Bullying and Harassment?**

The Board of Management adopts the definition of adult bullying as set out by the Task Force (2001):

*"Workplace Bullying is repeated inappropriate behaviour, direct or indirect, whether verbal, physical or otherwise, conducted by one or more persons against another or others, at the*

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*place of work and/or in the course of employment, which could reasonably be regarded as undermining the individual's right to dignity at work. An isolated incident of the behaviour described in this definition may be an affront to dignity at work but, as a once off incident, is not considered to be bullying".*

Harassment is covered by Employment Equality legislation and is based on a person's standing within one of the nine categories (or grounds) specified in that legislation (gender, marital status, religion, sexual orientation etc.) Harassment is defined in law as "*unwanted conduct*" related to one or more of the discriminatory grounds which "*has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity and creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for the person.*"

It is recognised that bullying and harassment complaints may arise among work colleagues but may also arise in relation to visitors to the school. In either case, the commitment to a positive workplace, where dignity at work is respected, prevails.

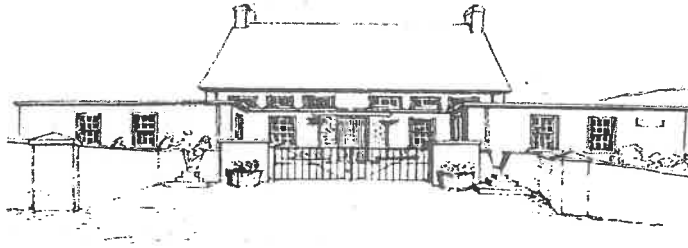
It should be noted that Working Together (2024) outlines a different set of procedures to address staff relation difficulties. The following outlines the procedures to address bullying/harassment.

### **C. A Positive Work Environment**

It is agreed that we will all work to make this school a happy place to work. A happy place to work has a positive work environment characterised by

- A supportive atmosphere
- Good and open communication (e.g. through opportunities at regular staff meetings)
- Appropriate interpersonal behaviour
- Collaboration
- Open discussion and resolution of conflict
- Recognition, feedback and affirmation as appropriate
- Fair treatment of all staff (including fair systems of selection and promotion in line

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with agreed procedures)

Every person has a responsibility to play his/her part in contributing to a positive work environment. In this regard, a person who is a witness or bystander has a clear responsibility to raise concerns about dignity at work and threats to this, in an appropriate and timely manner.

The Safety Statement - as mandated under the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005 - will also include a commitment to a positive work environment, in light of the Employer's obligations as outlined at Section 8 of that Act, including the duty to manage work activities in such a way as to prevent "*improper conduct or behaviour*" likely to put health and safety at risk.

It is agreed that the adoption of this policy in our school will be accompanied by a number of steps to examine our work environment and, as necessary, to agree changes which reflect a commitment to dignity at work. These steps will be initiated by Management, and be repeated by way of review at appropriate intervals.

The actions to be undertaken may generally be described as Identification, Assessment, Implementing Strategies and Monitoring.

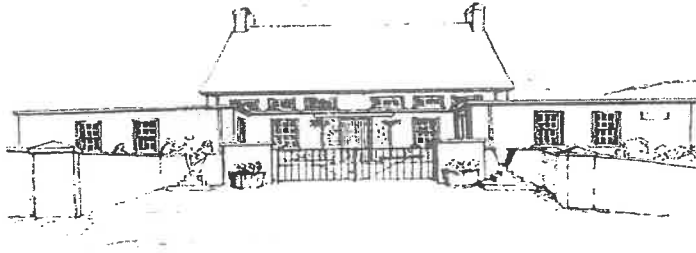
#### **D. Adult Bullying as a Problem**

Our school recognises that Adult Bullying and Harassment are problems where they occur in any workplace.

Bullying behaviour generally amounts to psychological abuse which causes serious pain and suffering. Studies have shown that any person may become a target, irrespective of their personality or ability. In addition to its unacceptable effects on persons who are its targets, workplace bullying and harassment is extremely detrimental to organisational effectiveness.

Bullying may include behaviours such as:

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- Verbal abuse/insults, undermining remarks
- Excessive monitoring of work
- Withholding work-related information
- Exclusion with negative consequences.

Such behaviours need not and should not be part of a workplace. This policy aims to ensure that a positive environment prevents such behaviours from occurring. Where bullying or harassment does occur or is alleged to have occurred, there are means of tackling it through the agreed procedure.

Bullying is not

- An isolated incident of inappropriate behaviour.
- Exercise of proper authority by management.
- Fair and constructive criticism of an employee's performance, conduct or attendance.

### **E. What Happens if there is an Allegation of Bullying or Harassment?**

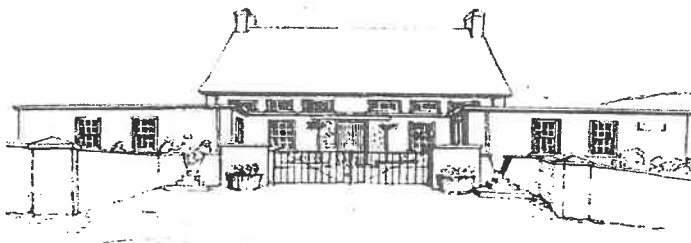
Without prejudice to an individual's right to take such advice or steps as they themselves may decide, the Board of Management will take seriously any allegations or workplace bullying or harassment.

Supportive and effective procedures, in accordance with nationally-agreed practice, are in the place in this school. These procedures to address and investigate allegations will focus on the earliest possible resolution, will proceed as necessary from informal to formal stages and will have a stress on confidentiality.

### **F. Resolution Process for Bullying and Harassment in the Workplace**

The Board of Management will usually refer to "Working Together-Procedures and Policies for Positive Staff Relations" (INTO, 2024). However, the Board may also seek advice and then refer to "Code of Practice on Guidance, Prevention and Procedures for dealing with Sexual Harassment and Harassment at Work made under the Employment Equality Act

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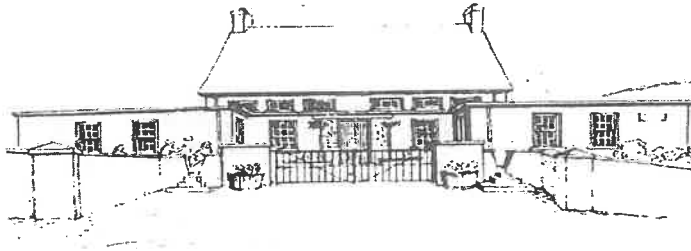
1998" (Equality Authority, 2012) and the Teaching Council Professional Standards or other relevant documents.

The following are the stages which should be followed by staff members who feel that they are being harassed, sexually harassed or bullied in the course of their employment :

### **Stage 1: Meeting of the parties**

- Party A should seek an appropriate opportunity to meet Party B in order to inform them they are invoking Stage 1 of this procedure.
- Where necessary, this meeting may be facilitated by a third party, generally a teaching colleague, other than any member of the Board of Management.
- At this meeting, Party A should outline their complaint in relation to adult bullying and harassment, should object to the alleged bullying/harassment and request that it stop.
  - It is important that Party A bear in mind that Party B may not be aware that their behaviour is a cause of complaint.
- Party B may respond to Party A at the initial meeting or if requested, the meeting may be adjourned and resumed subsequently.
- Whether or not Party B disputes all or some of the issues raised by Party A, or seeks to raise additional issues, nonetheless Party B should endeavour to respond in as constructive a manner as possible.
  - The onus is now on both parties to engage constructively and in a professional manner in order to address the issues raised.
- A variety of possible actions to resolve the matter may be initiated. These may include the following (though not exclusively or in any order of preference):
  - a. An acknowledgement by each party of the other's perspective.
  - b. An agreement to take on board the concerns of the other party.
  - c. An agreement by each party to be vigilant in respect of interactions with each other in order to avoid difficulties arising in the future.
  - d. Planning to minimise possible situations where conflict could arise.
  - e. A commitment to modify or cease the particular behaviour.

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f. An apology or other appropriate expression of regret, particularly where one of the parties may not have been aware of the impact of their behaviour.

g. An agreement by both parties to review the situation following a designated period.

h. Any other actions, as may be appropriate.

- Both parties should agree realistic timeframes which should not be later than 15 school days by which time a framework for resolution of issues should be agreed.

- By agreement between the parties themselves, the 15 day period may be extended

### **Stage 2: Meeting with Principal Teacher/Chairperson who endeavours to facilitate resolution**

Where the Principal Teacher is already involved in the matter as Party A or Party B, the Chairperson, in an individual capacity, will take the place of the Principal for the purposes of this Stage. This provision does not preclude the involvement of the Chairperson at a later stage of this procedure.

As part of effective leadership, the Principal Teacher/ Chairperson has a role in promoting positive working relations. The Principal Teacher/Chairperson as the case may be, should act in a fair and impartial manner and may exercise judgement in an attempt to facilitate a resolution.

- If Party A wishes to proceed to Stage 2 they should make the Principal Teacher/Chairperson aware discussions have taken place at Stage 1 and state they are invoking Stage 2 of this procedure.

- The Principal Teacher/Chairperson should advise Party A that they will initiate discussions with both parties, either individually or together and seek to resolve the complaint.

The onus is on both parties, facilitated by the Principal Teacher/Chairperson, to engage constructively in order to achieve resolution.

- The Principal Teacher/Chairperson may convene one or more meetings with the parties individually; or together as appropriate, to endeavour to conciliate between the parties.

- It is not envisaged that either Party A or Party B would be accompanied by a friend/teaching colleague at this stage.

- The resolution put forward or facilitated by the Principal Teacher/Chairperson may include any of the following:

a. An acknowledgement by each party of the other's perspective.

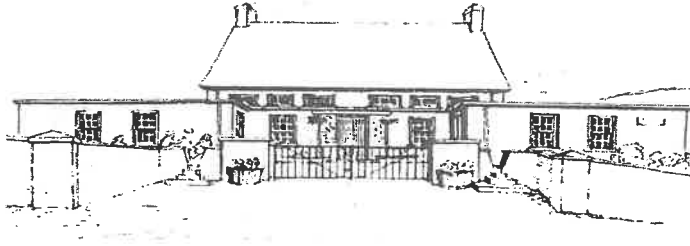
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- b. An agreement to take on board the concerns of the other party.
  - c. An agreement by each party to be vigilant in respect of interaction with each other in order to avoid difficulties arising in the future.
  - d. Planning to minimise possible situations where there could be conflict.
  - e. A commitment to modify or cease the particular behaviour. f. An apology or other appropriate expression of regret, particularly where one of the parties may not have been aware of the impact of his/her behaviour.
  - g. Agreement by both parties to review the situation following a designated period.
  - h. An offer of mediation from the employer subject to the consent of the parties.
  - i. Any other actions as may be appropriate.
- The outcome of Stage 2 should be recorded by the Principal Teacher/Chairperson on Template 2A. (see Working Together 2024)
  - 15 school days are provided to resolve matters at Stage 2 and the parties should note the time frames which should only be extended by agreement.

### **Stage 3: Mediation**

Prior to agreeing to and/or initiating Stage 3 Mediation, both Party A and Party B are required to familiarise themselves with the following fundamental information around the mediation process.

Mediation is a voluntary and confidential process for resolving disputes wherein the parties agree to resolve the issues of the dispute without recourse to the judgement of others with the aid of a mediator. Mediation is entered into by mutual consent and is solution focused. All matters discussed through the mediation process are confidential to the parties involved. Mediation requires that the parties involved enter into the process with an open mind and a willingness to listen to all points of view and is designed to assist them in working towards a better understanding of their issues. Mediation is led by the parties involved in it, with the approved mediator's role being to facilitate a resolution that can enable the parties to work in a professional manner together moving forward.

Mediation can include:

- Improving communication and mutual understanding.
- Improving relationships.



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- Working towards finding solutions.
- Exploring positive outcomes and agreements.

If Party A and Party B are agreeable to enter into mediation, then they are required, in the first instance, to contact the Chairperson of the Board of Management requesting mediation be put in place.

In order to progress mediation, the following steps need occur:

- The Chairperson is required to contact their Management Body/Patron with this request.
- The Management Body and/or Patron is then required to contact INTO Head Office to agree to mediation as mediation is a cost occurring process where the costs are split between the Management Body and INTO.
- INTO and the Management Body agree on a mediator, who is selected from a joint INTO/Management Body panel retained for this purpose. See Working Together 2024 for detailed process.

#### **Stage 4: Investigation**

4.1. Where Party A considers that their complaint of Bullying and Harassment has not been resolved it is open to them to refer the matter to the Board of Management for formal investigation. This step should be taken within 15 school days. Where the party does not make such a formal request to initiate an investigation within the 15 school days period then the matter is considered concluded.

4.2. The referral to the Board of Management should be in writing and will be signed and dated. The referral should be accompanied by the written complaint of the alleged bullying/harassment. The referral should be sent to the Chairperson as the correspondent of the BOM.

4.3. On receipt of such a referral, the Board should meet within 10 school days to consider the commencement of an investigation.

Thereafter the Board proceeds as follows.

Either:

a. Designate a member of the Board of Management to conduct an investigation, subject to a maximum of two, neither being the Chairperson, subject to the principles of natural justice and fair procedures. The Board should be mindful that the appointed member/s must withdraw from any subsequent decision of the Board on this matter at Stage 5, as well as the necessity to ensure a quorum for all Board decisions.

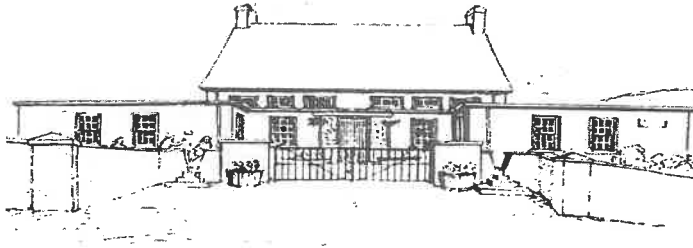
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Or b. An independent third party appointed by the Board of Management. The cost of the investigation will be borne by the Board of Management/employer in the case of appointing a 3rd party.

At the outset of the process and prior to appointing the investigator(s), declarations of conflicts of interest should be sought to ensure the integrity of the process and ensure the Board will be quorate at Stage 5. It is strongly recommended that advice be sought from the relevant Management Body as appropriate at this stage.

### **Stage 5: Decision following investigation**

It is a matter for the Board of Management as employer to make a final decision in relation to the upholding, partial upholding, or refusal of the complaint of bullying/ harassment. The Board is bound by the definitions set out in this procedure when making its decision.

The Board of Management/employer should ensure that outcomes are communicated sensitively and fairly. Both Party A and Party B are entitled to know whether the complaint is upheld either in part or in whole. The Board of Management/ employer should also be able to provide reason/s for not upholding a complaint.

Where it is found a person has been involved in behaviour which meets the definitions outlined in this procedure, the emphasis should be on acknowledging the offending behaviour and working constructively to ensure it is not repeated. Where the complaint/s in relation to bullying and harassment are upheld, it is open to the Board of Management to address the matter in any/ all of the following ways:

- The issuing of a clear warning that bullying/ harassment is not acceptable in the workplace.
- A recommendation to the relevant party that they apologise/express regret or give an assurance that the bullying/harassment behaviour will cease.

A demand that acceptable patterns of interaction should be established between the parties.

- Recommend the relevant parties engage with the Employment Assistance Service.
- Direct any other action as may be appropriate in the circumstances of the case.
- The Board may decide to monitor commitments given and to review matters on a particular date.
- A disciplinary process, in accordance with Circular 49/2018, under the work and conduct matters section of the procedures.

External appeals Role of the Health and Safety Authority (HSA) The Health and Safety

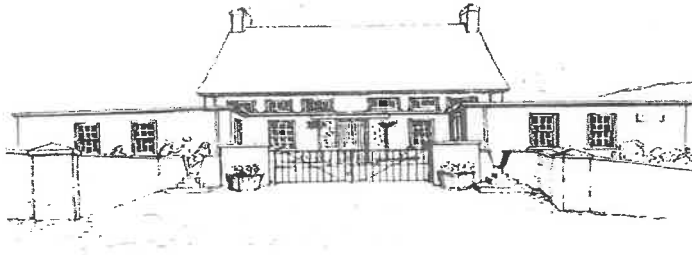
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Authority has an information service on workplace bullying and supports. A person may seek information from the HSA or make a complaint to the HSA regarding a complaint made by them, or a complaint made against them in the area of workplace bullying. The HSA will instigate its own procedures in line with its statutory remit. More information can be found on the HSA website at [www.hsa.ie](http://www.hsa.ie)

### **G. Summary**

Management has a duty of care towards employees. Similarly, employees have a duty of care towards one another. This policy seeks to set out principles and practices to support the exercise of that duty in our school.

Just as inappropriate and undermining behaviour among work colleagues is taken seriously, so is such behaviour when perpetrated against an employee of this school by any other person.

Together we are committed to building and maintaining a work environment where respectful, open and equal relationships are the norm.

In summary, we are committed to having a positive, happy place to work.

