



Fire Safety Policy

St. Joseph's N.S. is a primary school under the patronage of Bishop Tom Deenihan, Bishop of Meath. St. Joseph's N.S. operates within the regulations laid down by the Department of Education and Skills (DES) and follows the Primary School Curriculum (DES, 1999) which may be amended from time to time, in accordance with Sections 9 and 30 of the Education Act (1998). The Principal and the Board of Management fully subscribe to the principles of partnership, accountability, inclusion, respect for diversity, parental choice and equality, in developing and implementing all school policies.

1. Introduction

Fire safety refers to the set of practices intended to reduce the destruction caused by fire. Fire safety measures include actions which are

- (i) intended to prevent ignition of an uncontrolled fire, and
- (ii) that are used to limit the development and effects of a fire after it starts.

The Fire Safety Policy for St. Joseph's N.S. was developed following a collaborative consultation process with staff, engagement with members of the school's Board of Management, and a thorough review of the national fire safety legislation, guidelines and protocols including:

- Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Acts (2005, 2010)
- Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (General Application) Regulations (2007)
- Guidelines on Managing Safety, Health and Welfare in Primary Schools (HSA and DES, 2013)

This policy was prepared in accordance with the school's key Child Protection Policies:

- St. Joseph's N.S. Child Safeguarding Statement and
- St. Joseph's N.S. Child Safeguarding Assessment of Risk of Harm to the Child.

2. Aims

This policy aims to -

- Enable the school to provide for the immediate needs of students, staff and visitors in the event of a fire.
- Identify and implement appropriate safety procedures which comply with the Health, Safety and Welfare at Work Acts (2005, 2010).
- Ensure a safe school environment for all.



3. School Ethos

St. Joseph's N.S. is committed to the care of the whole school community and the provision of a safe and secure environment for learning. This policy is in keeping with these ideals.

4. Objectives

The objectives of this Fire Safety Policy for St. Joseph's N.S. are:

- To identify and utilise outside agencies (local fire station, fire officer) for training and staff development to enhance safety procedures at the school.
- To develop a tried and trusted Fire Safety Framework which will ensure the safety of all school personnel in the event of a fire.

5. Internal Procedures: Monitoring and Review Fire Safety Monitoring

Fire safety measures and equipment at St. Joseph's N.S. will be kept in effective working order. This includes all fixtures and fittings such as fire doors, staircases, corridors, fire detection and alarm systems, fire-fighting equipment, notices and emergency lighting. Regular checks, periodic servicing and maintenance will be carried out. Any defects will be put right as quickly as possible. St. Joseph's N.S. will ensure the reliability and safe operation of fire-fighting equipment and installed systems such as fire alarms and emergency lighting. A competent person will carry out periodic servicing and any necessary repairs. A record of the work carried out on such equipment and systems will help to demonstrate the school's compliance with the law. The following Emergency Escape and Fire Fighting Checklist will be used for routine checks and reporting on Fire Safety:

1. Are the extinguishers suitable for the purpose and of sufficient capacity?
2. Are there sufficient extinguishers sited throughout the workplace?
3. Are the right types of extinguishers located close to the fire hazards and can users gain access to them without exposing themselves to risk?
4. Are signboards or a safety colour (or both) used to mark permanently the location and identification of fire-fighting equipment?
5. Have the people likely to use the fire extinguishers been given adequate instruction and training?
6. Is the use of fire-fighting equipment included in the emergency plan?
7. Are all fire doors and escape routes and associated lighting and signs regularly checked?
8. Is all fire-fighting equipment regularly checked?
9. Is all other equipment provided to help means of escape arrangements in the building regularly checked?
10. Are there instructions for relevant employees about testing of equipment?
11. Are those who test and maintain the equipment properly trained to do so?



Fire Drill and Evacuation

In the event of a fire at St. Joseph's N.S., the following steps will be followed:

1. The fire alarm activates. The fire alarm company is automatically alerted unless the Principal, school secretary or Mr. Moloney calls to notify of a false alarm. If for any reason the Principal is unavailable Mr. Moloney will assume responsibility for all fire safety procedures.
2. In the event of a false alarm the Principal or another member of the school staff will announce this fact over the intercom and all classes will be directed to return to their rooms in an orderly fashion.
3. In all (class)rooms, children, adults and any visitors to the school stand up, push their chairs back under their tables and calmly walk to the door in single file. Children and adults do not pause to take bags or books with them.
4. All ancillary staff, parents and visitors must evacuate immediately on hearing the alarm.
5. Each teacher takes their class list of his/her own individual class with them.
6. All teachers check the class toilets before vacating the room.
7. Each teacher closes the classroom door when leaving the room.
8. The fire assembly point is located in the parent's car park. Each class has an allocated station as pictured on their fire safety poster.
9. Each class exits the school building as per their fire safety poster and lines up in an orderly manner. Children remain quiet.
10. Pupils who are attending the SET teacher at the time of a fire drill are accompanied by the SET teacher to the assembly area and join their class.
11. Each teacher calls the roll for his/her own class on reaching the fire assembly point.
12. The principal monitors the evacuation for (i) adherence to this set of procedures (ii) evidence of efficiency and safety for all actions outlined (iii) total time taken to evacuate the building.
13. Pupils return to the school premises when the all-clear has been given by the Principal.

Roles and Responsibilities

All teachers are responsible for the safety and well-being of the pupils in their care. The Principal and Mr. Moloney, together have overall responsibility for ensuring proper Fire Safety procedures are in place. Mr. Moloney is responsible for ensuring fire safety checks and routine maintenance work are completed at St. Joseph's N.S. Fire drill schedules are part of the post of responsibility of Mr. Moloney along with reviews and reports on fire safety checks including equipment as well as implementation of all Fire Safety procedures including protocols for Fire Drill and Evacuation.



The Board of Management will consult with staff to put in place and maintain measures to promote Fire Safety at the school and monitor the effectiveness of those measures. For example, any defects in the alarm system arising from a routine check will be prioritised by the Board of Management for repair or replacement in line with Guidelines on Managing Safety, Health and Welfare in Primary Schools (HSA and DES, 2013, p. 20 and p. 31).

This policy will apply with immediate effect at St. Joseph's N.S. This policy and related policies will be reviewed annually (or in line with a change in Department legislation) and amended if/as necessary.

Ratification and Communication

Following feedback from members of the St. Joseph's N.S. Board of Management, this Fire Safety Policy was finalised and posted on the school's website. Hardcopies of the policy are available to parents on request.

This policy was reviewed by the Board of Management of St. Joseph's N.S. on 20th March 2024.

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Signed: _____
Father Stan Deegan (Chairperson)

Date: _____

Signed: _____
Sé McCarthy (Principal)

Date: _____