Health & Safety Statement

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Health & Safety Statement

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Health & Safety Statement

Scoil Pól is committed to maintaining a safe teaching and learning environment for our staff, students and visitors to our school.

This Safety Statement, in accordance with Section 20, Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005, outlines the policy of which has been developed in consultation with the School Board of Management and school staff. It will be revised on a yearly basis or as required by changes in legislation and communicated to all staff through regular staff meetings and training programs.

We are committed to meeting all relevant statutory requirements that relate to occupational safety, health and welfare. We are committed to managing and conducting school activities in such a way as to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the safety, health and welfare at work of our staff and others who may be affected by our activities. This will be achieved by the following (in so far as is reasonably practicable):

- The provision of a safe place of work, including safe access and egress.
- The provision of safe plant and equipment.
- The provision of safe systems of work.
- The provision of welfare facilities.
- The provision of appropriate information, instruction, training and supervision.
- Determining and implementing appropriate preventative and protective measures.
- Having regard to the general principles of prevention.
- The provision of emergency plans and procedures.
- Reporting prescribed accidents and dangerous occurrences to the Health & Safety Authority.
- Obtaining, where necessary, the services of a competent person to advise on health and safety.

The detailed arrangements for achieving these objectives are set out in the main body of the Safety Statement. The Principal together with the Board of Management has overall responsibility for health and safety at the school. Staff share a responsibility with management in ensuring their own safety while at work. This Safety Statement requires the co-operation of all staff, visitors, contractors and others to enable Scoil Pól to discharge its responsibilities under the law.

Scoil Pól is committed to upholding the standards outlined in this Safety Statement. Sufficient authority and resources, both financial and otherwise, will be made available to enable staff to carry out their responsibilities in a reasonable and efficient manner. All staff will be made aware of and have access to this Safety Statement. The Safety Statement will also be available to third parties where appropriate.

The Safety Statement will be reviewed annually in light of experience and future developments within the organisation.

Signed: Siatin Eilen Kelly
Chairperson Board of Management

Date: 14/05/2025

Signed: Eoin Walsh
Principal

Date: 14/05/2025

2. About Us

Scoil Pól originally began as an all-girls school in 1915, In 1968 Scoil Pól became a co-educational school and in 1987 the new secondary school opened with an extension in 2005, 2018 and again in 2024.
We presently have an enrolment of over 720 students.
Our 720 students, representing all levels of academic ability, are taught an extensive range of subjects supported by excellent facilities in a spacious and well-maintained school surrounded by extensive grounds.

3. Organisation Structure

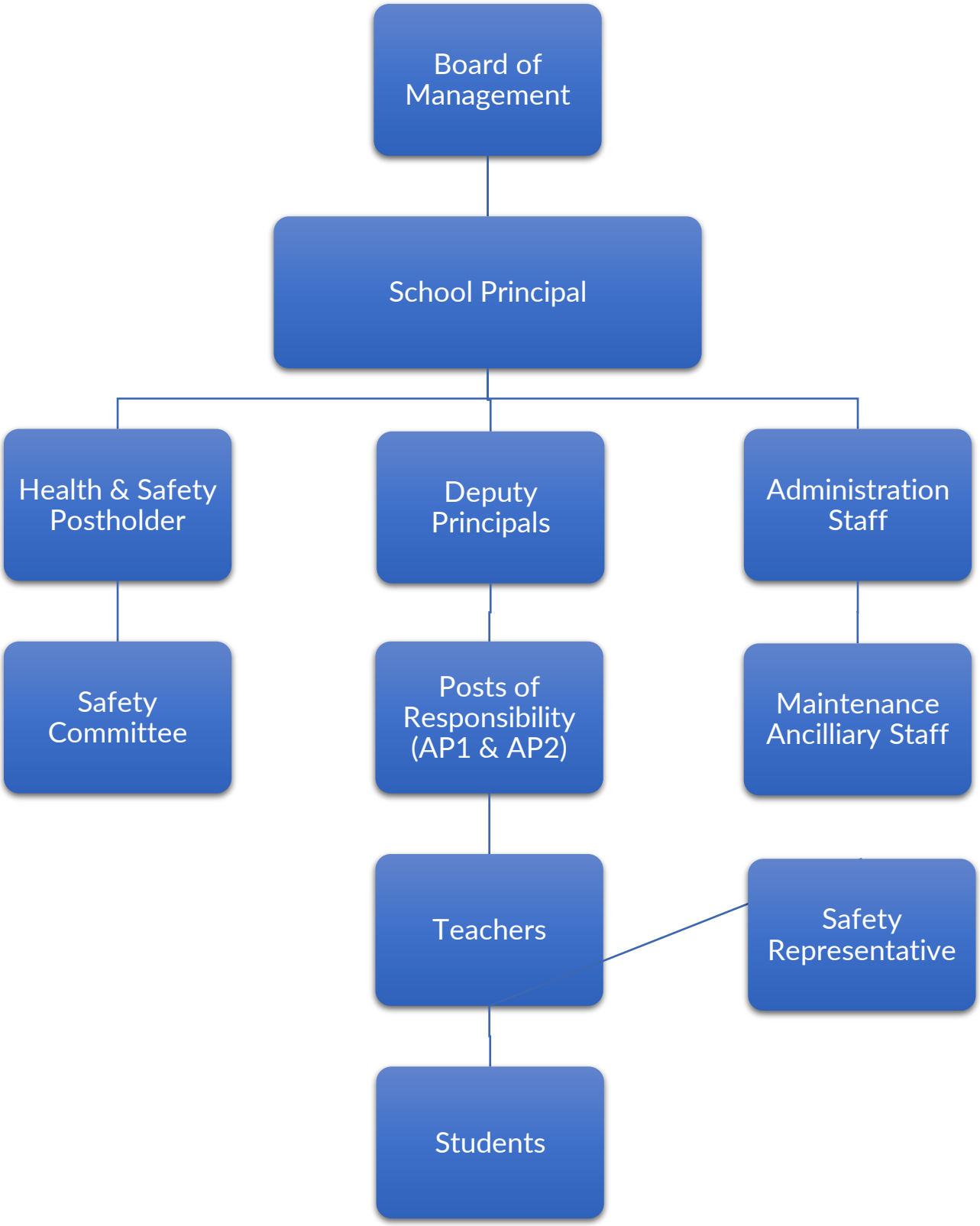
Scoil Pól is managed by a Board of Management and part funded by the Department of Education and Skills (DES). Scoil Pól operates within the regulations and guidelines set down from time to time by that Department.

The Board of Management manages the school and consists of eight members, made up of the Trustees' nominees, staff nominees and parent nominees.

The term of office for a Board of Management is three years. Correspondence to the Board of Management is managed by the Secretary of the Board of Management who is also the Principal of the school.

The Principal is responsible for the day-to-day management of the school, including providing guidance and direction to the teachers and other staff of the school. The Principal is accountable to the Board for that management.

4. Health & Safety Organisational Chart



5. Physical Health & Safety Resources

Some of the measures taken by the school to ensure the physical safety of the students across our campus include:

- Evacuation Plan formulated and clearly visible in each room.
- Regular fire drills conducted.
- Fully functional and regularly serviced Fire Alarm Systems.
- Fire exits and extinguishers are regularly checked.
- First Aid Kits located throughout our school.
- Defibrillator located on the premises.
- Supervision in the school before and after school and during all breaks.
- Established Code of Behaviour (with behavioural expectations for the creation of a safe environment).
- Induction for all new students.
- Security doors & Security perimeter fencing.

6. Psychological Health & Safety Resources

The management and staff of Scoil Pól aim to use available programmes and resources to address the personal and social development of students, to enhance a sense of safety and security in the school and to provide opportunities for reflection and discussion. Some of the measures taken by the school to ensure the psychological wellbeing of the students include:

- Establishment of Year Head Teams, Student Support Team, Special Educational Needs Team.
- Availability of Guidance Counsellors & SEN Coordinator.
- Comprehensive External Talks Program.
- Social, personal and health education (SPHE) is integrated into the work of the school. It is addressed in the curriculum by addressing issues such as grief and loss; communication skills; stress and anger management; resilience; conflict management; problem solving; help-seeking; bullying; decision making and alcohol and drug prevention. Promotion of mental health is included in this provision. Staff have access to training for their role in SPHE.
- Staff are familiar with the Child Protection Procedures and the Principal is the Designated Liaison Person.
- Information is provided to students on mental health in general and such specific areas as signs and symptoms of depression and anxiety.
- The school has links with a range of external agencies including NEPS, CAMHS, Social Services, NCSE, NEWB, Túsla, SENO, SPHE National Coordinator, Jigsaw, Garda, Neighbouring schools, PDST.
- Inputs to students by external providers are carefully considered in the light of criteria about student safety, the appropriateness of the content, and the expertise of the providers.
- There is a care system in place in the school comprised of the Principal, the Deputy Principals, the Guidance Counsellor, the SEN Coordinator, and the relevant Year Heads to meet regularly to review provision of care and to address specific cases.
- Students who are identified as being at risk are referred to this team, concerns are explored, and the appropriate level of assistance and support is provided. Where appropriate, parents are informed, and a referral is made to an appropriate agency.

7. Responsibilities – Board of Management

The Board of Management is responsible for occupational health and safety management and performance in the school. The Board is aware of the duties imposed on themselves, the school and its staff by health and safety legislation.

- The Board of Management will at each of its meetings include health and safety on its agenda, reviewing performance for the previous period and dealing with any key issues that have been brought to its attention.
- The Board will, on an annual basis, review occupational health and safety policies and performance in the school.
- The Board is responsible for ensuring that adequate financial and physical resources are provided to deal adequately with occupational health and safety issues as they arise.
- The Board may be requested to or initiate a review of specific issues during the year as the need arises.

8. Responsibilities – The Principal

The Principal has executive responsibility for the day-to-day management and co-ordination of occupational health and safety matters in the school in accordance with the health and safety policy agreed by the Board of Management. The Principal is responsible for the following:

- Implementing the health and safety policy.
- Ensuring that suitable and sufficient arrangements exist to identify all foreseeable significant risks and categorise the measures necessary to eliminate or reduce them to an acceptable level i.e. coordinate risk assessments.
- Ensuring that routine inspections are carried out to ensure health, safety and welfare In the workplace
- Ensuring that all services to buildings including all firefighting and fire prevention equipment are well maintained.
- Ensuring that all statutory examinations and inspections of facilities and equipment are carried out and that records are maintained.
- Carrying out statutory reporting of accidents i.e. to the H.S.A.
- Ensuring that teachers and any person given specific duties, are aware of their responsibilities, are given sufficient information, training and time to perform their duties, and their activities are co-ordinated and monitored.
- Ensuring that there are adequate arrangements for communication and consultation between staff, management i.e. the establishment of the H&S Post, Safety Committee & and Safety Representative.
- Ensuring that reports from staff on potential hazards are acted upon.
- Keeping abreast of health and safety legislation.
- Ensure that a minimum of one evacuation drill per term is carried out.

9. Responsibilities – Deputy Principals

Deputy Principals assume the responsibilities of the Principal in health & safety matters in the absence, for any reason, of the Principal. In the day-to-day running of the school, Deputy Principals have the following responsibilities:

- Assist in implementing the health and safety policy.
- Keeping abreast of the duties of the school and its staff.
- Insisting that sound and safe working practices are observed at all times.
- Being familiar with fire drills and evacuation procedures.
- Arranging a suitable rota for teachers to attend safety training courses.
- Arranging for supervision of external areas and arrange random patrols of grounds within the site perimeter in conjunction with the Principal.
- Arrangement for the supervision of classes when teachers are ill or absent.

10. Responsibilities – Teachers

Teachers are responsible for the day-to-day management of health and safety in their classroom and other areas affected by their teaching. Part 2, Chapter 2, Section 13 of the *Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act* 2005 outlines the general duties of staff. The responsibilities of the teachers include the following:

- Ensuring an interest in and enthusiasm for health, safety and environmental matters is promoted and a good personal example is set.
- Taking reasonable care for his/her own safety, health and welfare and that of any other person who may be affected by his/her acts or omissions.
- Carrying out routine inspections (each term) to ensure the classroom/work area is safe and passing on this information to the safety committee.
- Ensuring that equipment, furniture and classroom are adequately maintained and safe for student's use.
- To report to the Principal 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 becomes aware.
- Carry out room specific risk assessments.
- Carry out risk assessments relating to students with special education needs in their classroom to ensure they do not endanger themselves or others. Liaise with the AEN coordinator / SNA as needed.
- Ensuring that any measures identified as necessary by the risk assessments are fully implemented as soon as is reasonably practicable.
- Investigating, recording and reporting incidents/accidents that occur in their domain, as detailed in the school incident reporting procedure.
- Adequately supervising, instructing, informing and training students to enable them to participate in school activities safely.
- Wearing and insisting that all students wear personal protective clothing/equipment and apparel when needed.
- Bringing any problem that is outside the remit or authority of the teacher to the Principal's attention.
- Taking a full and active part in all training programs for safety that the school organises.
- Actively participating in fire safety including drills and firefighting training, being familiar with firefighting equipment and its uses and ensuring that students are aware of evacuation procedures.

11. Responsibilities – Health & Safety Postholder

The Health & Safety Postholder is a member of the safety committee and may consult with and make representations to the Principal on safety, health and welfare matters relating to the staff in the place of work. The functions of the Health & Safety Postholder include:

- Actively participate in the Safety Committee.
- Make representations to the Principal on safety, health and welfare in the school.
- Carry out routine inspections to ensure the school is adequate as regards health, safety and welfare.
- Implement the actions on the school Health & Safety Calendar.
- Carry out inspections to ensure that all statutory examinations and inspections of facilities and equipment are in place and that records are maintained.
- Carry out inspections to ensure that records relating to Health and Safety are maintained.
- Coordinate the completion of risk assessments by relevant members of staff annually.
- Coordinate the Fire Drills once per term and complete the relevant fire drill report for the Principal.

12. Responsibilities – Safety Committee

The Safety Committee is made up of staff/members of the Board. They are expected to:

- Co-ordinate the school's health and safety management system.
- Act as a conduit for the two-way exchange of information between management and staff in relation to matters of safety, health and welfare.
- Make recommendations on amendments to the Safety Statement.
- Consider methods of promoting health and safety within the school.
- Coordinate periodic inspections to ensure that the safety programme is being carried out.
- Collate inspection forms.
- Ensure that emergency procedures and contingency plans have been formulated in the event of a fire and instruct teachers and students on emergency procedures.
- Ensure that the Safety Statement including risk assessments is periodically revised.
- Ensure that all staff members have access to the Safety Statement and have read and understood it.
- Ensure regular inspections of the premises are carried out and remedial action taken where necessary.
- Ensure that an accident report form is completed for all accidents and that all accidents are investigated.
- Monitor the systems for ensuring that fire precautions are adequate.

13. Responsibilities – Safety Representative

The Safety Representative may consult with and make representations to the Board of Management on safety, health and welfare matters relating to the staff in the place of work. The Board of Management must consider these representations, and act on them if necessary. The intention of these consultations is to prevent accidents and ill health, to highlight problems, and identify means of over-coming them. Consultations are particularly important when changes are taking place, for example when drawing up a safety plan, or introducing new technology or work processes, including new substances. They also have a part to play in long established work practices and hazards. The Safety Representative is expected to:

- Accompany an HSA inspector carrying out an inspection under Section 64 of the 2005 Act other than the investigation of an accident or a dangerous occurrence (although this may be allowed at the discretion of the inspector).
- At the discretion of a HSA inspector, and where the employee concerned so requests, be present when an employee is being interviewed by an inspector about an accident or dangerous occurrence at a place of work.
- Make representations to the Board of Management on safety, health and welfare at the place of work.
- Make verbal or written representations to HSA inspectors including on the investigation of accidents or dangerous occurrences.
- Receive advice and information from HSA inspectors in relation to safety, health and welfare at the place of work.
- Consult and liaise with other safety representatives appointed in the same undertaking.

14. Responsibilities – AEN Department

The AEN Department consists of Special Class Teachers, SNA staff, Learning Support Teachers, Subject Teachers, the AEN Co-ordinator, Deputy Principals and the Principal. These persons have responsibilities for the students in their care. Chapter 2, Section 13 of the *Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act* 2005 outlines the general duties of staff. The responsibilities of the AEN Department of Scoil Pól include the following:

- Ensuring an interest in and enthusiasm for health, safety and environmental matters is promoted and a good personal example is set.
- Taking reasonable care for his/her own safety, health and welfare and that of any other person who may be affected by his/her acts or omissions while at work.
- Where required, participate in student risk assessments relating to students with additional education needs in classrooms to ensure they do not endanger themselves or others. Liaise with the relevant teacher / AEN Coordinator / External Agency as needed to implement appropriate control measures and safeguards.
- Administration of medications will be carried out specifically in line with the policy set out in this document.
- To report to the Principal 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 becomes aware.
- Taking a full and active part in all training programs for safety that the school organises.
- Actively participating in fire safety including drills and firefighting training, being familiar with firefighting equipment and its uses and ensuring that the students in their care are aware of evacuation procedures.

15. Responsibilities – Administrative Staff

Part 2 Chapter 2 Section 13 of the *Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act* 2005 outlines the general duties of staff. The responsibilities of the clerical staff are outlined below:

- Take reasonable care for their own safety, health and welfare and that of any other person who may be affected by his acts or omissions at work.
- Co-operate with the Principal on matters relating to Health & Safety.
- Actively participating in fire safety including drills and firefighting training and being familiar with firefighting equipment and its uses.
- Carrying out routine inspections (each term) to ensure the office is adequate as regards health, safety and welfare and passing on this information to the Safety Officer.
- Maintaining a list of emergency numbers.
- Reporting any defects in office equipment to the Principal as soon as possible.
- Taking reasonable care for their own safety, health and welfare and that of any other person who may be affected by their acts or omissions while at work.

16. Responsibilities – Maintenance Staff

Maintenance Staff have responsibility for the general care and maintenance of the school. As such in respect of occupational health and safety they have specific responsibilities to:

- Take reasonable care for their own safety, health and welfare and that of any other person who may be affected by his acts or omissions at work.
- Co-operate with the Principal on matters relating to Health & Safety.
- Carrying out routine inspections to ensure all areas are adequate as regards health, safety and welfare.
- Report to the Principal, without unreasonable delay, any defects in plant, equipment, place of work or system of work, which might endanger safety, health or welfare of students and staff, of which they become aware.
- Make correct use of personal protective equipment, machinery, apparatus, tools, dangerous substances and any other equipment.
- Be thoroughly familiar with machinery and power equipment before attempting to use it.
- Ensure that no one has access to areas whilst work is in progress.
- Prevent the build-up of rubbish and especially of combustible material.
- Maintain furniture, equipment or the work environment that are within their capabilities.
- Inspect ladders visually prior to use to ensure they are safe.
- Not carry out any tasks that they are not competent or permitted to carry out or which involves unreasonably high risks.
- Get help if there is any doubt whether an object to be moved is too heavy for one. Use any devices provided for assistance. Do not attempt to lift heavy loads single-handed.
- Take a full and active part in all training programs for safety that the school organises.

17. Responsibilities – Cleaning Staff

Cleaning staff have responsibility for the general cleanliness and hygiene of the school. Part 2, Chapter 2 Section 13 of the *Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act* 2005 outlines the general duties of employees. As such in respect of occupational health and safety they have specific responsibilities to:

- Take reasonable care for their own safety, health and welfare and that of any other person who may be affected by their acts or omissions at work.
- Co-operate with the Principal and any other person to such extent as will enable the Principal or the other person to comply with any of the relevant statutory provisions.
- Report to the Principal, without unreasonable delay, any defects in plant, equipment, place of work or system of work, which might endanger safety, health or welfare, of which she becomes aware.
- Know what to do in case of fire, familiarise themselves with the best escape route from their workstation so that in the event of an emergency they are able to lead themselves to safety.
- Attend to spillages immediately and to cordon the area until dry.
- Dispose of rubbish as soon as possible to avoid build up.
- Avoid leaving trailing cables. If this is necessary, use a notice to the effect that cleaning is in progress.
- Ensure all mats and carpets are properly laid and uncrumpled.

18. Responsibilities – Contractors

It is the responsibility of all contractors to:

- Ensure that all their employees comply with the school safety rules and procedures.
- Not to put at risk any of the employees or students at the school.
- Promptly report all accident / incidents to the Principal.
- Produce their safety statement, method statement and any other safety documentation to Scoil Pól's on request.
- Carry appropriate insurance cover.
- Take all safety precautions with systems of work, equipment, personal protection etc.
- Ensure all equipment and tools brought onto the school's premises be of sound construction and meet the statutory requirements applicable to these tools or equipment.
- Cordon off the boundaries of the contractor's operation, where possible, and mark them with warning signs.
- Provide emergency safety equipment, which may be required for their operation.
- Follow strictly the permit to work system in force at the time of contract.
- Comply with all relevant legal obligations in particular the provisions of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act, 2005, the Safety Health and Welfare (General Application) Regulations 2007 - 2016 and the Safety Health and Welfare (Construction Regulations) 2021.

19. Health & Safety Policy Introduction

This part of the policy provides details of Scoil Pól's general arrangements for health and safety. It is the school's policy to bring arrangements to the attention of all staff and other relevant parties.

- General policies included in the following sections include:
  - Emergency arrangements for fire evacuations including alarm types, escape routes, assembly points and general instructions.
  - Arrangements for first aid, including location of first aid facilities.
  - Arrangements for reporting accidents and other incidents.
  - Arrangements for reporting defects and hazards.
  - Information about any special risks and the arrangements for their control.

20. Absconding Students

- To abscond is to 'leave without permission'. The School has a duty of care towards our students and staff i.e. to ensure so far as is reasonably practicable their safety throughout the school day and during school led activities.
- Measures in place to manage absconding include:
  - Roll Calls taken in each class and parents / guardians are informed about their child's attendance promptly.
  - Staff supervision during break times, transitions between classes, and other periods when students are moving around the school.
  - Holding meetings between the Year Heads, Pastoral Care Team, and Senior Management Team to discuss student welfare and coordinate support strategies.
  - Identifying students who may be at risk of absconding through regular monitoring and assessments.
  - Ensuring that relevant information about at-risk students is shared appropriately among staff while maintaining confidentiality.
  - Providing ongoing training for staff to keep them updated on best practices for supervision, access control, and pastoral care.
  - Documenting all absconding incidents and review them regularly to identify patterns and areas for improvement.
  - Maintaining open lines of communication with parents and guardians, developing and implementing support plans, to ensure they are part of the solution.
  - Working with external agencies, such as social services and mental health organisations, to provide additional support where required.

21. Advice & Assistance

- Staff can obtain advice and assistance on health and safety matters from the Principal and the Safety Committee.
- Matters will be dealt with on a case by case basis.

22. Accident Investigation & Reporting

It is the policy of Scoil Pól to comply with all statutory requirements regarding the reporting of incidents, accidents, and dangerous occurrences. All accidents, whether they result in injury or not, and ill health, must be reported, recorded and where appropriate, investigated. All accidents must be reported by the teacher or other employee to the Principal using the School Accident Report Form immediately.

	Reporting Requirements	Incident/Accident Type	By Whom	To Whom
1	Internal	All	Anyone	Principal
2	Health and Safety Authority (H.S.A.)	Any accident that occurs at a place of work causing death or injury to an employee resulting in the employee being prevented from performing normal duties for more than 3 consecutive days. Any Person who is not at work e.g. pupil, visitor etc. but who as a result of an accident related to a place of work or work activities dies or suffers an injury requiring treatment from a registered medical practitioner or treatment in hospital	Principal	H.S.A
3	H.S.A.	Dangerous Occurrences	Principal	H.S.A

When an incident or accident is reported:

- The Principal will then ensure the Accident Report Form is completed by the teacher or other staff member as soon as possible.
- Written reports from witnesses and the injured party should be obtained even if first aid or medical assistance is not required. Witnesses should be interviewed, and statements taken as soon as possible after the incident.
- The scene should be preserved until the investigation is complete.
- Materials and equipment associated with the accident should be collected and retained, where practical. It may be vital to establish the condition of the equipment later. Photographs and drawings should be taken.
- In the case of road traffic accidents, where the accident results in damage to the vehicle only, accident details must be provided on an accident report form. Where road traffic accidents result in injury to an employee, student or member of the public the details of the accident must be reported.
- The Principal will as needed:
  - Monitor the process of investigation, reporting and action in order to ensure that the necessary response times are met.
  - Notify the Health & Safety authority and/or the state claims agency.
  - Ensure the appropriate corrective action is implemented to prevent a reoccurrence.

Notifying an Incident to the HSA:

- Completed forms, which are now web-based http://www.hsa.ie should be returned to the Health and Safety Authority.
- The legal requirement to report accidents is an external requirement and does not affect or change in any way the other internal accident reporting procedures. Notification is required when:
  - A work accident causes the death of an employee – immediate notification.
  - A work accident prevents an employee from performing his or her normal work for more than three consecutive days. (This does not include the day of the accident).
  - An accident arising from a work activity causes death or injury to a non-employee e.g. student, passers – by, visitors etc. which results in the person requiring treatment from a registered medical practitioner or treatment in a hospital as an inpatient or outpatient.
- Where an accident has resulted in death, the scene of the accident must remain undisturbed until an Inspector from the Health and Safety Authority has inspected it. The scene should be disturbed only if necessary to ensure the safety or health of persons remaining at the scene.
- In the event of a dangerous occurrence, the Principal will inform the Health and Safety Authority using Form IR3 as soon as possible. Dangerous occurrences should be notified by post after the event, provided a death has not occurred. In the event of death, the procedure outlined above for the reporting of accidents to the Health and Safety Authority should be followed.

Maintaining Records

- The Principal must keep a record of accidents or dangerous occurrence reported, for a period of ten years after their occurrence. A copy of the approved form sent to the Health and Safety Authority and any other relevant documentation will suffice.

23. Administration of Medicines to Students

- Scoil Pól is committed to ensuring the safety of our students with chronic conditions such as asthma, diabetes, epilepsy and severe allergies.
- The school understands that certain chronic conditions are serious and can be potentially life threatening.
- Parents have a duty to inform the school of such a condition and provide the necessary medical equipment and information to respond to emergencies.
- Medicines are not permitted in the school unless there is written parental consent stating the name of the student, the medication, the frequency and dosage to be administered.
- A log is kept of all medication administered and by whom.
- Medicines must be provided by parents / guardians in the original container/ labelled with the name of the appropriate student, dose, frequency of administration and expiry date.

- Medicines must be stored in the staff room.
- Students must not be given any short-term medication e.g. painkillers unless by written parental request.
- Any specific training required by staff on the administration of medication e.g. EpiPen will be arranged through the Principal and delivered to relevant staff by a competent medical practitioner.
- Emergency medicines (asthma inhalers, EpiPen etc.) will be kept readily available but out of reach of students.

24. Auditing & Inspections

- The Board of Management recognises its obligation to put in place an annual programme of auditing, which encompass all of the school's premises, procedures and organisation.
- In carrying out this duty the Board may employ the services of professionals, to advise on, or carry out risk assessments and audits where it is recognised that they do not have the necessary in-school competence.

26. Behaviours of Concern

Introduction

- Behaviours of concern are defined as "behaviours that indicate a risk to the safety or wellbeing of the people who exhibit them or to others".
- Our school's Health & Safety Statement underpins the entitlement of all students and staff to coexist in a safe environment.
- A crisis situation occurs when behaviours of concern present a serious risk of imminent physical harm to the student concerned and/or others within the school environment.
- Sometimes students may have highly complex and challenging behaviour, social, or education needs requiring extra help and support.

Key Assumptions in Understanding Behaviour

- **Behaviour is not random:** Our school recognises that behaviour is linked to specific events and responses.
- **Behaviour has meaning:** Our school understands that behaviour serves a purpose, such as seeking attention or avoiding tasks.
- **Children seek approval:** Our school acknowledges that approval from key adults is crucial for children.
- **Children want to learn:** The school supports the belief that all students have a desire to learn despite difficulties.
- **Understanding and applying social skills:** The school supports students in grasping social interactive skills.
- **Hidden dimensions:** The school is aware that behaviour may be influenced by unseen factors like anxiety or learning difficulties.

Supporting Parents / Guardians and Students

- The school will establish a positive relationship with parents and guardians as essential.
- During initial meetings, the school will focus on the child's needs, avoiding blame, and fostering collaboration.
- Parents / Guardians will be informed about the school's policies and procedures for recording and addressing behaviours of concern.
- The school will prepare for the child's entry by briefing teachers and welcoming the student positively.
- The school will understand behaviour in context, considering setting events (past experiences), antecedent events (triggers), and consequences.

Supporting Records

- The school will record and analyse all concerning behaviours using a structured approach.
- This helps in understanding triggers and planning appropriate interventions.
- In line with the school's Data Protection Policy staff will ensure confidentiality in handling sensitive information.

Supporting Staff

- The school will support staff dealing with behaviours of concern, through revisions of this policy and providing appropriate training as needed.
- The school will collaborate with agencies like NCSE, NEPS, and others. These agencies will provide resources, support, and interventions to assist in managing challenging behaviours.

Interventions

- The School encourages positive behaviour through recognition.
- At all times, staff will set clear, consistent expectations for student behaviour so as to ensure consistent application of our policy.
- The school will base interventions on thorough preparation, including knowing the child, auditing the environment, and analysing needs.
- The school will document and analyse behaviours continuously, consulting with relevant staff and parents to address underlying causes.
- When behaviours persist, the school will consider additional support from external agencies.
- If necessary, the school will discuss alternative placements.
- Options like a shortened school day, suspension, or expulsion will be last resorts, following thorough documentation and consultation.

25. Campus Safety

- Our school campus will be maintained in good order and in line with the Board of Management's legal obligations under Health & Safety Legislation.
- Staff and students must exercise due care and caution when travelling around the school campus i.e. beware of road users, adhere to the rules of the road, and only cross the road at the traffic crossing.
- Staff and students must exercise due care and caution when leaving the school campus and onto a busy road i.e. beware of road users, adhere to the rules of the road, and only cross the road at the traffic crossing.

26. Cash Handling

- Cash handling is kept to a minimum.
- Cash should be stored in the safe.
- Staff who have responsibilities for collecting cash should deposit cash in the bank as soon as possible after collection.
- Staff responsible for lodging cash should vary their routine for lodgement.
- Staff should not resist if theft is the obvious motive for an attack.

27. Communication & Consultation – The Safety Representative

The Board of Management is committed to meeting its obligations under Chapter 3 part 4 of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act, 2005, on consultation with and participation of our staff. The Board recognises that staff involvement is an important cornerstone of a successful school safety program. Various channels exist for staff contact.

- The school recognises the staff' right to appoint a Safety Representative to represent them in consultations with management on safety issues.
- The school will co-operate with the Safety Representative in:
    - Providing information necessary for safety.
    - Advising the representative when a H.S.A. inspector is touring the place of work.
    - Facilitating the representative in the discharge of his/her functions.
    - Allowing time off for training.

28. Contractors

The school has responsibilities in regard to the safe management of contracts providing building, engineering and other services. The activities of contractors working for Scoil Pól are strictly controlled at all times using the following:

- The following information to be received annually (or before commencing work on the premises) from all contractors carrying out work in the school including:
  - Up to Date Health & Safety Statement.
  - Method Statement & Risk Assessment for works carried out on the premises.
  - Copies of Training Certificates (incl. Safe Pass etc.)
  - Copies of Certificates for Equipment & Machinery brought on the premises.
  - Up to date Insurance details to be submitted prior to commencement on site.
  - Proof of Garda Vetting (where on site part-time / full time).

29. Critical Incident Management

- A Critical Incident Management Plan (separate from this document) has been prepared for the school and should be referred to and used should the need arise.
- Staff and students should review this document separately.

30. Dignity at Work

- Scoil Pól strives to create an environment that is inclusive of all persons, where its staff and students are free to perform their work without sexual harassment and bullying from other school members.
- In accordance with the ACCS, ASTI, IMPACT and the TUI Code of Practice for Dealing with Complaints of Bullying and Harassment of Staff, Scoil Pól has a Dignity at Work Policy in place.
- The Code of Behaviour and the Bí Cineálta Policy deals with bullying and harassment of students – please refer to these when appropriate.

31. Defibrillator

- Defibrillators are located at the Main Office.
- Defibrillators will be checked and maintained by a designated staff member to ensure that it is functioning correctly and is stocked appropriately.

32. Driving for Work

When driving in connection with a work activity, staff must ensure that:

- Make sure they hold a current driver licence for the category of vehicle they are driving, and this licence is carried when driving a company vehicle.
- Take time to familiarise themselves with the vehicle's handbook.
- Servicing the vehicle according to manufacturers' recommendations.
- Be responsible and accountable for their actions when driving for the purposes of work.
- Carry out a full daily walk around check prior to using the vehicle.
- Comply with the rules of the road at all times.
- Assess hazards while driving and anticipate 'what if' scenarios.
- Drive within the legal speed limits, including driving to the conditions.
- All occupants must wear their seat belt at all times.
- Only drive when fit to do so – never drive under the influence of alcohol or drugs, including prescription and over the counter medication if they cause drowsiness
- Avoid distraction when driving – e.g. if you need to, adjust or set sat-navs / car radios / mirrors before setting off. If you need to re-adjust whilst driving pull over safely in order to do so.

33. Drugs & Alcohol

The following outlines Scoil Pól's policy on drugs and alcohol in the workplace for all our staff. A separate policy deals with students.

Available Resources

Scoil Pól encourages a healthy and sensible approach to alcohol and drugs. In addition to seeing your GP the following organisations provide support and advice for alcohol and drug related problems:

- **Teaching Staff only: Employee Assistance and Wellbeing Programme (EAWP). The service is accessible through the Freephone Helpline at 1800 411 057 and is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.**
- **Alcoholics Anonymous 01 8420700.**
- Drugs Helpline (Mon – Fri 9.00am - 5.00pm) 1800 459 459.
- Narcotics Anonymous 01 6728000.

Policy

- This policy should be seen in the context of the promotion of health, safety and welfare of all staff and students in Scoil Pól.
- Alcohol and drug use affect concentration, co-ordination and performance. As a result, Scoil Pól is an alcohol, tobacco (including vape pens) and drug free workplace.
- Scoil Pól recognises its staff as its most valuable resource and is committed to providing a working environment, which is a healthy and safe one for the entire school population.
- Scoil Pól recognises that alcohol and drug related problems are primarily health and social concerns and staff with such problems require help and treatment.
- Staff are prohibited from being under the influence of alcohol and non-prescription drug use whilst on the school premises.
- Staff taking prescription drugs or over the counter medication which could affect performance and/or create a safety risk, he/she should inform the Principal.

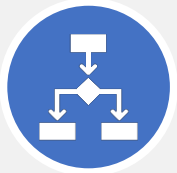
Aims

This policy aims to:

- Raise awareness of the risks of alcohol and other drug related problems.
- Promote the health and wellbeing of staff.
- Minimise effects arising from the misuse of alcohol and other drugs.
- To encourage and support staff with alcohol or drugs related problems to seek help at an early stage.
- Provide a framework for staff who are experiencing alcohol or drug related problems to address those problems and access help and support at an early stage.
- Reduce and help prevent the incidence of alcohol and drug related work impairment.

Scope

- This policy applies equally to all staff. For the purpose of this policy the term drugs will be defined as all mood-altering substances, either legal or illegal. This includes alcohol, prescribed and other medications, in addition to illegal and illicit substances.
- This policy is limited to the effect of alcohol or drug related problems on the health and/or work performance or conduct of Staff.
- It does not apply to Staff who, because of over indulgence in alcohol, or the use of drugs, behave in a manner contrary to the standard of safety and conduct required by Scoil Pól. Such instances will be dealt with in accordance with the Disciplinary Procedure.



Intervention

- Staff are encouraged to seek assistance for an alcohol or drug related problem on a voluntary basis.
- Where the Principal has concerns that a member of Staff may have a problem with alcohol or drug misuse which is affecting their conduct at work or work performance and where disciplinary action is considered inappropriate at that time, the Principal will arrange to meet with the member of Staff, informally, to discuss their concerns.
- When discussing the problem, the Principal will act to assist the member of staff in seeking assistance.
- The Principal will suggest a number of options to the member of Staff including:
    - Confidential Counselling.
    - Directing the member of staff to seek treatment from his/her GP.
- The member of Staff may be accompanied by his/her trade union representative (where relevant) or a colleague from the school. Legal representation is not permitted.
- The decision to seek help will be the responsibility of the individual staff member and refusal to do so will not influence any present or future promotion or disciplinary procedures.
- A record of the meeting will be kept and preferably signed by those present at the meeting. A copy of the meeting record will be given to the member of staff.
- All discussions with a member of Staff in connection with this Policy will be treated in a confidential manner. However, absolute confidentiality cannot be guaranteed in the following circumstances;
    - There is a potential risk of harm to self or others.
    - A criminal offence has occurred or may occur;
    - There has been a breach of Scoil Pól policy.
- If any of the above occur the Principal will take appropriate action including informing the relevant authorities. The consent of the Staff Member will be sought, however, if this is not forthcoming, such disclosure shall be made with the knowledge of the teacher involved.
- If work-related problems persist, the normal disciplinary procedures will be activated specifically in relation to these issues. The employee will be entitled to representation and due process.

Periods of Absence / Return to Work

- Scoil Pól will endeavour to ensure that any employee who seeks help will be treated with discretion and in confidence.
- Staff will be given the same sick leave and the same protection and employment rights as other staff with ill-health problems.
- Time off will be given for the treatment or other specialist help or aftercare provided appropriate certification is submitted.
- Where staff have been absent due to medical reasons Scoil Pól may require confirmation from their GP as to the member of staff's fitness to resume duties.
- Staff returning to work may need ongoing support and treatment, for example, ongoing counselling sessions etc. Staff should arrange these appointments outside school hours.
- Staff will be monitored on his/her return to work and if there is a relapse the Principal, with the advice of the Board of Management, will consider the new situation on its merits and a further opportunity to seek and cooperate with help may be offered.

34. Electrical Safety

- Work on electrical equipment is restricted to the supplier or authorised competent contractors.
- Staff are required to use only equipment, plant, machinery, tools provided by the school.
- All electrical installations will be thoroughly inspected every 5 years.

35. Emergency & Fire Arrangements

Scoil Pól recognises the need for constant vigilance with regard to the risks posed by fire in the school. A fire safety programme is in place to (a) guard against the outbreak of fire, and (b) ensure as far as reasonably practicable the safety of persons on the premises in the event of an outbreak of fire.

The Fire Safety Programme incorporates arrangements for:

- The prevention of an outbreak of fire through the establishment of day to day fire prevention practices.
- The instruction and training of staff.
- The holding of fire and evacuation drills.
- Informing the school community of the procedures to be used in the event of a fire or other emergency.
- The maintenance of escape routes.
- The provision of adequate fire protection equipment and systems and their inspection and maintenance.
- The provision of assistance to the fire brigade.
- A fire safety register.

Specific Arrangements are in place to meet the school's obligations:

- The Principal & Deputy Principals are responsible for conducting the fire drills.
- Fire Drills will take place once per term.
- Fire assembly points have been established in the car park as indicated below. Signage has been posted at each location.
- Directional fire evacuation signage is located throughout the school building.
- Site Layout plans and evacuation drawings will be posted in each classroom.

36. Staff Training (Fire)

All staff will be given training and instruction in relation to the following:

- The fire prevention measures.
- The emergency procedures, and fire and evacuation drills devised for the premises.
- The evacuation of students, paying special attention to those that are disabled.
- The arrangements for the provision of assistance of the fire brigade.
- Fire control techniques including:
  - The use of fire extinguishers, fire blankets and hose reels.
  - Closing doors (including those fitted with self-closers) and windows to inhibit fire spread.
  - Shutting off electricity, fuel supplies and ventilation systems where applicable.
- The layout of the building/site including:
  - Escape routes.
  - Location of alarm call points.
  - Location of firefighting equipment.
  - Location of assembly points.

37. Emergency Numbers

Service	Location	Telephone No.
Fire Service	Nationwide	999 Or 112
Ambulance	Nationwide	999 Or 112
Garda Siochana	Nationwide	999 Or 112
Health And Safety Authority	Nationwide	1890 289389
Gas Networks	Nationwide	1850 205050
ESB	Nationwide	1850 372999

38. Fire - Events, Functions & Large Public Gatherings

- When functions, musicals, evening classes or supervised study etc. are held on the school premises, participants are made aware of the safety procedures that apply in the event of a fire or other emergency.
- This takes the form of the fire notices (posted in each room) and announcements.

39. Fire Detection / Emergency Lighting System

- A service engineer will inspect and test the Fire Detection System quarterly as described in I.S. 3218:2013.
- A service engineer will inspect and test the Emergency Lighting System quarterly as described in I.S. 3217:2013.

40. Fire Prevention

- Rubbish and waste materials are not allowed to accumulate. Such materials are removed from the premises at regular intervals, and stored in suitable designated areas, pending disposal.
- Flammable liquids, gases and other potentially dangerous substances are limited to small quantities, handled with extreme care, and stored in labelled suitable containers in designated suitable storage areas.
- Smoking is strictly prohibited inside the school building.
- Electrical and gas appliances and associated fittings are checked on a regular basis and defects remedied as soon as possible. Defective items are rendered unsafe until repairs are carried out.
- Cookers, extractor fans, filters, air ducts and machinery are regularly cleared of oil, grease and dust. A competent person carries out servicing regularly.
- Service contractors and outsiders engaged to work on the premises are informed of the relevant requirements.
- Students are not permitted to enter areas other than those to which they are intended to have access, except where an emergency situation requires them to do so to escape from the building.

- Fire resisting doors and smoke stop doors are not to be propped open.
- Care is taken when using candles, that they are not left burning unsupervised.
- The premises are inspected each evening after students have vacated it to remove any potential fire hazard.

41. Fire Escape Routes

- Escape routes throughout our premises will be kept unobstructed and immediately available for use.
- Escape routes are clearly indicated and adequately lit.
- Fire resisting doors are maintained in a useable and fault free condition.
- Exit doors are capable of being readily opened at all times while people are on the premises.
- Floor coverings and mats are fixed or laid so that people will not slip or trip on them during an evacuation.
- External areas at or near exits are to be kept free of vehicles and other obstructions to allow unimpeded escape to a place of safety.

42. Fire Evacuation & Drills

Fire and evacuation drills are carried out each term. These drills are announced beforehand only to senior staff. It is the responsibility of each student and teacher to comply with the fire drill.

The Principal formally evaluate each drill and reports to the Board of Management on:

- Date and time of the drill.
- Time it took to fully evacuate the building.
- Issues identified, actions required to rectify issues and individuals responsible.

43. Fire Assembly Points

- Fire assembly points have been established as indicated below.
- Signage has been posted at each location.
- Signage will be spaced appropriately to prevent the congregation of hundreds of staff / students in the event of a drill.
- The location and condition of fire assembly points will be reviewed annually.

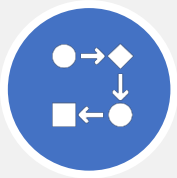
44. Fire - Inspection and Maintenance of Fire Protection Equipment

- Adequate fire protection systems and equipment are in place i.e. refuge points, smoke ventilation, fire detection and emergency lighting.
- All equipment will be inspected and maintained.
- All data relating to the inspection, testing and maintenance of fire protection systems and equipment will be recorded in the Fire Safety Register.

45. Fire Extinguishers & Hoses

- The caretaker is responsible for carrying out a monthly visual inspection of fire extinguishers to ensure. all pins and seals are in place, the gauge shows full charge i.e. is in the green 'full zone', and the equipment is mounted, serviced, accessible and undamaged.
- Each year a service engineer carries out a thorough examination of extinguishers (In accordance with I.S. 291: 2015- Use, Siting and Maintenance of Portable Fire Extinguishers and B.S. 5306 Part 3: 1985- Fire Extinguishing Installations and Equipment on Premises). The date of inspection is to be noted on a durable adhesive label fixed to the extinguisher / hoses.

46. Evacuation Procedure



In the event of an alarm activation, a teacher will:

- Line up your class and leave the room (in silence)
- The teacher will walk to the rear of the class.
- Make sure to close the door of your classroom on leaving the room.
- Exit the areas through the nearest Fire Exit.
- Once outside the Building go straight to the designated Assembly Point.
- Note that Personal Emergency Evacuation Procedures prepared for students with certain needs will be followed.

At the Assembly Point:

- Class Teachers will line up their class and take the roll call in silence then return the class roll to the Principal / Deputy Principals to identify approved absences.
- Principal / Deputy Principals will check students marked present on the school attendance list but absent from the evacuation.
- Principal / Deputy Principals will (where relevant) liaise with the Fire & Rescue Service on the current situation.

Monitoring of the Evacuation Procedure:

- Monitoring takes place at least annually during live drills and will include:
- Various scenarios will be developed to test the procedure and replicate eventualities, such as the loss of an exit due to fire.
- Significant evacuation failures are formally identified and recorded, and that appropriate corrective action is taken.
- Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (where relevant) will be reviewed at least annually.
- Evacuation times for fire drills will be reviewed on an ongoing basis including the level of staff knowledge with evacuation procedures and PEEPs.

47. Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans

Scoil Pól will develop Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEPs) for students and members of staff with certain physical or cognitive needs. The process will include:

- Consultation with the student for whom the plan is drafted.
- Ensuring students / staff with certain needs have a PEEP while maintaining appropriate confidentiality.
- Ensuring that the needs of students / staff members with cognitive or mental health impairments (such as understanding alarm warnings, avoiding panic reactions or distress) are met.
- Ensuring cover is arranged for PEEP assistants who are on holiday, sick or away from the place of work.
- Training for staff including practical elements such as drills and use of equipment (where needed).
- PEEPs are to be reviewed regularly and updated as necessary.

48. Assisting the Fire Brigade

The following measures should be taken by the Principal to assist the fire brigade in its response to a fire or other emergency:

- External access routes should be kept clear for use by fire appliances.
- The Principal will meet the officer-in-charge of the fire brigade and provide information on:
    - The number and location of persons still on the premises.
    - The location of the fire.
    - Any special hazards, e.g. chemicals, gas tank and cylinders etc.
    - Entry points to the building.
    - Available water supplies.
- Gas should be shut off when the alarm is raised. Electricity should be shut off if requested by the "Incident Commander" from the Fire & Rescue Service.

49. Record Keeping

Fire Safety Register is kept on the premises at all times and is made available for inspection by any authorised officer of the fire authority.

- The details of specific duties that have been assigned to staff.
- The details of instruction and training given to staff, and by whom.
- The date of each fire and evacuation drill, the names of staff taking part and the type of exercise held.
- The type, number and location of fire protection equipment and systems, along with brief comments on the results of the checks and the actions taken (and by whom) to remedy defects.
- The details of all fire incidents and false alarms that occur, and the action taken.

50. Emergency Escape of Gas

When not in use the gas isolating valves should be closed at all times. In the event of a gas leak the following actions should be taken:

- The first person becoming aware of it shall raise the alarm and ensure the building is evacuated as per evacuation arrangements outlined above.
- Do not switch on or off any electric device in or near the area affected as both actions can generate a spark.
- Turn off the gas supply by closing the isolating valve.
- Open windows and external doors to ventilate the area.

51. Expectant Mothers

- A detailed risk assessment for pregnant employees and students will be carried out and will inform the decisions of the school.
- Scoil Pól acknowledges their statutory responsibility to provide a safe environment to staff who are pregnant or have recently given birth.
- In accordance with the *Safety, Health & Welfare (Pregnant Staff) Regulations, 2000* (Regulation 3) a pregnant employee of Scoil Pól must notify management of her condition *'as soon as is practicable after it occurs and, at the time of the notification, given to her employer or produce for her employer's inspection a medical or other appropriate certificate confirming her condition*'.
- In fulfilling the school's legal obligations, there may be a need for temporary adjustment of duties, rest facilities etc. to ensure that staff are not exposed to ill health in any way.

52. Expectant Breastfeeding Staff

The Board of Management of Scoil Pól is conscious of its obligations under the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (General Application) Regulations 2007, Part 6, Chapter 2 'Protection of Pregnant, Post Natal and Breastfeeding Employees.' It is the policy of Scoil Pól to ensure, as far as is reasonably practicable, that the normal safety precautions will adequately protect pregnant, post-natal and breastfeeding staff. A pregnant staff member who feels she may be at risk should inform the Principal without delay to ensure appropriate precautions can be taken. A detailed risk assessment for pregnant employees will be carried out and will inform the decisions of the school. Facilities and supports include:

- The provision of breastfeeding breaks agreed in advance with the Principal giving due consideration to the unique working environment of schools i.e., timetabled classes and the availability of cover.
- The timing of these breaks must be negotiated between the breastfeeding mother and Principal in conjunction with the Board of Management.
- For the purposes of breastfeeding or breast milk expression, access will be provided to a clean, private room with power points, lockable door, comfortable chairs, a table, hand washing facilities and a secure breast pump storage area if required.

53. External Locations – Car Parks

- Where applicable, arrangements for clearing snow, safe access and egress, form part of the duties of the Board of Management.
- In addition, the school has adopted a policy of reversing into car parking spaces. By doing so, staff will have more visibility and will avoid backing out blindly into oncoming traffic or into the path of pedestrians. Suitable signage will be posted to reinforce this policy.
- Staff should exercise due care when exiting the school property due to restricted visibility at the end of the school day and volume of traffic.
- Students, staff and visitors are expected to take due care and caution when on campus i.e. using handrails in situ when using steps, zebra crossings and walkways.
- The gate to the car park will be serviced in line with the manufacturer's recommendations.

54. First Aid

From time to time, it may be necessary to administer First Aid to students or staff due to accidents or sickness.

- If a fellow member of staff or student is ill, he/she should not be left alone. If a staff member considers that a student be sent home, the office should be informed, and arrangements made to contact parents and arrange transport home.
- Under no circumstances should medicines be administered to students without expressed permission from the student's guardian / parent witnessed by a member of staff.
- In the event of an accident, the teacher in charge should arrange to bring the injured party to the office area and make arrangements for the First Aider to be contacted. If the injured party cannot be moved the teacher in charge should notify the school management immediately. It is the policy of Scoil Pól to provide equipment and facilities, which are adequate and appropriate for First Aid. First Aid boxes are located throughout the building. Staff are instructed to record all accidents, including injuries requiring first aid only, in the accident book provided for this purpose in the office.
- Designated Teachers are responsible for the safe keeping and maintenance of first aid boxes, equipment and their contents. Teachers should report deficiencies to school management for action.

Location of First Aid Kits

- GAA Storeroom
- PE Storeroom
- Reception Area
- Practical Rooms
- Staff Room

First Aid Box Minimum Contents				
	Travel Kit	**1-10 persons**	**11-25 persons**	**26-50 persons***
Adhesive Plasters	20	20	20	40
Sterile Eye Pads (No. 16) (bandage attached)	2	2	2	4
Individually Wrapped Triangular Bandages	2	2	6	6
Safety Pins	6	6	6	6
Individually Wrapped Sterile Unmedicated Wound Dressings Medium (No. 8) (10 x 8cm's)	1	2	2	4
Individually Wrapped Sterile Unmedicated Wound Dressings Large (No. 9) (13 x 9cm's)	1	2	6	8
Individually Wrapped Sterile Unmedicated Wound Dressings Extra Large (No. 3) (28 x 17.5cm's)	1	2	3	4
Individually Wrapped Disinfectant Wipes	10	10	20	40
Paramedic Shears	1	1	1	1
Examination Gloves Pairs	3	5	10	10
Sterile water	2 x 20mls	1 x 500mls	2 x 500mls	2 x 500mls
Pocket Face Mask	1	1	1	1
Water Based Burns Dressing Small (10x10cms)	1	1	1	1
Water Based Burns Dressing Large	1	1	1	1
Crepe Bandage (7cm)	1	1	2	3

55. Hazardous Substances & Chemicals

The Safety Committee is responsible for coordinating risk assessments of hazardous substances brought onto the premises and taking any necessary action required by the *Safety Health and Welfare at Work (Chemical Agents), 2013*.

- Safety Data Sheets (SDS) must be available for all chemicals in use in each classroom / area or the school.
- If a new chemical substance is being considered for a specific purpose or project, prior to ordering, an SDS must be requested from the supplier. From the information on the SDS an informed decision can be made as to the suitability of the chemical for use.
- All involved staff must be given access to the risk assessment.
- If training, information, supervision and instruction in the use of the control measures are needed, this must be undertaken prior to work with the substance.
- Management must ensure that third party contractors provide assessments for hazardous materials they bring on site and satisfy good environmental practice, including consideration of the ultimate disposal of the materials.
- Waste / out of date chemicals will be disposed of through a licenced waste contractor.

56. Housekeeping

Housekeeping i.e. keeping areas clean, and tidy is key to preventing trips and falls as well as preventing the build-up of combustible materials leading to fire.

- Housekeeping should form part of daily routines in all areas.
- Storage areas should be maintained throughout the school in a clean and tidy state. It is the responsibility of teachers to ensure that these areas do not pose a risk to staff and students.
- Waste bins, both indoor and outdoor will be emptied regularly.
- Walkways / routes must be maintained free of obstructions in all classrooms.

57. Legionella

Legionella is the name given to the pneumonia like illness caused by legionella bacteria, including the most serious Legionnaires' disease. Infection is caused by breathing in small droplets of water contaminated by the bacteria. Common symptoms include coughing, breathlessness, high fever, muscle aches and headaches and usually appear 5-6 days after infection but may take longer.

- Water storage tanks are checked and cleaned, any build-up of sludge/slime is cleaned, and tanks are disinfected annually
- There are arrangements in place for little used outlets, to either:
    - flush through showers/taps/water fountains and all other sources arising on at least a weekly basis, or
    - carry out a safe purge of the water system.
    - before use e.g., prior to reopening after summer holidays.

58. Lone Working

It is the policy of the school that staff (apart from the Senior Management, Administrative Staff, Maintenance Staff) are not permitted to be on the premises unaccompanied. At no stage will teaching staff be permitted to be on the premises unaccompanied out of school hours i.e. at night or weekends regardless of the activity to be carried out. If working alone, permitted staff are required to 'report in' to the Principal or designated person to inform that they are safely leaving the premises.

- You should not work alone if you know you have a medical condition that might cause you to become incapacitated or unconscious. Also, when working alone, do not attempt any tasks which have been identified as medium or high risk, or which common sense tells you are potentially hazardous.
- If you arrive at school outside of normal school hours and find another colleague is already in the building, let them know you are on site.
- If you are about to leave the building, and just one or two other colleagues are remaining on site, let them know you are going.
- Park your car close to the main entrance where there is an external light. Move it there whilst there are still others on site if you are planning to work late.
- If possible, carry a mobile phone with you.
- Lock the doors and close the windows to prevent intruders.
- Know the location of your nearest fire exit and how to open it in an emergency.
- Know the location of the nearest first aid kit.

- Ensure someone knows where you are and your estimated time of arrival home.
- If you arrive at school and find any sign of intruders, do not enter the building. Instead, call the Gardaí.
- If you become aware of intruders or vandals, do not challenge them. Instead, call the Gardaí.

59. Manual Handling

- Risks to staff from manual handling activities are eliminated or reduced through the provision of good task and workplace design, the provision of mechanical aids where appropriate, and the provision of information and training to those staff whose work involves significant manual handling.

60. Medical Register

- Staff / Students who have ongoing medical problems e.g., diabetic or other controlled conditions may need medical interventions on occasion.
- Staff will be informed through the medical register maintained by the Principal on how to deal with an emergency where the need arises.
- Parents of children with known allergies are responsible for informing the Principal/Deputy Principals of any assistance that may be needed for a student with food allergies / medical conditions etc.

61. Noise

- Scoil Pól considers potential noise levels in the selection of equipment and the design of work environments.
- The technology rooms and other noisy environments are identified and assessed, and appropriate precautions advised.

62. Personal Protective Equipment

- Scoil Pól recognises that where there is a risk to the health, safety and welfare of their staff and students that cannot be controlled by technical or organisational measures, Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) e.g. goggles, gloves are provided and maintained.
- The type of PPE provided for specific activities will be decided only after suitable and sufficient risk assessment has been conducted. Management is responsible for ensuring that staff and students are trained in the use, care and maintenance of PPE.

63. Radon

- Radon measurements are taken by an accredited radon measurement company.
- Where high radon levels are found, appropriate measures will be implemented to remedy areas where high levels (i.e. in excess of 200Bq/m3.

64. Record Keeping

- Maintaining health and safety records is essential.
- The school is responsible for keeping records relating to the building, the facilities, machinery and equipment in the school.
- The Principal will maintain records relating to the operation of the school i.e. policies, training etc.

65. Risk Assessments

- Risk Assessments will be carried out / reviewed annually in line with the Health & Safety Authority's Guidelines for Post Primary Schools.
- Risk assessments are particularly important in the practical subjects. Activities including the use of hazardous chemicals or machinery, field trips, science-based practical's/ demonstrations /research projects, hazardous physical manipulations, maintenance of hazardous machinery, etc, require rigorous risk assessments with carefully documented and implemented controls.
- Where possible, controls and other safety measures identified in the risk assessment process must be put in place immediately.
- In other cases where the scale or cost prohibits immediate action, a programme of action must be planned by the relevant teacher with the Principal/ Board of Management and put into effect.
- Depending on the risks involved, appropriate interim action must be taken i.e. if high, discontinuing the operation in the interim must be considered.
- The implementation of these arrangements must be reviewed at regular intervals.
- Where the risk cannot be reduced to acceptable levels and finance is not available to implement appropriate controls, it is our policy that the activity will cease, or the area closed.
- All final decisions on risk control must take into account the relevant legal requirements and industry codes of practice.

66. Safety Statement

- In accordance with the obligations placed on employers by the *Safety Health and Welfare at Work Act, 2005*, Scoil Pól has prepared a safety statement based on an identification of hazards at the workplace.
- Risk assessments are routinely carried out and control arrangements and resources are detailed in the statement.
- The safety statement is brought to the attention of all staff and third parties as necessary.
- Staff will be asked to sign a form stating they have read the statement and fully understand all the details therein.
- Scoil Pól plan to review the safety statement at least once annually in order to consider new legislation etc.
- If new working equipment, procedures, work practices, chemicals, materials or renovations etc. are introduced then the safety statement needs to be reviewed to take these into account.

67. School Bags

- Scoil Pól is committed to making efforts to alleviate the problem of heavy school bags and school bag storage issues.
- It recognises that the provision of marked storage areas is essential to alleviate the hazard.

68. School Trips / Tours

- Each trip is communicated and approved by the Board of Management.
- Parent/guardian's permission is obtained for each student before any excursions take place.
- Emergency preparedness is addressed (phone numbers, medical arrangements, first-aid) and an adequate number of supervisory adults are present on the trip.
- A head count is carried out before departure, routinely throughout the trip and in the event of an emergency, and before return journey by trip supervisor.
- Safety instructions are provided to students including information on correct clothing and equipment required, code of behaviour, etc.

69. Smoking

- In compliance with the Public Health (Tobacco) (Amendment) Act 2004 regarding smoking in workplaces, smoking is strictly forbidden on the premises and on the grounds of Scoil Pól.
- The policy also applies to E-cigarettes.

70. Specialist / Practical Classrooms

- Specialist / Practical classrooms each have specific hazards, which are unique to these rooms.
- Teachers in each room are responsible for training students on the use of equipment, machinery and appliances in the classroom including where relevant use of appropriate personal protective equipment, adjustment of guarding, use of safety devices,
- Teachers are also responsible for the supervision of use of this equipment in the classroom.
- Equipment, machinery and appliances shall be maintained in good working order to ensure the safety of all staff and students. It will be serviced by competent engineers as per the manufacturer's recommendations.
- These rooms should be locked when the room is not in use.
- Safe Working areas will be established around all machinery and equipment.
- Where possible, classes in other subjects should not be taught in these rooms unless by the specialised teacher.
- If a specialised teacher is absent, the substitute teacher must be fully aware of the hazards in the room as well as the controls in place to deal with these hazards.
- If the substitute teacher is not trained in the specialised area, then where possible classes should be supervised elsewhere.

71. Sports Facilities

- Staff using these areas for classes are responsible for instructing and supervising students on the safe use of sports and other equipment.
- Sports equipment will be maintained in good working order to ensure the safety of all staff and students.
- Staff are responsible for reporting defects to equipment. Defective items must be taken out of use until such a time as the item is made safe by a competent person.
- Appropriate First Aid equipment will be located in the area and checked regularly by designated staff.
- Outdoor areas will be maintained in good order – free from risk to students, staff and the wider school community. Where this cannot be achieved the area will be fenced off and secured.

72. Students with Physical / Additional Education Needs

- Specific Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans will be developed for students with mobility issues.
- Students who have ongoing medical issues e.g., diabetes, may need medical interventions during the school day.
- Staff will be informed and trained on how to deal with an emergency situation of 'at risk' students in their classrooms when the need arises.
- Parents of children with known allergies are responsible for informing the Principal / Deputy Principals of any assistance that may be needed for a student with food allergies.
- Those students with significant medical needs will be identified in the staffroom to ensure that all staff are aware of any underlying conditions that may present during corridor supervision, break time supervision etc.
- Students with special education needs will be supported through the AEN Department in the school in accordance with the guidance from the National Council for Special Education.
- Where necessary i.e., on a case-by-case basis, risk assessments may need to be carried out to ensure that the safety of the students, his/her peers as well as teachers and other staff is maintained.
- Where teachers feel that there is a risk to the student, a risk assessment must take place in conjunction with AEN Coordinator / ASD Class.
- In the event of an evacuation these students will be evacuated from the building by their SNA or teacher (in the case of mainstream student).

73. Statutory Inspections

Statutory inspections of machinery, equipment, training etc. will be conducted in accordance with below:

Description	Frequency											
	Per Manufacturer	As Required	Daily before use	Weekly Visual	Fortnightly	Monthly	Quarterly	6 Months	Annually	14 Months	18 months	60 Months
Boilers									•			
Contractor Documentation		•							•			
Defibrillator				•								
Emergency Lighting							•					
Fire Detection Systems							•					
Fire Extinguishers				•					•			
First Aid Kits				•								
Fixed Wired Electrical												•
Fume Cupboards									•			
Gas Proving Systems									•			
Health and Safety Audit									•			
Ladders		•	•									
Lift								•				
Passenger & Wheelchair List	•							•				
Portable Appliance Testing									•			
Practical Room Equipment			•						•			
Review Policy & Risk Assessments									•			
Review Training Requirements									•			

74. Training

Scoil Pól recognises that training is one of the most effective ways of making sure that staff are competent and effective in maintaining a safe working environment. Therefore, we aim to provide ongoing safety training programs to meet the needs of staff at all levels of the organisation. Training Initiatives include:

Teaching Staff Training	Frequency				
	On Commencement	Per Term	Annually	Every 2 years	Every 3 years
SafeSchool™ Health & Safety Awareness Training (The Ark HQ™)	•		•		
Health & Safety Staff Induction (All Staff)	•				
Manual Handling (staff involved in lifting, lowering, pushing, pulling)					•
Fire Extinguisher Training (All Staff)					•
Fire Evacuation Drills (All Staff)		•			
First Aid Responder Training (1 per 150 persons on site)				•	
AED Training (1 per 150 persons on site)				•	
Epi-Pen Administration			•		

Non-Teaching Staff Training	Frequency			
	On Commencement	Annually	Every 3 years	Every 4 years
SafeSchool™ Health & Safety Awareness Training (The Ark HQ™)	•	•		
Health & Safety Staff Induction	•			
Safety Induction Training		•		
Safe Pass Training (Caretaker)				•
Work at Height Training (Caretaker)			•	
Chemical Handling (Caretaker)			•	
Manual Handling Training (Caretaker)			•	
Abrasive Wheels Training (Caretaker)			•	

75. Induction Training

New staff will be introduced to the premises, safety/evacuation procedures, rules, regulations, their immediate work environment and colleagues in compliance with all legal and contractual obligations. This induction training applies to all permanent, temporary and contracted staff of Scoil Pól. New staff include college students on temporary work experience. A short period of induction will be given by the Principal or a designated staff member for new employees joining the staff. This will include:

- Receiving a copy of the staff handbook/diary.
- A tour of the premises for familiarisation purposes.
- Fire emergency procedures, location of exits, assembly points and training on firefighting apparatus.
- Details of accident reporting and investigation procedures.
- A discussion on the hazards in the workplace (relating to their own area of work), preventative measures and the Safety Statement.
- An explanation of the consultative process, name of Safety Representative and staff meetings.
- A detail of the new employee's safety responsibilities.
- Details of further training (if required or identified).
- Receiving a copy of the School Safety Statement.
- Staff are also encouraged to be attentive to new staff and ensure their compliance with all safety procedures. All staff will be retrained periodically on safety rules, policies and procedures, and when changes are made to the workplace safety statement.

76. Visitors

- Visitors are only permitted on the premise by appointment.
- For evacuation reasons, visitors are asked to sign in on entering the premises and sign out on exiting.
- Host staff are responsible for the safety and conduct of visitors and for informing them of local welfare facilities, emergency procedures and any specific risks.

77. Waste Management

- All waste is segregated at source and recycled where possible. Approved waste contractors are engaged for waste removal and recycling.
- In cases where staff cannot safely dispose of waste chemicals, specialist hazardous waste disposal firms must be consulted with.

78. Welfare Facilities

- Scoil Pól shall ensure that adequate welfare facilities are provided on the premises for all staff and students.
- Adequate toilet facilities are provided and maintained in a good clean hygienic condition.
- Adequate washing facilities (including hot water where necessary) and washing and drying materials/equipment are provided and maintained.

79. Weather

- Due to unforeseen weather conditions that as such constitute an issued Yellow / Orange / Red Weather warning staff and students may have difficulties getting to school for the standard start time.
- If this is the case, the Principal will monitor these weather reports and advise the school community accordingly as to whether the school will be opened or closed as the case may be.
- The Principal reserves the right to decide to finish/close early on days where the school deems the weather to be averse to ensure students and staff can travel home safety.
- Appropriate measures will be taken to safeguard staff and students in the event of significant inclement weather e.g. gritting footpaths where necessary.

80. Work Experience

- The work experience program is an integral part of our school.
- Where possible we intend to facilitate student's participation where it is safe to do so.
- Prior to any placement being made, the course organisers should discuss the safety policy of the workplace with the employer and students should be made aware of the potential hazards in the workplace.
- Students who wish to gain work experience on construction sites are obliged to have a 'Safe Pass' certificate.
- The teacher organising the work experience shall contact each employer to ensure suitable arrangements are in place before student takes up work placement, e.g. safety induction, supervision arrangements, provision of appropriate PPE and insurance arrangements.

81. Wellbeing - Students

- Scoil Pól is committed to establishing and maintaining a School Self-Evaluation Wellbeing Promotion Process in line with the Depart of Education & Skills' *Wellbeing Policy Statement and Framework for Practice, 2018–2023, Revised October 2019*.
- This will involve the development, implementation and review of wellbeing promotion in our schools, which includes tracking impact.
- Our school will play a vital role in the promotion of wellbeing through a range of activities and approaches to support the academic, physical, mental, emotional, social and spiritual development of our students.
- We will continue to develop innovative approaches to wellbeing promotion supported by strong leadership, quality teaching and learning that enhances, promotes, values and nurtures student wellbeing.
- Our vision and ambition to Wellbeing Promotion is in line with the Wellbeing Policy Statement and Framework for Practice, 2018–2023, Revised October 2019 i.e. the promotion of wellbeing is core to the ethos of our school.
- We will also seek evidence-informed approaches and support, appropriate to need, to promote the wellbeing of all their children and young people
- We will seek the support (where needed) of the Department of Education Support Services through the Wellbeing Practice Framework and online Wellbeing Resources.

82. Wellbeing – Staff and Stress

What is Work-related Stress?

Stress can be broadly defined as the negative reactions people have to aspects of their environment. Work-related stress simply refers to those reactions due to pressure within the working environment.

"Stress occurs when an individual perceives an imbalance between the demands placed on them on the one hand, and their ability to cope on the other" (Professor Tom Cox, Institute of Work, Health and Organisation).

Each individual member of staff brings into the school their own particular personality, medical history, psychological make-up and coping skills. As a result, what may be stressful for one staff member may not be for another. However, some workplace factors inevitably lead to stress, such as poor communications, role ambiguity, career stagnation, low participation in decision-making, conflict, etc.

Effects of Stress

The effects of stress differ from individual to individual. The experience of stress can change the way a person feels, thinks and behaves and can also produce physical changes. A person will often experience stress in a number of ways. When you are stressed, you are less likely to eat well, get adequate sleep, take exercise and relax. You can also experience irritability, reduced attention span and memory impairment. Irritability due to stress can create secondary problems such as the loss of social support. Being stressed over a prolonged period of time has been associated with increased blood pressure and cardiovascular problems.

Aims

- Encourage staff well-being within Scoil Pól and discourage the stigma attached to stress.
- Raise awareness of ill health associated with stress, its causes and associated factors.
- To reduce as far as is reasonably practicable within the confines of a school environment, the sources of stress.
- Enhance the factors within Scoil Pól that reduce the risk of stress.
- Educate staff in techniques for coping with pressure and stress.
- Provide systems of support and make sure they are well publicised.
- Encourage staff to get help at an early stage.
- Make sure there is confidentiality for those who want help.

As staff how can I cope with stress at work?

Manage Your Workload

- Set priorities & manage time effectively.
- Set limits to work and draw boundaries.
- Define problems precisely.
- Break work up into manageable units.
- Recognise your own worth.

Develop Skills

- Improve communication.
- Be more assertive.
- Make decisions.
- Plan your time – including your free time.
- Decide your career goals.
- Avail of training opportunities.

Maintain Physical Fitness

- Eat a sensible diet.
- Have sufficient rest.
- Decide on some agreeable form of exercise and make it a habit.
- Develop interests outside work.

Procedures

- Unruly students have been recognised as one of the major sources of stress for Teachers and SNA's Scoil Pól recognises this. Teachers and SNA's should avail of the assistance that is provided to them by the Pastoral Care Teachers, Year Heads, the Deputy Principals and the Principal etc.
- Clear policies on behaviour exist in the school and these should be referred to. These policies are continually reviewed, and staff are consulted in policy development.
- The Board of Management ensures that staff roles and responsibilities are clearly defined.
- High priority is given to staff training and the Board of Management supports and encourages participation in relevant in-service courses in so far as is reasonably practicable.
- The Board of Management recognises that communication and consultation with staff, which promotes openness and discussion, is essential.
- The Principal brings concerns of staff to the attention of the Board.
- The Board of Management and the Principal ensure, as far as is reasonably practicable, that the physical work environments for staff are safe and do not expose them to risks that may give rise to stress at work.
- It is school practice to make sure that staff take time to review and celebrate positive achievements.
- Social occasions are organised throughout the school term to give staff a chance to relax and socialise with each other outside of the workplace.
- If an employee feels that they are suffering from work-related stress it is important that they seek medical help. They should then discuss with the Principal the causes of their stress and as far as reasonably practicable, the Principal will deal with the issues concerned.

83. Wellbeing – Resources for Staff

Your family doctor is usually the first person to approach in relation to mental health.

Scoil Pól will support you through this time. In addition to seeing your GP the following organisations provide mental support and advice:

- **Staff only: Employee Assistance and Wellbeing Programme (EAWP) The service is accessible through the Freephone Helpline at 1800 411 057 and is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.**

- **Aware**
  Depression & Bipolar Disorder Support
  www.aware.ie | Tel: 1800 80 48 48 | Email: supportmail@aware.ie

- **Pieta House**
  Free therapeutic support to people who are in suicidal distress and those who engage in self-harm.
  T: 1800 247 247 | W: www.pieta.ie

- **Turn2me**
  They offer self-help, peer support and professional support through an online platform for those who are experiencing poor mental health.
  www.Turn2Me.org

- **Grow**
  Mental Health support and Recovery Organisation
  Tel: 1890 474 474 | Email:alex@bodywhys.ie | www.grow.ie

- **Parentline**
  The national helpline for parents
  www.parentline.ie
  Helpline: 1890 92 72 77 | or 01 873 3500

- **Childline**
  The national helpline for young persons
  www.childline.ie
  Helpline: 1800 666 666

84. Work at Height

- Where working at height becomes necessary, we refer to Part 4 of the 2013 (Work at Height) Regulations and take the recommended steps to minimise risk.
- Work at height means working in a place (except a staircase in a permanent workplace) where a person could be injured by falling from it, even if it is at or below ground level.
- Staff must do all that is reasonably practicable to prevent anyone falling a distance liable to cause personal injury.
- The Regulations set out a simple hierarchy for managing work at a height:
    - Avoid work at height where this is reasonably practicable.
    - Use work equipment or other measures to prevent falls where you cannot avoid working at height, and
    - Where you cannot eliminate the risk of a fall, use work equipment or other measures to minimise the distance and consequences of a fall.
- The Regulations also require the school to ensure that:
    - All work at height is properly planned, organised, supervised and carried out.
    - The place where work at height is done is safe.
    - All work at height takes account of weather conditions.
    - Those involved in work at height are instructed and trained.
    - Equipment for work at height is appropriately inspected.
    - The risks from fragile surfaces are properly controlled. and
    - Injury from falling objects is prevented.
- The risk assessment and the action taken should be proportionate to the harm that could occur if no action was taken. It should include a careful examination of what harm could be caused from working at height with a view to taking the necessary steps to reduce the likelihood of this harm occurring, either through avoiding the activity or, where this is not reasonably practicable, by carrying it out in a safe manner using the appropriate work equipment.

85. Violence

The Board of Management of Scoil Pól is committed to the continuance of a school characterised by mutual respect, free from threat or intimidation. To this end dangerous, threatening, aggressive or violent behaviour (hereafter called violent behaviour), whether verbal or physical, is not permitted in the school or among the school community. A separate Code of Behaviour Policy deals with students.

During the course of their work school staff may be at risk in the form of verbal abuse, threats, assaults or other forms of intimidation. This behaviour may come from pupils, parents, guardians, other staff members or visitors. Violent behaviour is categorised as acts against people or property.

The Board of Management of Scoil Pól recognises its duties to:

- Provide a safe environment for staff and other persons present in the school.
- Minimise the risk of assaults on teachers / Principal / Deputy Principals or other staff employed in the school.
- Support staff that have been assaulted or threatened with assault. And ensuring that appropriate action is taken to safeguard against a recurrence.

Preventative Measures

- Policies on violence go hand in hand with policies in relation to bullying, harassment, behaviour etc. These policies need to be reviewed frequently to identify and resolve weaknesses to lessen the threat of violence.
- Communication between home and school should be frequent, open and positive. In this context policies and procedures in relation to visits to the school, meeting with teachers, school discipline, complaint procedures etc. should be in place and parents/ guardians encouraged to communicate with the school as appropriate.
- Parents /visitors who wish to have a consultation with a class teacher should make a prior appointment with the relevant teacher. In urgent cases where a prearranged appointment is not appropriate, parents should, in the first instance, report to the school secretary.
- All visitors are required to report to the school secretary's office. Signs displayed within the school grounds and premises outline this.
- Video surveillance equipment has been installed to help deter violent acts.

Steps to be followed in the Event of an Assault

- In the event of an assault, a staff member should not try to resist if cash or goods are the obvious motive for the attack. Depending on the circumstances and the level of training, the member should endeavour to calm down the assailant and seek assistance as quickly as possible.
- The incident should be immediately reported to the Principal/Deputy Principals.
- Where necessary, immediate medical assistance should be sought. Debriefing is essential as soon as possible after the event. Staff are entitled to time off work and counselling if needed.
- The matter should be reported to the Gardaí, where appropriate. The staff member who was assaulted would normally make this report.
- The details of the incident should be recorded. The information recorded should include personal details (name, age, occupation) of the victim and assailant where available, description of what happened, why did it happen, when and where it happened, description of any injuries sustained and weapons used, what procedure failed. Situations in which staff members have been intimidated or threatened with physical violence should also be recorded. Reports should be made to the Health and Safety Authority and the States Claims Agency as required.
- The Board of Management should be notified of the incident and where necessary an emergency meeting of the Board of Management should take place. The Board should consider notifying its legal advisors and insurance company of the incident as appropriate.
- Where an assault is by a pupil the matter should be dealt with in accordance with the school's Code of Behaviour.
- Repeatedly aggressive pupils should be referred, with the consent of parents/guardians, for psychological assessment in order to assess the pupils' social and emotional needs and to determine how these can be best met.
- Where a parent/guardian or visitor commits the assault, the Board of Management should immediately instruct the person in writing not to make direct contact with the staff member/school pending full consideration of the matter. Subsequently the Board of Management should correspond with the parent/guardian or visitor stating:
- that it considers the assault unacceptable and what action the Board of Management intends to take.
- outlining what pre-conditions should be met before access to the school is restored.
- Where a staff member commits the alleged assault, the Board of Management should immediately instruct the member in writing not to make direct contact with the victim pending full consideration and investigation of the matter. The question of suspension may also need to be considered prior to further action/disciplinary measures being taken.

86. Health & Safety Statement Acknowledgement

Print Name	Signed	Date