

Scoil Phobail Bhéara

Safety Statement

Scoil Phobail Bhéara

(BEARA COMMUNITY SCHOOL)



2023/24

STATEMENT OF INTENT FOR Scoil Phobail Bhéara

TO EACH STAFF MEMBER, STUDENT, VISITOR AND CONTRACTOR

This document has been prepared to comply with our obligations under the Safety, Health, and Welfare at Work Act 2005.

It sets out the safety policy of and specifies **Scoil Phobail Bhéara** the means provided to achieve that policy.

Our objective is to manage and conduct our activities in such a way as to ensure, as far as is reasonably practicable, that we provide a safe and healthy work environment for all staff and meet our obligations to students, visitors, contractors, and members of the public who may be affected by our activities.

We also intend to manage and conduct our activities in such a way as to prevent, so far as is reasonably practicable, any improper conduct or behaviour likely to put the safety, health or welfare of our staff, students or others at risk.

The success of this policy will depend on your co-operation. It is therefore important that you read the document carefully and understand your role in the overall arrangements for health and safety at the School. It is our intention to review this statement regularly, in the light of experience and developments at the School, especially if there has been a significant change in the matters to which this statement refers, and in line with statutory requirements.

The safety statement will be brought to the attention of school staff annually, new staff members at induction, and to all staff members in the event of significant changes to it. The safety statement will be made available to contractors and others as appropriate.

Staff and others are encouraged to put forward suggestions for improvements to this statement.

Signed: _____

Pauline Hurley

Principal

Date: _____

Safety, Health, and Welfare Policy

In accordance with the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005, it is the policy of the Board of Management of **Scoil Phobail Bhéara** to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the safety, health and welfare at work of all staff and to protect students, visitors, contractors and other persons at the school from injury and ill-health arising from any work activity. The successful implementation of this policy requires the full support and active co-operation of all staff, contractors and students of the school. It is recognised that hazard identification, risk assessment and control measures are legislative requirements which an employer must ensure are carried out to secure the safety, health and welfare of all staff. The Board of Management of **Scoil Phobail Bhéara**, as employer, undertakes in so far as is reasonably practicable to:

- (a) promote standards of safety, health and welfare that comply with the provisions and requirements of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005 and other relevant legislation, standards, and codes of practice.
- (b) provide information, training, instruction, and supervision where necessary, to enable staff to perform their work safely and effectively.
- (c) maintain a constant and continuing interest in safety, health and welfare matters pertinent to the activities of the school.
- (d) continually monitor the system in place for the management of occupational safety, health and welfare and review it periodically to ensure it remains relevant, appropriate and effective.
- (e) consult with staff on matters related to safety, health and welfare at work.
- (f) provide the necessary resources to ensure the safety, health, and welfare of all those to whom it owes a duty of care, including staff, students, contractors, and other persons. All employees and students of the school are expected to demonstrate their commitment towards a safe and healthy work and study environment by complying with this health and safety policy and associated procedures.

The Board of Management of **Scoil Phobail Bhéara** is committed to playing an active role in the implementation of this occupational safety, health and welfare policy and undertakes to review and revise it regularly in light of changes in legislation, equipment, and other relevant developments and review its effectiveness each year.

Signed: _____

Date: _____

2.0 RESPONSIBILITIES FOR HEALTH & SAFETY

2.1 Board of Management

The Board of Management has overall responsibility, in so far as reasonably practicable, for ensuring the safety, health and welfare of staff and others affected by activities at Scoil Phobail Bhéara, Castletownbere, Co Cork.

The Board is responsible for ensuring that personnel, planning and investment at the location are adequate to meet the commitments of the general safety policy (Statement of Intent) and detailed commitments on the control of hazards that are made later in this Safety Statement.

The Board is also responsible for ensuring that the occupational health and safety performance of Scoil Phobail Bhéara is reviewed on an annual basis in consultation with the principal, and other staff members as appropriate.

Day-to-day health & safety responsibilities are delegated to the principal.

2.2 Principal

The Principal, Pauline Hurley, is responsible on a day-to-day basis, in so far as is reasonably practicable, for the safety, health and welfare of Scoil Phobail Bhéara staff members and others affected by school activities.

Examples of health and safety responsibilities are as follows:

- To ensure that the various components of this Safety Statement are communicated to staff members and other appropriate persons, e.g., contractors.
- To ensure that staff members adhere to safe systems of work and that any equipment they are using is kept in safe condition and is reported for repair when necessary.
- To ensure that fire / emergency arrangements are in place and up-to-date and that fire / emergency plans are reviewed at least annually and updated as required.
- To ensure that high standards of housekeeping are maintained and that the workplace is kept safe and free of physical hazards as far as reasonably practicable, e.g., trip / fall hazards, fire hazards, equipment hazards, chemical hazards etc.
- To ensure that accidents, incidents, and near misses are reported as soon as they occur and for initiating and conducting subsequent investigations.
- To review annually with the Board of Management, the occupational health and safety performance of Scoil Phobail Bhéara.

Principal's Responsibilities – contd

- To ensure that equipment and facilities are maintained to high standards and are safe as reasonably practicable.
- To consult, where necessary, with staff on safety, health and welfare issues affecting them and take appropriate action arising from these consultations.

The principal helps ensure that budgets and planning decisions allow for on-going maintenance and development of safety standards and safety awareness at the school.

2.3 Deputy Principal

The Deputy Principal, Niamh O Driscoll, supports and assists the Principal, Pauline Hurley in all aspects of health and safety management at the school and is responsible in her absence.

2.4 Safety Co-ordinators AP1

Coordinates health and safety activities and assesses health and safety requirements in consultation with the Principal They also provides advice on all health & safety related matters.

The Safety Co-ordinators has the following main responsibilities:

- To co-ordinate and prioritise for action, in consultation with the principal, any safety, health and welfare issues raised by safety inspections or individual staff.
- To ensure that all systems of work are regularly reviewed from a safety, health, and welfare point of view, including the provision of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) where appropriate.
- To ensure that all statutory and recommended safety inspections / certifications are recorded, e.g., for equipment such as fire extinguishers, fire alarm system etc.
- To monitor safety, health and welfare training needs and to advise the principal accordingly.
- To investigate and review accidents / incidents occurring on school premises.
- To liaise with regulatory bodies as appropriate, e.g., Health & Safety Authority.

Safety Co-ordinator Responsibilities – contd

- To communicate with staff members, students, visitors, contractors, and members of the public, where appropriate, on safety, health, and welfare issues.
- To ensure that appropriate emergency evacuation procedures are in place and that fire drills are carried out at the prescribed intervals.

2.5 Individual Staff Members

Individual staff members are required to adhere to safe systems of work as outlined in this Safety Statement and must comply with the instructions provided by school management in relation to safety, health, and welfare.

Each individual has a responsibility to act in such a way that his / her safety or the safety of colleagues and others is not put at risk. Where staff members notice defects in equipment or in systems of work, which could cause danger to themselves or others, they must report them to the principal and / or Safety Co-ordinator as soon as possible, or the Deputy Principal in their absence.

Each staff member is responsible for using the equipment and systems provided to protect their own safety, health, and welfare.

Accidents / incidents must be notified to the Principal or Safety Co-ordinator without delay and report forms completed in co-operation with school management as appropriate.

The statutory duties of employees (with regard to safety, health, and welfare) are detailed in the Safety Health and Welfare at Work Act, 2005 and these are documented below.

All employees are legally required to co-operate with Section 13 and 14 of the Safety, Health, and Welfare at Work Act 2005, as follows:

General Duties of Employees

13 — (1) An employee shall, while at work —

- (a) Comply with the relevant statutory provisions, as appropriate, and take reasonable care to protect his or her safety, health and welfare and the safety, health and welfare of any other person who may be affected by the employee's acts or omissions at work,
- (b) Ensure that he or she is not under the influence of an intoxicant to the extent that he or she is in such a state as to endanger his or her own safety, health, or welfare at work or that of any other person,

General Duties of Employees – contd

- (c) If reasonably required by his or her employer, submit to any appropriate, reasonable, and proportionate tests for intoxicants by, or under the supervision of, a registered medical practitioner who is a competent person, as may be prescribed,
 - (d) Co-operate with his or her employer or any other person so far as is necessary to enable his or her employer or the other person to comply with the relevant statutory provisions, as appropriate,
 - (e) Not engage in improper conduct or other behaviour that is likely to endanger his or her own safety, health, and welfare at work or that of any other person,
 - (f) Attend such training and, as appropriate, undergo such assessment as may reasonably be required by his or her employer or as may be prescribed relating to safety, health and welfare at work or relating to the work carried out by the employee,
 - (g) Having regard to his or her training and the instructions given by his or her employer, make correct use of any article or substance provided for use by the employee at work or for the protection of his or her safety, health and welfare at work, including protective clothing or equipment,
 - (h) Report to his or her employer or to any other appropriate person, as soon as practicable —
 - (i) any work being carried on, or likely to be carried on, in a manner which may endanger the safety, health or welfare at work of the employee or that of any other person,
 - (ii) any defect in the place of work, the systems of work, any article or substance which might endanger the safety, health, or welfare at work of the employee or that of any other person, or
 - (iii) any contravention of the relevant statutory provisions which may endanger the safety, health, and welfare at work of the employee or that of any other person, of which he or she is aware.
- (2) An employee shall not, on entering into a contract of employment, misrepresent himself or herself to an employer with regard to the level of training as may be prescribed under subsection (1)(f).

General Duties of Employees – contd

14 — A person shall not intentionally, recklessly or without reasonable cause —

- (a) Interfere with, misuse or damage anything provided under the relevant statutory provisions or otherwise for securing the safety, health, and welfare of persons at work, or
- (b) Place at risk the safety, health, or welfare of persons in connection with work activities.

2.6 Specific Responsibilities for Safety, Health & Welfare

Scoil Phobail Bhéara is committed to complying with its duties to manage safety, health and welfare in the workplace as specifically required under Section 8 (2) (a) and (b) of the Safety, Health & Welfare at Work Act, 2005, i.e.,

8 (2) (a) managing and conducting work activities in such a way as to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the safety, health and welfare at work of his or her employees;

(b) managing and conducting work activities in such a way as to prevent, so far as is reasonably practicable, any improper conduct or behaviour likely to put the safety, health or welfare at work of his or her employees at risk;

This Safety Statement specifies the manner in which safety, health and welfare (at work) of employees shall be secured and managed. The Board of Management, Principal and Deputy Principal are responsible for the management of safety, health and welfare at the school.

The following strategies are employed to help school management comply with these duties (and others) under the Act. Individual responsibilities are assigned as appropriate.

2.6.1 Consultation on Safety, Health & Welfare Matters

School management recognises the legal rights of employees under Section 25 (1) of the Safety Health & Welfare at Work Act, 2005 to “select and appoint from amongst their number at their place of work a representative (in this Act referred to as a “safety representative”) or, by agreement with their employer, more than one safety representative, to represent them at the place of work in consultation with their employer on matters related to safety, health and welfare at the place of work”.

Currently Noel O Sullivan is the Safety Representative , School management will co-operate with any Safety Representative(s) selected and appointed by staff in the future.

Consultation on Safety, Health & Welfare Matters – contd

Scoil Phobail Bhéara is committed to meeting its obligations for consultation with staff members under Section 26 of the Safety, Health, and Welfare at Work Act, 2005. This includes full and early consultation with staff members on all health and safety matters including alterations or changes, which could potentially affect their health and safety and that of students, visitors, contractors, and members of the public using the premises.

The safety committee (AP1) is in place at the School and School Management is committed to meeting its obligations under Schedule 4, Section 26 of the Safety, Health & Welfare at Work Act 2005, where “employees select and appoint from amongst their number members of a safety committee to perform the functions assigned to safety committees under this Act”. Employees are also required to comply with the provisions of this Schedule to the Act. See Schedule 4, Section 26 of the Safety, Health & Welfare at Work Act 2005 in Appendix 4. The names of the current safety committee are provided in Appendix 5.

Safety, health and welfare matters also form part of the agenda at term staff meetings and at Board of Management meetings.

The topics for review at staff and Board of Management meetings may include the following items as appropriate:

- Current safety issues, including items outstanding from safety inspections.
- Health and welfare issues
- Safety training requirements
- Fire drills and evacuations
- Accidents and accident statistics
- Policy development

Staff members are also encouraged to participate in the consultative process through direct contact with the Principal, Safety Coordinator, and the Deputy Principal. The effectiveness of consultation arrangements will be reviewed from time-to-time.

- The principal has responsibility for consultation arrangements.

Specific Responsibilities for Safety, Health & Welfare – contd

2.6.2 Safety Audits / Inspections

In addition to the ongoing monitoring of safety standards by the Principal, Safety Co-ordinator, Deputy Principal, and staff, regular safety audits / inspections are carried out.

These audits include an inspection of premises and equipment from a physical hazard and risk assessment viewpoint. Compliance with health and safety procedures and the maintenance of appropriate records are also audited.

The principal, in consultation with the Safety Co-ordinators, prioritises actions required from the findings of safety audits in consultation with the Board of Management and relevant competent personnel.

These safety inspections take account of several issues including the following:

- Fire safety
 - Building safety
 - Electrical safety
 - Equipment safety
 - Housekeeping
 - Hazardous substances
 - Manual handling
 - First Aid arrangements
- Persons responsible for carrying out safety inspections include the Principal, Safety Co-ordinator, and Deputy Principal, and other personnel in designated areas as appropriate.

2.6.3 Engineering Hazards Out

Where practicable, school management commits to eliminating identified hazards by ‘engineering’ means in the first instance, e.g., by provision of special tools or equipment or access arrangements etc. School management also examines proposals for the installation of new equipment and upgrading of the building and the reduction of hazards contained therein.

- Persons responsible for ‘engineering hazards out’ are the Principal & Safety Co-ordinator in consultation with the Board of Management and relevant competent personnel.

2.6.4 Safety, Health & Welfare Information, Instruction, and Training

School management is committed to complying with Section 10 (1) – (6) of the Safety, Health & Welfare at Work Act 2005 with regard to the provision of instruction, training, and supervision of staff members in relation to their safety, health and welfare at the school. See Appendix 2, ‘General Duties of Employer’.

Safety, Health & Welfare Information, Instruction, and Training – contd

Safety, health, and welfare training commences at induction when new staff are provided with instruction in safety, health and welfare rules and regulations, and in safety procedures specific to their job. Appropriate induction materials are provided. The Safety Statement, and how it relates to safety management at the school, is also brought to the attention of new staff during induction.

Safety training needs are assessed annually. See also Appendix 12 for recommended health & safety training.

Specific training in the following topics is provided as appropriate, e.g.,

- Legal responsibilities for health & safety
- Risk assessment
- Fire evacuation / use of fire-fighting equipment
- Hazardous substances
- Manual handling
- First Aid
- VDU workstation ergonomics
- Bullying / Harassment / Stress
- Safe Pass (as appropriate)

Staff members are obliged to co-operate with safety training – see Section 2.5 [13 (f)] above.

- Training is held from time to time and staff members must attend as appropriate. The principal is responsible for arranging for appropriate safety instruction and training in consultation with the Safety Co-ordinator. The principal maintains appropriate training records.

2.6.5 Practical and Safe Working Systems

School management is committed to keeping a watching brief on safety matters and where necessary it will alter or adjust systems of work to make them safe as reasonably practicable. The reasons for new systems of work are explained to staff members as appropriate and they are trained in new systems to help ensure their own health and safety and that of their colleagues and others affected by their work.

- The Principal is responsible for the provision of safe systems of work.

2.6.6 Personal Protective Equipment

It is the policy of school management to provide whatever Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) is appropriate to the work concerned and to replace it as appropriate.

Personal Protective Equipment – contd

The Principal and Deputy Principal are responsible for ensuring that staff members, e.g., Caretaker, Practical Room Teachers, wear correctly any PPE provided. Consultation takes place on suitability and user acceptability.

School management accept and recognise that PPE is considered to be the last line of defence and therefore management commits to alter work systems by providing fixed and permanent arrangements to adequately control identified hazards where practicable, in order to minimise or eliminate the need for PPE. See also Appendix 11 for recommended PPE.

Contractors working on the premises must provide their own PPE appropriate to the work.

- The principal is responsible for the provision of appropriate PPE and for ensuring that staff members are adequately trained in its safe use.

2.6.7 Communications with Contractors

Communications take place with contractors prior to them carrying out work for Scoil Phobail Bhéara to ensure adherence to safety procedures and to the Safety, Health, and Welfare at Work Act, 2005 and other relevant statutory provisions. When the activities referred to in Section 20 – (6) of the 2005 Act are finally prescribed (see below), employers who contract to provide services to the school will be obliged to be in possession of an up-to-date safety statement as required under this section of the Act, i.e.,

20 – (6) Every employer who is conducting activities, as may be prescribed in accordance with this subsection, who contracts with another employer for that employer to provide services to him or her shall require that that employer is in possession of an up-to-date safety statement as required under this section.

Scoil Phobail Bhéara currently requires that a contractor's safety statement must be made available to school management prior to commencing work at the school.

Contractors may not work in Scoil Phobail Bhéara without appropriate current insurance.

Contractors' procedures can be found in Part 4 of this Safety Statement.

- The principal is responsible for communications with contractors. A deputy liaison person is appointed as appropriate.

3.0 ORGANISATIONAL MEASURES FOR CONTROL OF SAFETY, HEALTH & WELFARE

3.1 Statutory Requirements

It is the intention of Scoil Phobail Bhéara, Casteltownbere, Co Cork to apply the statutory provisions of the Safety, Health, and Welfare at Work Act, 2005 and other relevant legislation / regulations as our minimum standard. Inspectors, and others concerned with safety and health standards, will be afforded all co-operation.

3.2 Standards

Scoil Phobail Bhéara, in providing for health and safety, applies the most appropriate technical standards available, including national standards, fire safety codes and guidelines of the Health and Safety Authority.

3.3 Co-operation

Scoil Phobail Bhéara is committed to co-operating with the local authorities such as the Fire and Emergency Services and the Health and Safety Authority.

3.4 Competence

School Management recognise the requirement under Section 8 (2)(1) of the 2005 Act to obtain, where necessary, the services of competent¹ personnel for the purpose of ensuring, so far as is reasonably practicable, the safety, health and welfare at work of staff. School Management also recognise the requirement for competent staff having regard for the tasks they are required to perform and / or the significance of the workplace hazards.

3.5 Budgets

Health & safety arrangements are funded from the annual budget.

3.6 Fire and Emergencies

Fire and emergency arrangements cover such areas as, roles and responsibilities, emergency procedures, fire-fighting equipment, fire drills etc. Fire action procedures are strategically posted throughout the buildings, e.g., in classrooms, offices, corridors etc.

Fire and emergency arrangements are reviewed at least annually and updated in the light of changing circumstances.

See also Section 5, ‘Arrangements for Dealing with Fire and Other Emergencies’.

Organisational Measures for Control of Safety, Health & Welfare – contd

3.7 Maintenance Work and Building Services

Maintenance work includes routine servicing and repairs to buildings and equipment. Statutory and recommended inspections of equipment are also conducted as required, e.g., fire extinguishers, emergency lighting etc. Specialist servicing of equipment is assigned to specific competent contractors e.g., fire and emergency equipment.

The Caretaker conducts routine minor repairs and maintenance work.

3.8 First Aid / Medical Treatment

A number of staff members have been trained as certified First Aiders.

Appropriate stocks of First Aid supplies are available at all times. Eyewash facilities are also provided. First Aid kits are provided in the Deputy Principal's office, Science Rooms, Metalwork Room, Woodwork Room, Art Room, and General Office.

Travelling First Aid kits are provided for school trips.

3.9 Welfare Facilities

The following general welfare and personal hygiene facilities are provided:

- Drinking water (staff room)
- Toilet / washroom facilities (male, female, disabled)
- Staff Room with some food preparation facilities.

Staff members and students are obliged to care for these facilities and not to damage or misuse them.

SECTION 4
GENERAL POLICIES & PROCEDURES
FOR
SAFETY & HEALTH

4.0 GENERAL POLICIES & PROCEDURES FOR SAFETY, HEALTH & WELFARE

4.1 Dignity at Work Charter

The ‘Report of the Task Force for the Prevention of Workplace Bullying’ concluded that, “central to the concept of an effective workplace is the commitment of management and the workforce to develop and maintain an atmosphere in which the dignity of each individual is respected”.

The Task Force went on to recommend that each organisation should adopt a ‘Dignity at Work Charter’ as a demonstration of that commitment.

Scoil Phobail Bhéara supports and endorses this concept and as a demonstration of our commitment to respect the dignity of each individual at work, we draw the attention of each employee to the following ‘Dignity in the Workplace Charter,’ which is also prominently displayed in the building.

Dignity in the Workplace

“We at Scoil Phobail Bhéara, commit ourselves to working together to maintain a workplace environment that supports the right to dignity at work. All who work here are expected to respect the right of the individual to dignity in their working life. The right of each individual student to dignity at Scoil Phobail Bhéara also respected. All will be treated equally and respected for their individuality. Bullying in any form will not be accepted by us and will not be tolerated. Our policies and procedures will underpin the principles and objectives of this Charter.

All individuals, whether Teachers, Staff, or Students at Scoil Phobail Bhéara, or others directly employed or contracted by us, have a duty and responsibility to uphold this Dignity at Work Charter.

School management and staff have a specific responsibility to promote its provisions”.

4.2 Outline Anti-Bullying Policies and Procedures for Staff

Definition

Bullying in the workplace is defined as “repeated inappropriate behaviour, direct or indirect, whether verbal, physical or otherwise, conducted by one or more persons against another or others, *at the place of work and / or in the course of employment*, which could be reasonably regarded as undermining the individual’s right to dignity at work. An isolated incident of the behaviour described in this definition may be an affront to a person’s dignity at work, but as a once off incident, is not considered to be bullying” (Task Force on the Prevention of Workplace Bullying, 2001).

Policy and Procedures

Fundamental to the concept of equality and respect for individuals in the workplace is that the environment should be free from activities that are likely to adversely effect the dignity of the individual.

Scoil Phobail Bhéara is committed to ensuring that all its staff and students are free from bullying in the school environment. School Management will not tolerate bullying and this policy and complaint procedure will be applied to reported incidents of bullying of employees.

4.3 Smoking and substance abuse

Smoking Tobacco or Nicotine Inhaling Products (E cigarettes Vapes) are not permitted in the building in compliance with the Public Health (Tobacco) (Amendment) Appropriate signage is posted.

4.4 Accidents, Incidents and Near Miss Reporting and Investigation

All accidents, incidents and near misses to staff members, students, visitors, members of the public, and contractors must be reported as soon as possible to the Principal or Deputy Principal.

The reporting teacher initially completes the school accident / incident form. This information is uploaded by admin staff to the NIMMS portal once a month.

Staff members, students, visitors, members of the public, and contractors are obliged to cooperate with accident investigation, and to provide any information, which may help to establish the circumstances surrounding the incident.

Accidents are recorded and investigated in exactly the same way whether they involve staff members, students, visitors, members of the public, or contractors. The Principal maintains records of notifiable accidents for *ten* years.

4.5 General Health & Safety Rules – Staff Members

All staff members must have regard for their own safety and that of others and each member of staff is expected to observe the following:

- Staff members are required to comply with the statutory duties of employees under all current health and safety legislation / regulations.
- Smoking/Vapping is not permitted in the building in compliance with the Public Health (Tobacco) (Amendment) Act 2004.
- Avoid any actions that could increase the risk of fire in the premises.
- Keep water and other drinks away from electrical equipment to prevent the risk of electrical shock and / or fire.
- Report defects in electrical equipment such as loose connections, burning smells, electric sparks or similar obvious faults to Caretaker or Principal or Deputy Principal. No unauthorised person may attempt to carry out electrical or mechanical repair work.
- Avoid creating trip hazards, e.g., trailing cables, poor storage arrangements etc.
- Take care if handling loads and seek assistance if loads are heavy or awkward.
- Report accidents, incidents and near misses to the Principal or Deputy Principal.
- Report to the Principal or Deputy Principal without delay, any defects in equipment or in systems of doing work that might endanger health, safety or welfare of staff, students, visitors, contractors or members of the public.
- Report any suspicious activities or strangers in the building to the Principal or Deputy Principal without delay.
- Avoid running through the building.
- All staff members are obliged to co-operate with safety training and instruction programmes.
- Emergency equipment must never be tampered with.
- No one may work whilst under the influence of alcohol or drugs to an extent that it could impair their judgement or affect their safety or the safety and comfort of others.

4.6 Contractor Procedures

In order to meet our obligations for the safety and health of our staff and of contractors working in our premises, the following safety arrangements are in place:

- Contractors must be in possession of an up-to-date safety statement for their organisation before commencing work at the school. A copy of the up-to-date safety statement must be made available to the School contractor liaison person. Contractors must liaise with the appointed liaison person as appropriate.
- Contractors must have appropriate insurance cover throughout the term of the contract.
- Smoking/ vaping is not permitted in the building in compliance with the Public Health (Tobacco) (Amendment) Act 2004.
- Contractors must report to the principal on arrival and before commencing work.
- Contractors' equipment, tools and systems of work must meet the standards required by the Safety, Health & Welfare at Work Act 2005 and health and safety standards generally.
- Contractors must take all due care of their own safety and the safety of others affected by their work. The instructions of the liaison person must be complied with.
- Contractors must comply with all safety and security measures in operation on the site.
- Contractors must not leave machines or equipment, e.g., ladders, power or hand tools, unattended or in a hazardous condition particularly where staff members, students or visitors may be present. Toolboxes must be kept locked unless in use, in which case they must be closely supervised.
- Contractors must report any accidents, incidents or near misses to their liaison person without delay and must co-operate in any subsequent investigation of the accident or incident.

4.8 Safety for Visitors

In order to meet our obligations for the safety and health of our staff and of visitors to our premises, the following arrangements are in place:

- Smoking/ vaping is not permitted in the building in compliance with the Public Health Act
- Parents and other relatives must make an appointment to see a member of staff or a student during school hours.
- Visitors must enter the school through the front door and report to reception
- Visitors must not do anything likely to put themselves or others at risk.
- Visitors must comply with all safety and security arrangements in operation on the site.

5.0 ARRANGEMENTS FOR DEALING WITH FIRE AND OTHER EMERGENCIES

5.1 Fire Safety Features of the Building

Scoil Phobail Bhéara, Castletownbere, Co Cork is a single-storey building with evacuation routes from each area.

5.2 Fire Detection / Alarm System

A manually operated fire alarm (breakglass units and bells) is provided. The alarm is centrally monitored. new intalation June 2023.

5.3 Fire Wardens

The names of the Chief Fire Warden and Deputy are provided below:

- Pauline Hurley (Chief Fire Warden)
- Noel O’Sullivan (Deputy Chief Fire Warden)
- Tom Dickenson (caretaker)

Teachers act as Fire Wardens in the event of fire or other emergency. Each Teacher is responsible for ensuring that the evacuation of the students under their care is taking place. They direct and assist students and other personnel in their area to the exit routes. Teachers check each area as they evacuate with their students, *without putting themselves at risk*. See also 5.10, ‘Action in the Event of Fire’.

The Principal or Deputy Principal liaises with the media in the event of a fire, as appropriate.

5.4 Fire Action Notices

Fire Action Notices, advising personnel what to do in event of fire, are strategically posted throughout the building, e.g., in Classrooms, Offices etc.

5.5 Fire Fighting Equipment

Portable fire extinguishers, e.g., CO₂, Foam, Dry Powder etc, are provided at strategic locations throughout the building and in the boiler house. Fire hose reels are provided in some areas.

Fire extinguishers that have been used on a fire or otherwise discharged are replaced or re-filled as soon as reasonably practicable. Fire Points to be numbered and designated by appropriate signage.

Specialised contractors inspect, test and certify fire-fighting equipment at least annually to Irish Standard, IS 291: “The Use, Siting, Inspection and Maintenance of Portable Fire Extinguishers”. The Caretaker is responsible for maintaining appropriate records of test certificates.

Fire – contd

5.6 Fire Training / Designated Persons

In compliance with SI 53 of 2003, a number of personnel have been designated and trained to tackle incipient fires using fire extinguishers *where appropriate*. All personnel receive training in emergency evacuation procedures and their roles during emergencies. The Safety Co-ordinator Noel O Sullivan, maintains records of all fire and emergency training.

5.7 Emergency Lighting / Emergency Exit Routes

Emergency lighting and illuminated emergency exit signs have been provided and updated July 2023 and comply with regulations. Emergency exit routes with push-bar exit doors have been provided.

Competent personnel test, and service emergency lighting to Irish Standard, IS 3217: Code of Practice for Emergency Lighting. The Caretaker is responsible for maintaining appropriate records of test certificates.

5.8 Assembly Point

The Assembly Point is in the schoolyard at the basketball courts. The Assembly Point is clearly identified.

5.9 Fire Drills

Fire drills, initiated by the principal, are carried out at least twice a year.. The time for each drill is recorded along with any observations on the effectiveness of the drill.

Fire – contd

5.10 Action in the Event of Fire

Fire Warden (teachers are fire wardens)

If you discover a fire or one is reported to you, immediately raise the alarm by activating the nearest alarm break glass unit.

- If you discover the fire yourself and *if it is safe to do so and you have been trained and you feel confident*, attack the fire with suitable extinguishers, e.g., do NOT use water or foam on electrical fires, use a CO₂ or Dry Powder extinguisher. When attacking a fire be sure to keep an escape route at your back.
- Go to the Assembly Point and bring a First Aid kit and high-vis vest with you
- The Sports hall is a separate building but as students move to and from it. Persons in the sports hall will be notified to evacuate.
- Control and Co-ordinate emergency activities at the Assembly Point, e.g.,
 - Consult with the Emergency Services as appropriate.
 - Review status of evacuation and take appropriate action
 - Monitor First Aid cases.
 - Keep the Principal informed of progress.
- If the Emergency Services gives the ‘all clear’, instruct personnel to return to the building in orderly fashion.

If your first knowledge of a fire is the sound of the fire alarm ringing:

- Go to the fire alarm panel and ascertain the zone in which the breakglass unit (BGU) has been activated. Go to the zone, *if it is safe to do so*, and locate and assess the status of the fire. Bring with you –
 - Another Teacher or other member of staff
 - A mobile phone
- After assessing the situation and deciding on appropriate action, go to the Assembly Point, bringing a First Aid kit and high-vis vest with you, to co-ordinate emergency activities. On route, direct / assist personnel (employees, visitors, contractors etc) to an emergency evacuation route, *if it is safe to do so*.

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- If the Emergency Services give the ‘all clear’, instruct personnel to return to the building in orderly fashion.

Action in the Event of Fire – contd

Fire Wardens (Teachers)

If you discover a fire or one is reported to you, immediately raise the alarm by breaking the glass in one of the fire alarm break glass units (BGU).

- If you discover the fire yourself and *if it is safe to do so and you have been trained and you feel confident*, attack the fire with suitable extinguishers, e.g., do NOT use water or foam on electrical fires, use a CO₂ or Dry Powder extinguisher. When attacking a fire be sure to keep an escape route at your back.

Alternatively, your first knowledge of fire may be the sound of the fire alarm– in either case:

- Direct students to exit the classroom in single file, with no talking and no running. Use an evacuation route unaffected by fire or an alternative route if your designated route is not safe. Know which alternative routes are available to you.
- Ensure all students have left the classroom and remember to check if any students have previously left the room & not yet returned, e.g., from toilets. Take your class Roll Book to the Assembly Point in the schoolyard. Close the door of the classroom as you leave.
- Line up your students at your designated Assembly Point IN SILENCE and take a roll call of students at your Assembly Point. Ensure personnel do not obstruct access by the fire brigade to the area. Report the status of your class to Chief Fire Warden at the Assembly Point and await further instructions.
- See also 5.11 ‘General Fire Evacuation Procedure’ below.

Action in the Event of Fire – contd

Calling the Fire Brigade

When calling the Fire Brigade, the following procedure should be used:

- Dial 999 or 112
- Give the operator your telephone number and ask for ‘FIRE’.
- When Fire Brigade replies, give the call distinctly:

**“FIRE AT –
SCOIL PHOBAIL BHÉARA
CASTELTOWNBERE
CO CORK”**

Eircode **P75 AH74**

- Do not hang up until the Fire Brigade has repeated the address.
- Evacuate the premises as per the Fire Evacuation Procedure – see Section 5.11.

Fire – contd

5.11 General Fire Evacuation Procedure

- On hearing the fire alarm being raised prepare to evacuate immediately.
- Switch off electrical equipment in use *if it safe to do so*.
- Put away valuable documents *if it safe to do so*.
- Do not attempt to carry anything from the building that could hinder your escape or that of other personnel.
- **As you make your escape:**
 - Walk quickly, do not run.
 - Do not stop to collect personal belongings.
 - Do not return to the building.
 - Assist fellow staff members, students, visitors, contractors and others who may be in difficulty without putting yourself at undue risk
 - Go to the Assembly Point in the schoolyard. Ensure access for the emergency services is not obstructed in any way
 - In the event of a bomb threat in the building, ensure personnel assemble at least 500 metres away from buildings or at any other point advised by the emergency services.
- At the Assembly Point pass on any relevant information to the Chief Fire Warden.
- Do not leave the Assembly Point until the Chief Fire Warden or Emergency Services gives the *'all clear.'*
- The Chief Fire Warden liaises with the emergency services when they arrive.

5.12 Bomb Threats

All bomb threats are treated seriously and a search of the building is always carried out. The Gardaí are always alerted and, in consultation with them, a decision is taken as to whether the premises should be evacuated or not.

If the decision is to evacuate, the **EVACUATION PROCEDURES** are implemented.

Staff who receive a telephoned bomb warning should do the following:

- Remain calm.
- Try to ascertain details of the bomb, e.g.,
 - Exact location
 - Time due to detonate.
- Note details about the caller, e.g.,
 - Sex
 - Accent
 - Approx age group (young or old)
 - Speech (measured, abusive, drunken etc.)
- Try to get as much information as possible.
- Note the main points of the call.
- Inform the most senior person in the building
- Remain calm and do not spread panic.
- If the warning is given by other means, inform the most senior person in the building.

Notes:

Staff who notice anything out of place or out of the ordinary, e.g., suspicious packages etc, should report it to the principal or other senior person immediately. Do not move or touch suspicious packages or objects.

Assembly following, and evacuation for, a bomb threat should be at least 500metres from the building.

5.13 Gas Leaks

Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) is used in Home Economics, Science and Metal Work classrooms. Gas is stored in a (compressed) gas tank at the side of the school.

If a gas leak is detected in any location, the emergency stop button on the gas control panel should be activated and as much ventilation as possible should be provided in the location. Under no circumstances should electrical equipment (including lighting) be turned on or off or mobile phones used. The building should be evacuated without activating the school bell or fire alarm. It may be necessary to evacuate to a point as for a bomb threat – see 5.11 and 5.12 above. The Principal or Deputy Principal or Safety Co-ordinator or Caretaker should be immediately informed.

The gas should not be turned on again until the Principal has authorised it.