

St. Mary's National School

Supervision of Pupils Policy

October 2015

Introduction

This policy was formulated in consultation with all staff and it applies to all staff and children during school hours, break times, and on all school-related activities.

Rationale

The rules for National Schools 121(4) and 124(1) obliges teachers to take all reasonable precautions to ensure the safety of pupils and to participate in supervising pupils during school time and during all school-related activities.

Legislation such as the Health, Safety and Welfare at Work Act and recent Court judgments have placed a “duty of care” and accountability on schools that must be underpinned by a policy covering all possible eventualities.

Relationship to ethos of the school

This policy is in keeping with the school ethos of providing a safe and secure environment for learning for all pupils and the wider school community.

Aims and Objectives

- To develop a framework that effectively ensures, as far as is practicable, the safety of children while in school at play on the yard or while engaged in school-related activities
- To observe and monitor behaviour patterns outside the confines of the classroom in school
- To contribute to effective school management and comply with relevant legislation.

School Procedures

- Teachers assume a duty of care at 9.00am. A letter is sent to parents/ guardians in September reminding parents/ guardians that the Board of Management takes no responsibility for children on the premises before 9.00 a.m.
- It is the policy of the school to supervise the school yard at all times during regular lunch breaks i.e. 10.30am to 10.40am and 12.00pm to 12.30pm/12:30 to 1:00 pm.
- A rota for supervision is drawn up by a post holder (Fiona Murphy) in consultation with Principal/staff and this rota is displayed on the staff room notice board.
- School rules as well as rules of the school yard are reviewed and revised as necessary and communicated to children regularly.
- If a serious issue arises or parents indicate a worry about a particular child on the yard, teachers rostered for yard duty are informed of the concern so that the particular concerns can be addressed satisfactorily.
- Teachers on supervision duty remain in the yard or on corridor (on a wet day) until the class teacher returns to class or collects the classes from the yard.

- Teachers who will be absent on school business, attending an in-service course or on an Extra Personal Vacation (EPV) day can arrange to swap supervision duties with a willing colleague.
- If a teacher is unexpectedly absent, a volunteer colleague will assume his/her duties in a reciprocal arrangement. This may be rostered as an Emergency Duty Rota.
- Special Needs Assistants are on duty during lunch breaks. While these Assistants provide individual supervision for designated children with special educational needs, they can also act in an observing and reporting capacity, bringing instances of misbehaviour to the attention of the teacher on yard duty. The schools Anti-Bullying Policy and Code of Behaviour Policy cover incidents of misbehaviour.
- Children with injuries/ illness are dealt with by the teacher on duty at lunchtime. A parent must request permission in writing for a child to stay in at break time due to ill health/injury.
- First Aid boxes and Accident Report books are kept as a matter of procedure.
- A record is kept in the office of all serious accidents. This is written up by the teacher/ SNA on duty who witnessed the accident. The insurance company are also informed if deemed necessary.
- At home time teachers bring children to their designated exit door

Daily Routine

Reception of pupils:

- All class levels assemble in a line at their designated assembly points inside the school yard.
- The principal/deputy principal or designated teacher opens the main doors at 9:00 a.m. A bell is rung to inform the children that it is 9:00 a.m.
- Teachers collect their classes and proceed to their classrooms in the order of sixth down to Junior Infants.
- Doors to the school are secured by electronic locks at 9.10 and entry to the school during the day is through the main door.

Morning Break:

Infant- 6th Class

Coffee break is from 10.30 - 10.40 a.m. Two teachers supervise the classes on dry and wet days.

On dry days pupils go outside. All classes are brought to the main door by the class teacher and pupils go outside. Two teachers supervise the yard. SNAs are also on duty.

On wet days pupils stay indoors and two teachers supervise the classrooms and corridors. SNAs are also on duty.

Lunch Break:

- Lunch break is staggered in two sessions from 12:00 to 12:30 p.m. for Junior Infants to 1st Class and 12.30p.m -1.00 p.m. for the Senior Classes.
- One teacher takes outdoor duty for each of the lunch breaks.

- Children are supervised eating their lunches in the classrooms for the first 10 mins of lunch break. The teacher on duty is assisted by another teacher for these 10 minutes and helps with the lining-up and the exit of the pupils for yard play –time.
- Special needs assistants supervise their assigned pupil in whichever yard their pupil is assigned.
- The same roster applies for wet day supervision

In exceptional circumstances where an illness or an injury prevents a pupil from going outside during yard time, the pupil will be permitted to sit at the First Aid Station opposite the secretary's office.

Dismissal of Pupils

- Infants are dismissed at 1.40 p.m. All other classes are dismissed at 2.40 p.m.
- Children in Junior Classes are collected from their teachers in the school yard.
- Class teachers bring the older classes to the main door and see the pupils off the premises.
- For safety reasons, pupils are not allowed to enter/ leave by the main gate, where cars enter/ exit at dismissal time. Children are frequently reminded of this. They must remain on the path and exit through the pedestrian gate on Sandford Road.

Permission for children to leave school early

Permission must be obtained from the Principal/Deputy Principal/ Class teacher. Pupils leaving the school premises for dentist/ doctor appointments are collected by parent/ guardian from the secretary's office and signed out. Generally speaking, pupils are not allowed to leave school with teenage siblings unless there is a written request from parents.

Toilets:

Children generally go to the toilets with the permission of the class teacher. Each child is encouraged to use the toilet before they go onto the yard. However, if they need to use the toilet, they ask permission of the teacher on duty, A pass is issued to the child to enter the building. Pupils in senior classes are constantly reminded of the expectation of responsible behaviour if they are unaccompanied around the building.

Security Measures:

- Pupils from Infants to Second class should go on a message in pairs under the supervision of their class teacher.
- No child is allowed to open the front door from inside to allow a visitor access.
- The main door is locked after 9.10 a.m. and is secured by code.
- Parents are requested to make appointments to see Principal/ Class teacher.
- The secretary will bring messages e.g. forgotten lunch, runners etc. to pupils in class to avoid unauthorised personnel walking unaccompanied around the building.

Pupils who leave school without permission:

If, for any reason, a child leaves the school without permission during the school day, parents/guardians will be notified immediately. Should the school be unable to contact the parents/ guardians, the Gardai will be notified.

Pupils who are not collected on time when school finishes:

The class teacher waits with the child at the dismissal door for a reasonable amount of time. He/she then proceeds to the school office with the child and contacts the parents/guardians/emergency contact numbers and organises for the timely collection of the child. If there are after-school clubs in operation, it can be agreed that the child can be left in the care of a teacher/project worker/coach/principal depending on the circumstances on the day.

In the unlikely event that no contact can be made and all school personnel are leaving the building, the Gardaí will be contacted by the principal teacher or his/her representative.

Special Provision

- For out of school activities such as games, swimming and tours, back up provision is put in place to ensure adequate levels of supervision. The level of supervision is usually one adult per 15 pupils with designated teachers/ assistants/adults in charge of specific groups.
- If a teacher is called urgently from his/ her classroom to meet with a parent, another member of staff may be released to cover supervision of the pupils if this can be arranged. However, it is school policy to request parents to make prior appointments.
- On wet days children remain in their classes at break times under the normal supervision rota. One teacher supervises classes on the corridor. SNAs are also in duty in assigned classrooms.
- When student teachers or visiting tutors/coaches are teaching subjects e.g. P.E., or other topics, the class teacher is always present in the room/hall.

Minor and serious incidents of misbehaviour will be dealt with in accordance with the school's Code of Behaviour Policy and Anti- Bullying Policy.

Success criteria and Review

- Ensuring a safe child- friendly school and school yard
- Providing well organised and safe school activities
- Reinforcing school rules on a regular basis
- Reviewing supervision duties yearly (or sooner if the need arises)
- Altering or adjusting procedures deemed to be inoperable
- Evaluating and improving procedures regularly.

St. Mary's N.S. has an agreed systematic cycle of review of policies whereby new policies are reviewed after one year and thereafter every three years unless an earlier review is requested for a specific reason by a member of the school community if circumstances arise that would prompt a more timely review.

This policy was reviewed and ratified by the Board of Management of St. Mary's National School on 22/10/2015.

It is available for parents and staff online on the school server. It is also available in the policy folder in the school office.

Chairperson's Signature:
Date: