

Tallaght Hospital School

■ Title

Health & Safety Policy

■ Introductory Statement

This policy statement was adapted to the current format in accordance with the guidelines of the Primary Professional Development Service. Our previous Safety Statement was reviewed and updated to take into account the most recent legislation in regard to Health and Safety.

The Board of Management will ensure that, in so far as is possible, the highest standards of safety shall prevail and that, at a minimum, the provisions of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work act, 2005 are applied. This policy was also compiled under the guidance of the Health, Safety and Welfare at Work policy in Tallaght University Hospital.

■ Persons affected

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

■ Rationale

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

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

■ Aims

- to create a safe and healthy school environment by identifying, preventing and tackling hazards and their accompanying risks
- to ensure understanding of the school's duty of care towards pupils
- to protect the school community from workplace accidents and ill health at work
- to outline procedures and practices in place to ensure safe systems of work
- to comply with all relevant health and safety legislation (so far as is reasonably practicable) to include the following areas
 - *Provision of a safe workplace for all employees – teachers, visiting staff, secretary, students etc.*
 - *To ensure competent employees, who will carry out safe work practices*
 - *Safe access and egress routes*
 - *Safe handling and use of hazardous substances and equipment*
 - *Safe equipment including maintenance and use of appropriate guards*
 - *Provision of appropriate personal protective equipment.*

■ Guidelines

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

1.2. Specifically, the Board of Management wishes to ensure so far as is reasonably practicable:

- The design, provision and maintenance of all places in a condition that is safe and without risk to health.
- The design, provision and maintenance of safe means of access to and egress from places of work.
- The provision of systems of work that are planned, organised, performed and maintained so as to be safe and without risk to health.
- The provision of instruction to staff on proper lifting techniques of pupils and dealing with pupils with challenging behaviour when such children are enrolled.
- The provision of such information, instruction, training and supervision as is necessary to ensure the safety and health at work of its employees.
- The preparation and revision as necessary of adequate plans to be followed in emergencies. e.g. fire evacuation, injuries etc.
- The safety and prevention of risk to health at work in connection with use of any article or substance.
- The provision and maintenance of facilities and arrangements for the welfare of employees at work.
- Obtaining where necessary, the services of competent persons for the purpose of advising on the safety and health at work of the employees e.g. Advisors from the HSE, Fire Officers, ICT Advisors re-equipment, ergonomics etc.
- The provision of arrangements for consultation with employees on matters of Health and Safety

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

CONSULTATION & INFORMATION

It is the policy of the Board of Management of Tallaght Hospital School:

- To consult with staff in the preparation and completion of the Health and Safety Statement.
- To make the *Health & Safety Statement* available to all present and future staff.
- That any additional information or instructions regarding safety, health and welfare at work not contained in the document will be conveyed to all staff as it becomes available.
- That Health, Safety and Welfare will form an integral part of any future staff training and development plans.

HAZARDS

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

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

SPECIFIC HAZARDS

1. Fire

It is the policy of the Board of Management that

- * There are fire extinguishers readily available in the hospital corridor opposite the school.
- * There is a fire alarm check in the hospital every Friday at 11am to test the fire alarms.
- * Teachers are to complete mandatory fire safety training under the hospital.
- * Instruction is given in the use of fire extinguishers for specific materials/equipment.
- * Signs will be clearly visible to ensure visitors are aware of exit doors.
- * All electrical equipment be unplugged or turned off outside school hours and when classrooms are vacated for lengthy periods.
- * An assembly area is designated inside/outside of the hospital (see attached information sheet for staff).
- * Those leaving buildings/classrooms should let someone know.

CONSTANT HAZARDS

1. Electrical Appliances

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

2. Chemicals

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

3. Drugs/Medications

It is the policy of the Board of Management that no drugs or medication be administered to pupils by members of school staff due to the fact that staff are not qualified to do so and therefore could pose a threat to the welfare of the pupils. If a pupil is feeling unwell, they will be brought back to their Ward in the Hospital and the teacher will inform the parent/guardian and nurse.

4. Accidents and Injuries

However vigilant the school staff is in relation to pupil safety; accidents will happen and correct procedures in the event of accidents can prevent or minimise injuries. Our accident/illness procedure is included as Appendix 5.

5. Bullying

The Tallaght Hospital School Anti-Bullying Policy is a stand-alone policy, which provides a framework for dealing with instances of bullying among pupils. The procedures for dealing with Adult Bullying are in accordance with the INTO publication **‘Working Together: Procedures and Policies for Positive Staff Relations (2000)’** and our **‘Dignity at Work Statement’** included as Appendix 7.

6. Access to Employees is by Consent

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

7. First aid/medication

No drugs will be administered, or medical procedure carried out in the classroom. Doctors, nurses etc. will take the pupil from the classroom with permission from relevant authorities e.g. parent/guardian.

Any member of staff requiring treatment will immediately be sent to the Occupational Health Department during working hours or Accident and Emergency if the injury sustained is a serious one.

OTHER PROCEDURES

Visitors to the School

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

■ **Success Criteria**

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

■ Roles and Responsibility

DUTIES OF ALL EMPLOYEES

1. It is the duty of every employee while at work:
 - To take reasonable care for his/her own safety, health and welfare and that of any person who may be affected by his/her acts or omissions while at work.
 - To co-operate with his/her employer and any other person to such an extent as will enable his/her employer and the other person to comply with any of the relevant statutory obligations.
 - To use in such manner so as to provide the protection intended, any suitable appliance, protective clothing, convenience, equipment or anything provided (whether for his/her use alone or for use by him/her in common with others) for securing his/her safety, health and welfare while at work.
 - To report to the Board of Management without unreasonable delay, any defects in plant, equipment, place of work or system of work, which might endanger safety, health or welfare, of which he/she might become aware.
2. No person will intentionally or recklessly interfere with or misuse any appliance, protective clothing, convenience, equipment or anything provided in pursuance of any of the relevant statutory provisions or otherwise, for securing safety, health and welfare arising out of work activities.
3. Employees will, by using available facilities and equipment provided, ensure that work practices are performed in the safest manner possible.

■ Timeframe for Implementation

The revised policy will be implemented from April 2026.

■ Timeframe for Review

This policy is reviewed annually.

■ Ratification and Communication

The Board of Management ratified this policy on the _____ of _____.

Signed: _____, (Chairperson, BOM)

Signed: _____, (Principal).

HAZARD CONTROL FORM			
Hazard	Action Taken	Date Remedied	Person Responsible

Dignity at Work: Building & Maintaining a Positive & Effective Work Environment

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

A. Core Principles

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

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

B. What is Workplace Bullying and Harassment?

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

"Workplace Bullying is repeated inappropriate behaviour, direct or indirect, whether verbal, physical or otherwise, conducted by one or more persons against another or others, at the place of work and/or in the course of employment, which could reasonably be regarded as undermining the individual's right to dignity at work. An isolated incident of the behaviour described in this definition may be an affront to dignity at work but, as a once off incident, is not considered to be bullying".

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

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

C. A Positive Work Environment

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

- Our Church of Ireland Ethos
- A supportive atmosphere
- Good and open communication
- Appropriate interpersonal behaviour
- Collaboration
- Open discussion and resolution of conflict
- Recognition, feedback and affirmation as appropriate
- Fair treatment of all staff (including fair systems of selection and promotion in line with agreed procedures)

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

D. What Happens if there is an Allegation of Bullying or Harassment?

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

In the vast majority of cases, teachers deploy conflict resolution skills, informally, effectively and constructively, such as:

- Listening
- Identifying the source of the conflict:
- Addressing the issue early, in a constructive manner and an appropriate venue (e.g. where the conflict relates to one particular individual it is related to that person individually and in private before being made public)
- Putting forward options for resolution which may include reaching compromises
- Acknowledging errors have been made and likewise accepting that errors may have been made by another party or that misunderstandings may have occurred
- Accepting solutions whether as a compromise or otherwise
- Closing the matter and
- Moving on

F. Summary

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

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

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

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