# **Health & Safety Statement**

# **Introduction**

The Health and Safety Statement of the Marist Primary School was drafted by management and staff in, in compliance with the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 1989. It was reviewed and updated by management and staff in February 2010 to comply with the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005. It was further reviewed and amended in May 2016.

# **Rationale**

The Board of management of the Marist Primary School recognises its statutory responsibility under the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005 to prepare in conjunction with employees, a Health and Safety policy. This statement represents the Board of Management’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 Board of Management will document the school’s health and safety policy and make it available at all employees, outside providers and inspectors of the Health and Safety Authority.

# **Relationship to Characteristic Spirit of School**

The Marist N.S Safety Statement reflects the importance the Board of Management place on the safety, health and welfare of all school employees and pupils.

**Aims**

# The creation of a safe and healthy school environment by identifying, preventing and tackling hazards and their accompanying risks.

Ensuring 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, as far as is reasonably practicable, with all relevant health and safety legislation to include the following areas:

* *Provisions of a safe workplace for all employees\_ teachers, SNAs, Childcare staff, secretary, caretakers, cleaning staff.*
* *To ensure employees are competent in executing safe work practices.*
* *Safe access and egress routes.*
* *Safe handling and use of chemicals.*
* *Safe handling and use of hazardous substances and equipment.*
* *Safe equipment including maintenance and use of appropriate guards.*
* *Provision of appropriate personal protective equipment.*

# **Duties and Responsibilities**

**Employers Duties**

An employer’s duties under the Safety Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005 include:

Managing and conducting all work activities so as to ensure the safety, health and welfare of people at work – including the prevention of improper conduct or behaviour likely to put employees at risk.

Designing, providing and maintaining a safe place of work that has safe access and egress, and uses plant and equipment that is safe and without risk to health.

Prevention of risks from the use of any article or substance, or from exposure to physical agents, noise, vibration and ionising or other radiations.

Prepare a Safety Statement which is regularly reviewed and updated.

Prepare and update procedures to deal with an emergency situation and to communicate these procedures to employees.

Planning, organising, performing maintaining and where appropriate revising systems of work that are safe and without risk to health.

Providing and maintaining welfare facilities for employees at the workplace.

Providing information, instruction, training and supervision regarding safety and health to employees, which must be in a form, manner and language that they are likely to understand.

Providing appropriate protective equipment and clothing to the employees at no cost to the employees.

Require employers from whom services are contracted to have an up to date safety statement (e.g. painters, bus companies, contract cleaners)

Appointing one or more competent persons to specifically advise the employer on compliance with the safety and health laws.

Ensuring that health and safety will be on the agenda for discussion at every Board of Management meeting.

Ensuring that reportable accidents and dangerous occurrences are reported to the Health and Safety Authority,

**Duties of Employees**

To take reasonable care for his/her own safety, health and welfare and that of any person who may be affected by their acts or omissions while at work

To co-operate with his/her employer with regard to safety, health and welfare at work.

To ensure that they are not under the influence of any intoxicant to the extent that they could be a danger to themselves or others while at work.

Not to engage in any improper conduct that could endanger their safety or health or that of anyone else.

Participate in safety and heath training offered by the Board of Management.

Make proper use of all machinery, tools, substances, etc. and of all personal protective equipment provided for use at work.

An employee who is under medical supervision or on prescribed medication and who has been certified fit for work should inform the principal of any known side-effects or temporary disabilities which may pose a danger to themselves, their colleagues or children in their care.

Report any defects in the place of work, equipment, etc. which might endanger safety and health to the Safety Representative.

Report to the principal any accident resulting in loss or injury and any incident that could have potentially resulted in loss or injury.

Each employee is expected to make himself/herself familiar with the contents of the Marist School Safety Statement.

**Role of the Safety Officer**

The Principal as Safety Officer has responsibility for:

The implementation of the health and safety programme as detailed in this Safety Statement.

Reviewing the hazard identification/risk assessment section of this safety statement and acting upon the recommendations stated.

Ensuring continuous vigilance in the area of hazard identification.

Dealing directly with the Safety Representative and acting upon any representations where reasonably practicable.

Informing all staff of safe work practice methods.

Ensuring implementation of specific training programmes where/when necessary.

Ensuring that all employees receive adequate safety training, instruction and information appropriate to their tasks.

Ensuring that all staff members are aware of actions to be taken in case of emergency and that properly maintained fire fighting equipment is available within the school.

Ensure that good housekeeping standards are maintained and in particular that fire exit routes are kept clear.

Arranging a review of the Safety Statement on an annual basis and revise according.

### **Entitlements of the Safety Representative**

The Safety Representative, under the provisions of the Safety Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005, has the right to:

Represent the employees at the place of work in consultation with the employer on matters in relation to health and safety.

Inspect the place of work on a schedule agreed with the employer or immediately in the event of an accident, dangerous occurrence or imminent danger or risk to the safety, health and welfare of any person.

Receive appropriate training.

Listing health and safety for discussion at staff meetings if necessary and if required.

Investigate accidents and dangerous occurrences.

Investigate complaints made by employees.

Accompany an inspector carrying out an inspection at the workplace.

Make representations to and receive information from an inspector of Health and Safety.

Consult and liaise with other safety representatives in the same

undertaking.

### **Safety Committee**

A Safety Committee which is representative of management, teaching and ancillary staff has been established. The committee will meet in the first term of the school year and thereafter during the school year if required.

Management and staff will be informed of decisions made, at their respective meetings.

#### Consultation and Information

It is the policy of the Board of Management of the Marist Primary School:

To consult with staff in the preparation and completion of the Health and Safety Statement and of the hazard control forms.

To give a copy of the Safety Statement to all present and future staff

To convey any additional information or instructions regarding Health, Safety and Welfare at work not contained in the Safety Statement to staff as it becomes available.

To ensure that Health, Safety and Welfare will form an integral part of any future staff training and development plans.

## Hazard Identification, Risk Assessment and Controlling Risks

A comprehensive review and assessment of hazards, risks and controls within the Marist Primary School will be undertaken annually by representative of the Safety Committee. This exercise will be carried out in accordance with the definitons and procedures noted below.Appendix 1 contains details of the current Risk Assessments and Control Measures in place in the Marist N.S. . All staff are encouraged to review the hazards listed in Appendix 2, to identify any issues that are not currently assessed and to feedback to the Health and Safety Representative.

**Definitions**

**A Hazard** *is any substance, article, material or practice within the school, which has the potential to cause harm to employees at work, children in our care or visitors to the school.*

**Risk** *is the potential of the hazard to cause harm in the actual circumstances of use.*

**Risk Assessment** *is the evaluation of the likelihood that harm could arise from the hazard and the likely severity and extent of the harm.*

The outcome of qualitative risk assessment will inform practices and procedures within the school.

### **Unacceptable Risk**

Where the risk cannot be reduced to acceptable levels and finance is not available to implement appropriate controls, it is the policy of the Marist Primary School to require that the activity cease or the area close.

## Pregnant Employees

Management is committed to protecting the reproductive health of all employees and minimising risks to the unborn. Management adheres to the provision of The General Application (Pregnant Employees) Regulation 2007.

Pregnant employees of the school should make the principal aware of their condition as soon as possible. When the principal/management is made aware of the above, an assessment of any hazardous activities relating to the staff member will be carried out. (See also Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment Forms Appendix 1.) If safeguards are not possible then the staff member must be given leave. This is paid leave, which continues until either the conditions change or the staff member becomes eligible for paid maternity leave.

## First Aid and Injury/Illness Management

Designated persons will treat a minor injury which would not require treatment by a medical professional.

Designated persons will take charge of an injured or ill person requiring medical assistance, until medical assistance arrives.

First Aid boxes are stored in the staffroom.

The Safety Representative is responsible for ensuring the First Aid boxes are adequately stocked.

A list of designated First Aid personnel will be displayed in the staffroom.

## Procedures to Deal with Emergencies

**Emergency Contact Procedures**

Contact details of children are updated annually by the principal. Details are kept in the school secretary’s office. The principal, teachers, and the school secretary have access to this information. It is the responsibility of parents/guardians to inform the school should they change their contact numbers during the school year.

In emergency cases parents will be contacted by the principal/deputy principal/class teacher and informed of the accident. In cases where the parents/guardians cannot be contacted the school authorities will act in loco parentis.

**Fire Drill and School Evacuation Procedures**

It is the policy of the Board of Management of the Marist Primary School that -

There is an adequate supply of fire extinguishers of different types.

That all fire equipment is identified and serviced regularly.

Instruction is given in the use of Fire Extinguishers.

Fire Alarms are clearly visible.

Signs will be clearly visible to ensure all, including visitors, are aware of exit doors.

Exit signs are clearly marked.

The school and equipment are checked by a fire officer every 5 years and that all recommendations made by him/her are implemented.

Those with a duty of care to children, (teachers other than H/S/CL, SNAs, childcare staff), must let the principal or deputy principal or other member of staff know if they are leaving the building during school hours.

### **Emergency Evacuation Procedure**

Evacuation Drills will be organised at least once a term.

The Health and Safety Representative has responsibility for the evacuation drill organisation.

Feedback on drills will be communicated to staff at staff meetings.

One evacuation drill each year will occur during a lunchtime or break period.

The school lift will not be used during fire drills or if the fire alarm is activated. Any child or adult requiring assistance will use the *Areas of Safe Refuge*, which are located on the two landing areas on the top corridor. An SNA will remain with a child/children in this area during a fire drill, or in the case of a fire until help arrives. Should an SNA not be available to escort a child/ children to the Area of Safe Refuge, the class teacher will remain with the child/children requiring assistance and her class will follow the class beside them to their assembly area.

# **Evacuation Procedures during Class Time**

The evacuation procedure for each class will be displayed on the wall beside the classroom door. Teachers must familiarise themselves regularly with the fire drill procedure in the school year.

It is considered good practice within the school for teachers to write down the number of children present each day on the whiteboard, after the roll call.

**Evacuation During Lunch/Break Periods.**

##### **Wet Day Breaks**

If possible all teachers will make their way back to their class. Personnel on supervision duty will begin to organise the children to exit the school. The personnel on supervision will also take the roll books from the classes in their care. 6th class children on lunch duty will line up and exit with the class they are in.

If it is not possible for teachers to return to their classes, the personnel on duty will begin to evacuate the building as per the designated exit route.

**Playground Breaks**

Personnel on yard duty will instruct the children to line up in their class groups at the designated fire assembly points. The teachers and SNAs on yard duty will remain in their assigned yards. Teachers will exit from the staffroom through the infant and first class corridors doors. The first teacher on each corridor will check the toilets and take out the 6th class girls who are on door duty to the designated fire assembly points. The teacher checking the infant block must also check the Early Start rooms. Joyce Cowzer will take responsibility for children who are sitting outside the staff room door during the break periods. In the event of a class being split up, due to a teacher’s absence from school, the children will remain in the yard of the class they are working in on that day.

Parents who take their children from school early must sign their child out of school and also inform the teacher on the yard that they are taking their child during break periods.

It is the policy of the school to organise evacuation drills for a wet day and for when children are in the playground during the first term of the school year.

### **Serious Accident Procedure and Accident Reporting Procedure**

A report will and must be made to the HSA in respect of the following types of incident:

An accident causing loss of life to any employee or self employed person sustained in the course of their employment.

An accident sustained in the course of their employment, which prevents any employed or self-employed person from performing the normal duties of their employment for more than 3 calendar days not including the date of the accident.

An accident to any person, not at the work place, caused by a work activity, which causes loss of life or requires medical treatment.

**Critical Incident Policy**

This policy available in our School Plan outlines the school procedure in responding to critical incidents.

### **Exceptional Closures**

In cases of exceptional closure parents/guardians will be notified by mobile phone text. It is the responsibility of parents/guardians to inform the school office when they change their contact details.

## Success Criteria

That the safety of employees and children in their care would be the overriding priority in all school practices and procedures.

That the policies, procedures and practices of the school would ensure that the highest possible levels of safety prevail.

All employees would be aware of their rights and responsibilities as detailed in the Safety Statement.

All employees would be cognisant of the procedures to be followed in the event of a serious accident/emergency occurring.

That an awareness of health and safety would be evident among all staff members and that staff would report any health and safety issue to the principal or safety representative without delay.

That the Safety Statement and associated policies and procedures would meet the criteria of the HSA.

## Organization for Safety

The chain of responsibility for Health and Safety within the Marist Primary School is as follows:

Board of Management

School Principal (Safety Officer )

Deputy Principal

Safety Representative/Safety Committee

Teachers

SNAs and Childcare Staff

Secretary and Caretakers

## Implementation

The revised and updated Safety Statement will apply from September 2016.

## Timetable for Review

The school Safety Statement will be reviewed by the Board of Management and staff annually.

**Ratification and Communication**

The Board of Management officially ratified this updated policy at a board meeting in May 2016. Parents/guardians were notified of the updated policy through the school newsletter in June 2016.

Appendices

Appendix 1 Hazard Identification and Risk Management Forms

Appendix 2. Safety Checklist