



Health & Safety Statement

Holy Cross Mercy School

Health and Safety Statement

February 2024

The Board of Management brings to the attention of its staff the following arrangements for safeguarding the safety, health and welfare of those employed and working in the school.

This policy requires the co-operation of all employees. It shall be reviewed annually or more frequently if necessary, in the light of experience, changes in legal requirements and operational changes.

The Safety Representatives are Ms Judy O'Mahony (Assistant Principal I) and Ms Lucy O'Mahony (Assistant Principal II). Staff will report any health and safety concerns to the safety representatives. These concerns will be noted in a Safety Notebook and referred to the appropriate person. Any issues that can be dealt with by Niall Myers (Caretaker) will be entered into his Maintenance Book in the school office. Anything of a more serious nature will be reported to the Safety Officer (Mrs Alice Davern). All records of accidents and ill-health will be monitored in order to ensure that any safety measures required can be put in place to minimise the recurrence of such accidents and ill-health.

The Board of Management of **Holy Cross Mercy School** wishes to ensure that as far as is reasonably practical:

- ◆ The design, provision and maintenance of all places in the school shall be safe and without risk to health.
- ◆ There shall be safe access to and from places of work.
- ◆ Work systems shall be planned, organised, performed and maintained so as to be safe and without risk to health.
- ◆ Protective clothing or equivalent shall be provided as is necessary to ensure the safety and health at work of its employees.
- ◆ Plans for emergencies shall be complied with and revised as necessary.
- ◆ This statement will be continually revised by the Board of Management as necessity arises, and shall be re-examined by the Board on at least an annual basis.
- ◆ Employees shall be consulted on matters of health and safety, at least on an annual basis and as and when the need arises.

The Board of Management of **Holy Cross Mercy School** recognises that its' statutory obligations under legislation extends to employees, students, to any person legitimately conducting school business, and to the public.

The Board of Management of **Holy Cross Mercy School** undertakes to ensure that the provisions of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005 are adhered to:

Duties of Employees

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 extent as will enable his/her employer or the other person to comply with any of the relevant statutory provisions.
- To use in such manner so as to provide the protection intended, any suitable appliance, protective clothing, convenience, equipment or thing provided (whether for his/her lone use or for use by him/her in common with others) for securing his/her safety, health or welfare at work.
- To report to the Board of Management without unreasonable delay, any defects in equipment/appliances or other which might endanger safety, health or welfare of which he/she becomes aware.
- To be responsible for the safety and maintenance of equipment/appliances brought into the classroom by the employee.

No person will intentionally or recklessly interfere with or misuse any appliance, protective clothing, convenience or other means or thing provided in pursuance of any of the relevant statutory provisions or otherwise, for securing safety, health or welfare or persons arising out of work activities.

Employees using available facilities and equipment provided should ensure that work practices are performed in the safest manner possible (see Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005).

Consultation and Information

It is the policy of the Board of Management of **Holy Cross Mercy School** to consult with staff and to convey any additional information or instructions regarding health, safety and welfare at work to all staff as it becomes available. Health, safety and welfare at work will be considered in any future staff training and development plans.

Hazards

Hazards shall be divided into two categories. Those which can be rectified will be dealt with as a matter of urgency. Those that cannot will be clearly indicated and appropriate procedures listed beside them. All hazards shall be eliminated in so far as resources and circumstances allow.

Fire

It is the policy of the Board of Management of **Holy Cross Mercy School** that:

- The Board of Management will ensure that an adequate supply of fire extinguishers, suitable for the type of fires likely to occur in each area, is available, identified and regularly serviced by authorised and qualified persons. Each fire extinguisher shall have instructions for its use.
- Ms Judy O'Mahony will ensure that fire drills shall take place at least once a term.
- Fire alarms shall be clearly marked. (Responsibility of Board of Management Safety Officer)
- Signs shall be clearly visible to ensure that visitors are aware of exit doors and routes. (Safety Officer)

- All doors, corridors, and entries shall be kept clear of obstruction and shall be able to be opened at all times from within the building. Teachers must ensure that all fire windows and exits in their classrooms are kept clear. The main door will be free of obstruction.
- A plan of the school showing assembly points outside the school is available.
- Assembly areas are designated outside the building. Some of these may change upon completion of the new building.
- All electrical equipment shall be left unplugged outside of school hours. Teachers are responsible for their own classroom. The secretary/principal, as appropriate, is responsible for the office. Cleaners are to check when cleaning.
- All recommendations made by a Fire Officer in addition to these provisions shall be implemented. The Fire Officer will be asked to visit and provide fire safety advice following completion of the new building.

The following hazards (in so much as can be identified) are considered by the Board of Management to be a source of potential danger and are brought to the attention of all staff.

1. Wet stairs
2. Playground equipment
3. Gas tanks
4. Trailing leads
5. Computers
6. Guillotine
7. Projectors
8. Fuse Board
9. Electric kettles
10. Boiler house
11. Ladders
12. Protruding units and fittings
13. Store rooms to be kept locked
14. Paths around perimeter of school
15. Icy surfaces on a cold day
16. Windows and wheelchair toilet doors opening out
17. Steps and stairs

To minimise these dangers, the following safety/ protective measures must be adhered to.

- (a) Access to and operation of appliances/equipment is restricted to qualified members of the staff, whose job function is that of running, maintaining, cleaning and monitoring particular items in the course of their normal duties. Copies of this Safety Statement will be sent to all contractors prior to contract by the Principal/Board of Management. Any other contractors entering the school must be shown a copy of the schools Safety Statement and shall adhere to its provisions.
- (b) In addition, all such appliances/equipment are to be used in strict accordance with the manufactures instructions and recommendations.
- (c) Where applicable Board of Management will ensure that members of the staff will have been instructed in the correct use of appliances and equipment.

- (d) All appliances and electrical equipment are fitted with adequate safeguards.
- (e) Precautionary notices, in respect of safety matters are displayed at relevant points.
- (f) Ladders must be used with another person's assistance.
- (g) Avoid use of glass bottles by pupils. Remove broken glass immediately on discovery.
- (h) Board of Management will check that floors are clean, even, non-slip and splinter-proof.
- (i) The Safety Representatives/Post-Holder with this responsibility will check that P.E. equipment is stacked securely and is positioned so as not to cause a hazard.
- (j) Check that all P.E. and other mats are in good condition.
- (k) Check that P.E. equipment is in good order.
- (l) Check that there are no uneven or broken footpaths.
- (m) Will check that roofs, guttering, drain pipes etc, as far as can be seen, are sound and well maintained.
- (n) Check that manholes are safe.
- (o) Check that all play areas are kept clean and fit for purpose.
- (p) Check that outside lighting works and is sufficient.
- (q) Check that all builders' materials, caretaker's maintenance equipment etc. are stored securely.
- (r) Check that refuse is removed from building each day and is carefully stored outside. (Caretaker)
- (s) Step ladders (one per floor, stored in the toilet) must be used to hang items at height. Climbing on tables and chairs is not recommended.
- (t) Any spills must be mopped up immediately, to prevent slipping. Mops (one per floor, stored in the toilet) should be used.

Constant Hazards

Kitchen equipment, electrical appliances, tools.

It is the policy of the Board of Management of **Holy Cross Mercy School** that kitchen equipment, electrical appliances and tools are to be used only by competent and authorised persons. Such appliances and equipment will be subject to annual maintenance checks.

Electrical Appliances

Arrangements will be made for appliances to be checked on a regular basis at least annually by a competent person (i.e.) maintenance person, the supplier or his agent. Before using any appliance, the user should check that:

- ◆ All safety guards which are a normal part of the appliance are in working order.
- ◆ Power supply cables/leads are intact and free of cuts or abrasions.
- ◆ Unplug leads of appliances when not in use.
- ◆ Suitable undamaged fused plug tops are used and fitted with the correct fuse.
- ◆ Follow official guidelines issued by the Health and Safety Authority.

Chemicals

It is the policy of the Board of Management of **Holy Cross Mercy School** that all chemicals, photocopier toner, detergents etc be stored in clearly identifiable containers bearing instructions and precautions for their use and shall be kept in a locked area, and protection provided to be used when handling them. (Secretary / Cleaner / Principal where appropriate).

Drugs and Medication

It is the policy of the Board of Management of **Holy Cross Mercy School** that all drugs, medications, etc. be kept in a secure cabinet, locked at all times and the key kept in a separate and secure place and used only by trained and authorised personnel. It is the responsibility of parents/guardians to ensure that all medicines e.g; Epi Pens, etc. are in date.

Where a child suffers severe allergic reactions, medication may be kept in the classroom and will move with the child at all times. A notice of foods banned from the classroom is placed on the classroom door.

Welfare

To ensure the continued welfare of the staff and children, toilets and coat racks are provided. Staff areas separate from the work area are provided, where tea/coffee and lunch breaks may be taken. Staff must co-operate in maintaining a high standard of hygiene in these areas.

A high standard of hygiene must be achieved at all times. Adequate facilities for waste disposal must be available. An adequate supply of hot and cold water, towels and soap and sanitary disposal facilities must be available.

Members of staff and students are reminded:

- A person who is under medical supervision or on prescribed medication and who has been certified fit for work, should notify the school of any known side effect or temporary physical disabilities which could hinder their work performance and which may be a danger to either themselves or their fellow workers. The school will arrange or assign appropriate tasks for the person to carry out in the interim.
- Staff and students are not allowed to attend the premises or carry out duties whilst under the influence of illicit drugs or alcohol. Any person found breaking this rule will be liable to disciplinary action.

Highly Polished Floors

It is the policy of the Board of Management of **Holy Cross Mercy School** that every attempt will be made to avoid the creation of slippery surfaces. The washing of floors shall be conducted, as far as is possible, after school hours to eliminate as far as possible, the danger of slipping. Where floors are wet, warning signs regarding wet floors shall be used. Attention is drawn to the possibility of outside surfaces being affected by frost in cold weather, and staff and pupils shall be told to use handrails when going up or down stairs. Step edges shall be painted with clearly marked edges of a non-slip nature wherever practical.

Smoking

It is the policy of the Board of Management of **Holy Cross Mercy School** that the school shall be a non-smoking area to avoid hazard to staff and pupils of passive smoking.

Broken Glass

The Board of Management shall minimise the danger arising from broken glass. Staff are asked to report broken glass to the Principal so that it may be immediately removed.

Visual Display Units

It is the policy of the Board of Management of **Holy Cross Mercy School** that the advice contained in the guidelines on the safe operation of visual display units, issued by the Health and Safety Authority be carefully followed. Any up-to-date information regarding hazards relating to the use of VDU's will be studied and recommendations and directives implemented.

Infectious Diseases

It is the policy of the Board of Management of **Holy Cross Mercy School** that all infectious diseases shall be notified and steps taken to ensure the safety of staff and students against all such diseases. The Board of Management will endeavour to minimise the risk by adherence to sound principles of cleanliness, hygiene and disinfection and have provided disposable gloves for use in all First Aid applications, cleaning tasks, etc. Toilets and washrooms shall be provided at all times with an adequate supply of water, soap, towels and a facility for the safe disposal of waste.

First Aid

First Aid equipment is held in individual classrooms and in the office. Relevant telephone numbers are available in the office.

Minor first aid will be administered by the teacher on yard duty. All incidents deemed to be serious will be recorded. In the event of a bang to the head, ice will be applied and the parent contacted. If the person attending to the situation is in any doubt about any injury, or if it a serious nature, the parent will be contacted.

All incidents, no matter how trivial and whether to employees or to students or to members of the public must be reported immediately to the person responsible for the hazard identified in the Statement or in the event that the accident/incident occurs in any other place to which that paragraph dealing with hazards does not relate to the Safety Officer. This is necessary to monitor the progress of safety standards and to ensure that the proper medical attention is given where required. An Accident Report File is to be maintained for the recording of accidents and incidents by the Safety Officer.

The Principal will see that there will be maintained in the school a properly equipped First Aid Box available to staff at all times containing:

- Sticking plasters
- Anti-histamine for Stings, etc.
- Tape
- Disinfectant (e.g.) Savlon/wipes
- Cotton Bandage
- Spray for treatment of Burns
- Antiseptic Wipes
- Scissors

Disposable gloves must be used at all times in administering First Aid

Access to School

In as much as is compatible with the practical layout of the school premises, anyone entering the school premises shall be required to identify themselves to the Principal or the Secretary as relevant before gaining admittance to the school. Any contractor must make direct contact

with the Principal before initiating any work on the premises and shall be shown a copy of the safety statement applying to the school and shall agree to its provisions.

While work is in progress, any noise shall be avoided wherever possible during school hours and shall at all times be reduced to the minimum necessary. The contractor and his workmen shall not create any hazard, permanent or temporary, without informing the Principal or her nominated agent and shall mark such hazard with warning signs or other suitable protection.

Collecting Children

- (1) All parent/guardians/carers in the interest of safety must adhere to all signs upon entering the school grounds.
- (2) Parents, guardians and children are to enter school grounds by ramp only, and not through the car park.

Revision of This Safety Statement

This statement shall be regularly revised by the Board of Management of **Holy Cross Mercy School** in accordance with experience and the requirements of the Health and Safety Act and the Health and Safety Authority.

Signed on behalf of the Board of Management:

Chairperson: Bridget McGuire Date: 19/2/24

Principal (Safety Officer): Alice Davern Date: 19/2/24

Signed by Staff Safety Representatives:

Safety Representative: Judy O'Mahony Date: 20/02/2024

Safety Representative: Lucy O'Mahony Date: 20/02/2024

Policy statement is in accordance with the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005.

Members of the Board of Management:

Chairperson:	Bridget McGuire
Principal / Safety Officer:	Alice Davern
Staff Nominee:	Edel Cronin
Parent Nominees:	Mairead Quill John Hussey
Community Representatives:	Martin O Grady Nora Holland
Patron Representative:	Fr Sean Jones

This statement was prepared by the Safety Representatives and the Board of Management, in consultation with parents and teachers. This statement is in accordance with the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005.

