**St Brendan’s NS**

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Principal: Marie Hurley

**Fire Safety Policy St. Brendan’s N.S**

**Introduction**

**This policy was updated in Sept 2022 as part of a whole-school Health and Safety Review**

This fire safety policy which is included in the overall Health and Safety Policy of the school, sets out the safety arrangements and procedures to be followed in order to ensure a safe school environment free from fire and its effect.

Fire safety refers to the set of practices intended to reduce the destruction caused by fire. Fire safety measures include actions which are

1. intended to prevent ignition of an uncontrolled fire, and
2. that are used to limit the development and effects of a fire after it starts.

The Fire Safety Policy for St. Brendan’s NS was developed following a collaborative consultation process with staff, engagement with members of the school’s Board of Management, and a thorough review of the national fire safety legislation, guidelines and protocols including: • Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Acts (2005, 2010) • Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (General Application)Regulations (2007) • Guidelines on Managing Safety, Health and Welfare in Primary Schools (HSA and DES, 2013)

This policy was prepared in accordance with the school’s key Child Protection Policies: St. Brendan’s NS Child Safeguarding Statement and Child Safeguarding Assessment of Risk of Harm to the Child.

**Objectives**

The objectives of a fire safety policy in St. Brendan’s N.S are:

* Enable the school to provide for the immediate needs of students, staff and visitors in the event of a fire.
* Identify and implement appropriate safety procedures which comply with the Health, Safety and Welfare at Work Acts (2005, 2010)
* Ensure a safe school environment for all

**Relationship to school ethos**

The Board of Management of St. Brendan’s N.S recognises their responsibility for providing a safe environment for teaching staff, non-teaching staff, pupils and other persons who come onto the premises.

**Fire Safety Monitoring**

Fire safety measures and equipment at St. Brendan’s NS will be kept in effective working order. This includes all fixtures and fittings such as fire doors, corridors, fire detection and alarm systems, fire-fighting equipment, notices and emergency lighting.

Regular checks, periodic servicing and maintenance will be carried out. Any defects will be put right as quickly as possible.

St. Brendans’ NS will ensure the reliability and safe operation of fire-fighting equipment and installed systems such as fire alarms and emergency lighting. This work is contacted to a registered company.

A competent person will carry out periodic servicing and any necessary repairs. A record

of the work carried out on such equipment and systems will help to demonstrate the school’s compliance with the law. This record will be kept in the Health and Safety File in the Principal’s Office.

The following Emergency Escape and Fire Fighting Checklist will be used for routine checks and reporting on Fire Safety:

1. Are the extinguishers suitable for the purpose and of sufficient capacity?

2. Are there sufficient extinguishers sited throughout the workplace?

3. Are the right types of extinguishers located close to the fire hazards and can users gain access to them without exposing themselves to risk?

4. Are signboards or a safety colour (or both) used to mark permanently the location and identification of fire-fighting equipment?

5. Have the people likely to use the fire extinguishers been given adequate instruction and training?

6. Is the use of fire-fighting equipment included in the emergency plan?

7. Are all fire doors and escape routes and associated lighting and signs regularly checked?

8. Is all fire-fighting equipment regularly checked?

9. Is all other equipment provided to help means of escape arrangements in the building regularly checked?

10.Are there instructions for relevant employees about testing of equipment?

11.Are those who test and maintain the equipment properly trained to do so?

**Fire Safety in St. Brendan’s N.S.**

**Risks**

High risk areas where fire can start are identified as

* The staff room- toasters etc may be left plugged in
* The kitchenette- as above
* The boiler house- there is a risk of a serious electrical or gas fault
* The electrical panels/boards in the coms room in the halla and plant room in An Cuan
* Anywhere that phones, tablets and devices may be left charging for long periods of time
* Offices- printers, shredders, laminators may be left switched on
* Portacabins- electric heater/dehumidifiers may not be unplugged
* Storage rooms – flammable materials may be left with undue care
* Outside storeroom- risk of external sources of combustion

**Smoking**

The school has a NO SMOKING POLICY within the parameters of the school building and anywhere on the external school grounds. No smoking signs are clearly visible in the interior and exterior of the building.

**Electrical Equipment**

Computers and other electrical equipment, shredder, photocopiers, laminator, kettle, dishwasher, can all impose heavy demands on the electrical system. Wiring, plugs and sockets should not be overloaded or in bad condition as they are a fire hazard.

**Flammable liquids and Chemicals**

The storage of such substances will be strictly monitored and chemicals will be stored in a locked area. Flammable material must not be stored in boiler house or electrical board area.

**Means of Escape**

* The means of escape from the school will be through the two main exit doors to the front and back on each corridor when and if it is safe to do so. Otherwise the means of escape will be through the emergency exit windows located on the exterior wall of each classroom.
* Fire escape windows and doors, will be kept clear and unlocked at all times, and never used as storage areas
* Escape routes will be inspected regularly to ensure that they are kept clear and not obstructed
* The roller shutters on the two exit doors to the rear of the building will not be left down when the premises are occupied during school hours. All available means of escape will be available at all times when the building is occupied during school hours
* Displays should never obstruct the exits, fire notices, fire fighting equipment, or exit signs. They should never be attached to lights, radiators, heaters, or fire safety equipment.

**Equipment**

All fire safety equipment was updated in 2019/2020 as part of the building works.

* Each room, corridor, store is fitted with a smoke detector.
* The Fire Alarm control panel is located in the corridor outside the secretary’s office. It is maintained twice annually by Alert Fire Protection. The principal/deputy Principal/Secretary are familiar with its usage. All rooms are appropriately numbered and a room key and plan of the school is displayed on the wall beside the fire panel so that fire fighters can locate the source of the smoke rapidly.
* All mag lock doors are designed to drop power in the event of a smoke detection event.
* A fire shutter in the ASD unit cooking area is designed to drop automatically if smoke is detected.
* Two fire hose reels are located in entrance hall at Junior and Senior section
* C02 and Foam extinguishers are located at visible points throughout the school corridors. They are maintained annually by Atlantic Fire and labelled appropriately.
* There is a fire exit window in classrooms 13, 18, 19, 21. Smaller rooms 27, 28, 29 also have fire window exits.
* All exits are clearly marked and fitted with light-up signage. Emergency lighting of escape routes will activate in the event of a fire.
* There are “break glass” fire alert buttons in corridors throughout the school
* There is a Fire blanket in the staff canteen area.
* Each room has a school plan on display with the fire exit route clearly marked and a class list readily available to check at the assembly point.

**Assembly Points**

Assembly points are in the playgrounds that the pupils line up in during morning assembly or break times.

**Roles and Responsibilities**

**Staff:**

All staff are responsible for the safety and well-being of the pupils in their care.

* Class teachers will be responsible for unplugging computers and other electrical equipment in their classroom. Only electrical portable heaters procured by the school authorities are allowed in the school. These MUST be switched off at the end of the day. The class/SEN teachers are responsible for ensuring that portable heaters are not left on
* Class teachers will be responsible for reporting damaged cabling, plugs, cracks or fraying to the Principal fire safety Officer.
* It is the responsibility of each staff member to familiarise themselves with details of escape routes and Assembly Points.
* It is the responsibility of each class teacher to ensure that the pupils in their care are familiar with procedures for evacuating the school in the event of a fire. It is also their duty to teach fire prevention and explain fire hazards.
* Class teachers (when pupil is in class) and SEN teacher (when pupil is attending resource class) in collaboration with the assigned special needs assistant, are responsible for ensuring that wheelchair bound pupils and pupils with special educational needs are brought to fire assembly point quickly and safely.
* Particular care should be given to the health and safety risks inherent in the carrying out of a Fire Drill and all staff should be fully aware of how to minimise the risks to pupils, especially SEN pupils and pupils with a physical disability.

**BOM and ISM Officers:**

The Principal, Marie Hurley, BOM Health and Safety Officer Keith Farragher and staff Health and Safety officer, AP11 Michael Maye together have overall responsibility for ensuring proper Fire Safety procedures are in place, as part of the school’s Safety Committee.

The Principal will consult with staff to put in place and maintain measures to promote Fire Safety at the school and monitor the effectiveness of those measures.

It is the responsibility of the Principal and the Fire Safety Officer on the BOM/In-school Management Team to ensure that Fire Drills are carried out twice yearly.

The Fire Safety Officer should liaise with the local Fire Service and Atlantic Fire to ensure that staff is trained on the use of the fire extinguishers and that evacuation procedures adhere to current legislation and are suitable for this particular premises.

**BOM:**

Any defects in the alarm system arising from a routine check will be prioritised by the Board of Management for repair or replacement in line with Guidelines on Managing Safety, Health and Welfare in Primary Schools (HSA and DES, 2013, p. 20 and p. 31).

**Duty of the Staff Health and Safety Officer**

The health and Safety officer is responsible for fire related matters which include

* Organising fire drill at least twice annually
* Termly review and report on fire safety checks
* Checking that fire notices are displayed in prominent positions throughout the building
* Checking fire alarms and exits ensuring that they are working and free from obstruction
* Ensuring that newly appointed staff receive information and training in emergency procedures
* Arranging with Principal for testing of system and fire fighting appliances and the maintenance of records of all tests, fire drills and inspection of equipment
* Encouraging staff to participate in fire safety courses
* Ensuring all classes participate in Fire Safety Week activities

**Fire Safety Policy: Monitoring and Reviewing**

**Success Criteria**

Practical indicators of the success of this policy will be evident in termly reports on Fire Safety at St. Brendan’s NS by the school’s Health and Safety Officer which show full compliance with this Fire Safety Policy to ensure the safety of all adults and children at St. Brendan’s NS. (For example, the termly reports will note that fire drill procedures achieved a coordinated and orderly evacuation in the shortest time possible.)

**Implementation and Timetable for Review**

Following approval by the Board of Management, this policy will apply with immediate effect at St. Brendan’s NS.

This policy and related policies will be reviewed annually (or in line with a change in Department legislation) and amended if/as necessary.

**Ratification and Communication**

This Fire Safety Policy was finalised and posted on the school’s website. Hardcopies of the policy are available to parents on request.

This policy was adopted by the Board of Management of St. Brendan’s NS on:

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Signed: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Fr. Noel Rooney, Chairperson on behalf of the Board of Management

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Marie Hurley, Principal

**Fire Drill and Evacuation Procedure**

**A fire escape route map and up to date class list is hanging near to the door or fire exit in each classroom. All other rooms will also have a fire exit route map on display. The Principal/Health and Safety Officer will ensure that all staff are familiar with this route map at the start of the school year and also in the event of a change of staff. All staff are equally responsible for making themselves familiar with this from the start of the school year.**

Particular care should be given to the health and safety risks inherent in the carrying out of a Fire Drill and all staff should be fully aware of how to minimise the risks to pupils, especially SEN pupils and pupils with a physical disability.

In the event of a fire at St. Brendan’s NS, the following steps will be followed:

1. The fire alarm activates. The Principal calls the Fire Brigade using the school mobile.

2. In all (class)rooms, children, adults and any visitors to the school stand up, push their chairs back under their tables and calmly walk to the door in single file. Children and adults do not pause to take bags or books with them.

3. Each teacher takes their class list of his/her own individual class with them.

4. Each teacher closes the classroom door and windows when leaving the room.

5. All teachers check the class toilets before vacating the room.

6. Each groups fire assembly point is marked on the fir exit route map. (Generally it coincides with the playground lining up procedures for each class).

8. Pupils who are attending the SET teacher at the time of a fire drill are accompanied by the SET teacher to the assembly area and join their class.

9. Each teacher calls the roll for his/her own class on reaching the fire assembly point.

10. The principal monitors the evacuation for (i) adherence to this set of procedures (ii) evidence of efficiency and safety for all actions outlined (iii) total time taken to evacuate the building.

11. Pupils return to the school premises when the all-clear has been given by the Principal.

12. The Fire Drill is carried out at least twice a year and ideally once a term.

*Safety during Fire drill is paramount. As rooms 3, 13 and 18 may be required to use the fire window in the event of the corridor filling with smoke, special drills will be carried out in addition to the whole school drill for these crooms alone, with the Principal present to ensure safe exit.*