

## INTRODUCTION

Maria Regina College St Paul's Bay Primary believes that the safety of our pupils, staff, employees and visitors cannot be compromised. Health and Safety is incorporated throughout our curriculum and activities. The responsibility of Health & Safety is a shared and mutual responsibility between the Head of School and staff at all levels. The School Management Team (SLT) will, so far as is reasonably practicable, safeguard the physical and mental well-being of all staff, pupils and visitors as indicated by the Health and Safety Legislative Framework indicated below:

Legislation	Impact on school practice
Occupational Health and Safety Act  (Act XXVII of 2000, as amended by Act XXXII of 2007 and Legal Notice 426 of 2007)	Outlines the responsibility of individual employees for maintaining health and safety in the workplace.
LEGAL NOTICE 11 of 2002, as amended by Legal Notice 348 of 2011. Work Place (First Aid) Regulations	Deals with the importance of having adequate and appropriate equipment and facilities for enabling first aid treatment "to whosoever becomes injured or ill inside the workplace". This includes a readily accessible and adequately maintained First Aid Box (1:50) and suggests that a trained First Aider is present at all times.
Children's Protection Act (Out of Home Care) 2014	Focuses on improving outcomes for children through their childhood including 'being healthy' and 'staying safe'.  "Early childhood education and care in Malta: The way forward" includes the welfare requirements for promoting health and safeguarding children.
LEGAL NOTICE 35 of 2003. Protection against Risks of Back Injury at Work Places Regulations	Provides guidance for lifting and carrying, including correct techniques and procedures for risk assessment.

<p>Registration of Food Handlers Regulations, 2001 (L.N. 178 of 2001) as amended by Food Handlers (Registration) (Amendment) Regulations, 2007 (L.N. 137 of 2007)</p>	<p>Provides guidance on the preparation, storage and cooking of food and the requirements for staff training in food hygiene.</p> <p>(DCM 069 – Food Handling Card – “As from the beginning of scholastic year 2015 – 2016, personnel from the Health Inspector Services will be visiting schools as part of their routine duty asking to see the Food Handling Card”)</p>
<p>LEGAL NOTICE 227 of 2003, as amended by Legal Notices 353 of 2007 and 53 of 2012. Protection of the Health and Safety of Workers from the Risks related to Chemical Agents at Work Regulations</p>	<p>Protects children from dangerous chemicals (including cleaning substances and medicines), including regulations about storage and usage</p>

## OUR AIMS

Maria Regina College St Paul’s Bay Primary recognises its’ ultimate responsibility for the implementation of this policy. Matters that cannot be resolved at this level must be referred to the College Principal’s Office.

We believe that perceived risks during meticulously planned activities reinforce our students’ awareness of risk-taking and foster self-confidence and self-control, skills essential in building tomorrow’s workforce. This is appropriate when risks are identified and mitigated. Yet, parents/carers who entrust us with their children justifiably expect them to return uninjured. To achieve this goal, the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) and all staff members must work together to:

- provide and maintain healthy and safe systems of work and working conditions (This requires that risk assessments be carried out as appropriate to enable hazards and risks to be identified which, in turn, enable the standards of safety to be adapted and enforced);
- provide means of access and egress that are safe and without risks to health.
- provide comprehensive information, instruction, training and supervision, with the object of ensuring, so far as is reasonably practicable, the Health and Safety at work of all students, staff and the public.
- ensure that the health, safety and welfare of all students, staff and visitors are under continuous review by management at all levels.
- ensure safe arrangements are made for the storage, handling and transport of articles and substances.
- ensure the School will have and maintain up to date fire procedures and documents and ensure that all employees and pupils are familiar with them.
- model safe behaviours when participating in events.
- communicate the importance of incident and near-miss reporting.
- analyse incidents that do occur to learn from them, and modify risks where appropriate.
- communicate with parents and carers.
- provide first aid when necessary.
- promote children’s health and wellbeing at all times.

## **HIERARCHY OF RESPONSIBILITIES**

### The Head of School

The Head of School shall implement the Health and Safety Action Plan within the School system and shall be responsible to:

- supervise the effectiveness of the action plan and the safe working practices described within it for any necessary revision which shall be carried out on a regular basis;
- make the required arrangements to draw the attention of all staff to the school's safety procedures and of any other relevant safety guidelines/ information issued by the relevant authorities;
- instruct all staff on their specific duties and provide the relevant training;
- provide suitable protective clothing and safety equipment (as and where necessary) and ensure that it is used in compliance with manufacturer's recommendations;
- inform all users of the school of any relevant safety procedures;
- make students aware (and where appropriate, parents/carers) of their responsibilities through direct Health and Safety lessons, meetings, printed and electronic communication, etc;
- identify and delegate suitable staff members as Health and Safety representatives who shall take on the responsibility of being the liaison person between the school members (staff and students), the school administration and the College Health and Safety Teacher;
- identify trained staff members to take charge of First Aid matters and to administer the accident reporting procedure; the nominated person shall receive all the relevant training;
- provide adequate and appropriate First-aid equipment and facilities at all times. First-aid equipment must be clearly labelled and easily accessible.
- provide at least one fully stocked first-aid container for each site.
- make certain that regular safety reviews and updates are carried out routinely and as necessary;
- take precautionary immediate action to rectify any defect in a state of disrepair, which may constitute any form of hazard of the school's building and its surroundings;
- delegate responsibilities to the SLT;
- liaise and consult with the College Health and Safety Teacher.

### The Senior Leadership Team (SLT) shall:

- cover all forms of maintenance which are under its control and report to the College Principal's Office any other hazardous situation which cannot be remedied within the financial resources made available to them;
- withdraw, repair and replace any unsafe item (furniture, fitting or equipment);
- ensure that any contractors, self-employed and other workers present on site comply to local safety legislation as well as the School's safety policy;
- stop any unauthorized or unapproved work systems;
- report any accident (or incident where personal injury could have arisen) and take appropriate mitigation action;
- carry out effective emergency evacuation procedures and maintain the necessary records;
- make the necessary arrangements to regularly monitor the condition of all fire prevention equipment - regular checks of fire extinguishers and the fire alarm system.
- liaise and consult with the College Health and Safety Teacher.

### The School Health and Safety Representative

The delegated person/s shall:

- serve as liaison between the school staff & students and the school administration regarding Health and Safety matters;
- assist the Head of School in the implementation, monitoring and development of the School Health and Safety Action Plan;
- observe applicable recommendations regarding safety matters set by the competent authorities or other recognised relevant bodies and advise on their application within the School functions;
- assist the Head of School in making the necessary arrangements for the implementation of safe work practices within the School;
- arrange and liaise for the dissemination of information and for the instruction of students, staff and visitors on Health and Safety matters;
- assist in regular safety inspections to ensure that all School members understand and adopt safe methods of practice, examine any Health and Safety issues that may arise within the School, consult with the College Health and Safety Teacher and make recommendations on suitable corrective/control actions to the Head;

- report any hazard, near miss, accident or injury to the Head of School for the appropriate corrective/ control action to be taken;
- coordinate evacuation drills with the College Health and Safety Teacher and the Head of School;
- liaise and consult with the College Health and Safety Teacher.

### Teachers

Teachers are responsible for Health and Safety in relation to students who, by default, fall directly under their duty of care. While executing their work activities they are to take all the reasonable steps to:

- cooperate with their superiors and provide the necessary support to attain the School's Health and Safety objectives;
- take care of the Health and Safety of themselves and that of any other person who might be affected by their operations or omissions in their line of work;
- be conscious of and adopt safe working practices to lead by good example and be positive role models to their students;
- supervise those for whom they are responsible, especially students;
- ascertain that any equipment is appropriate for their use and utilized in compliance with the recommended safety standards;
- ensure that tools and equipment are in good working condition and report any faults to the SLT;
- identify any potential hazards and take all the necessary actions to minimise the likelihood of an accident occurring;
- report any hazard, near miss, accident or injury to the SLT for the appropriate corrective/ control action to be taken;
- provide their full support in evacuation drills.

### Minor Staff

All minor staff personnel have a responsibility to:

- cooperate with their superiors and give the necessary support to attain the School's Health and Safety objectives;
- be conscious of and observe all safety rules, procedures and safe work practices which are applicable to their posts;
- take care for their own Health and Safety and that of any person who might be affected by their acts or omissions at work;

- use the necessary protective clothing and safety equipment provided to them and ensure that such supplies are kept in good condition;
- not interfere with or misuse equipment or anything provided in the interests of Health and Safety;
- ensure that tools and equipment are in good working condition and report any faults to the SLT;
- beware of wet floors and any tripping hazards and mark them appropriately;
- leave unattended equipment in a safe place, out of students' reach;
- ensure that exits from the building are not blocked;
- ensure good housekeeping;
- report any hazard, near miss, accident or injury to the SLT for the appropriate corrective/ control action to be taken;
- provide their full support in School evacuation drills.

### Responsibilities of Students

According to their level of expertise and ability, students are expected to:

- adopt personal responsibility for the safety of themselves and that of their colleagues;
- observe the related dress code standards and be consistent with safety practices (such as unapproved clothing and accessories, footwear, sharp or pointed objects, dangerous objects, broken toys and other items considered hazardous);
- observe and adopt all the safety rules of the School, particularly the instructions of their teachers and School staff in the event of an emergency;
- not misuse, neglect or interfere with things which are provided for Health and Safety purposes (eg: fire extinguishers);
- participate and observe School evacuation drill procedures.

## SAFETY IN THE CLASSROOM AND INDOOR ACTIVITIES

The educators' attention to safe instructional practices for each class activity, planning and the inclusion of age-appropriate activities are the main key in decreasing the inherent hazards regardless of the students' physical, mental, emotional abilities or cultural background.

Meanwhile, students must understand how to follow safety procedures and why they should do so. They should also be informed of the importance of contributing to their own safety.

An informal risk assessment by educators:

- ensures that the planned activity and resources being used are age-appropriate for the learners' physical/mental abilities/limitations and behavioural patterns. Any identified hazards must be acknowledged and removed.

Before the actual activity:

- Prior to teaching the skills of the activity, it is recommended that educators outline the potential risks of the activity, show the students how to reduce the risks and set guidelines and rules for safe play.
- All educators must launch procedures, rules of acceptable conduct/performance and appropriate duties of students at the beginning of all activities and reinforced throughout.
- Students must be made aware of the rules of activities/games. Rules must be strictly enforced and modified to suit the age, physical, emotional, social, and intellectual abilities of the participants.
- Educators might need to sanction students for unsafe play or improper behaviour and must implement that responsibility at all times.

During the activity:

- Where an incident occurs that increases or could increase the risk of injury, counteractive arrangements must take place to help avoid its reoccurrence.
- Students must be encouraged to report equipment problems to their educators immediately.
- All members of staff have a responsibility to prevent injuries to all students by being vigilant following safety procedures and ensuring that the classroom equipment is in a good state of repair.
- All equipment used by the students, such as toys, play materials and electrical items, need to meet the relevant health and safety standards. These items should display a product- safety logo, such as the **CE mark**, to show that they meet European health and safety standards.

## DISMISSAL

Students should be supervised in their classroom setting at all times. On dismissal, students from Kinder 1 to Year 4 must never leave the setting unsupervised and should only be released into the care of individuals who have been notified to the Head of School by the parents/carers, unless otherwise indicated by the same parents/carers.

## OUTINGS AND INDOOR ACTIVITIES

It is essential for students to experience different settings and play experiences. If outing includes visits to an open space (such as Ta' Qali and Buskett), teachers and members of the SLT must consider the potential hazards that pupils might encounter. Only those areas that could affect the pupils and staff during their visit should be considered.

Hazards might include pits, surrounding roads and cliffs. It is **not meant** to cover public places such as streets, as in these cases normal safety procedures are already in place. Reasonable precaution should be taken at all times.

Planning of an outing should include consideration of:

- the educational aims
- suitable venues for achieving those aims
- the dangers and difficulties which may arise and how to reduce them
- appropriate / trained staff and/or guidance
- appropriate and safe material and educational items
- appropriate first aid in case of any incidents

The member from the Senior Leadership Team in charge of a particular year group, with the help of the teachers within his/her team need to make sure that:

- all students going on an outing have acquired parental/carer **written** consent
- for high-risk outings, at least one of the educators must possess a current certificate in Basic First Aid or its equivalent;
- adequate supervision shall be provided and the students' whereabouts shall be accounted for at all times;
- each student knows or has displayed the name, school address and school phone number to which s/he belongs;
- the weather conditions have been considered and providing an alternative route or plan if the main plan is disrupted;
- a plan for any specific, individual needs of the students (such as allergies and special dietary requirements) has been created;
- a register or list of all the students attending has been accomplished before the actual trip.



- 'The Lost Child Plan' and safety procedures have been reviewed with the educators workers and students alike. Before the group leaves the school, a Buddy System and the accountability system will be established and students will be assigned seats with their buddies.

## **Sanctions**

The Senior Leadership Team (SLT) and teachers reserve the right to apply appropriate sanctions to students whose conduct does not comply with our school's Behaviour Policy.

Furthermore, students might be prohibited from going to school outings:

- if their uniform is not up to the dress code
- in the absence of a written consent from their parents/carers.

## **ACCIDENT PROCEDURES AND FIRST AID**

In most cases accidents can be avoided. Nevertheless, accidents or incidents do occur and when they happen they can create shock and panic. That is why all stakeholders involved in our learners' development should know exactly what to do in response to an accident:

- Accidents to visitors/contractors/pupils/staff/ etc. should be reported to the SLT immediately.
- On becoming aware of an accident/incident, staff should, as far as they are able, render first aid to the casualty as soon as possible.
- The first aider attending to the casualty stays with the latter until no further assistance is required, or until the casualty is placed in the care of ambulance officers or other medical personnel, unless the employee's personal safety is at risk.
- In more serious situations professional/medical services might be required or an ambulance might be called.
- In the case of students, parents/carers are informed immediately. Where a parent cannot be reached, the person designated as an emergency contact shall be contacted.
- When a serious accident happens, it is important that the site is left untouched until advice is obtained from the SLT.
- The school's SLT is then required to investigate the accident/incident and ensure any hazard is controlled to prevent further injuries/incidents.
- All accidents are to be recorded on the Accident Report sheet as close as possible to the time of the accident/incident.
- Whenever doubt exists as to the seriousness of the injury, the procedure will be the same as for injuries which obviously require medical/hospital attention.

## **MEDICATIONS**

Some students and staff might need medication to control their health. While it is the duty of the staff to care and assist students and colleagues, the school is committed to respect the individual's privacy and confidentiality. Parents/carers are encouraged to inform the school if their child needs any medication or of their condition.

No staff shall administer and/or distribute any non-prescription medication, such as 'Paracetamol', 'Asprin' or any other medications which can be purchased over the counter without prescription.

## **CLEANLINESS**

Students are susceptible to infection and cross-infection, as their immune systems are still developing, they usually have a higher degree of close contact with others and they may not have an understanding of hygiene practices. Procedures to prevent the spread of infection are essential for protecting them from illness and promoting good health.

Parents/carers are recommended to nurture in their children the importance of good personal hygiene, and clean habits from a young age by encouraging them to have a bath or shower daily, to brush their teeth twice a day and to change their school uniform regularly.

The school is committed to:

- encourage basic hygiene measures amongst staff and students such as the importance of hand washing, food hygiene and cleaning;
- promote sessions in hygiene to educate the students (ex: hand washing practices, posters, and staff meetings) and reinforce infection control practices;
- verify that the staff is aware of the correct management of spills of blood and body fluids;
- encourage the staff to use protective clothing and disposable gloves, use appropriate waste bins for hazardous waste and disposable tissues and practice decontamination procedures;
- confirm that all staff know their responsibilities for cleaning and set cleaning policies and procedures
- ensure there are adequate supplies of appropriate PPE readily available to staff;

## **EMERGENCY EVACUATION**

- All staff should ensure that they are familiar with the school evacuation procedures and act upon the requirements.
- All staff should know the school and the various routes of exits.
- At MRC St Paul's Bay Primary fire drills are carried out once per term and logged in the fire log book.
- Staff and students are often warned in advance of these drills, but sometimes are not, to maintain authenticity and reduce complacency.
- Obstruction - entrances, exits and corridors must be kept clear and unobstructed at all times. Essential works to corridors and/or exits must be separated off in such a way that safe exit in an emergency remains possible.
- Safety Evacuation Procedure notices should be clearly displayed in every classroom.

- In the event of an evacuation, no member of staff or pupil shall re-enter the building without the permission of the SLT present. Where there are members of the emergency services present, their permission must be obtained before anybody re-enters the building.
- In case of a real evacuation, parents/carers must inform the child's educator before taking their child home, for accountability reasons.