

# Holy Family Secondary School



## Health and Safety Policy and Safety Statement

May 2019

**Ratified by Board of Management on: 7<sup>th</sup> May 2019**

**Proposed Next Policy Review date: Annual review as necessary**

---

Chairperson, Board of Management    Secretary, Board of Management    Representative of the  
Diocese

Ms T. Brophy

Ms S. Allen

Fr. Joe Mc Dermott

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

### Section 1: HFSS Health and Safety Policy

### Section 2: Organisational Structure

- 2.1 School Profile
- 2.2 School Structure
- 2.3 Personnel

### Section 3: Duties & Responsibilities

- 3.1 School Principal
- 3.2 Deputy School Principals
- 3.3 Teaching Staff and Administrative Staff
- 3.4 Caretaker and Cleaners
- 3.5 All employees
- 3.6 Health and Safety Committee
- 3.7 Visitors
- 3.8 Contractors

### Section 4: Safe Working Arrangements

- 4.1 Resources
- 4.2 Training & Induction
- 4.3 Safety Consultation
- 4.4 First Aid
- 4.5 Reporting of Accidents & Dangerous Occurrences
- 4.6 Welfare Facilities
- 4.7 Control of Contractors
- 4.8 Pregnant Employees
- 4.9 Monitoring & Revision
- 4.10 Others Affected by School Activities
- 4.11 Fire
- 4.12 Gas
- 4.13 Smoking and Vaping
- 4.14 Places of Public Assembly
- 4.15 High Risk Activities
- 4.16 School bags
- 4.17 Specialised Classrooms
- 4.18 Statutory Inspections of Machinery and Equipment
- 4.19 Occupational Health and Safety
- 4.20 Employee Assistance Service
- 4.21 Dignity and Diversity at Work
- 4.22 Manual Handling

### Section 5: Hazard Identification and Control Measures

- 5.1 Safety Statement and Risk Assessments
- 5.2 Hazard Identification
- 5.3 The Health and Safety Authority (HSA) Guidelines for Schools

## **Section 1: HFSS HEALTH and SAFETY POLICY**

### **1. Link to Mission Statement**

This Policy has been developed in line with our Mission Statement which states;

*'We promote the Christian virtues of faith, hope, love, gentleness, respect and tolerance, and we emphasise togetherness and family. Guided by these Christian virtues, and dedicated to the pursuit of excellence, it is our mission to provide a safe, caring, inclusive learning environment in which to foster the spiritual, intellectual, academic, aesthetic, physical, emotional and social development of each pupil so that she may fulfil her own unique potential and may leave our school with the capacity and the willingness to contribute to the building of a society characterised by these Christian virtues'*

Holy Family Secondary School takes its responsibilities of managing health and safety considerations very seriously as they make our whole school a better place to learn and work.

### **2. Rationale**

A Health and safety Management System (SMS) in a school setting involves an on-going process which aims to promote continuous improvement in the way the school manages safety. It fits into the overall management of the school and includes the school structure, planning activities, practices, procedures, and resources for developing, implementing, reviewing and maintaining safety, health and welfare.

- 'School' means Holy Family Secondary School, Newbridge, Co. Kildare
- 'Parent/Guardian' means those having parental responsibility for a HFSS pupil

### **3. Scope of this policy**

This Health and Safety policy comprises part of the preparation of the Safety Statement, as required by Section 20 of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005. This policy is a written document containing a declaration of the commitment of the Board of Management to ensuring safety, health and welfare in Holy Family Secondary School.

This policy is to be read and interpreted in its totality and operates within the framework of the school's collective policies. The policy also operates within a legislative framework and takes account of the following;

- The Education Act, 1998
- The Education Welfare Act, 2000
- Equal Status Act, 2000
- The Equality Act, 2004
- Building Control Acts 1990 and 2007
- Civil Liability and Courts Act 2004

- Fire Services Acts 1981 and 2003
- Occupiers' Liability Act 1995
- Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (Chemical Agents) Regulations (amended) 2015
- Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005
- Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (General Application) Regulations 2007
- 2018 Code of Practice for the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (Chemical Agents) Regulations 2001
- The Children First Act 2015

#### **4. HFSS Health and safety Policy**

In accordance with the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005, it is the policy of the Board of Management of Holy Family Secondary School to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the safety, health and welfare at work of all staff and to protect pupils, visitors, contractors and other persons at the school from injury and ill health arising from any work activity. The successful implementation of this policy requires the full support and active co-operation of all staff, contractors, parents/guardians and pupils of the school.

It is recognised that hazard identification, risk assessment and control measures are legislative requirements which must be carried out by the employer to ensure the safety, health and welfare of all staff.

The Board of Management, as employer, undertakes in so far as is reasonably practicable to:

- promote standards of safety, health and welfare that comply with the provisions and requirements of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005 and other relevant legislation, standards and codes of practice;
- provide information, training, instruction and supervision where necessary, to enable staff to perform their work safely and effectively;
- maintain a constant and continuing interest in health and safety matters pertinent to the activities of the school;
- continually improve the system in place for the management of occupational health and safety and review it periodically to ensure it remains relevant, appropriate and effective;
- consult with staff on matters related to safety, health and welfare at work;
- provide the necessary resources to ensure the safety, health and welfare of all those to whom it owes a duty of care, including staff, pupils, contractors and visitors.

The Board of Management of Holy Family Secondary School is committed to playing an active role in the implementation of this occupational health and safety policy and undertakes to review and revise it in light of changes in legislation, experience and other relevant developments.

#### **4. HFSS Safety Statement**

This policy is a core element of our HFSS Safety Statement.

Every safety statement begins with a declaration, signed at senior management level on the employer's behalf. This is known as the health and safety policy. The declaration gives a commitment to ensuring that a workplace is as safe and healthy as reasonably practicable and that all statutory requirements will be complied with. This declaration should spell out the policy in relation to overall health and safety performance, provide a framework for managing health and safety and list relevant objectives.

*Glossary from HSA Guidelines, source [www.hsa.ie](http://www.hsa.ie)*

**Audit:** In the context of health and safety management, an audit is a structured process of collecting independent information on the efficiency, effectiveness and reliability of the overall health and safety management system as well as the drawing up of plans for collective action.

**Employees/staff:** For ease of reading the term 'employee(s)' has been replaced with the word 'staff' in many instances. Where 'employee(s)' is mentioned the reader can interpret this to mean 'staff'. The definition of employee is outlined in Section 2(1) of the Safety Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005.

**Hazard:** A hazard is anything that has the potential to cause harm to people, property or the environment. It can be a work material, piece of equipment or a work method or practice.

**Hazard Identification:** This is the process of identifying situations or events that could give rise to the potential of injury, or of harm to the health, of a person.

**Health and Safety Authority (HSA):** the national body in Ireland with responsibility for securing health and safety at work. It is a state-sponsored body, established under the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act and it reports to the Minister for Enterprise, Trade and Innovation. The Authority's responsibilities cover every type of workplace and every kind of work in the public and private sectors.

**Reasonably Practicable:** Legislation defines "reasonably practicable" to mean that "an employer has exercised all due care by putting in place the necessary protective and preventative measures, having identified the hazards and assessed the risks to health and safety likely to result in accidents or injury to health at the place of work concerned and where putting in place of any further measures are grossly disproportionate." "Reasonably practicable" may be understood to mean that which a reasonable person would do given the particular circumstances.

**Risk:** Risk is the likelihood that someone will be harmed by the hazard together with the severity of harm suffered. Risk also depends on the number of people exposed to the hazard.

**Controls/control measures:** Controls/control measures are the precautions taken to ensure that the risk is eliminated or reduced.

**Risk Assessment:** Risk assessment is the process of determining whether there is a risk associated with an identified hazard. The significance of the risk is determined by the frequency of the potential occurrence and the severity of its consequences.

**Safety Committee:** A committee comprising management and employee representatives involved in the safety consultation arrangements at the workplace.

**Health and safety Management System (SMS):** This refers to that part of the overall management system of the school that includes the organisational structure, planning activities, responsibilities, practices, procedures and resources for developing, implementing, achieving, reviewing and maintaining the school's health and safety policy.

**Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005:** The Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005, which revoked and replaced the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 1989 was brought in to

make further provision for the safety, health and welfare of persons at work. This Act clarifies and enhances the responsibilities of employers, the self-employed, employees and various other parties in relation to health and safety at work. The Act also details the role and functions of the Health and Safety Authority, provides for a range of enforcement measures that may be applied and specifies penalties that may be applied for breaches of occupational health and safety.

## **Section 2: Organisational Structure**

### **2.1 School Profile**

Holy Family Secondary School (HFSS) is a Catholic, girls-only, all-ability, Diocesan day school, under the patronage of the Bishop of Kildare and Leighlin.

Subjects offered at HFSS include:

#### ➤ JUNIOR CYCLE

Irish, English, Maths, History, Geography, Science, German, French, Spanish, Art, Business Studies, Computer Studies, Religious Education, Music, Physical Education, Civic, Social and Political Education (CSPE) Social, Personal & Health Education (SPHE) Digital Literacy and Guidance (DLG)

#### ➤ LEAVING CERTIFICATE

Irish, English, Maths, History, Geography, Physics, Biology, Chemistry, Art, Business, Accounting, Economics, French, Spanish, German, Religious Education, Guidance and Counselling, Social, Personal & Health Education (SPHE) Relationship and Sexuality Education (RSE)

#### ➤ SENIOR CYCLE OPTIONS:

1. **Leaving Certificate** -established
2. **Transition Year (TY)** - The Transition Year offers students a broad educational experience with a view to the attainment of increased maturity before proceeding to study for the Leaving Certificate.
3. **Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme (LCVP)** a Senior Cycle Programme of the Department of Education and Skills, designed to give a strong vocational dimension to the Leaving Certificate (established). The programme combines the virtues of academic study with a new and dynamic focus on self-directed learning, enterprise, work and the community

#### ➤ STUDENT SCHOOL SUPPORT and PASTORAL CARE

**School Guidance & Counselling Team** - offering students and their families help and support with social, personal and vocational services.

**School Chaplaincy Team** - supporting the school community in their journey and spiritual development.

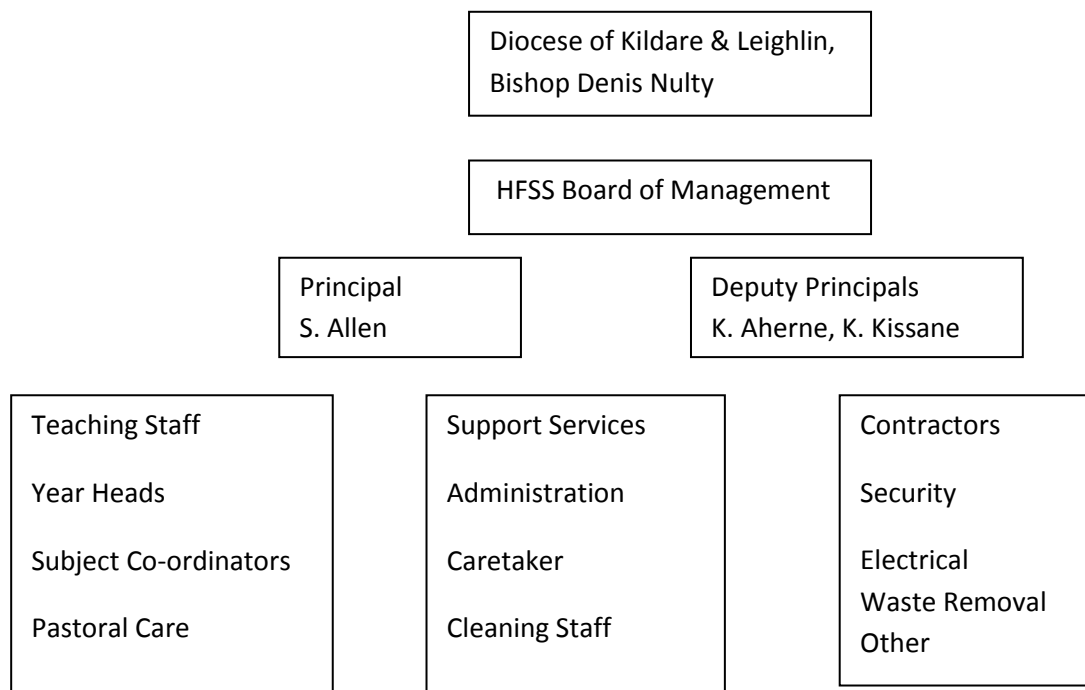
**School Special Education Team** –

#### ➤ EXTRA CURRICULAR & CO-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES:

Gaelic, Basketball, Volleyball, Badminton, Athletics, Debating, School Musical, School Quizzes, Evening Study *this list is not exhaustive*

## 2.2 School Structure

The management structure of HFSS is shown in the diagram below:



## 2.3 Personnel

The following health and safety responsibilities have been allocated:

- Board of Management
- Principal and Deputy Principals
- HFSS Health and Safety Committee
- PHECC First Aid Team

## SECTION 3: DUTIES & RESPONSIBILITIES

### 3.1 The Principal

The School Principal, as instructed by the HFSS Board of Management, co-ordinates the effective implementation of effective health and safety standards within the school according to agreed objectives. The School Principal, as instructed by the HFSS Board of Management, is responsible for ensuring that staff are given sufficient information and training to do their job effectively and that work targets are realistic and do not compromise health and safety requirements. Also for ensuring that staff are given adequate support to make the correct decisions on health and safety issues and that the standards described in this Safety Statement are met in a practical manner. Safety is a prime consideration in all planning.

### 3.2 Deputy Principals

The Deputy Principal will assist the Principal in co-ordinating the management of health and safety in the school.

### **3.3 Teaching Staff, SNA Staff and Administrative Staff**

Staff are responsible for health and safety performance and standards in respect of activities, which are within their control. Staff will ensure that they read and understand the Safety Statement and carry out their work in accordance with its requirements and that they follow the manufacturers / suppliers instructions in the use of any materials/equipment, he/she is required to use in the course of his / her teaching.

**Accordingly, all staff must be cognisant and actively aware of their responsibilities for maintaining a safe work space.**

Teachers and SNAs should keep the classroom(s) in a neat and tidy fashion, in order to minimise the risk of accidents. Specific attention must be paid to trailing cables, wet spots on the floor, spillages, books, work-related materials and the storage of student bags and belongings. Student work is displayed/ stored in such a manner that it does not constitute a fire risk;

Staff should ensure that they co-operate with the Principal and HFSS Safety Committee in matters relating to health and safety. Staff should be aware of the location of all emergency exits and fire exits and fire points; be able to recognise the fire alarm sounded and to be familiar with the evacuation procedures to be followed in the case of an emergency.

The ***Guidelines on Managing Health and safety in Post-Primary Schools*** state that;  
*In accordance with the 2005 Act all employees (including full or part-time, permanent or temporary, regardless of any employment or contractual arrangements they may have) are required to co-operate fully with the employer so that appropriate health and safety policies are established, implemented and adhered to.*

#### ***Employee duties while at work include:***

- *to take reasonable care to protect his or her safety, health and welfare and the safety, health and welfare of any other person who may be affected by their acts and omissions at work;*
- *to co-operate with his or her employer or any other person so far as is necessary to enable his or her employer or the other person to comply with the relevant statutory provisions (namely the 2005 Act);*
- *to attend training and take instruction on the correct use of articles or equipment;*
- *to use personal protective equipment (PPE)*
- *to report to his or her employer as soon as practicable: - any work being carried out which might endanger him/herself or others; - any defects in the place of work, the system of work, any article or substance which might endanger him/herself or others; - any contravention of the relevant statutory provisions of which he/she is aware;*
- *not to engage in any improper conduct or dangerous behaviour.*

Source: Page 11

[http://www.hsa.ie/eng/Publications\\_and\\_Forms/Publications/Education/Guidelines\\_on\\_Managing\\_Safety\\_and\\_Health\\_in\\_Post\\_Primary\\_Schools.pdf](http://www.hsa.ie/eng/Publications_and_Forms/Publications/Education/Guidelines_on_Managing_Safety_and_Health_in_Post_Primary_Schools.pdf)



### **3.3 Caretaker / Gardener / Cleaners**

The responsibilities of the Caretaker/Gardener/Cleaners are:

- To read and understand the Safety Statement and carry out their work in accordance with its requirements
- To carry out routine inspection of the building and grounds ensuring that all floor areas are free from spillage and any obstructions that might lead to accidents;
- To make every effort to maintain the security of the building and grounds;
- To carry out regular inspections of all fire escape routes, fire points and alarms etc and report any defects immediately to the Principal;
- To ensure that the manufacturers / suppliers instructions are followed when using chemicals and equipment on floor/wall cleaning, gardening etc;
- Store gardening equipment etc. safely and out of reach and not accessible to students, teachers etc.;
- Store a minimum amount of petrol on site for the strimmer / mower (petrol should only be stored in approved containers out of reach of students, teachers etc.)
- To report immediately any defects of plant or equipment.
- To report any accident, however minor, to supervision immediately.
- To set a personal example by wearing protective clothing and by carrying out their own work in a safe manner
- To look for and suggest ways of eliminating hazards and to bring to the attention of supervision any improvements or additions to the safety statement which they feel should be made.

#### **All HFSS staff should**

- read and understand the school's Safety Statement
- report any accident or damage, however minor, to management as soon as possible
- co-operate in the investigation of accidents
- not try to use, repair or maintain any office equipment or machinery for which they have not received full instructions or training
- adhere to all school safety rules and requirements.

#### **All HFSS staff report to the Principal, as soon as practicable, on the following;**

- Any work which may endanger the health and safety of themselves or others.
- Any defect in the place of work, systems of work, articles or substances.
- Any breach of health and safety legislation of which he or she is aware.

#### **HFSS staff must NOT:**

- Interfere with, misuse or damage anything provided for securing the health, safety and welfare of those at work.
- Place anyone at risk in connection with work activities.
- Intentionally or recklessly interfere with or misuse any appliance, or safety equipment provided to secure the safety health or welfare of persons at work.

### **3.5 HFSS Health and Safety Committee**

The main responsibility of the Health and Safety Committee is to advise and assist management and staff on health and safety matters. The Committee will be comprised of representation of school staff, including one independently staff elected member.

### **3.6 Visitors**

It is the responsibility of visitors to the school to:

- Co-operate with the School with respect to all matters relating to health and safety;
- Obey all safety instructions given by the School staff;
- Remove any hood, cap or helmet before entering the school premises.
- Sign a VISITOR'S RECORD AND SIGN IN GDPR compliance log at reception.
- Co-operate with management in the wearing of the correct safety equipment, using safety devices where appropriate and following proper safe systems of work as outlined in Section 4 of this Safety Statement.

### **3.7 Contractors**

Contractors must ensure that:

- they comply with the provisions of the schools Safety Statement and that their own company's Safety Statement, Site Specific Safety Statement and Method Statements (where appropriate) are made available
- all work is carried out in accordance with relevant statutory provisions and taking into account the safety of others on the site;
- they comply with any Permit to Work system in place within the school;
- they wear any personal protective equipment as required;
- scaffolding and other access equipment used by their employees is be erected and maintained in accordance with current regulations and codes of practice;
- all plant and equipment brought onto the premises is safe and in good working order, fitted with any necessary guards and safety devices, and with any necessary certificates available for checking;
- no power tools or electrical equipment of greater than 110 volts is brought onto the premises and that such equipment is suitable for industrial use and in good condition;
- any injury sustained by a contractor's employee is reported immediately to site management;
- they comply with any safety instructions given by site management;
- site management is notified of any material or substance brought onto the premises which has health, fire or explosive risks. Such materials must be stored and used in accordance with the school recommendations and management approval;
- they respect the School's right to see documentary clarification of contractors' insurance arrangements.

### **4.1 Resources**

The HFSS Board of Management recognises that adequate funding must be made available to implement effectively the safety procedures and policies laid down in this Safety Statement. They undertake to ensure that adequate numbers of suitably trained staff are available for all work activities carried out.

Health and Safety considerations are incorporated in annual estimates for running of the school. The Board of Management will provide resources for the ongoing monitoring of health and safety in the organisation and for the provision of health and safety information and training to all staff.

#### **4.2 Training and Induction**

Any safety training provided will be recorded. The school will keep health and safety training records. The school shall provide the following training as appropriate such as safety induction training for all new staff as appropriate, manual handling and fire safety and management training to ensure that senior staff are equipped to undertake their health and safety duties and responsibilities. All new personnel receive induction training.

#### **4.3 Safety Consultation**

Regular team meetings are held. Although health and safety issues are not an agenda item, these meetings can be used by staff members to raise any issues of concern such as reviewing accidents and dangerous incident statistics and identifying any unsafe conditions and practices; we seek to establish and maintain good communications networks relating to health and safety.

#### **4.4 First Aid**

The school is committed to providing sufficient first aid facilities to personnel based on an assessment of needs and as required by the *Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (General Regulations), 2007*.

First Aid Kits are provided for use throughout the school. The School will provide training in First Aid to all nominated first aiders. This training will be reviewed and updated every two years or earlier when necessary. A sufficient number of first aiders will be appointed to ensure that where possible a trained first aider will be on site at all times. The names of all PHECC trained First Responders are available on the staff notice board. A green cross is also placed over the classroom of a trained First Responder. A list of trained responders is placed in prominent places around the school. Contents of the first aid boxes are checked regularly. Where necessary the Principal is notified of the need to reorder stocks.

#### **Automated External Defibrillators (AEDs)**

Holy Family Secondary School provides automated external defibrillators (AEDs) in the school to prevent sudden cardiac death. Early defibrillation using an AED is one of the vital links in the “Chain of Survival”. An up to date list of AED trained personnel is in the staffroom and in prominent places around the school.

#### **4.5 Reporting of Accidents & Dangerous Occurrences**

All accidents to persons, whether or not in the employment of Holy Family Secondary School resulting in injury, however slight, must be reported immediately to the School Principal.

If an accident either at the place of work or related to a place of work or work activity, causes loss of life to a person or disables any person for more than three calendar days not including the day of the incident from performing his/her normal duties of employment, then written notice must be given to the Health and Safety Authority on forms IR1 and IR3. The School Principal will ensure that

the IR1 and IR3 are completed as required and sent to the Health and Safety Authority. If the accident is fatal, then the scene of the accident must be left undisturbed for three days after notice has been given, other than for rescue purposes.

#### **4.6 Welfare Facilities**

Adequate welfare facilities are provided for all personnel and maintained in good order. Toilet, washing and kitchen facilities are provided in this regard. All facilities are maintained and cleaned regularly.

#### **4.7 Control of Contractors**

During maintenance work, conditions are very different from those normally encountered and new hazards may be introduced. It is essential that everyone concerned is aware of the hazards and the correct precautions are adopted. All contractors must supply a copy of their Safety Statement. Method statements should be obtained from all contractors carrying out high-risk activities.

#### **4.8 Pregnant Employees**

It is the policy of the Holy Family Secondary School to take all the necessary steps to comply with the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (General Application) Regulations 2007.

It is the duty of the employee to inform the School Principal if they are pregnant as early as possible in the pregnancy. On receiving notification that an employee is pregnant the school will assess the specific risk to that employee and take action to ensure that she is not exposed to any situation which could damage either her health or that of her developing child. If the assessment reveals that there is a risk, the employee will be informed and every effort will be made to eliminate exposure to this risk. Every effort will also be made to provide, where practicable, suitable working conditions and flexible working arrangements. Holy Family Secondary School fully subscribes to the provisions of the Maternity Protection Act(s).

#### **4.9 Monitoring and Revision**

Holy Family Secondary School will ensure that safety performance is monitored and systems are revised when necessary. This will be achieved in the following manner:

- All employees are expected to bring to the notice of the School Principal any areas where the policy on health, safety and welfare appears to be inadequate and request an amendment to be made to the Safety Statement;
- Such information will be communicated directly to management or through the Safety Committee and this will ensure that the Safety Statement is monitored on a continuous basis;
- The School Principal will ensure that the Safety Statement is regularly updated (to reflect changes in legislation, staff or work practices etc.) and employees will be informed of the changes;
- The school will undertake on a regular basis to carry out safety inspections and ascribe a risk assessment of High, Medium or Low and time scale to address same together with the person assigned to implement the necessary corrective measures.

#### **4.10 Others Affected by School Activities**

Third parties affected by school activities include visitors and contractors.

The school will give at least the same level of attention to contractors and visitors as it gives to employees in the area of health, safety and welfare. Visitors shall be directed to take notice of emergency exit routes from all levels of premises and be aware of alarm signals. All contractors working on the premises should be aware of the fire safety provisions (e.g. emergency exit routes, alarm signals, etc.). In the event of an emergency, all contractors and visitors will be instructed to evacuate and/or follow staff members to a safe exit route.

#### **4.11 Fire**

There is always a danger of fire or other emergencies occurring which will necessitate the prompt evacuation of the building. Fire extinguishers are provided on the premises and are regularly checked.

A HFSS Fire Officer is appointed and is also a member of the Health and Safety Committee, additionally, the following precautions are in place:

- instruction and training of staff in fire and emergency evacuation procedures, the location of fire points and the use of fire fighting equipment;
- holding fire and evacuation drills every 6 months;
- providing and maintaining escape routes and exits which are unlocked, operational and free from obstruction;
- providing adequate fire protection equipment and systems;
- inspecting and maintaining fire protection equipment and systems;
- maintaining good housekeeping practice to ensure the removal of all combustible rubbish; and
- testing and maintaining electrical installations and ensuring that all electrical equipment is switched off and unplugged when not in use (where practicable).

#### **Action in the Event of a Fire**

1. Clear everyone from the immediate vicinity of the fire except those actually authorised to engage in fire fighting.
2. Sound the fire alarm.
3. Alert other staff in the immediate area of the fire and contact the Fire Brigade, giving them the address clearly and any other directions necessary.
4. If there is no danger by doing so, try to put out the fire with the apparatus provided, but remember that equipment will only be effective on a small fire.
5. Make sure that the premises are cleared of all pupils, visitors and staff. Close doors. See that no unauthorised person enters the building. Staff must abide by the fire evacuation procedures.
6. Staff should not delay their departure to collect personal belongings from another part of the building and should assemble at their designated meeting point ensuring that they do not obstruct emergency services.

#### **4.11. Emergency Lighting and Directional Lighting**

Emergency lighting is provided in the office area and on the stairs to facilitate escape from the building(s) during any interruption of the general lighting system. Illuminated exit signs are provided above protected doorways leading from the escape route.

#### **Fire Drill**

**A fire drill shall be undertaken regularly (at least three times per year) and recorded in the fire register.**

#### **4.12 Gas**

The main hazards associated with gas are:

- a) Fire and possible explosion when accumulations of unburnt gas is ignited; and
- b) Carbon monoxide poisoning from gas, which is not burned properly. Carbon monoxide is odourless and tasteless and therefore hard to detect. It can be given off by installations, which are faulty or inadequately maintained. It is highly poisonous and breathing it can quickly lead to death. Carbon monoxide alarms are installed in the school and are checked regularly.

#### **Action in the Event of a Fire**

#### **If you smell gas:**

- Do not use any naked flames.
- Do not use your mobile phone in the vicinity of the gas leak.
- Do not switch the lights or other electrical equipment on or off (switches produce sparks that could ignite escaping gas).
- Check whether gas is coming from a pilot or burner
  - a) If so, turn the burner off
  - b) If not turn the supply off where it enters the room or at the meter
- Open doors and windows to get rid of the gas and leave them open until the leak has been stopped and any build up of gas has dispersed.
- Report the leak immediately to the Principal.
- Do not turn the gas back on where it enters the room or at the meter until the fault has been traced and repaired by a competent gas service engineer.
- If the gas continues to escape after the supply has been turned off at the meter, contact Bord Gais immediately.

#### **4.13 Smoking and Vaping**

In compliance with the *Public Health (Tobacco) (Amendment) Act 2004* regarding smoking in workplaces, smoking is strictly forbidden in the premises and on the grounds of Holy Family Secondary School. Employees and students failing to comply with directive will be subject to disciplinary action.

**Smoking and vaping e-cigarettes is strictly prohibited on HFSS school grounds and in the school building.**

#### **4.14 Places of Public Assembly**

Holy Family Secondary School regularly holds events. For such events additional care is advocated, bearing in mind the public would not be familiar with the grounds and building. Hazards include fire, crowd access / egress, general tripping, falling.

In order to minimise the hazards outlined above the following measures shall be adopted for all such events carried out by the school:

1. all places used for such events shall have adequate means of escape, fire fighting equipment and fire detection systems;
2. the HFSS Fire Officer shall communicate the location of fire exits to participants;
3. a plan of the premises shall be displayed prominently inside the main entrance. The location of escape routes and fire fighting equipment shall be indicated;
4. the number of persons allowed on the premises shall be determined for events or be communicated by the establishment hosting the event;
5. all rubbish shall be removed regularly from the premises and good housekeeping practices shall be employed at all times;
6. the premises shall be inspected by the trainers on each occasion that the public has vacated them to remove any potential fire or safety hazard;
7. all flammable liquids, gases and other potentially dangerous substances shall be limited to small quantities, suitably labelled and stored in designated suitable storage areas;
8. portable gas or liquid fuel heaters shall not be used on the premises;
9. any fire/smoke resisting doors shall be kept in the closed position;
10. members of the public shall not be admitted to areas other than those to which they are intended to have access except in a fire or emergency situation for the purposes of escape;
11. all areas where the public shall be gathered shall be laid out and maintained in a safe condition to reduce risk;
12. adequate means of access/egress shall be provided in premises where crowds may gather for entry/exit;

#### **4.15 High Risk Activities**

High risk activities by staff such as accessing roofs, attic(s) or any work at height is strictly forbidden by Holy Family Secondary School. Only competent authorised contractors will be permitted to carry out such activities (once a method statement has been agreed).

#### **4.16 School Bags**

The use of school bags creates risks for both students, as they may do damage to their backs due to their weight, and for other school personnel, as the storage of school bags can block passageways and become a tripping hazard. There are three common school bag designs, namely the rucksack, shoulder strap bag and the sports bag. The rucksack design is the most efficient when it is worn correctly on the back and not over one shoulder. It is important that the straps are a good fit. Students should also be reminded that it is not necessary to bring all books for all subjects every day and they should be encouraged to plan their requirements for each day. Holy Family Secondary School is committed to making efforts to alleviate the problem of heavy school bags and school bag

storage issues. It recognises that the provision of marked storage areas and lockers is essential to alleviate the hazard and is providing both.

#### **4.17 Specialised Classrooms**

- Art Rooms
- Home Economics Kitchens
- Science Labs

Specialised classrooms each have specific hazards, which are unique to these rooms. These rooms should be locked when the room is not in use. Classes in other subjects should not be taught in these rooms. If a specialised teacher is absent, the substitute teacher must be fully aware of the hazards in the room as well as the controls in place to deal with these hazards. If the substitute teacher is not trained in the specialised area then classes should be supervised elsewhere.

#### **Chemicals, Solvents, Detergents Etc.**

Safety data sheets are supplied with all such materials. Members of staff using these materials should familiarise themselves with the hazards associated with the materials and precautions to be taken in event of spillage, splashes, etc.

#### **4.18 Statutory Inspections of Machinery and Equipment**

Statutory inspections of machinery and equipment are arranged and monitored by management. A register of all plant under the school's control is maintained.

#### **4.19 Occupational Health and Safety**

##### **What is Work-related Stress?**

Stress can be broadly defined as the negative reactions people have to aspects of their environment. Work-related stress simply refers to those reactions due to pressure within the working environment.

*“Stress occurs when an individual perceives an imbalance between the demands placed on them on the one hand, and their ability to cope on the other” (Professor Tom Cox, Institute of Work, Health and Organisation).*

Holy Family Secondary School recognises that each individual employee member brings into the school their own particular personality, medical history, psychological make-up and coping skills. As a result, what may be stressful for one employee may not be for another. Holy Family Secondary School is committed to a healthy workforce by placing value on both physical and mental health.

If an employee feels that they are suffering from work-related stress it is important that they seek medical help. They should then discuss with the Principal the causes of their stress and as far as reasonably practicable the Principal will deal with the issues concerned.

#### **4.20 Employee Assistance Service (EAS) offered via Inspire Workplaces (Wellbeing At Work)**



The purpose of the EAS is to provide teachers and Special Needs Assistants and their immediate family members with easy access to confidential counselling and to assist in coping with the effect of personal and work related issues.



**EAP Consultants** (branded as **Inspire Wellbeing**) are the current providers of the Employee Assistance and Wellbeing Services which includes a **free confidential service** accessible by means of a free phone telephone helpline available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, providing counselling on a range of personal health and wellbeing issues given by qualified clinicians. Up to 6 face-to-face counselling sessions are available to provide supportive and solution-focused care based on an individual's clinical needs. The telephone service also provides specialist information, support and advice in relation to family, financial, legal, work-related and consumer information services as well as providing management support.

**Access to the service is offered through the free-phone number – 1800 411 057 (24 hours a day / 365 days a year)**

#### **4.21 Dignity and Diversity at Work**

Holy Family Secondary School strives to create an environment that is inclusive of all persons, where its employees and students are free to perform their work without sexual harassment and bullying from other school members

#### **Definition of Bullying and Harassment**

Bullying/harassment can be defined as a destructive and malicious attempt to target a particular individual or individuals.

- It should not be confused with workplace inter-personal conflicts which may, in themselves, be damaging and stressful, but which do not necessarily constitute bullying.
- It should not be confused with the reasonable conduct of their responsibilities by school management staff.
- It should not be confused with industrial relations difficulties, which should be handled using the appropriate industrial relations procedures.

Bullying and harassment is behaviour that is unprovoked, unwelcome, persistent and is intimidatory or offensive to the recipient. It can take the form of verbal, physical or psychological attack and can be openly aggressive or subtle, on line or on mobile phones. Generally, bullying and harassment is taken to mean repeated and persistent behaviour.

#### **What is Sexual Harassment?**

Sexual Harassment is a pattern of behaviour that is unwanted, unsolicited and offensive to the recipient. Such behaviour fails to respect the dignity of others and impacts upon the employee in the workplace. It is a pattern of behaviour that any reasonable person finds hostile, intimidating or humiliating. The intent of the alleged perpetrator shall not be relevant in determining whether the behaviour is acceptable. Sexual harassment implies that the unwanted behaviour is being imposed on an individual who finds it hostile, intimidating or humiliating. It is the impact of the conduct on the recipient and not the intent of the accused person that determines whether the behaviour is acceptable. It should not be confused with normal social interaction involving mutually acceptable behaviour. Sexual harassment may occur between men and women or between members of the same sex.

### **Procedures for Dealing with Complaints of Bullying, Harassment and Sexual Harassment in Holy Family Secondary School: Purposes of Complaints Procedure**

- To provide a fair, consistent and expeditious mechanism to process complaints of bullying, harassment or sexual harassment against staff.
- To do so in a manner that affords all concerned full rights in accordance with natural justice.
- To outline the principles for the employer, the staff member and their representatives in the event of complaints of bullying, harassment or sexual harassment being made against staff.

#### **Specifically this procedure may be utilised:**

- To investigate complaints of bullying/harassment/sexual harassment made by staff against other members of staff.
- To investigate complaints of bullying/harassment/sexual harassment made by staff against holders of management responsibility.
- To investigate complaints of bullying/harassment/sexual harassment made by holders of management responsibility against staff.

#### **Issues to which these procedures do not apply:**

☒☒Complaints of bullying/harassment/sexual harassment made by staff against students. Such complaints will be treated in accordance with the appropriate student code of discipline/behaviour and/or other agreed codes of practice.

☒☒Matters of the professional competence of teachers which cannot be dealt with at school level or which are referred to the Department of Education and Science for investigation under the terms of circular letter 43/85 or other existing arrangements.

☒☒Anonymous complaints.

☒☒Frivolous and vexatious complaints, which do not impinge on the work of the staff member.

☒☒Complaints that are the subject of legal proceedings.

Complaints of bullying/harassment made by student(s) against a staff member do not fall within the remit of these procedures. Such complaints will be dealt with under appropriate guidelines or other agreed codes of practice.

Note: Claims of harassment under the nine grounds set out in the *Employment Equality Act, 1998*, may be taken under the provisions of that Act. Section 32 of the Act defines these grounds as follows: *Age, Disability, Sexual Orientation, Race, Family Status, Marital Status, Gender, Religion, Membership of the Travelling Community*

#### **4.22 Manual Handling**

Manual Handling operations will include any transportation or supporting of any load by hand or use of the body to support/move by force. This will include the lifting, lowering, pushing, pulling, carrying, supporting or movement of any load.

Definitions of certain terms;

- *Load* - a load must be an object that can be moved.
- *Manual Handling Operations* - This means anything that requires human effort which can be applied directly.

#### **AVOIDANCE OF MANUAL HANDLING**

##### **Summary Guidance**

If a manual handling operation has been identified as a risk then the following hierarchy of options must be considered;

1. The first option to consider would be to eliminate the need for handling altogether.
2. The next option, if avoidance cannot be done is to consider automation of the task or operation, (this may not be feasible therefore mechanical aids should be investigated and identified). Bear in mind that the introduction of automation or mechanical aids may reduce the manual handling risks, but they may increase other risks which would have to be assessed under other assessments i.e., general risk assessments.
3. The next option to consider is to re-arrange the workplace i.e., heavier items stored at waist height, where possible, or the more commonly used items stored next to the point of use. Consider changing loads.

If the above have been considered/implemented, but there are still risks from manual handling then exposed staff should be given training in moving and handling techniques.

##### **Action required**

***Assess the risks***

***Eliminate the risks at source or***

***Automate/mechanical aids to be used or;***

***Investigate the potential for re-organisation of the work environment***

***Train staff in moving and handling***

#### **REDUCING THE RISK OF INJURY**

Where the need for HFSS staff to undertake manual handling operations which involve risk of manual handling injuries cannot be avoided, staff must take appropriate steps to reduce the risks to the lowest level possible.

##### **Action required**

Improve layout of the workplace.

Improve the work routine.

Eliminate/reduce handling while seated.

Consider team handling.

Make loads lighter, smaller and easier to handle.

Improve handles and grips on loads to be handled.  
Improve constraints on posture.  
Ensure only staff with adequate health are used to conduct operations.

## **SECTION 5: HAZARD IDENTIFICATION AND CONTROL MEASURES**

### **5.1 Safety Statement**

In accordance with the obligations placed on employers by the *Safety Health and Welfare at Work Act, 2005*, Holy Family Secondary School have prepared a safety statement based on an identification of hazards at the workplace.

Risk assessments are routinely carried out and control arrangements and resources are detailed in the statement. The safety statement is brought to the attention of all employees and third parties as necessary. Employees will be asked to sign a form stating they have read the statement and fully understand all the details therein.

Holy Family Secondary School plan to review the safety statement at least once annually in order to consider new legislation, code of practices etc. If new working equipment, procedures, work practices, chemicals, materials or renovations etc. are introduced then the safety statement needs to be reviewed to take these into account.

### **How to carry out a risk assessment**

Assessing risk means evaluating what could cause harm to your employees, other people's employees and other people (including pupils, visitors and members of the public) who are using the school or its facilities. The key questions to ask when conducting a risk assessment are:

- **What can cause injury or harm?**
- **Can the hazards be eliminated and, if not;**
- **What preventative or protective measures are or should be in place to control the risks?**

### **Three steps to follow in drawing up a Safety Statement:**

- Step 1. Identify the Hazards. A hazard is anything, which has a potential to cause personal injury or ill health.
- Step 2. State the Risk of Injury to Employees.
- Step 3. Steps taken to avoid injury.

### **5.2 Hazard Identification**

It is the policy of the Holy Family Secondary School to identify hazards in the place of work, to assess the risk to Health and safety and to control risks as far as is practicable so that they are reduced to an acceptable level.

*Hazard* refers to any substance, article, material or practice, which has the potential to cause harm to the Safety, Health or Welfare of employees at work.

*Risk* refers to the potential of the hazard to cause harm in the actual circumstances of use. The risk assessment methodology employed in this Safety Statement is described below.

Risk Control measures are intended to reduce the risk to an acceptable level. Holy Family Secondary school is committed to implementing the risk control hierarchy so that, in the first instance and where practicable, hazards are eliminated. This approach takes into account normal good practice within this sector of industry and any standards and guidelines available.

### **5.3 The Health and Safety Authority (HSA) Guidelines for Schools**

The Health and Safety Authority (HSA) Guidelines on Managing Health and safety in Post-Primary Schools and the Department of Education and Skills templates and guides were adhered to throughout.

[www.hsa.ie/publications](http://www.hsa.ie/publications)

[www.education.ie](http://www.education.ie)

**HFSS SCHOOL POLICY REVIEW:****Safety Statement and Health & Safety Policy**

<b>PROCESS STAGE</b>	<b>DATE</b>	<b>NOTES</b>
<b>Identification Primary Planning Meeting</b>		February 2015
<b>Scoping document (DRAFT 1)</b>		February/August 2015
<b>Discussion document finalised (DRAFT 2)</b>		Health and Safety Committee (Feb-May 2015)
<b>Circulation of discussion document to focus group (staff) (DRAFT 2)</b>	November 2015	Health and Safety Committee Risk Assessments conducted Training provided; Manual Handling First Aiders
<b>Circulation of discussion document to staff (DRAFT 3)</b>	15 <sup>th</sup> December 2015  January 2017 (review)	Safety Statement review incorporated
<b>Consultation</b>	Update and review  April 2019	Health & Safety Committee review/focus group Risk assessments incorporated Staff, Parents Association
<b>Ratification date (BOM)</b>	7 <sup>th</sup> May 2019	Implemented as date ratified by BOM.