

Fire Drill & Evacuation Policy

Introduction:

The fire drill/evacuation policy of St. Luke's NS has been produced following a collaborative consultation process by staff in response to changing circumstances in the school.

Aims:

This policy aims to;

- Enable the school to provide for the immediate needs of students, staff and visitors in the event of a fire
- Have in place appropriate safety procedures which comply with the Health, Safety and Welfare at Work Act
- Ensure a safe school environment for all

School Ethos:

The school is committed to the care of the whole school community and the provision of a safe and secure environment for teaching and learning. This policy is in keeping with those ideals.

Objectives:

- To utilize outside agencies (local fire station, fire officer), when required, for training and staff development, so as to enhance safety procedures
- To develop a tried and trusted framework which will ensure the safety of all school personnel in the event of a fire

Prevention Measures:

- Visual inspections carried out regularly to identify risks of fire throughout the school - Health and Safety Coordinator (post holder).
- The use of candles/matches/lighters is strongly discouraged but if unavoidable (science demonstration) will be carried out by class teachers in a safe manner, outside the building.
- Electrical appliances and sockets are inspected regularly for faults and risks - Health and Safety Post Holder.
- Combustible materials are kept away from sources of ignition as much as possible.
- Staff room, office, classrooms, storage areas and SET rooms are kept tidy at all times and an audit of materials being stored is carried out each year in the summer term - Materials (combustibles, art supplies, books etc.) that are no longer needed or are out of date or are in a state of disrepair are removed to avoid clutter.

Protection Measures:

- Staff training in the correct use of Fire extinguishers and other fire fighting equipment (fire blankets etc) to be carried out every 3 years. The first of these training sessions since the implementation of this policy was carried out in March, 2023 by Maurice Morley of M&K Fire Defence Ltd.
- A fire drill will be carried out once per term from the implementation of this policy and will be documented in the fire and evacuation procedures folder in the office.
- Extinguishers and other fire fighting equipment will be checked and serviced regularly. New extinguishers and signage were installed in the school by Maurice Morley of M & K Fire Defence Ltd in December 2022. M&K Fire Defence Ltd have been given the contract to check and service extinguishers in St. Luke's on an annual basis. Certificates of annual service to be kept in the fire and Evacuation procedures folder in the office.
- Absolute Fire Systems have been awarded the contract (2023 BOM folder) to carry out Bi-Annual Fire Alarm Maintenance as per IS3218:2013 + A1:2019 Standards. These maintenance checks are to be carried out during February midterm and in August. Records to be kept in the Fire and Evacuation Procedures Folder in the office.

Evacuation Procedures:

In the event of a drill follow the steps for real event and precede that procedure with the following:

- Contact the Alarm monitoring company to inform them of the drill.
- Access the fire panel using the key or input the code:2143
- Press the **RED** button to sound the alarm
- Press the **RED** button again to silence (when children are evacuated)
- Press the **GREEN** button to reset the panel
- Press the **YELLOW** button or use the key to exit access mode

In the event of a fire, the following steps must be taken;

- Activation of fire alarm - Buttons located in the front entrance and back entrance of the school.
- The person who raises the alarm/discovers the fire is to contact emergency services **immediately** and activate the alarm using the buttons described in the previous bullet point.
- In all classroom/resource areas, children are to stand up, push their chairs under the tables and calmly walk in a single file to their assigned exit door, leaving everything (bags, coats, books etc) behind them.
- All teachers are to take their fire drill/evacuation pack (if in their classrooms when the alarm is sounded) and guide their classes out of the building and yard, walking to the playground at the bottom of the hill to assemble - **DO NOT RETURN TO CLASSES FOR THIS PACK**
- **WHOLE SCHOOL ROLL LISTS ARE LOCATED IN FIRE PACKS AT MAIN AND BOTTOM ENTRANCES OF THE BUILDING.** Principal (Bottom Entrance) and Deputy (Main Entrance) are to take these to the playground - take the roll call for all classes and tick the sheets, comparing to Aladdin roll call for that day. If the Principal and/or Deputy are absent, the last adult to exit those doors should take the packs.

- Principal/Secretary and Infant Teacher to take first aid boxes located in the office and in the Staffroom - **DO NOT RETURN TO THE BUILDING TO GET THESE IF ALREADY OUTSIDE**
- Junior and Senior Infants exit through the front entrance
- 1st and 2nd exit through the door at the bottom of the yard
- 3rd and 4th walk down the back stairs and exit through the door at the bottom of the yard
- 5th and 6th walk down the front stairs and exit through the front entrance.
- Teachers must ensure that all children in their care are accounted for, toilets are to be checked before leaving the building by Principal (back entrance toilets) and Deputy Principal (front entrance toilets) - if the Principal and/or Deputy are absent the last adult to leave via each respective door should do this.
- **On arrival at the playground the Health and Safety Coordinator (Deputy Principal) is to carry out a quick visual inspection to ensure no alcohol, drugs or related paraphernalia are present.**
- **In the unlikely event that the playground is inaccessible for any reason, classes are to line up in single file along the footpath outside the playground.**
- Once it is deemed safe to enter, classes are to line up as follows:
 - Junior and Senior Infants line up along the wall to the RIGHT of the gate
 - 1st and 2nd Class line up along the railing OPPOSITE the gate
 - 3rd and 4th line up along the wall to the LEFT of the gate
 - 5th and 6th line up in next to the nearest goal post
- **CHILDREN ENROLLED IN THE ASD CLASS ARE TO LINE UP WITH THEIR RESPECTIVE MAINSTREAM CLASSES**
- Teachers are then to carry out a roll call of their class using the list in the class fire pack, ensuring all children that are present on the day are accounted for. This is to be ticked for fire drills and for real events. Compare to Aladdin on devices if rolla was taken earlier in the day.
- Should a child or group of children be working with a SET or SNA during a fire drill or in the event of a fire; that adult will be responsible for bringing those children to their class assembly point - the playground.
- The same procedure as above applies to children working in the ASD class.
- Pupils and teachers can only return to the school once permission has been given to do so.
- **If it is deemed unsafe to return to school on the day of an event, parents are to be contacted and children collected directly from the playground/the path outside the playground.**
- The fire drill is to be carried out once a term and the roll sheet in the fire pack marked for each one.

Other Emergencies:

- In the event of **ANY** other emergencies where the children and staff of St. Luke's are in immediate danger/risk of harm the above evacuation procedure is to be followed.

Assisting the Emergency Services:

The person who discovers the fire and raises the alarm will contact the emergency services. In order of seniority: the Principal, Deputy, AP2 Postholder or most senior member of staff present on the day of an event will remain at the school until the arrival of the emergency services and will assist them by providing information about the source of fire/emergency, by informing them of anyone having been left behind in the building, and providing copies of the school ground plan (if to hand) which are contained in Fire and Evacuation Packs.

In the event of a real fire/emergency scenario, staff and pupils are not to return to the building under any circumstances until given the green light from the appropriate authorities.

Record Keeping:

Records of all fire drills, fire equipment maintenance and servicing, fire alarm servicing, real life events, training, and certs associated with any of the previous will be kept in the Fire and Evacuation Folder in the office.

Training:

- Staff training in the correct use of fire equipment will be carried out every 3 years and a record kept of this.
- Staff will be trained first aid every three years and a record of this will also be kept.

Role and Responsibilities:

All teachers are responsible for the safety and well being of the pupils in their care. The Principal has overall responsibility for ensuring proper procedures are in place. Fire drill schedules are part of the post of responsibility within the in-school management structure of St Luke's NS.

Evaluation:

- Positive feedback from all stakeholders (BOM)
- Maintaining safety standards
- Achieving a coordinated and orderly evacuation in the shortest time possible
- Yearly reviews

Implementation:

This policy has been in operation since February 2023. It was updated in December 2023 after an evacuation event and fire drill carried out in the school.

Appendix 1: Contents of the Fire Drill/Evacuation Pack

Each classroom has a fire drill/evacuation pack which is easily accessible in the event of a fire or a fire drill.

The packs contain:

1. A class list including emergency contact numbers for parents and guardians - this will also be used as a record of fire drills or real evacuation events.
2. A clipboard
3. A pen
4. A key to the playground
5. A copy of the Fire Drill and Evacuation Policy which details what to do in the event of a fire drill/evacuation
6. A map of the school building indicating exits, locations of fire extinguishers and fire alarm activation points.

2 Master copy evacuation packs are located at the main and bottom entrance of the building and are to be taken by the Principal and Deputy OR the last 2 adults to leave the building.

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a stylized 'S' followed by a long horizontal stroke.

19/12/23

References:

- Fire safety in the home – National Safety Council
- Fire safety in the school – National Safety Council

Ratification of Policy

This policy was adopted by the Board of Management on 19/12/23.

This policy has been made available to school personnel, published on the school website and provided to the Parents' Association.

A copy of this policy will be made available to the Department and the patron if requested.

This policy and its implementation will be reviewed by the Board of Management once in every school year.

Written notification that the review has been completed will be made available to school personnel, published on the school website and provided to the Parents' Association.

A record of the review and its outcome will be made available, if requested, to the patron and the Department

Signed:

Date:

(Chairperson, Board of Management)