



St Vincent's Special National School



Supervision policy

Introductory Statement

This Policy applies to all staff and pupils during school hours, including break times and on all school related activities. The Board of Management and staff of St Vincent's Special School acknowledge the importance of providing a safe and secure environment for all of the pupils. Every effort will be made to ensure that the pupils are adequately supervised at all times.

Rationale

The rules for National Schools (121 (1) and 124 (4) obliges teachers to take all reasonable precautions to ensure the safety of pupils and to participate in supervising pupils during school time and during all school related activities. Legislation such as Health and Safety and Welfare at Work Act, 2005 and recent Court judgements has placed a "duty of care" and accountability on staff. The extent of the teacher's "duty of care" is to take such care of his/her pupils as a careful parent would of his/her children. This legal principle is known as 'in loco parents'. Some examples of 'duty of care' are:

- Actively supervising the pupils in the yard, school environment, centre grounds and the local environment.
- Assessing the risks, minimising hazards and observing situations which may cause disruption.
- Accurate reporting and recording of incidents.

The degree of supervision required of the teacher will vary with the circumstances and from a number of factors, including (but not limited to) the following

- The age and ability of the pupil.
- Nature of the activity
- Number of pupils' present
- Available space
- Associated risk with the individual pupil's profile.

Aim

The aims of this policy are:

- To develop a framework that effectively ensures, as far as is practicable, the safety of all pupils entering and exiting the school, in the classroom, on the school corridor, while at with a class teacher in the yard, in the grounds or while engaged in school related activities. To contribute to effective school management and comply with relevant legislation.
- To ensure that all staff are aware of what is required of them in regard to supervision and that they fulfil their duties satisfactorily.
- To develop a framework that addresses the safety of the pupils, in as far as practicable with their arrival and departure to and from the school building, while at play, while in the school environment, while engaged in school related activities, or while alighting/ embarking school transport.

Relationship to the characteristic ethos of the school.

This policy is in keeping with the school ethos of providing a safe and secure environment for learning for all pupils and the wider school community. Our School Agreement/ Keys to success is the vision that unites the whole school. These are:

- We speak nicely to each other
- We have kind hands and feet
- We walk nicely in the school
- We have quiet inside voices



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- We play and work safely
- We try our best
- We always tell the truth
- We work together

School Procedures

The staff have a duty to protect the moral and physical welfare of all the pupils in their care. Staff are expected to:

- Keep informed of changes to school routine through notices presented individually to them, displayed on Aladdin and staffroom notice boards or written in the communication book at sign in each morning.
- Be punctual for all professional responsibilities and all supervisory duties.
- Be present in the school for break and lunch.
- To try to ensure that the pupils move around the school in a quiet orderly fashion
- Support intimate care needs in the changing room/toilet areas with two staff present.

Morning Supervision

The school opens to receive pupils at 9.10 am. The school bell is rung at this time. The Deputy Principal undertakes the supervision of pupils from the buses, with the assistance of all of the Special Needs Assistants; the class teachers are in their classes at 9.10am to receive pupils.

Parents are informed that the school takes no responsibility for children before 9.10 a.m. The school day ends at 3.00pm. All pupils should be collected by this time if not travelling home by bus/taxied

The Special Needs Assistants are present in the school from 9.00am and support the pupils in their arrival at school. Where a pupil identified as having particular needs and requires individual support to transition from school transport a risk assessment will be completed.

The Deputy Principal is present in the car park to oversee the safe arrival of pupils from school transport services to the school building. She is assisted by the Special Needs assistants assigned to the front of the school.

Bus Escorts fill in the bus register each morning. They are required to inform and complete a report form on any incidents which occurred to the Principal as soon as possible. All incidents must be reported before leaving the school premises. If the Principal is not available all incidents must be reported to the Deputy Principal

Corridor

Pupils are expected to walk to the left side of the corridor at all times. When a whole class is in the corridor, coming in from the yard, before or after PE or at home time, their teacher or another teacher should supervise them.

Mid-Morning Break and Lunch time

Yard

It is the policy of the school that teacher supervision be available on the school yard at all times during regular breaks i.e. 10.10 – 10.25 a.m., or 10.30- 10.45 and 12.30 – 1.00 p.m. daily. No class should be in the school yard unsupervised outside these times. If the teacher on yard duty is late, then the class teacher should stay with his/her class until the teacher on yard duty is on the yard.

Teachers on duty must bring their class to the yard. At the end of each break, the teacher on yard duty should remain in the yard until all the classes have been collected by their class teachers.



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To further the efficient management of the yard area during morning breaks and lunch time and as a professional courtesy to colleagues, it is important that staff on the supervision rota arrive punctually for duty. Teachers should arrive promptly in the yard to collect their classes after break and lunch time.

Wet Days

If it is too wet for the children to go to the yard, pupils in rooms 1 to 8 remain in their classrooms. Rooms 9 & 10 may use the school hall. Teachers on duty will supervise the top corridor, bottom corridor/ hall and room 9 and 10 area. The teachers on duty will make the decision about staying in.

Supervision - Teachers

The supervision rota is drawn up by the Assistant Principal and a copy is given to each teacher. A copy is on display in each classroom. A minimum of three teachers is rostered on a weekly basis for break times, and a further three for lunch times. Two teachers are in the main yard one in the junior end and one in the senior end. One teacher is on the small yard with classes 9 and 10.

Teachers taking a course day should swap supervision duties with a colleague and should inform the office/ Principal. If a teacher is unexpectedly absent a volunteer colleague will assume his/her duties in a reciprocal arrangement.

Teachers on duty will take their break and lunch time -15 minutes and 30 minutes respectively before their supervision duty commences. The Principal / Deputy Principal will provide supervision cover from 12.00- 12.30pm daily. The class teacher next door should also be informed and provide supervision.

Supervision – Special Needs Assistants

Pupils who require individual support at break and lunch times will be supported by an allocated member of staff. Teachers must inform the Principal in writing on such protocols and any changes thereafter. Circular 30/2014 outlines the role of SNA staff with regards to

- Assistance with mobility and orientation
- Assistance to attend or participate in out of school activities: walks, or visits, where such assistance cannot be provided by teaching staff
- Assisting teachers to provide supervision in the class, playground and school grounds: at recreation, assembly, and dispersal times including assistance with arriving and departing from school for pupils with special needs where the school has made a robust case that existing teaching resources cannot facilitate such supervision

Supervision- dispersal

In the event that a suitable substitute teacher cannot be sourced the class will be dispersed. On grounds of health and safety, there are some classes that cannot be dispersed. Where this happens, teaching staff will be rotated to go into those classrooms on a rota and their class will be dispersed. In the event that SNA substitutes cannot be sourced, or if the needs of the pupils require experienced SNA staff, SNA staff will be redeployed into other classrooms. This will be communicated in the sign in book.

Play Equipment

It is the responsibility of all staff members on duty to ensure that equipment is used appropriately at all times and pupils are supervised when using this equipment. It is the responsibility of the staff to return equipment to the correct place. Helmets must be worn by pupils on bikes. If any yard or play equipment is broken it should be removed from the shed and noted in the maintenance book.

Afternoon Routine



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At 2.55pm, the staff members assigned to individual pupils will direct pupils to respective buses and wait with them until the bus escort is on the bus. All other pupils will wait until the bell rings at 3.00pm before going to the buses. Staff are to support the pupils with this transition as discreetly as possible. The class staff will inform relevant bus escorts of pupils who have arrived/left during the school day and/or not travelling on school transport.

Reporting

An Accident/ Illness/Incident report must be completed by the staff member who witnesses the event. All staff must report to the teacher on duty and where necessary to the class teacher. Under no circumstances, should the teacher leave the yard as the children are effectively unsupervised if this happens. All incidents must be filed in the incident book and parents informed. The Principal must be informed as soon as possible.

Special Provisions

- a) It is school policy to request parents to make appointments. However, in exceptional circumstances if it is essential to meet with the parent immediately the Principal will be notified and emergency cover will be organized. No appointments should be made during break or lunch times and where possible, outside of staff breaks and lunches.
- b) The school Safety Statement lists all hazards on the school yard and supervisors are accordingly briefed. Staff should be familiar with these.
- c) Parents may request that their children be allowed leave during the school day due to medical commitments etc. In the interests of safety, parents/guardians must first come to the Office/reception to sign out the child. If unable to collect the parent/guardian/or the person who usually collects the child must contact the school to notify the Principal as to who will collect the child.

Success Criteria and Review

- Ensuring a safe arrival and dispersal to and from the school in the morning and afternoons
- Reviewing supervision duties annually
- Altering or adjusting procedures deemed to be inadequate

Ratification, Communication and Review:

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management 9th June 2022 and communicated to the school community thereafter. This policy will be reviewed in 2 years' time and amended as necessary by means of a whole school collaborative process.