



Supervision Policy

Beartas Maoirseachta

Introduction

This policy was formulated in consultation with staff and parents/guardians and was ratified by the Board of Management in June 2025. It is in effect during school hours, break times, and on all school related activities.

Rationale

The rules for National Schools (121(4) and 124(1)) 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 the Health Safety and Welfare at Work Act and recent Court judgments have placed a “duty of care” and an accountability on schools that must be underpinned by a policy covering a wide range of possible eventualities.

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.

Aims and Objectives

- To develop a framework that effectively ensures, as far as is practicable, the safety of children while at play on the yard or while engaged in school related activities.
- To observe and monitor behavioural patterns outside the confines of the classroom.
- To facilitate the safe arrival and departure of students and to communicate these clearly with parents and guardians.
- To contribute to effective school management and comply with relevant legislation.

School Routines and Procedures

1) Morning Assembly of Students

- The school does not accept responsibility for any pupils before 9.10am.
- The school gates are opened at 9.10am for the reception of pupils. Supervision is provided by a combination of in-school managements (ISM), the SNA team and class teachers between 9.10am and 9.20am.
- All class teachers assume responsibility for supervision when they collect their class at 9.20am.
- Parents are asked to note that class teachers are not in a position to discuss matters of concern with parents before school, as teachers are responsible for the supervision of pupils at this time. Parents are kindly requested to make an appointment for a meeting or request a phone call with the teacher at a more suitable time.
- The arrangements for morning assembly / drop-off are flexible and are under regular review, to ensure the safe arrival of students and to promote a calm and welcoming environment. Further details are provided in the school's Arrival & Dismissal Policy.
- Any changes will be communicated directly with the relevant families.
- External doors and gates are locked daily after the morning assembly / drop-off period. The main black school gate will be kept closed over, but not locked after this time.

2) Breaktime and Lunchtime Supervision

- Supervision duties are compulsory and teachers do not have the option of opting out if they so desire (0047/2017). It is mandatory for all teachers to participate in the supervision scheme as part of DES Circular 33/2013. Teachers can no longer opt out of the supervision scheme.
- The Principal retains overall responsibility for ensuring the adequate supervision of all pupils during school hours. A member of the ISM team, in consultation with the Principal/staff, draws up a rota for breaktime supervision, which is displayed on the staff room notice board.
- At break times, class teachers accompany their class to the relevant yard and ensure the teacher on duty is present before leaving the class.
- Teachers on yard duty remain with the classes until the class teacher returns from break. All teachers are asked to be punctual after breaks.
- Teachers who are on a planned leave of absence (e.g. EPV day) should arrange to swap supervision duties with a willing colleague. If a teacher is unexpectedly absent, a colleague assumes his/her supervision duties.
- All Special Needs Assistants are on duty during lunch breaks. While SNA's provide individual supervision for designated children, they can also act in a general observing and reporting capacity, bringing instances of misbehaviour to the attention of the teacher on yard duty. The school's Code of Behaviour covers incidents of misbehaviour.

- Children are allowed to participate in a wide range of activities during outside yard time, as deemed appropriate by staff. These may include (but are not limited to) running, chasing, football, skipping, tarmac rounders and other lunchtime activities. Staff on duty remain responsible for the adequate supervision and behaviour of all pupils but do not directly manage the running of these games or act as a referee.
- Rules of the schoolyard are reviewed and revised continually and communicated to children regularly in class, on the yard and at school assemblies.
- If parents indicate a worry about a particular child on the yard, all staff rostered for yard duty may be informed of the concern so that the particular concerns can be addressed satisfactorily.
- Children with injuries/complaints are dealt with directly by the teacher on duty. A first aid kit is available and all minor incidents are dealt with in the yard.
- In the event of a more serious incident, the injured child is brought into the school. School management and parents are informed as needed. Another teacher assumes supervision duties in the classroom/yard if required.
- First Aid boxes and Accident Report books are kept as a matter of procedure.
- On very wet days, children remain in their classrooms during breaktimes and lunchtimes. Normal supervision rota will apply for all breaks.
- Children are reminded to stay seated / play in an agreed place at all times. Children may play board games, with toys, colour, draw, read, watch something on the classroom smart board, or engage in any other activity as deemed suitable by staff to the confines of a classroom.

3) End-of Day Collection & Dismissal of Students

General principles

- Junior pupils (J1-2nd Class) are handed over to an adult at collection times.
- Senior pupils (3rd-6th Class) are allowed to leave the school grounds unaccompanied but are reminded that they can return to the school at any time for assistance, if required.
- Specific arrangements are communicated with parents at the beginning of each school year and are reviewed and updated as needed.
- Further details are provided in the school's Arrival & Dismissal Policy.

4) Activities Outside of School Hours

- Breakfast Club: arrangements for Breakfast Club will be communicated directly with the relevant families. The facilitator assumes responsibility for the supervision of students until 9.10am and ensures all students go to their assembly point at this time.
- After-School Activities: Children, facilitators, school staff and parents are required to adhere to the school's After-School Activities Policy.

- Pupils will remain under the care and supervision of school staff until the activity begins and/or the facilitator assumes responsibility.
- Junior pupils will be escorted by school staff to the activity and handed over to the facilitator.
- Senior pupils are allowed to go directly to the meeting point.
- Children will remain under the supervision of the relevant facilitator or staff member throughout the activity period and until dismissal / handover.
- The same general principles for the collection and dismissal of students, as laid out above, will be in operation at the end of after-school activities - junior pupils will be handed over to a parent/guardian and senior pupils may leave the grounds unaccompanied, unless otherwise communicated by the relevant facilitator. If parents wish for junior pupils to leave the school grounds independently or with an older sibling, this must be communicated in writing to the facilitator.
- Further details are available in the school's Arrival & Dismissal Policy and After-School Activities Policy.

5) Other

- When visiting teachers such as P.E., Spanish or Music teachers are teaching a class, the class teacher remains responsible for the supervision of pupils. For senior classes, supervision will be provided by the class teacher or a neighbouring teacher.
- When class teachers need to leave the classroom for a brief period, short-term supervision will be provided by a neighbouring teacher.
- Parents/guardians may request that their children be allowed leave during the school day due to health commitments etc. Children must be collected from/returned to the school office and the sign in/sign out book should also be completed.
- Children who are withdrawn from their mainstream classroom for support teaching or for any other purposes are collected at the classroom door by the relevant teacher and supervised until they re-enter the classroom.
- During movement breaks, working 1:1 with children, etc. the children are supervised at all times either by a teacher or by an SNA, working under the direction of a teacher.
- For school outings or trips, a ratio of 1:15 or 1:10 minimum is essential for supervision, depending on the age and needs of the children.
- Specific arrangements for the school's Autism Class are included as an appendix to this policy.

Ratification & Review

This policy will be ratified and enacted from June 2025 and will be reviewed as deemed necessary.

Signed by Judy O'Toole (Chairperson)

Date:

Signed by Mark Sheekey (Acting Principal)

Date:

Appendix A: Arrangements for the Silver Birches Autism Class

1. Arrangements for the arrival and dismissal of Silver Birches pupils are to be confirmed at the beginning of each school year, following discussion between staff and parents. Arrangements to be reviewed and adjusted throughout the year, as deemed appropriate.
2. Further details are available in the school's Arrival & Dismissal of Pupils Policy
3. Break Times:
 - a. When on the yard, Silver Birches pupils will be supervised by the teacher on duty, with assistance from the SNA team.
 - b. Staff on duty are made aware that a child from Silver Birches is in their yard.
 - c. On very wet days, Silver Birches pupils may spend their break:
 - i. in their link class, where they will be supervised by the teacher on duty and/or an SNA.
 - ii. in the Silver Birches classroom, where a teacher will supervise if one is available. Alternatively, two SNA's will be present for supervision and the door will remain open.
4. General:
 - a. The Silver Birches class is allocated one teacher and either one or two SNA's, depending on total enrolment.
 - b. The class teacher provides for adequate supervision at all times, with assistance from the SNA(s).
 - c. Children from other classes are often invited to visit the Silver Birches classroom to take part in an activity or complete their work, as part of the school's inclusion practices. The teacher supervises these children, with assistance from another member of staff as needed.
 - d. Brief teacher absences: if the teacher needs to exit the classroom for a short period of time, adequate supervision is provided by two SNA's, a neighbouring teacher or management.
 - e. When students from the Silver Birches class are visiting their link classes, supervision is provided by the link teacher, with assistance from an SNA as deemed necessary.
 - f. Movement Breaks: Pupils will receive movement breaks / sensory breaks as required throughout the school day. SNA's supervise pupils during these breaks, under the direction of the class teacher.
 - g. Cooking / baking: two staff members must be present at all times while any cooking or baking equipment is being used.
 - h. On special outings (eg. the shop), two staff members will accompany the children.