

Bohermore National School

Supervision Policy

Introduction

This policy was formulated in February 2025 and ratified by the Board of Management in March 2025. It applies to all staff and children during school hours, break times, and on all school related activities.

Rationale

Our aim is to provide a safe place for all the children in our care. In Bohermore National School we value a safe environment and work towards providing that for the entire school community.

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.

The duty of care to pupils applies not only in school but also, for example, on school tours and on other occasions when the children are in the care of a teacher.

Duty of Care:

The school must take reasonable care for the safety of pupils when pupils are under their charge. This applies not only to periods during break or playtime but also to the periods between the pupils' arrival at school and the start of the school day and from dismissal in the afternoon. (Ref: Primary Education Management Manual 3:2.7).

While careful supervision is undertaken at all times during the school day, all members of the school community must be aware that no arrangement exists for the supervision of pupils who arrive at the school before 9.00am or who remain in the vicinity of the school after school hours awaiting collection.

Legislative Context

Under the provisions of the Education Act 1998, and the regulations of the Department of Education and Skills, the Board of Management is the body charged with the direct governance of a school.

The overall responsibility for the day to day management of school supervision rests with the principal teacher. The terms of Circular 16/73, which issued to all primary schools, provide that the principal teacher of primary schools should organise supervision for the order and general behaviour of the pupils during school hours. In particular, s/he should organise and participate in the effective supervision of the pupils during breaks, lunch breaks, assembly and dismissal.

Circular 18/03: "Rules 121(4) and 124(1) of the Rules for National Schools and Section 23(2) of the Education Act 1998 oblige teachers to take all reasonable precautions to ensure the safety of pupils and to participate in supervising pupils when the pupils are on school premises, during school time and/or on school activities. Accordingly, the responsibility of all teachers individually and collectively to provide a duty of care at all times towards the pupils in the school in which they teach, including periods of supervision, is not changed."

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 contribute to effective school management and comply with relevant legislation.

School Procedures Pre-school supervision procedures

It is the policy of the school to supervise the school yard at all times during regular lunch breaks i.e. 10.30 to 10.50am, 11:00-11:15 and 12.30-12.50pm & 1:10-1:30. Teachers assume a duty of care at 9.00am. The Board of Management informs parent/guardian/guardians that the school does not accept responsibility for pupils dropped off earlier than 9.00am.

All parents are notified by the school of the times at which the school accepts responsibility. An email will be issued to parents at the commencement of the school year to inform parents on the arrival and dismissal procedure. Reminders will be sent throughout the year when the need arises.

Pupils arriving to school on the school bus will go straight to the designated room with a bus escort.

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.

All teachers are responsible for the supervision of the children in their care and all the children when they are on yard duty or indoor supervision when weather is inclement.

A Rota for supervision is drawn up in consultation with the Principal and this Rota is displayed on the staff room notice board.

Teachers on yard-duty supervise the yards to ensure and encourage the safety and good behaviour of the pupils.

Two teachers are on duty in each yard at all times, there are also a varying amount of snas on the different breaks to meet the needs of the children on each yard. The yard is divided into three sections, with one teacher supervising in each area (front – by the basket ball hoops, middle – by the gate and gable end of the school).

Rules of the school yard are reviewed and revised continually and communicated to children regularly.

Teachers will bring to the attention of the class teacher any matter requiring corrective action. The more serious issues will be brought to the attention of the principal. For more information regarding serious incidents of misbehaviour, refer to the school's Code of Behaviour.

While SNAs provide individual supervision for designated children with SEN at lunch and break times, they can act in an observing and reporting capacity, bringing instances of misbehaviour to the attention of the teacher on yard duty.

In the event of necessary corrective action, the pupil involved may be asked to stand out for a short period. The class teacher is informed on his/her return if necessary.

First Aid boxes and Accident Report books are kept as a matter of procedure (see Accident and Injury Policy). All accidents where a significant injury is involved are noted in the Accident Report Book as per policy, by the teachers on supervision and reported to the class teacher. A report is written and a copy kept by the class teacher and the secretary. The principal is informed when an accident occurs and where teachers deem it necessary, the child's parents will be informed. All head injuries will result in an immediate phone call home.

Children with injuries/complaints are dealt with directly by the teacher on yard duty. Children are not permitted to report directly to the staff room if there is an incident on the yard.

Teachers on yard duty remain with the classes until all of the class teachers return from break. Teachers taking a course day can swap supervision duties with a willing colleague. If a teacher is unexpectedly absent a volunteer colleague will assume his/her duties in a reciprocal arrangement

In the job-sharing scenario, the teacher will complete yard duty at their base school for the duration of the year.

If parent/guardian/guardians indicate a worry about a particular child on the yard all teachers rostered for yard duty are informed of the concern so that the particular concerns can be addressed satisfactorily

All teachers will do yard duty(ies) each week in line with recommended pupil-teacher ratios.

Dismissal of Students

At 1.50pm (infants) and 2.50pm (1st - 6th class), class teachers will accompany their classes to their designated point of dismissal.

In the event of a child not being collected on time, the child will proceed to the office. The secretary will call the relevant parent or guardian and arrange for the child to be collected from the secretary's office as soon as possible.

Contact details for parents are available to the secretary. It is the responsibility of the parents to provide a minimum of two valid and current contact numbers upon which they can be reached in the event of non-collection.

Children who are attending after school-activities will be walked to the afterschool and from there are in the care of the afterschool staff.

Bohermore National School Special Provisions

- On wet days children remain in their classes under the supervision of the staff in accordance with the supervision rota.
- When visiting teachers such as P.E. or Music take over a class, the teachers must maintain a presence.

- Neither SNA or pupils are left in sole charge of a class.
- The school Safety Statement lists all hazards on the school yard and supervisors are accordingly briefed.
- 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 gate and a written notice must be provided via email with the sign in/sign out book also completed at the office.
- Children are not permitted to wander around the school yard unsupervised during movement breaks, busy breaks, etc. The supervising teacher/SNA must accompany the children on such occasions. Equally, students must not be left unsupervised in their classrooms at any time.
- Children who are withdrawn from their mainstream classroom for Resource, Learning Support or Language Support should be collected and returned to the classroom door by the relevant teacher.
- For school outings or trips a ratio of 1:15 or 1:10 minimum is essential, depending on the age and needs of the children.

Other considerations:

- A 24-hour personal accident insurance cover is available to all pupils.
- If pupils are required to be on the school premises before or after official school hours, e.g. for school tours, school team training, choral work etc., written notification is sent to the parents in advance and a teacher must be on site to supervise the activity specified.
- Where a court order is in place denying access to one of the child's parents, it is the responsibility of the primary custodian to provide evidence of a court order to the school at the earliest possible opportunity.
- If the parent who has been denied access becomes threatening and/or insists on attempting to remove a child from the school, the principal or deputy principal or next most senior teacher will call An Garda Síochána.

Success Criteria and Review

- Ensuring a safe child-friendly school yard
- Providing well organised and safe out of school activities Bohermore National School
- Re-enforcing school rules termly
- Reviewing supervision duties regularly
- Altering or adjusting procedures deemed to be inoperable

Implementation

This policy is a new policy, in place of the previous policy upon review.

It was ratified by the Board of Management.

Ratified on the 16/10/25 Signed: 

Review date: May 2026

Michael Sheahan