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Bord Oideachais agus Oiliúna  
na Gaillimhe agus Ros Comáin  
Galway and Roscommon  
Education and Training Board

# CUAN NA GAILLIMHE CNS - A STEINER EDUCATION



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## SUPERVISION POLICY

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## 1 INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT AND RATIONALE

### 1.1 INTRODUCTION

This policy outlines the supervision practices in our school and applies to all staff and children during school hours, especially in the areas of assembly and dismissal of pupils, playtime and all school related activities.

### 1.2 RATIONALE

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 during all school activities.

Legislation such as the Health Safety and Welfare at Work Act and recent Court judgments have placed a “duty of care” and accountability on schools that must be underpinned by a policy covering all possible eventualities.

## 2 RELATIONSHIP TO THE CHARACTERISTIC ETHOS OF THE SCHOOL

This policy is in keeping with Cuan na Gaillimhe CNS ethos of providing a safe and secure environment for all pupils and the wider school community while at the same time in line with the spirit of our outdoor statement- *See Appendix 1*

## 3 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The aims of this policy are:

- To develop a framework that effectively ensures, as far as is practicable, the safety of children while at play in the outdoor areas 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.

## 4 SCHOOL PROCEDURES

### 4.1 PRE-OPENING SUPERVISION

- All staff are assigned supervision duties.
- A rota for supervision is agreed at the start of the year and this Rota is displayed on the staff room notice board.
- Staff will supervise in the morning between 8.50am and 9.10am as per supervision timetable. This supervision will be counted as hours recognised as working hours in relation to the Public Service Agreement as approved by the Board of Management and as part of post-holders duties.
- Teachers assume a duty of care at 9.10 am.
- The Board of Management informs parents that the school does not accept responsibility for pupils dropped off earlier than 8.50am. Parents are requested to stay with their child and ensure parents are supervising their own child until 8.50am.

## 4.2 DISMISSAL

- Staff members are responsible for seeing pupils off the premises each afternoon at the end of the school day. The children must wait inside the school gates until the staff member has identified that the person responsible for collecting a child is there and hands over to them.
- It is the responsibility of parents/guardians to make arrangements for the collection of their children at 1.50pm for Infants and 2.50pm for the rest of the school.
- If children are not collected after 1.50pm or 2.50 pm respectively, the school always ensures that a duty of care is provided until a parent/guardian arrives.

## 4.3 BREAK TIME SUPERVISION

It is the policy of the school to supervise the school play areas at all times during regular breaks.

*Infants: Sos beag is at 10:40am. Lón mór is at 12:40pm*

*1<sup>st</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> class: Sos beag is at 11:05am. Lón mór is at 12:50pm*

- A signal is given by relevant teacher to indicate the start and finish of an outside break to the children. The class teacher should dismiss the class to the outside break area when they are satisfied that the teachers on duty are in-situ.
- Yearly the principal and staff will agree "adequate supervision" during breaks. There is no agreed definition of "adequate supervision" as the degree of supervision required will vary with the circumstances and also in line with the spirit of our outdoor statement. (see Appendix 1)
- Rules of the school play areas are reviewed and revised continually and communicated to children regularly.
- Children are not permitted to enter the car park under any circumstances during break times. If a ball or other equipment rolls into the car park, children are to ask the teacher on Break Duty to retrieve it.
- No child may enter the building without permission during break times.
- There are toilets in all classrooms. Whether the children are inside/outside they let an adult know when they are going to the toilet. "Tá mé ag dul go dtí an leithreas". All children are encouraged to go to the toilet before going out to the play area. If a child needs to go to the toilet during break the following procedures apply:
  - Junior Infants (maximum of two children at a time) are accompanied by an adult.
  - Children in all other classes let an adult know they are going to the toilet, they go to the toilet, one at a time, unaccompanied by an adult. If the child is delayed an adult will be sent to check.
  - A child with care needs might be accompanied by the SNA or teacher.
  - When children of prefab 10 are outside and need to go to the toilet, they will use the toilets in another assigned prefab.
- When children are in Forest and Cappagh Park Playground, children ask to go to toilet and an adult goes with the child to the designated toilet area.

- Play ceases in response to a signal relevant to the class (e.g. bell/cuckoo call/flute sounds), signifying the end of break and children proceed to return to class or teacher promptly.
- Teachers on playground duty remain with the classes until the class teacher returns from break.
- Teachers taking a course day can swap supervision duties with a willing colleague. If a teacher is unexpectedly absent the substitute list will be used and another teacher will assume his/her duties.
- If parents indicate a worry about a particular child on the playground, all teachers are informed of the concern so that the particular concerns can be addressed satisfactorily.
- All Special Needs Assistants are on duty during breaks.
  - While SNAs provide individual supervision for designated children with special needs, they can act in an observing and reporting capacity, bringing instances of misbehaviour or questionable behaviour to the attention of the teacher on playground duty.
- The schools Code of Positive Behaviour and Anti-Bullying policy covers incidents of misbehaviour.
- On wet days, children still go outside for break. Teachers will remind children to dress appropriately before being dismissed for break. Parents are reminded about the importance of appropriate outdoor clothing.
- On days of extreme weather, children remain inside. The class teacher ensures that children have appropriate activities. An adult is present in each classroom. Children from senior classes may assist the staff on duty.

#### 4.4 BREAK TIME PLAY AREAS

During breaks all outside areas are supervised by a member of the teaching staff, interns and volunteers. The following areas are the areas for outdoor play for the different class which will be reviewed on an on-going basis and changed as necessary:

**Infant's classes:** Infant's Garden, Sandpit, Section of Bigger Garden

**1st -6th class:** School Pitch, Sandpit, Bigger Garden,

- If children's activities are spreading over more than one supervised area those areas are to be supervised by designated adults.
- Each class teacher is responsible for ensuring a relevant number of adults are available for the intended outdoor activity before the children engage in it.
- If there aren't a sufficient number of adults available to supervise the outdoor areas, the class teacher decides which areas remain open to the children and clearly communicates this to the children before they are released for outside break.
- Class teacher and interns should regularly ensure the children are aware of boundaries and permitted area.
- When off site (e.g. forest, school trip/tours), the class teacher will endeavour to identify open spaces with which to base their activities and will clearly communicate the boundary area within which the children are permitted to play.

#### 4.5 PRE-FAB 10 SAFETY PROCEDURES

Prefab 10 is used as a classroom. There is an adjoining kitchen in pre-fab 10.

- Children using this classroom are not allowed into the kitchen through the main (left) door or through the classroom without being accompanied by an adult.
- The right door of pre-fab 10 will be locked in the morning from 9.30am and again in the afternoon after lunch to ensure the safety of all children.

#### 4.6 FIRST AID ON PLAYGROUND

- In the event of an injury requiring First Aid treatment staff will attend to the child. If the injury requires further medical treatment parents/guardians should be informed immediately, and where contact cannot be made, qualified medical treatment should be sought for the child.
- First Aid boxes and Accident Report books are kept as a matter of procedure. Details of an injury or accident will be recorded by relevant staff member in the accident book and a copy provided to parent/guardian.

#### 4.7 ALL OTHER SUPERVISED TIMES

- At all other times each teacher is responsible for the supervision of all children under their care.
- Unless unavoidable, teachers should not leave their classroom unsupervised during class-time. If the teacher is absent from the room for a short period, a staff member, teaching interns supervises until he/she returns.
- Children who are withdrawn from their mainstream classroom for support outside of the classroom should be collected at the classroom by the relevant teacher. *Appendix 2* details the one to one teaching procedures.
- If a teacher is called from his/her classroom to meet with a parent, another member of staff may be released to cover. However, as a small school this is difficult to manage so it is school policy to request parents to make appointments outside of school hours.

#### SCHOOL TOURS/OUT-OF-SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

- Staff will be extra vigilant when taking children out of the school. Special attention will be paid to: road safety, behaviour on bus, risks posed by particular venues (e.g., adventure playgrounds etc.).
- The minimum supervision ratio will be 15:1 (adult) with individual adults in charge of specific groups.

#### VISITING TEACHERS

- Sometimes visiting teachers come to the school. They are required to have Garda vetting and teachers will remain present as the activity is taking place.

#### TEMPORARY WITHDRAWAL:

- On occasion, parents may request that their children be allowed leave during the school day due to health commitments etc. It is the responsibility of the parent to collect the child from the office and to return the child to the office afterwards. The pupil is the responsibility of the parent from the time they leave the school building until they return to the school building.

## 5 SUCCESS CRITERIA AND REVIEW

The criteria that will indicate success are as follows:

- A safe, child-friendly school playground
- Well organised and safe out of school activities
- School rules revised on a regular basis
- Supervision ratios reviewed as the need arises
- Procedures altered as the need arises

## 6 IMPLEMENTATION/RATIFICATION AND REVIEW

This policy will be communicated to staff and the school community as appropriate and will be subjected to regular review. In accordance with the systematic cycle of review of policies adopted in Cuan na Gaillimhe NS, it will be reviewed initially after one year and then every two years, unless there is a compelling reason to review it earlier.

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management of Cuan na Gaillimhe CNS on the 27<sup>th</sup> of April 2020.

Chairperson of the Board of Management



**To be reviewed: June 2021**

## 7 APPENDIX 1- OUTDOOR STATEMENT

In Cuan na Gaillimhe CNS the outdoor component plays a strong role in the everyday delivery of the curriculum. Each day time is spent outside, either as part of a planned learning activity or outdoor play.

In the infant classes the child's play is not directly lead or organised by an adult in order to foster creative imagination. Time in the garden and forest gives the children access to natural resources (sticks, pine cones, sea shells, rocks, water, sand, tree bark, etc.) that have no defined play purpose and are open to investigation, creation, interpretation and imagination. For both older and younger children, being outside during forest school and/or play, gives opportunity to breathe fresh air, witness the marvels of the natural world, increases the child's power of observation, gives them an opportunity to run off extra energy and has a calming effect. The children elaborate on existing natural macro-structures and creations as they engage in using gross-motor movements and muscles, working hard and generally in collaboration with classmates, which fosters communication, creativity, teamwork and problem-solving. Other benefits of this type of hard work are that it builds "will-forces" and resilience when faced with challenges; a skill that serves the children for the rest of their lives. Other times the children might engage in building tiny gnome homes or gnome villages at the base of trees. Building small structures utilises fine motor skills and provides opportunities for the children to imagine more intently by pretending that they are entering a fairy world and a magical realm.

Prior to and during outdoor activities the school and teaching staff are continuously considering the correct level of supervision. There is no simple answer as to what the 'correct' level of supervision is. But as a school we guide ourselves and our judgement by taking the following influencing factors into account: age, maturity and number of children as well as the topography of the area that requires supervision. Supported by Rules for National Schools and The Education Act 1998 we lean on guiding rules that; the degree of supervision by a teacher should be that of 'reasonable care' i.e. equate to the supervision levels of a careful parent.

The teachers, interns and volunteers take all reasonable precautions to ensure the safety of pupils and supervise the children during school time and school activities. It is important to distinguish between a 'risk' and a 'hazard':

A risk is something you can judge, how high can you go and still safely jump off the swing and fly through the air. This is a 'good risk' where children learn 'physical literacy'.

A hazard is something you cannot judge, is the swing pivot almost worn right through and about to give way unexpectedly? This is 'bad' and must be avoided by good management practices.

*London Play Briefing, November 2007 (updated October 2010) Risk in Play*

While teachers, interns and volunteers keep a close and caring eye on all children and their safety, we also allow for manageable obstacles getting in their way. While (still closely supervising and ready to help if needed) we are walking to the forest, playing or engaging in activities, children may trip, stumble, fall, and hurt themselves. As a school we categorise this as 'Good risks'. Good risks in play provision are those that engage and challenge children, and support their growth, learning and development. We trust the children's ability to manage themselves in our presence and that it helps them strengthen their focus, build up strength and resilience, and develop self-confidence.

To make these outdoor experiences the richest possible, it is important that the children are prepared and properly dressed for the weather.

- In the Infants classes the class teacher and interns ensure that all children are wearing appropriate outdoor clothes provided from home. The class teacher will inform parents/guardians in case the child does not have appropriate clothing available for outdoor school activities.
- From 1st to 6th class, the class teacher will remind children to look at the weather before they go out and to dress accordingly. Parents are responsible for their children having appropriate outdoor clothes available in school for activities during the week – including forest school.

If parents/guardians feel their child cannot participate in the daily outdoor activity, we ask parents to evaluate whether or not your child is healthy enough to come to school that day. If children are well enough to come to school she/he should be well enough to participate in all of the daily activities.

We observe National weather warnings as well as follow our school Forest School Weather policy for any planned outdoor trips.

## 8 APPENDIX 2-ONE TO ONE TEACHING

- Timetabling for one to one teaching will be drawn up by the SET in conjunction with the class teacher. If a child needs one to one support, parents/guardians will be informed.
- Learning support may take place in the form of in class support or small group or one to one teaching outside the classroom. When one to one activities and teaching take place this will be in spaces that can at all times be observed by others - in line with child protection guidelines. A classroom door will be generally closed to provide for a quiet and stimuli reduced environment. But activity areas and seating arrangements are considered in relation to being always visible.
- Learning support takes place in the general staff room and SNA or teacher is working one to one with children in the room. While the area is not visible from the exterior door, the room is used throughout the day by staff and interns and is situated beside an exterior window.
- When learning support takes place in prefab 9 the exterior door is left open allowing the learning support area to be visible from the interior glass panelled door as well as the external windows