



St. Patrick's Junior School

TENNIS COURT LANE, SKERRIES, CO. DUBLIN

K34 D799

Principal: Máire Ní Chróinín

Roll Number: 16333Q

Deputy Principal: Gráinne Connolly

RCN: 20118839

SUPERVISION (INCLUDING YARD SUPERVISION) POLICY

Introduction

This policy was originally formulated in 2009, reviewed in 2016, 2018 and 2019. It was redrafted and updated in 2026. It applies to all staff and children during school hours, break times, and on all school related activities.

Rationale

The rules for National Schools 121(4) and 124(1) oblige 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 accountability on schools that must be underpinned by a policy covering all eventualities insofar as possible.

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

- It is school policy to supervise the school yard during all break times, i.e. 10.30 am to 10.40 am and 12.00 noon to 12.30 pm.
- All teachers are assigned supervision duties.
- All SNAs are assigned supervision duties for one or more specific children at each break.
- Class teachers bringing children to yard must supervise them until the teachers who are supervising yard are present. Teachers supervising yard must stay on the yard (with their classes) until all other teachers have collected their classes.



Tel/Fax: 01 8490836



admin@stps.ie www.stps.ie



- A Rota for supervision is drawn up by a post holder in consultation with principal and staff and this Rota is emailed to all staff members at the start of each term. A copy is displayed in the staff room.
- Arrangements for yard duty may change from year to year. Exact arrangements are detailed in the Yard Duty Arrangements for the current school year. A balance of teachers and SNAs will supervise on Junior and Senior yard. One teacher supervising the junior yard at each break will supervise toilets. All children should use the classroom toilet before each break to minimise the number of children who have to use the toilet during yard times.
- Teachers assume a duty of care at 8.50 am. The Board of Management informs parents that the school does not accept responsibility for pupils outside of normal school hours, i.e. 8.50 a.m. to 2.30 p.m.
- Rules of the school yard are reviewed and revised continually and communicated to children regularly.
- If there is a concern about a particular child on the yard all teachers rostered for yard duty are informed of this so that the specific concerns can be addressed satisfactorily.
- Teachers absent on a day when they are rostered for yard supervision can swap duties with a willing colleague. If a teacher is unexpectedly absent, a volunteer colleague will assume his/her duties in a reciprocal arrangement.
- All Special Needs Assistants are on duty during lunch breaks. While these Assistants provide supervision for their assigned charges, they can act in an observing and reporting capacity, bringing instances of misbehaviour to the attention of the teacher on yard duty.
- A “Calm Zone” has been designated on each yard (Infant Yard and 1st & 2nd class Yard) for quiet games. There is no running at all or loud shouting or screaming in either Calm Zone.
- For reasons of health and safety, children are not allowed to run dangerously fast (“charge”) on yard at play time. Unsafe or rough play is never allowed.
- Two bells are rung at the end of each play time. On the first bell, children “freeze”. On the second bell, children walk to their line.
- Children are rewarded for considerate behaviour and sanctioned for breaking the rules on yard as they are in every other area of school life.
- Reward systems which the class teacher may have in place can be used to reward good behaviour on yard.
- Sanctions for unsafe play or dangerous behaviour of any kind on yard are as follows:
 - First offence on any given day gets a warning.
 - On a second offence the child is directed to shadow the teacher for five minutes or more, at the teacher’s discretion, having regard to a particular child’s age & needs.
 - A child who continually breaks the agreed school rules for behaviour while on yard will be required to shadow the teacher for the remainder of yard time.
 - Where rough play is an ongoing problem, a child may need to spend part of yard time in the office.

- The teachers supervising the yard will in so far as possible deal with incidents on yard. At the end of yard time the supervising teacher will inform the class teacher of any unsafe behaviour by a pupil in his/her class and of the sanction applied.
- Further sanctions are applied in accordance with the Code of Behaviour already agreed in the school.
- Children with injuries/complaints are dealt with directly by the teacher on yard duty. The teacher will fill in an incident/accident form if necessary. An incident form is always filled in where there is a head injury or a blood injury. Parents will be informed if there is a head injury or a more serious injury elsewhere on the body. They may be informed via a phone call, text message or email, at the discretion of the school.
- Children who are on crutches or who are wearing medical apparatus such as a sling or a cast are not allowed on yard during yard time. This is due to the risk to the health and safety of all pupils. Pupils who are on crutches or who are wearing a cast or sling, will sit in the area designated for treatment of yard injuries, an area where s/he will still in be view of and in contact with the teachers on duty. They will have an appropriate activity with them and may at the teacher's discretion be accompanied by a friend. The class teacher will obtain parents' permission for an accompanying child to miss yard.
- Children who have stitches will be allowed to the yard at the discretion of the principal in consultation with the class teacher.
- First Aid boxes and Accident Report forms are kept as a matter of procedure (See Accident and Injury Policy). All accidents where there is injury involved should be noted on the accident/incident form by the teachers on supervision or by the relevant class teacher. Where teachers suspect that a child is unwell parents are alerted, by phone if immediate collection is required and by phone, text or email if early collection is not required, or where immediate collection is required but parents cannot be contacted by phone.
- If children remain uncollected after 1.30 p.m. / 2.30 p.m., the school always ensures that supervision is provided until a parent/guardian collects the child or makes arrangements for his/her return home.
- At all other times each teacher is responsible for the supervision of all children under their care.
- At dismissal time in the evening the supervising teachers walk with their classes to the main gate. Pupils are required to inform their supervising teacher when they see an adult waiting to collect them. No supervision is provided outside the school gate.
- Unless absolutely unavoidable, teachers should never leave their classroom unsupervised. Where this is unavoidable, the teacher should inform the teacher next door that the class is unsupervised so that teacher can supervise both rooms until the class teacher returns.
- Children from infant classes who are withdrawn from their mainstream classroom for additional needs support teaching should be collected at the classroom door by the relevant teacher and dropped back by this teacher afterwards. Children from First/Second classes may be allowed to go back to their classes themselves at the discretion of the additional needs teacher in consultation with the relevant class teacher.

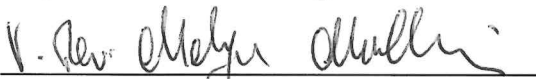
Special Provisions

- a) During out of school activities such as games or tours, the level of supervision is usually one adult per eight children with individual adults in charge of specific groups. The class teacher will always accompany his or her group on tour. If a teacher is absent on a tour day (due to illness etc) another teacher from the school will accompany the class. Please refer to the relevant school policy in this regard ("Policy on School Outings and Out of School Activities") available on the school website.
- b) During the school's active week, activities may be set up in different areas of the school and on occasion in the senior school or the community centre field next door. Teachers stay with their classes and supervise their class using each group activity in turn.
- c) If a teacher is called from his/her classroom on school business, another member of staff will supervise that teacher's class.
- d) On wet days children remain in their classes. Teachers listed for yard supervision that day supervise the children in their classes.
- e) When visiting or student teachers are teaching a lesson, the class teacher stays in the room. Neither SNAs nor pupils are left in sole charge of a class.
- f) Parents may request that their children be allowed to leave during the school day due to health or family commitments etc. In these circumstances it is the parent's responsibility to collect the child from school. If the parent will not be collecting the child themselves, they must inform the school beforehand of who will be collecting. The parent must give notice of early collection, giving details of the reason. If feasible, parents are encouraged to return their child to the school after the appointment. Where a pupil arrives late or leaves early this is noted by the class teacher on the Databiz pupil management system. If a pupil returns to school having been collected earlier the same day, this fact is also noted by the class teacher on the Databiz pupil management system.

Review

This updated policy will be reviewed after three years or sooner if necessary.

Approved by the Board of Management on 25/05/2026

Signed: 
Very Rev. Melvyn Mullins,
Chairperson, Board of Management.