

**Thomond Primary School**  
**Playground Use Policy**

## **INTRODUCTION**

This policy was formulated in 2024. It applies to all staff and children during school hours, break times, and on all school related activities. This document has been prepared in compliance with the Safety Health and Welfare Act 2005 and is to be read together with Thomond Primary School policies and procedures.

Playing outside in Thomond Primary School is not just about letting off steam. It is a vital part of childhood that helps children develop physical strength, coordination and balance. Our new fixed equipment offers swinging, sliding, climbing, hanging, balancing and jumping options. Our seating area provides quiet chatting areas for children to choose and is an area where outdoor learning can be supported. Our yard areas include open spaces for running around, informal ball games and activities. We also support our student's alternative communication needs with a communication board on their yard at their height. Colourful moveable seating in the senior sheds give students who want a chill out and a chat a place to go away from the hustle and bustle of the senior yard. We also have a ping pong table in this shed to add to the diversity of choice for our students.

**The Play areas in our school can also provide opportunities for children to learn and develop:**

- Social Skills – when they play with other children they learn to communicate, share, collaborate and empathise with others.
- Imagination and creativity – outside play is often open-ended and children need to be creative about what and how games are played.
- Thinking and problem-solving skills – as children assess risks and tackle new challenges, they learn about having a go, persistence and perseverance and the success those attributes can bring.
- Sense of self – as they master new skills and play with other children, they improve their competence and confidence in their own physical and social abilities.
- Sense of connection – to place, to peers and to their local community and environment.
- Self-care skills – managing physical and social challenges helps children to learn about keeping themselves safe.

### **1. BOARD OF MANAGEMENT PHILOSOPHY**

The Board of Management recognises and accepts not only its statutory responsibilities but also its obligations as an employer to direct, manage and achieve as far as is reasonably practicable, the Safety, Health and welfare at work of every employee, pupil and guest alike.

## **2. 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.

## **3.SAFETY OFFICER**

Sinéad Toomey (School Principal) and Sarah Mackey (member of the leadership team with responsibility for Health and Safety in Thomond Primary School), shall be responsible for overseeing the safety provisions on behalf of the school. The safety officer should be consulted if any of the employees have queries regarding any of the safety provisions mentioned in this statement.

### **The main duties and responsibilities are as follows:**

To guide and advise on health, safety and welfare matters in the playground areas.

To ensure that the School fulfils all statutory requirements in respect of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005

To ensure that the appropriate safety education and training are co-ordinated and carried out using both in-house and external resources where necessary in use of the playground equipment.

To undertake regular and appropriate revision and auditing of the school safety procedures on using the playground areas to ensure that they are kept up.

## **4.HAZARDS**

The following hazards (in as much as can be identified) are considered by the school to be a source of potential danger and are brought to the attention of all concerned.

Appropriate use of swings – no child is to stand on a swing (basket or regular) or belly swing on a regular swing. The ropes are not to be twisted.

Appropriate use of slides – all children slide down the slide feet first and no child is to climb up the slide when another child is coming down. No pushing anyone on the slide.

Appropriate use of balancing equipment – children can move this themselves but need to be mindful of others within hitting vicinity when moving the lengths. No pushing on the balances.

Movement of children in and around the equipment appropriately and safely ensuring that children give swings and slides a wide berth. No child should climb the apex of the equipment or catch the ropes of the swing from the top of the equipment.

Adequate supervision of play – a member of staff needs to be present at all times when children are using the play equipment. Children need to be reminded of the rules when play becomes too boisterous.

Matting – children must not pull up the rubber mats.

Tables – children must not walk on the picnic benches or get onto the tables.

## **5.ACCIDENT/INCIDENT RECORDING**

All incidents, whether to employees, pupils or members of the public must be reported to the principal. This is necessary to monitor the progress of safety standards and to ensure that proper medical attention is given where required. In the case of more serious incidences, parents/guardians should be contacted, and an incident report should be recorded on the Aladdin Schools website.

## **6. CONCLUDING COMMENT**

This safety statement has been prepared based on conditions existing in the premises of the school at the time of writing. It may be altered, revised or updated at a future date to comply with any changes in conditions. This policy was proposed and ratified by the Board of Management on the **11<sup>th</sup> June 2024**

Signature of Chairperson; *Michael Condon*

Date; *11/06/24*