Supervision and Substitution Policy

2026/2027

Ratified at Board of Management Meeting

Date: 17th September 2026

Chairperson: Keith Purcell

Mission Statement

Coolmine Community School strives to create an atmosphere of mutual respect which promotes excellence in all aspects of school life and enables each individual to realise their full potential.

Introduction

This policy applies to all staff and students during the school day, before and after school supervision periods, break times and all school-related activities, both on and off the school premises.

Rationale and Legislative Context

Coolmine Community School recognises its duty of care to students and is committed to providing a safe, well-supervised environment. Following the principles laid down by the Children First Act 2015, Coolmine Community School obliges teachers to take all reasonable precautions to ensure the safety of students while supervising students during school time and during all school related activities. This policy has been reviewed in accordance with Coolmine Community School's Child Safeguarding Statement and in line with the Children First Act 2015 (and Addendum 2019) and the Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary schools revised 2025. This policy is developed in line with current Irish legislation and statutory guidance (*Appendix 1)* including:

- Children First Act 2015 (as amended)
- Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools (revised 2025)
- Education Act 1998
- Education Welfare Act 2000
- Equal Status Act 2000
- Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005
- Teaching Council Code of Professional Conduct for Teachers

Aims and Objectives

- To clarify supervision responsibilities
- To inform parents that the school does not accept responsibility for students before 08:30am
- To ensure student safety during the school day and school activities
- To support the Anti-Bullying Policy
- To comply with legislative requirements

School Procedures for Supervision and Substitution

The substitution of classes and supervision of the school is covered by the Supervision & Substitution system in the school.

At the start of each year, teachers are invited to indicate preferences for substitution periods by nominating ten periods on their timetable in numbered order of preference. They also indicate their preferences for break time supervision.

A roster for supervision and substitution is drawn up by the Deputy Principal in consultation with the Principal, taking into account the preferences of the teacher and the needs of the school, and is shared with staff.

Substitution

Teachers will be notified through Compass of substitution needs for the day. Teachers should check Compass regularly to ensure that they are aware of substitution that might be required during their on-call periods.

The substituting teacher is required to attend class punctually, take a roll, ensure set work is completed, and uphold the school's Positive Code of Behaviour.

Substituting teachers are asked to be mindful of medical and special educational needs of students who may not be personally known to them. Information is available on Compass.

A teacher whose timetabled class is on an out of school activity may be re-assigned to cover classes of absent teachers for those periods.

Teachers may volunteer at local level to substitute for colleagues who have been granted approved personal leave by the Board of Management. Teachers are asked not to volunteer to cover class during one of their agreed on-call periods. Teachers who intend taking personal leave are asked to arrange cover from among willing colleagues, to set work for students, and to inform the Deputy Principal of the details of the teachers taking classes.

Casual arrangements for covering colleagues is not permitted, without prior knowledge of school management.

Supervision

Supervision duties are compulsory for all staff involved in the Supervision and Substitution system.

Supervision Coverage and Timing

- It is the policy of the school to always supervise the school premises during break time and lunch time.
- There are teachers on duty at each break.
- Supervision is provided in the morning before school 8.30am-8.45am, during morning break, at lunchtime and after school for 10 minutes to allow for the safe exit of all students.

Safe supervision arrangements at breaktimes depend on staff being at the appointed location on time. If staff are delayed, a colleague must be requested to stand in or the Principal or Deputy Principal should be contacted. It is vital for health and safety reasons that students are not left without appropriate supervision.

Active Supervision Duties

- The supervisor patrols the designated area.
- Supervisors are asked not to remain in groups throughout the period, but to spread out and cover as much space as possible.
- The Supervisor should remain vigilant whilst on supervision duty.
- Staff on supervision must engage in active supervision and fulfil their duties of care and attention.

Staff Absence and Substitution

- Teachers who are availing of personal leave must ensure that cover is sought for all classes from their colleagues and that all supervision requirements are fulfilled.
- If a teacher is unexpectedly absent, a Deputy Principal arranges alternative supervision.
- Should a teacher have prior knowledge of an absence, it is their responsibility to inform school management of their anticipated absence.

Insurance

- Insurance cover is provided for all students, in school and during school-related activities (i.e. any activity taking place with the full knowledge and authority of the school, including direct travel to and from such activities).

Accidents, Injuries and First Aid

- First Aid supplies are kept in the main office.
- All accidents or serious incidents must be recorded and reported appropriately in accordance with the school's Safety Statement, State's Claims Agency and HSA procedures.
- Accident Report Forms are retained as a matter of procedure and are kept on file by the Health and Safety Officer.
- The teacher on supervision duty reports any incidents or injuries to the Year Head or a member of senior management and completes an accident report form if relevant.
- Students with injuries or illness are dealt with in accordance with the school's relevant policies. If First Aid treatment is necessary, a trained member of staff is called to assess the student.
- Any serious injury, bump or knock to the head is notified to parents by phone as soon as possible after the incident.
- Serious accidents and incidents must be reported to the State's Claims Agency in accordance with the school's Safety Statement.

Behaviour and Discipline During Supervision

- The teacher on supervision duty reports any incidents of serious misbehaviour to the Year Head and/or a member of senior management.
- Students who are on detention must remain under staff supervision to complete their work.
- The detaining teacher is responsible for ensuring supervision for the duration of the detention period.

Additional Supervision Responsibilities

- Where teachers are providing extra tuition, it is the responsibility of the relevant teacher to ensure supervision for the duration of the period.

Role of Special Needs Assistants (SNAs)

- SNAs are on supervision during the formal breaks providing supervision for designated children with additional needs. This is organised by the Deputy Principal.

- SNAs are on supervision during the breaks providing supervision to children on the SEN register.
- The SNA can act in an observing and reporting capacity, bringing instances of misbehaviour to the attention of a teacher on supervision.

Classroom, Computer Room, Outdoor Classroom and Specialist Room Supervision

- No student should be in a classroom without a teacher present.
- A teacher should be present in class when students are present at all times.
- If the class teacher needs to leave the classroom, another teacher or the Principal/Deputy Principal should be asked to supervise.
- Specialist Rooms: students using the specialist rooms are always accompanied by a teacher or an SNA under the instruction of a teacher.
- Computer Room: students using the computer room must always be accompanied by a teacher or an SNA under the instruction of a teacher.
- Outdoor Classroom: students should be accompanied by a teacher at all times when learning in the outdoor classroom.

Procedures When On or Off School Premises

- For out of school activities the tour organiser or team management must ensure that there are appropriate levels of supervision.
- For out of school activities such as sporting events, school tours etc., teachers must ensure that adequate levels of supervision are put in place prior to departure.

School Tours and Educational Outings

- Taking into account the age and interest of the children, and the curriculum being covered, tours will be arranged at various times to present students with opportunities to further their education in a different environment.
- Staff will be extra vigilant when taking students out of school.
- Special attention will be paid to road safety, behaviour on the organised transport, and risks posed by the venue (e.g. adventure outings etc.).
- Please consult the School Tour Policy for further details.

Review

This policy will be reviewed regularly in line with legislative updates and school needs.

Chairperson: Keith Purcell Date: 17th September 2026

Date of Ratification:17th September 2026

Date of Review: October 2027

Appendix 1: Legislative Compliance Checklist

- Children First Act 2015 (as amended) – https://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/2015/act/36/enacted/en/html
- Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools (2025) – https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/9b7d1-child-protection-procedures-for-primary-and-post-primary-schools/
- Education Act 1998 – https://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/1998/act/51/enacted/en/html
- Education Welfare Act 2000 – https://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/2000/act/22/enacted/en/html
- Equal Status Act 2000 – https://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/2000/act/8/enacted/en/html
- Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005 – https://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/2005/act/10/enacted/en/html
- Teaching Council Code of Professional Conduct – https://www.teachingcouncil.ie/en/publications/fitness-to-teach/code-of-professional-conduct-for-teachers/

Appendix 2: Community School Governance Context

Coolmine Community School operates under Community School governance. The Board of Management, appointed in accordance with Department of Education regulations, is responsible for the strategic direction of the school, policy approval, and oversight of the Principal in the day-to-day management of the school. This policy supports the Board's statutory duty to ensure a safe learning environment and complies with national legislation and Department of Education guidance.