

# St. Mary's College Dundalk



## Fire Safety Risk Assessment.

Ratified by the Board of Management on 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2026.

### St Mary's College Mission Statement

St Mary's College is a Catholic secondary school under the patronage of the Marist Fathers. The primary aim of the College through its spiritual and humanistic endeavours, is to promote and develop a sense of community where those entrusted to its care can be brought to the fullness of their human potential in accordance with the teachings of the Gospel.

The College, through its academic, pastoral and spiritual undertakings strives to provide for the holistic development and welfare of each of the students in its care.

### 1. Overview and Objectives

The purpose of this risk assessment is to identify potential fire safety hazards within St Mary's College, evaluate the risk to all staff, students, and visitors, and implement measures to mitigate those risks.

Within this document, due consideration is given to individuals with physical disabilities, ensuring they are included in the fire safety protocols set out.

### 2. Fire Hazards and Potential Risks

#### Fire Source Identification:

1. **Electrical Equipment:** Classrooms, offices, and corridors may have electrical equipment (e.g., computers, projectors, printers) which could pose a fire risk if not properly maintained.
2. **Chemicals and Laboratory Equipment:** Laboratories for science experiments may contain flammable chemicals.
3. **Heating Systems:** Boilers or heating systems, if not regularly serviced, may present a fire hazard.
4. **Kitchen Areas:** School canteen or Kitchen areas contain potential fire hazards from cooking equipment.
5. **General Waste:** Waste materials in classrooms, corridors, or in storage areas.

### 3. Persons at Risk

- **Staff Members** - teachers, administrative staff, special needs assistants, ancillary staff, canteen staff etc.
- **Students** - including those with physical disabilities.
- **Visitors** - parents/guardians, contractors, guest speakers, mentors and other visitors.
- **Vulnerable Individuals** - students with physical disabilities, mobility impairments, hearing or vision impairments, and those with sensory disabilities.
- **Contractors and Visitors.**

All contractors and visitors to the college must comply with fire safety procedures. Contractors working on site must:

- ✓ Report to the main college office.

- ✓ Follow all fire safety instructions in the event of an alarm activation.
- ✓ Where contractors are carrying out works that may impact fire safety systems, this must be coordinated with the facilities management provider, BAM FM.

#### 4. Risk Analysis

| HAZARD                                                             | RISK     | CONTROL                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | RESIDUAL |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|
|                                                                    | LEVEL    | MEASURES                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | RISK     |
| Electrical Equipment                                               | Moderate | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Regular inspection of electrical systems and equipment. Annual PAP testing.</li> <li>- Use of certified electricians for repairs and maintenance.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | Low      |
| Chemicals (in Laboratories)                                        | High     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Safe storage of chemicals.</li> <li>- Clear labelling and safety signage.</li> <li>- Safety training for students and staff.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | Moderate |
| Heating Systems                                                    | Moderate | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Annual servicing of heating systems.</li> <li>- Smoke detectors and fire alarms in the area.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | Low      |
| Kitchen Areas (Canteen)                                            | High     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Regular inspection of cooking equipment.</li> <li>- Staff trained in fire safety.</li> <li>- Fire extinguishers nearby.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | Low      |
| General Waste Storage                                              | Low      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Waste disposed of regularly.</li> <li>- Waste kept in designated areas away from fire hazards.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | Low      |
| Lack of accessible evacuation routes                               | High     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Identify areas where mobility-impaired individuals might struggle.</li> <li>- Ensure accessibility in all emergency routes.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | Low      |
| Gas or battery powered mobility devices (e.g. powered wheelchairs) | Moderate | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Individual P.E.E.P. developed for any student using powered mobility equipment.</li> <li>- Assigned staff members responsible for assisting during evacuation where required.</li> <li>- Evacuation routes assessed to ensure adequate width and accessibility.</li> <li>- In the event that evacuation via stairs is required, the student will be directed to a designated refuge area until assistance from trained staff or emergency services is available.</li> </ul> | Low      |

#### 5. Fire Evacuation Plan

##### Considerations for Individuals with Physical Disabilities

##### Evacuation Routes

Ensure all evacuation routes are accessible to individuals with mobility impairments, including:

- **Doorways and Corridors:** Ensure there are no obstructions.
- **Lift Access:** Lifts must not be used during fire evacuations, except where specifically designated as evacuation lifts within the building's fire strategy.

- **P.E.E.P.'s** (Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans): P.E.E.P.'s are to assist those students with disabilities or impairments, who may have difficulty evacuating during a fire. They document how a person will be evacuated, where special equipment or procedures are needed.

### Students Using Powered Mobility Devices

Where a student uses a powered wheelchair or other powered mobility aid, an individual Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (P.E.E.P.) will be organised in consultation with the student, parents/guardians, SNA's and other relevant staff members. The P.E.E.P. will identify:

- The evacuation route most suitable for the student.
- The staff members responsible for assisting where necessary.
- The nearest safe refuge location if immediate evacuation is not possible.
- Any equipment or procedures required to support safe evacuation.

Staff involved will be briefed on the evacuation arrangements as part of the school's fire safety procedures.

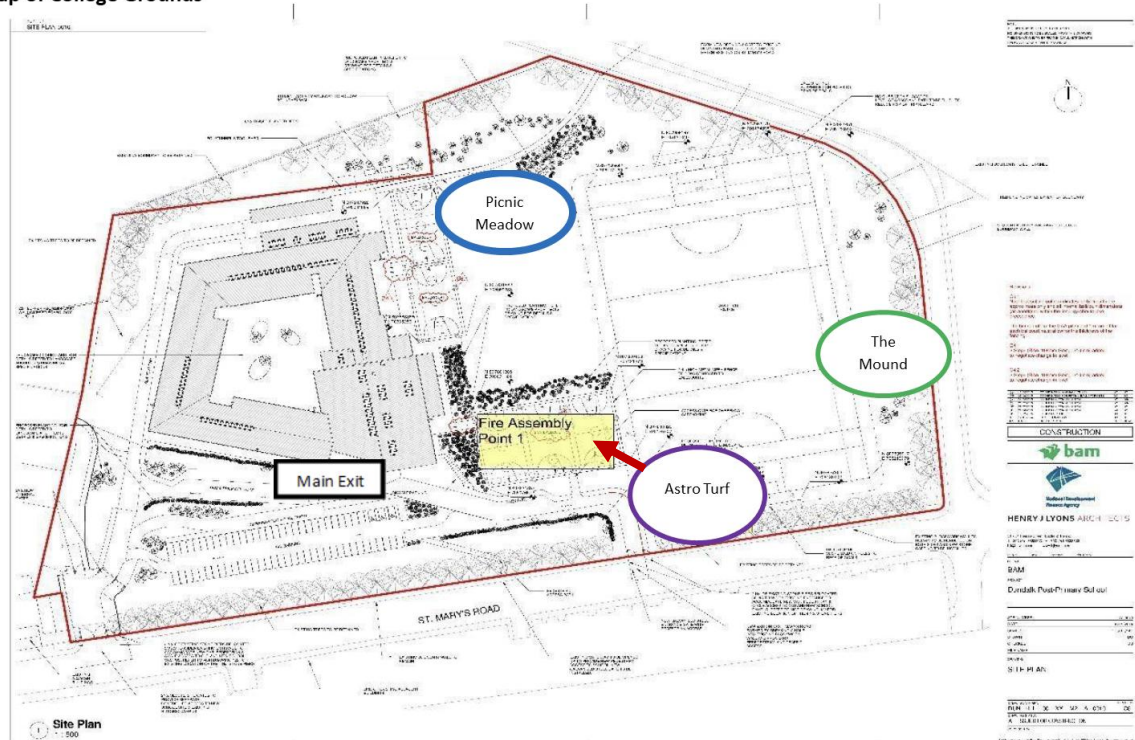
### Fire Assembly Points

In the event of a fire alarm activation, all staff, students and visitors must evacuate the building immediately and proceed to the designated assembly point.

Staff members will supervise their class groups at the assembly point and conduct a headcount before displaying the **Red/Green** accountability card.

No person may re-enter the building until permission is given by the Fire Officer or emergency services.

Map of College Grounds



## 6. Fire Alarm and Notification System

- **Audible Alerts** - The fire alarm system is tested weekly by the school caretaker, with results recorded in the Fire Safety Logbook. These checks are carried out at 7.30 A.M. every Friday.
- **Clear Signage** - Ensure that fire exits are clearly labelled.
- **Fire Officer and Staff 'Spotters'**.

In the event of a fire alarm activation, the college operates a chain of responsibility to ensure the safe evacuation of all occupants.

### Fire Officer

A member of the Senior Management Team or their nominee will assume the role of Fire Officer Controller during an evacuation. The Fire Officer will:

- ✓ Proceed to the designated assembly point.
- ✓ Receive status updates from staff using the Red/Green card system.
- ✓ Liaise with emergency services if required.
- ✓ Confirm when it is safe for staff and students to return to the building.

### Fire 'Spotters'

Designated staff members may act as Fire 'Spotters'. Each staff member receives their duties as a 'Fire Spotter' upon employment, during their initial 'staff on-boarding sessions'; they are reviewed annually. Their responsibilities may include:

- ✓ Checking corridors, toilets and nearby areas to ensure evacuation.
- ✓ Assisting students who require support.
- ✓ Reporting any concerns to the Incident Controller.
- ✓ Fire Wardens will not place themselves at risk and will evacuate immediately once their assigned area has been checked.

#### Fire Drill Spotter.

As a member of staff in St Mary's College,

I may be called upon to be a [spotter/observer](#) during a Fire Drill.

When called upon, my role is to:

- Check each room and bathroom I pass to ensure students / staff have left.
- Encourage students and staff to move quickly and quietly.
- Advise students to remain with their teacher and class group.
- Advise students and staff to leave coats, bags, books behind.
- Advise students and teachers to use the appropriate evacuation route.

- **Emergency Services Access.**
  - ✓ Access routes to the school buildings and fire service access points must be always kept clear to allow safe access for emergency services.

## 7. Fire Drills and Training

- **Regular Fire Drills** - Conduct fire drills minimum once a term, ensuring that drills involve evacuating people with mobility impairments and other special needs. Protocols around evacuation procedures, roll-calling and signalling shared with staff.
- **Student Evacuation:**
  - ✓ **Green/Red Card System** - At the beginning of each class, the teacher completes an attendance roll and notes absences. In the event of a fire alarm, teachers should collect the red and green status cards located on the back of the classroom door and instruct students to line up calmly and quietly in single file. Students should leave the building via the designated exit route indicated on the classroom door and proceed to the Assembly Point. The teacher ensures the group remains together throughout the evacuation.
  - ✓ Once at the Assembly Point, the teacher retakes the attendance roll. Where all students are present, the **Green** card should be held up to indicate that the class is complete; if any students are missing, the **Red** card should be raised to alert Fire Officer and other pertinent staff.
- **Policy Training:** Fire drills and evacuation procedures are updated regularly, and updates and recommendations are shared with the staff of the college and the Board of Management.
- **Fire Drill Report Records.** A report record of all fire drills is maintained by the Fire Officer of the college. This record includes:
  - ✓ Date and time of the drill.
  - ✓ Duration of evacuation.
  - ✓ Any issues encountered during evacuation.
  - ✓ Actions required to improve procedures.
  - ✓ Fire drills are conducted at least once per school term and records are maintained in the School Fire Safety OneDrive.

Any issues identified during drills will be reviewed by Senior Leadership Team and Safety Committee and addressed where necessary.

## 8. Firefighting Equipment and Resources

- **Accessible Fire Extinguishers:** Where needed, to advise BAM FM of any visible issues with fire safety equipment.
- As a Public Private Partnership (PPP) school, certain building maintenance and fire safety infrastructure responsibilities are managed by the facilities management provider, BAM FM.
 

The college retains responsibility for:

  - ✓ Fire evacuation procedures
  - ✓ Staff and student training
  - ✓ Fire drills and emergency planning
  - ✓ Reporting any identified fire safety concerns to the facilities management provider.

### 9. Fire Safety Training and Awareness

- **Induction Training:** All new staff and students receive basic fire safety training, including evacuation routes, and provision of policies.
- **Awareness for Students with Disabilities:** Ensure that students with disabilities are aware of evacuation routes, emergency procedures, and their role in the fire drill.

### 10. Review and Update

This Policy will be reviewed as is deemed necessary.

Signed: Morella O'Connell

Date: 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2026

*Chairperson of Board of Management.*