

The St Michael Steiner School
Supervision of Pupils Policy and Procedures

General Principles

Teachers and assistants have a duty of care to all children and for the sake of their health, safety and welfare, must ensure their adequate supervision throughout the school day.

At the same time, it is important for the development of a sense of freedom and responsibility that children do not feel they are watched all the time. A balance should be found for them between the security of knowing that someone is there if needed, and feeling free to explore and experiment with the things in their environment. This will mean different levels and kinds of supervision are required at different ages.

Accidents requiring First Aid should be dealt with according to the First Aid policy in all cases.

Kindergarten

Kindergarten children spend most of the day with their Kindergarten teacher and/or assistant who take(s) full responsibility for their welfare and for planning activities and supervising them, both inside and in the garden, from their arrival at 8:30am until they hand them over to their parents at pick-up time.

All supervising staff are qualified and adult/child ratios comply with those set out in the *“Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage”(2021)* – 1:8 or 1:13 (3 – 5 year-olds).

All members of staff have Paediatric first aid training and risk assessments and daily garden checks are carried out and logged to ensure the environment is safe for the children.

Playing outside in the garden

Free play and exploration of the environment are strong aspects of the school’s ethos. Children are encouraged to play freely during garden time.

Supervising staff must be outside immediately when the children go out and supervise the play pro-actively and attentively, but as unobtrusively as possible.

Staff should guide the children’s play where appropriate and may intervene to support their interactions or if there is an incident/accident. They may also comfort children who, for some reason, might be sad.

Staff should use their judgement and/or consult colleagues about when and how to intervene if it seems necessary.

Lunch and afternoon sessions

Afternoon sessions are provided for those children whose parents need it. Lunch is at 1 p.m. and takes place in one of the kindergarten rooms. A register is taken.

A teacher is responsible for the children in their care at lunchtime and a member of staff sits with and supervises children throughout lunch.

After lunch, the teacher takes the children to the cottage kindergarten and hands them over to another teacher, who is responsible and supervises the children until pick up time at 3pm.

Parents collect their children from the cottage kindergarten.

Children who have not been collected may walk over to reception together with a teacher and wait there until their parents arrive. (See the Non-Collection of a Child policy and procedure).

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A regularly updated staff rota is posted in the kindergartens/kitchens, to ensure the adequate supervision of the children at all times.

First aid kits are available both in the classrooms and in the garden in teachers' registers bags. Staff have their phones to use in emergencies.

The Lower, Middle and High School

Children may be 'unsupervised' for up to 15 minutes from Class 1 onwards. 'Unsupervised' means without an adult actually present; all pupils have a member of staff who is responsible for them, and to whom they can go, at all times.

Children go to the toilet by themselves and may be asked to get water for the class, take the register to reception, take something to another class, take the class rubbish or compost to the bin etc. These things are a normal part of school life and develop in the children the feeling that they are trusted and responsible.

Both staff and parents in the school community recognise the benefits for children of being allowed to play freely during their breaks. Free play and exploration of the environment are strong aspects of the school's ethos.

Parents' understanding of these freedoms is acknowledged through the consent form they sign when their children join the school.

Break Duty

All teaching staff (apart from Kindergarten) are expected to take on between one and three break duties per week, depending on their overall workload.

As well as a responsibility, this is also an opportunity for teachers to observe the children in free play and to get to know them. The better we know all of our children, the better our decision-making will be for their wellbeing.

Adult supervision during free play should be attentive but unobtrusive as far as possible; its purpose is to keep the children from coming to harm without making them feel 'watched'.

Children should know that there are adults they can go to if they need to, and adults should be quietly aware of where the children are playing, what they are doing, how they are treating each other and how they are managing their games.

Staff should use their judgment and/or consult colleagues about when and how to intervene if it seems necessary.

Supervising staff should be watchful that:

- games do not become too rough, especially when older children are playing with younger ones
- children are not being bullied (see Anti-bullying policy for characterisation of bullying)
- children are not out of sight (e.g. in the 'woods') for too long (for very young children, five minutes is long enough)
- when children ask to go inside for something (a coat or the loo), they come back within a reasonable time. Staff should use their discretion about allowing children to go inside together.
- children do not leave their belongings or litter in the grounds (send them to collect things if they do, rather than picking them up yourself)

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- children do not take unacceptable risks or endanger others (make sure *you* are satisfied that they are not likely to come to serious harm)
- all of the children go inside or to their lessons promptly after break.

Supervising staff are also responsible for inspecting the grounds and should look for:

- Pieces of wood with nails in them
- Broken glass
- Worn ropes holding swings
- Holes dug under the fence
- Places where the fence is broken or bent down
- Glass bottles, litter and cans thrown over the fence
- Dead or broken branches on trees
- Precarious constructions that the children have built
- Structures under swings onto which the children might fall

These things should be removed, made safe and reported to the maintenance team if necessary.

All supervising staff at each break are responsible for making sure one of them has inspected the grounds for these hazards.

Procedure for breaktime supervision

- A rota will be made during the INSET days before term starts and posted on the wall in the staff kitchen.
- There should be three supervising staff members on duty at each break. If children are playing in the yard as well as on the grass and in the woods, all three areas need to be supervised.
- Supervising staff in all cases should take with them:
 - a mobile phone
 - the bell for checking the time and for calling for help in an emergency.
- The First Aid kit is kept in reception and can be fetched by one of the supervising staff when needed and returned there.
- Supervising staff are responsible for ringing the bell at the right time (10:55 at first break and 1:55 at lunch time) and for making sure everyone goes inside or to their lessons after breaks.
- Children from Classes 1 - 8 should go outside at break time unless supervision is provided by their Class Teacher. Children found unsupervised in lower school classrooms must be sent out even if they tell you they are allowed to stay in.
- High School students may usually stay inside or go out, but High School staff may adapt this rule to individual classes and will usually ask them to go out for fresh air for at least part of the break.
- Students in Classes 11 and 12 have permission to leave the school premises during breaks, but must sign out and in at reception. Class Guardians are responsible for monitoring this.
- Generally, the children should always go outside to play if possible; the duty teachers are responsible for deciding if the weather is too bad and, if so, they must inform the Class Teachers that the children will not be going out. Class Teachers are then responsible for supervising their own classes.

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- It is your responsibility to find cover if you cannot do your scheduled break duty at any time. If someone is absent and has not arranged cover, the Class Teachers are responsible for their own classes.

General Rules Around Play

Rules and guidance about play are subject to constant review as play changes and evolves. Some classes may have specific rules (younger children are not usually allowed into the 'Forbidden Forest' unsupervised for example). Staff should be made aware of these rules through staff meetings and via the message board in the kitchen.

Apart from this, supervising staff are expected to use their judgement about what is acceptable behaviour. Sometimes a child who is being aggressive or destructive will need a spell sitting on the bench before being allowed to go and play again; the child's Class Teacher should be informed if this is necessary, or if there are any incidents that require adult intervention.

Incidents of bullying, aggressive behaviour or deliberate flouting of school rules should be recorded in the Behaviour Log¹ so that patterns of behaviour can be spotted.

Pupils are allowed to:

- climb trees and play with sticks
- build camps, swings etc.
- go into the 'forbidden forest' when allowed by their Class Teacher and when supervising staff have been made aware of it.
- play in the yard **when allowed by their Class Teacher** and when there is a staff member on duty there
- go into the playground outside the gate when there is a staff member on duty there

They are not allowed to:

- use foul or offensive language or deliberately hurt others
- climb the garden walls or fences or onto the roofs of any buildings
- leave the school grounds without adult supervision (except for Classes 11 and 12)
- go into the car park, the bin/skip area (unless they have been asked to take rubbish or recycling there) or the area around the green cabin classroom
- go onto the main drive
- go into the Kindergarten garden
- go into the Parent and Child garden
- go behind the Kindergarten cottage
- play football except where it has been agreed specifically by the Faculty
- have water fights except where it has been agreed specifically by the Faculty
- play outdoor games (run, throw balls etc.) inside the building during break time
- be inside the building during break times without their Class Teacher or Guardian's permission
- bring toys to school, apart from balls, skipping ropes etc. (what is allowed should be agreed by the Faculty)

Using the Off-site Playground

¹ Currently kept by Eleni

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- The Faculty may decide at some points in the year that the grass is off limits; then the children will be taken to the off-site playground outside the gate at break times until further notice and are then not allowed to play on the grass.
- If the children are in the off-site playground, two members of staff should go with them. The third person should check in the school and grounds to make sure everyone who is supposed to have gone out and then monitor the pedestrian gate, take children to reception if they need medical attention, keep an eye on anyone who is legitimately in the school grounds. etc.
- On returning to school after break, one supervisor should go ahead with the children. There is usually at least one class that stays outside for the afternoon. The second supervisor should wait with the children until one of the afternoon supervising teachers comes out.
- Classes who spend the afternoon in the playground are supervised by their Class Teachers.

Next review date: July 2025

Purple text indicates changes made at the last review