7.1 Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act, 2005

Note
The Parent Safety Statement for Co. Donegal VEC is currently being reviewed by the Health and Safety Sub-Committee with a view to providing an updated Parent Safety Statement, reflecting the current legislative environment including the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act, 2005, at an early date.

The new Parent Safety Statement, to be published at www.donegalvec.ie, will create the means to update Safety Statements and Guidelines throughout the VEC’s Schools, Colleges and Centres.

Introduction
Arising from the enactment of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act, 2005, which places a range of duties on employers, employees and others, e.g. manufacturers, designers, suppliers and property owners whose activities may impact on workplace health and safety, Co. Donegal Vocational Education Committee established a representative Health and Safety sub-committee in 2006.

Under the provisions of the Safety, Health and Welfare Act, 2005, the purpose of this sub-committee is to embed health and safety in every aspect of the activities of Co. Donegal Vocational Education Committee as an organisation.

The Health and Safety sub-committee has co-operated with the Health and Safety Authority (HSA) in drafting a strategic plan for the embedding of health and safety within all aspects of the Committee’s services.

Composition
The Health and Safety sub-committee comprises of representatives of:

- Committee’s Schools and Colleges
- Adult Education Services Staff
- Gartan Outdoor Education Centre
- Maintenance and Support Services

Chaired by Ms. Anne Marie Luby, Principal of St. Catherine’s Vocational School, Killybegs, who holds a Masters qualification in Occupational Health & Safety, the sub-committee is representative of the organisation, inclusive of the Safety Manager and the CEO.

The objective of Co. Donegal VEC is to provide a safe place of work for all of its employees and all of those affected by its activities. Co. Donegal VEC through its Health and Safety sub-committee has established a comprehensive Safety Management Programme to achieve this objective.
**Safety Management Programme**
The Health and Safety Sub-Committee has devised a safety management programme with the following elements:

1. Conduct annual safety audits of all workplaces to identify hazards, assess risks and control the hazards where necessary and appropriate.

2. Identify training needs and provide training where necessary and appropriate.

3. Ensure employee consultation and distribution of necessary information on safety, health and welfare matters.

4. Ensure adequate employee co-operation in order to achieve the success of the programme.

5. Ensure regular revision of the programme as necessary.

6. Allocate a proportion of its financial allocation to Safety.

7. Seek appropriate additional funding from the Department of Education and Science to further control hazards.

**Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (General Application) Regulations 2007.**
The Health and Safety sub-committee acting on behalf of Co. Donegal VEC, the CEO, who has ultimate responsibility for Health and Safety within the organisation and Mr. Frank Quinn, Head of Corporate Services are currently in the process of incorporating the requirements of the Safety Health and Welfare at Work (General Applications) Regulations 2007 into every aspect of the Committee’s Safety Management Policy and Programme.