



Student Teacher Policy of St. Patrick's Primary School

1. Introduction

The Board of Management of Saint Patrick's Primary School acknowledges the following regarding initial teacher education and the role of school placement in this process.

- Positive school placement experiences are critical to ensuring appropriate initial teacher education for all student teachers.
- Close collaboration between schools and colleges/universities is essential to positive and meaningful school placement experiences for student teachers.
- It is desirable that schools host student teachers for placement and, in doing so, provide student teachers with the opportunity to observe teaching and to teach classes independently, in collaboration with suitably qualified practicing teachers.
- In the course of school placement, student teachers require the support of the whole-school community in their journey towards professional competence.
- Hosting student teachers on placement is enriching for the learners in a school, student teachers, co-operating teachers, the wider school community and colleges/universities. In particular, learners benefit from a greater variety of teaching, learning and co-curricular experiences through the structured participation of student teachers in the school. Furthermore, the school gains access to a variety of newer approaches to teaching and learning through its engagement with student teachers and college/university staff.
- School placement tutors benefit from partnership experiences with schools and from being in the actual setting of a school during visits to student teachers.

2. Development of Policy

This policy was developed by the Board of Management following consultation with staff.

3. Commitment to hosting student teachers

St. Patrick's Primary School is committed to hosting student teachers for school placement and, in this context, adopts without modification as part of this school placement policy the Guidelines on School Placement developed by the Teaching Council in consultation with all relevant education partners.

4. Implications for the school hosting student teachers on placement

- Hosting a student teacher on placement will, inter alia, involve the student teacher observing classes being taught by members of the school's teaching staff.
- It will also involve student teachers teaching classes, in the first instance, while being observed and supported by the teacher with primary responsibility for the welfare and educational progress of the class (the co-operating teacher).
- Then, as the student teacher's competence develops, the student teacher will move

to teaching classes independently (under the supervision of the class teacher) in line with their course requirements and the student teacher's particular stage of development in their training.

5. Scheduling of student teachers on placement

- The Principal, will allocate student teachers to co-operating teachers and classes, having regard for:
 - the stage the student teacher is at in his/her initial teacher education programme
 - the particular needs of the learners in a particular class
 - the requirement for the student teacher to experience an appropriate range of placement contexts
 - any special circumstances of which the co-operating teacher has an awareness.
- School placements for student teachers can be accommodated in St. Patrick's Primary School for a maximum of 5 weeks in any one class.
- The school is not in a position to accommodate student teachers during the months of September & June.

6. Induction of student teachers on placement

- Student teachers will, prior to commencing their placement, be provided with an orientation to the key personnel, ethos and work of the school.
- This orientation shall involve student teachers being provided with an information pack that will include details of key school policies, in particular the school's Student Code of Behaviour, Child Protection and Student Teacher Placement Policies. This will be sent via email.
- Student teachers will be briefed by the Principal or Deputy Principal and/or any other relevant members of staff on other key policies and procedures in the school.

7. Confidentiality

Anyone who is engaged in Teaching Practice in our school is required to observe the following requirements of confidentiality:

- Confidential or private documents should not be read. No-one doing work experience may remove any documents or copies of the same from the school.
- School business and procedures should not be discussed outside of school by people engaged in work experience. It is particularly important to respect the confidentiality rights of children, parents, teachers and other school staff.
- If a written report must be compiled as part of work experience, nothing in it should indicate the names of individual pupils or teachers (use initials if necessary for the purpose of class lists etc.)

8. General Guidelines & Supports for the student teacher

The school community is committed to supporting positively and sensitively the student teacher in accordance with the Guidelines on School Placement developed by the Teaching Council in consultation with all relevant education partners. Furthermore, the school is committed to allocating the student teacher to (an) appropriate co-operating teacher(s) and to the classes

essential to him/ her undertaking his/her school placement successfully. Considerations of the following should be taken by the student teacher:

Breaks

- Student teachers shall be entitled to a 15 minute break in the morning and a 25 minute break in the afternoon. They may take their lunch in the school library/Nurture Room.

Discipline and Child Protection

- The teaching staff are responsible for discipline in the school. Students on placement may not discipline children of the school beyond regular classroom management expectations that they are expected to implement.
- If people on work experience have a concern regarding behaviour, they must report it to a member of the teaching staff.
- If student teachers on placement have any concerns regarding child protection, they should report it to the Designated Liaison Person or the Deputy DLP.
- The student teacher will be reminded that one-to-one teaching is not permitted in our school unless there is another adult present in the room at all times.

Mobile Phone Use

- The use of Mobile phones and other electronic devices may not be used in the school during the school day by student teachers on placement.
- Recordings (photographic/video/audio) of staff and the school grounds are not permitted without prior consent from the school authorities.
- Photos of work undertaken by pupils during the student's placement may be taken, as long as the identity of the child in question can not be revealed.

Resources

- The school will also provide the student teacher with access to the black and white photocopier for the duration of their placement. As a rule of thumb, ten copies of worksheets per pupil per week is allocated for the purpose of this. It will be the responsibility of the class teacher who is accommodating the placement to oversee the implementation of this (using the class teachers' photocopier code)

9. Ratification & Communication

A copy of the school placement policy is readily accessible on the school website. This policy will be reviewed as necessary by the staff and Board of Management of St. Patrick's Primary School.

This policy was ratified on 12th Decemberr 2024.

Signed: *Fr. Tony Finn (Chairperson of the Board of Management)*

Signed: *Riona Donoghue (Acting Principal)*

Date: **12/12/2024**

** Please note that the signed copy of this policy is in the school office*

