



## **Star of the Sea Primary School Student Teacher Placement Policy**

### **Introduction**

The Board of Management of Star of the Sea PS 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 HEIs 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 HEIs. 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 HEI staff.
- HEI placement tutors benefit from partnership experiences with schools and from being in the actual setting of a school during visits to student teachers.

## **Development of Policy**

This policy was developed by the Board of Management following consultations with all members of the school community – school management, teachers and other relevant staff, parents, students and the school patron.

## **Rational**

Due to the increasing number of requests from HEIs and individuals to facilitate student teacher placements it is intended that this policy will provide a clear and unambiguous procedure and criteria under which placement opportunities will be granted. The policy will ensure that pupils' learning needs are given priority in allocating classes to students. The implementation of this policy will limit disruption to class and school routines, and ensure that excessive demands are not placed on any individual class or teacher.

## **Aims of the Policy**

- To provide student teachers an enriching opportunity to work with children on a professional level
- To provide the structure to enable an exchange of teaching methodologies and skills between students and co-operating teachers.
- To support teachers in their professional development.

## **Commitment to hosting student teachers**

Star of the Sea PS 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. (<http://www.teachingcouncil.ie/en/Publications/Teacher-Education/Guidelines-for-School-Placement-.pdf>)

## **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 in line with HEI requirements and the student teacher's particular stage of development on the ITE programme.

## **Scheduling of student teachers on placement**

The principal, or staff member to whom this task is delegated, 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; and any special circumstances of which the co-operating teacher has an awareness. All placements must be by the agreement of the class teacher and class teachers have the discretion to accept or reject a student teacher placement in their classroom..

## **Operational Procedures**

- A student teacher will not be accepted during
  - The first two weeks and the last two weeks of the school year.
- Restrictions will apply for certain classes where students will not be accepted
  - The first term in Junior and Senior Infants
  - 2<sup>nd</sup> Class - At time of preparation for First Holy Communion– generally mid-April/early May
  - 6<sup>th</sup> Class may also be restricted due to preparation for Confirmation
- A maximum of 2 blocks of a 10 week placement (i.e. 2 students) will be facilitated in any one year and 2 allocations of First year student placement.
- Only one student placement per class per year.
- A class will only have a student teacher twice during their time primary school.
- Non probated teachers will not host students in their class.
- Fixed-term/substitute teachers will not facilitate student placements.
- The student placements will rotate amongst staff, whenever feasible, to ensure equity in allocating students among teachers.
- Where possible, first year MIC students will rotate every second year between 1<sup>st</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> classes
- The timeframe for each placement and the protocol involved will be agreed upon prior to the student teacher taking up the placement.

## **Conduct expected from the student teachers**

- The student is expected to arrange to meet the class teacher well in advance of the placement to agree schemes of work, timetabling etc.
- Where applicable, students must follow agreed schemes of work and timetabling. Any changes must have the approval of the class teacher.
- The student must recognise that the class teacher may teach the class at any stage during the day even if the student is expected to teach for the full day.

- It is expected that the student teacher will engage fully with the class teacher and under his/her instructions involve themselves with the work of the class and assist at all times. In this way the experience is mutually beneficial.
- Students must be mindful of confidentiality at all times. Students' files, notes etc must not contain any reference to pupils' full names – initials only.
- Student teachers may be offered, if feasible, the opportunity to observe teaching and learning outside of the assigned class.
- Student teachers are asked to be mindful of waste in relation to photocopying and printing.
- Student teachers should be sensitive to, and adhere to staffroom routines and conventions and to any health & safety requirements and policies of the school.
- Student teachers should familiarize themselves with the school's Child Safeguarding Statement
- The student teacher's mobile phone should be turned off/silent throughout the school day.
- The student teacher must consult with the class teacher as regards access to any school resources e.g. Visual Arts materials, P.E. equipment, ICT equipment, photocopying etc.
- At every stage during the placement, student teachers should be receptive to advice from the class teacher and/or Principal on any aspect of their professional development.
- The student teacher must at all times present and behave themselves professionally.

Please note that in exceptional circumstances Star of the Sea Primary School reserves the right to contact the HEI to discuss the progress and the (dis)continuation of the placement of the student teacher.

### **Application Criteria and Procedures**

All applicants for school placement will, where possible, be considered on merit alone. However, where applications exceed placement positions available the following preferences will be strictly applied:

- Student teachers who have a connection to the school e.g. past pupil, parent.
- Relative of a staff member.
- All other applicants

Applications for student teacher placements must be received at least 6 months in advance of the year preceding the required placement year. Applications must be submitted by post to

*Mrs. Geraldine Conroy,  
Student Teacher Placement Co-ordinator,  
Star of the Sea Primary School,  
Passage West,  
Cork*

Decisions on success or otherwise of the application will be communicated by email.

Applications for Student Teacher Placement in Star of the Sea Primary School will *only* be considered if they include the following:

- Cover letter with date noted
- Curriculum Vitae (max 2 pages) including phone numbers of referees
- Contact details (address, phone number and e-mail address)
- Exact dates of observations/placements
- Class preference
- Previous school placements, if relevant
- Focus of observation as outlined by the College
- Student teachers must ensure proof of Garda Vetting is supplied by the HEIs.

If all of these criteria are not met, the application will not be considered.

### **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, Health and Safety, Homework and Student Teacher Placement Policies.

### **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. The school will also provide the student teacher with the teaching facilities and resources necessary to his/her work during the placement.

**Continuing professional development for staff involved in supporting/facilitating student teacher placement**

The school management authority and the school’s senior management are committed to promoting and facilitating the participation of school staff in continuing professional development programmes essential to ensuring the successful operation of student teacher placement in the school.

**Communication of school placement policy to school community**

A copy of the school placement policy is made available to school personnel and the Parents Association and the policy is readily accessible to parents on request. In particular, a copy of the policy shall be published on the school website.

**Policy reviews**

This policy will be reviewed by the school management authority within five years from date of ratification.

**Date of policy adoption**

This policy was adopted by the Board of Management on \_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Chairperson of Board of Management

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of next review: