Scoil Mhuire Trim, Patrick Street, Trim, Co. Meath, Ireland

Student Teacher Placement Policy

1. Introduction

The Board of Management of Scoil Mhuire 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 Higher Education Institutions (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.

2. Development of Policy

This policy was developed by the Policy Development Core Team following consultations with all members of the school community – school management, teachers and other relevant staff, parents, students and the school trustees CEIST.

3. Commitment to hosting student teachers

Scoil Mhuire 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.

Scoil Mhuire will host a maximum of six students depending on curricular needs.

4. Implications for the school hosting student teachers on placement

Hosting a student teacher on placement will, among others, 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 Initial Teacher Education (ITE) program. The student teacher may also team teach with the co-operating teacher.

5. Scheduling of student teachers on placement

The Deputy Principal will allocate student teachers to co-operating teachers and classes, having regard for:

- the stage the student teacher is at in his/her ITE program:
- 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.

6. Role of the Student Teacher

Student Teachers are expected to take a proactive approach to their own learning and to participate constructively in a broad range of placement experiences. They are expected to engage fully in school life and seek and avail of opportunities to observe and work alongside other teachers. The school community expects that the Student Teacher will engage with it in a respectful and courteous manner having due regard for the values and standards set out in the various school policies.

7. Placement

- Request from 3rd Level Institution/Student should be sent to Principal/Deputy Principal.
    - ✓ Deputy Principal requests a copy of a student's Garda Vetting, Children First Tusla Certificate and University Transcripts.
    - ✓ Student is requested to attend an interview with the Deputy Principal.
- Permission should be sought from Deputy Principal by the student teacher.
- Deputy Principal will consult with subject department Co-ordinator/s.
- Deputy Principal will allocate classes to student teacher in consultation with the subject department Co - Ordinator and the co-operating teacher/s.
- Student teachers will be allocated 1st, 2nd, T.Y. and/or 5th Year classes.
- The student teacher will meet with the subject department for planning at the commencement of the year.
- The student teacher will meet formally with the co-operating teacher/s prior to commencement of teaching.
- The student teacher will engage with training in the use of VSware and Office 365. The Deputy Principal will provide student teachers at induction with the relevant material including:
    - Code of Behaviour
    - CEIST Charter
    - Teaching Council Code of Professional Conduct
    - Map of the school

- Staff Journal and Student Journal
- Names of class teachers and relevant room numbers
- Child Safeguarding Statement
- Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools (revised 2023)
- Relevant policies
- Relevant Procedures
- Timetable

8. Procedures to be followed

- The Co-operating subject teacher should introduce the student teacher to the class and outline the plan of work for the class. S/he should ensure that the student teacher is familiar with class rules/procedures/VS Ware etc.
- The Co-operating subject teacher should remain in the classroom for initial classes.
- The Co-operating subject teacher must remain on school premises when student teacher is in his\her classes unless otherwise agreed with Deputy Principal.
- The Co-operating subject teacher should afford the student teacher opportunities to observe his\her teaching and should observe the student teacher's teaching and give feedback to him/her.
- The Co-operating teacher should work collaboratively with the student teacher and bring any concerns regarding the student teacher's practice or professional conduct to the attention of the Deputy Principal.
- The Deputy Principal should furnish report to 3rd level institutions on request.
- Student teachers should never meet with parents/guardians on their own without prior approval of the Deputy Principal.
- Every student teacher must furnish the school with a copy of their Garda Vetting Certificate and a copy of their TUSLA Online Child Protection Certificate and University Transcripts before they can commence their placement in the school.

9. Responsibilities

- Co-operating subject teacher retains primary responsibility for the progress of the students. S/he should be available to meet with parents in relation to a student's progress.
- Co-operating subject teacher should be on school premises when student teacher is taking his\her class unless prior permission is given by Deputy Principal.

10. Induction of student teachers on placement

Student teachers will, prior to commencing their placement, be provided with full induction and orientation to the key personnel, ethos and work of the school. This orientation shall involve student teachers being provided with information that will include details of school policies, in particular the school's Student Code of Behaviour, Child Safeguarding Statement, Dignity in the Workplace, Health and Safety, Student Teacher Placement Policy, Teaching Council Code of Professional Conduct and Homework Guidelines.

11. 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.

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

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

13. Communication of school placement policy to school community

A copy of the school placement policy is available on the school website www.scoilmhuiretrim.ie

14. Date of policy adoption

This policy was adopted by the Board of Management on the 5th December 2024

Reviewed and Revised 29th January 2026