



St. Mary's Secondary School

Convent of Mercy, Newport, Co. Tipperary V94 RY18

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Registered Charity Number: 20148379



Student Teacher Placement Policy

St. Mary's Secondary School, Newport, is a Voluntary Catholic Secondary School under the Trusteeship and the Patronage of C.E.I ST. (Catholic Schools, An Irish Schools Trust). The School is grant aided by the Department of Education & Skills, and is a co-educational school.

School Management: The Board of Management of St. Mary's Secondary School is a statutory Board, appointed pursuant to the provisions of the Education Act 1998.

Mission Statement:

St. Mary's Secondary School, Newport operates as a Catholic co-educational Secondary School, to provide teaching and learning of the highest quality for the benefit of the community which it serves.

In pursuing this mission we aim:

To provide a quality educational experience that caters for the full range of academic aptitude and abilities.

To foster the intellectual, physical, social, cultural, moral and religious development of our students.

To enable pupils to achieve their full potential academically.

To promote the Catholic ethos and faith.

To cater for the needs of the local community in so far as ethos, resources and facilities permit.

Ethos: As a CEIST school, St. Mary's seeks to promote the five key elements of the CEIST charter.

- Promoting Spiritual and Human Development.
- Achieving Quality in Teaching and Learning.
- Showing Respect for Every Person.
- Creating Community.
- Being Just and Responsible

Student Teacher Placement Policy

1 Introduction

The Board of Management of St Mary's Secondary 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 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 practising 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 Board of Management following consultations with relevant members of the school community. This policy was formulated having regard to the increasing number of requests from HEIs and from individuals to provide opportunities for student teacher placements in St. Mary's Secondary School. It is expected that implementation of this Policy will ensure continuity of routine, teaching and learning within the classroom setting, and will also limit disruption to regular school routines. The Policy will provide for an equitable and fair allocation of opportunities for student teacher placements throughout the school and should ensure that excessive demands are not placed on any individual class or teacher. It recognises that every member of staff has a responsibility to contribute to the positive professional development of the student teacher.

3 Commitment to hosting student teachers

St. Mary's Secondary 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 in line with HEI requirements and the student teacher's particular stage of development on the Initial Teacher Education (ITE) programme.

5 Criteria

When allocating placement positions, the following criteria shall apply:

- The needs of the students of St. Mary's Secondary School are of paramount importance.
- Priority will be given to first time applicants.
- The decision of school management is final.

6 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.

Please note that in exceptional circumstances St. Mary's Secondary school reserves the right to contact the HEI to discuss the progress and the (dis)continuation of the placement of the student teacher.

7 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.

8 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.

9 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.

10 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.

Timetable for Review

The Student Teacher Placement policy will be reviewed as the need arises, and/or every three years. The next review is scheduled to take place in 2024.

Policy development team: Ms. E. Mullally, Ms. L. Droog,

Relevant dates for this policy

Parent survey: 9th January, 2020

Draft policy presented to students on placement in school: 15th January, 2020

Draft policy presented to Staff: 12th March, 2020

Draft policy presented to Parents' Council: 28th April, 2020


Draft policy presented to Board of Management: 24th February, 2021

Policy ratified by Board of Management: 24th February, 2021

Signed: 

Chairperson, Board of Management

Date: 24/2/2021

Signed: 

Principal, St. Mary's Secondary School

Date: 24/2/21