



Student Teaching Placement Policy

Introduction

The Board of Management of St. John the Baptist IGS 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 (HEI) 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 pupils in a school, student teachers, co-operating teachers, the wider school community and HEIs. In particular, pupils 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.

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, pupils and the school patron.

Commitment to hosting student teachers

St. John the Baptist IGS 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.

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 Teaching Education programme.

Scheduling of student teachers on placement

The principal, or staff members 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.

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.

The class teacher is responsible for the children in his/her class and should remain with them at all times.

During inspections the class teacher will be in the cloakroom at all times. If and when the class teacher needs to leave his/her classroom briefly (in exceptional circumstances) during placement she/he will: let a colleague know that they are leaving the room and where they can be located; leave the doors open between classrooms; tell the student(s) where to find them in case of an emergency and give them directions regarding who they should contact if they are unable to locate the class teacher. When a supervisor or mentor from the HEI college visits a class, class teachers will remain in the cloakroom.

Policy reviews

This policy will be reviewed by the school management authority periodically.

Ratified by the Board of Management

Paul Nolan
Chairperson, Board of Management

24 May 2018