



Student Teacher Placement POLICY

Meán Scoil Mhuire Longford

Chairperson: Ms. Karen Clabby
Principal: Ms. Mairéad Lyons
Date: 19th March 2024

1. Mission Statement

Meán Scoil Mhuire is a voluntary, secondary, catholic school. It is a centre for the holistic formation of girls and young women.

Aims

- (1) We respect the dignity of each person with her own unique background, talents, traditions and beliefs
- (2) We provide a pleasant disciplined atmosphere in which students can grow spiritually, morally, academically, socially, culturally.
- (3) We expose all to a rich cultural heritage and help them to acquire the knowledge and skills which enable them to understand, appreciate and respect themselves, others and their environment.
- (4) We foster positive Christian values and self-esteem so that our students leave school with a sense of self-worth and self-esteem, and are well equipped for the challenges of life.
- (5) We encourage partnership at all levels between the management, staff, pupils, parents and the local community.
- (6) Meán Scoil Mhuire has not only a highly respected academic tradition. We also develop creativity, leadership and social skills by promoting involvement in extra-curricular activities.

2. Introduction

The Board of Management of Meán 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 Institutes (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 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.

3. 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 trustees.

4. Commitment to hosting student teachers

Meán 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.

Please see: <https://www.teachingcouncil.ie/assets/uploads/2023/08/school-placement-guidelines-updated-march-2022.pdf>

5. 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/ Treoraí). 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.

6. Scheduling of student teachers on placement

The Principal, or the Deputy Principal to whom this task is delegated, will allocate student teachers to co-operating teachers (Treoraíthe) 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.

7. Induction of student teachers on placement

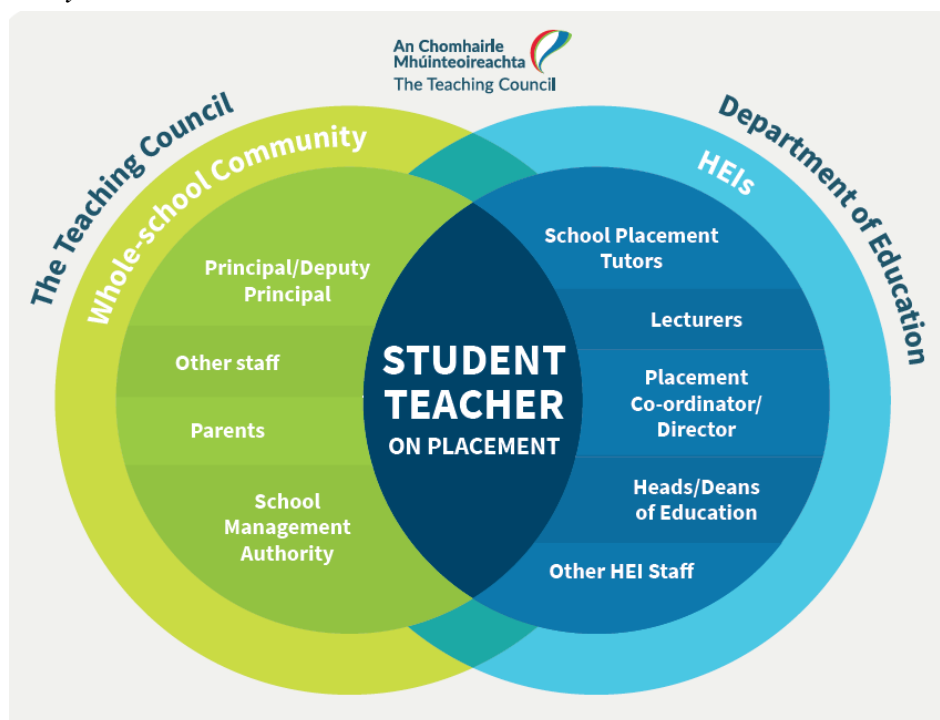
- Student teachers will, prior to commencing their placement, be provided with an orientation to the key personnel, ethos and work of the school. This orientation shall involve student teachers being provided with the staff induction handbook, and information on relevant school policies and procedures, in particular the school's Student Code of Behaviour, Child Protection, Health and Safety, Homework and Student Teacher Placement Policies.

- Student teachers must be vetted through JMB unless there is a prior written agreement between the school and the college. The school must receive written confirmation from the college that the student teacher has been vetted. 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 before they can commence their placement in the school.

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.

Key Partners



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

The Board of Management and the school's senior management team 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. Responsibilities of the Treoir/ Co-operating Teacher

- 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.
- Remain in the classroom for initial classes.
- Remain on school premises when student teacher is taking his\her classes unless otherwise agreed with Principal/ Deputy Principal.
- Afford the student teacher opportunities to observe his\her teaching and observe the student teacher's teaching and give feedback to him/her.
- Work collaboratively with the student teacher and bring any concerns regarding the student teacher's practice or professional conduct to the attention of the Principal/ Deputy Principal.
- Furnish a report to 3rd level institutions on progress when requested.
- Retain primary responsibility for student progress, meeting with parents, termly assessments, exam supervision and completion of student reports. Student teachers should never meet with parents/guardians on their own without prior approval with the Principal/ Deputy Principal. .

11. 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 and made available to parents/guardians of all learners enrolling in the school and all new teachers at the point of their employment, either electronically or in hard copy.

12. Related Policies and Documents

- Anti-bullying Policy
- Anti-Bullying (Dignity at Work) Policy
- Child Safeguarding Statement
- Code of Behaviour
- Code of Professional Conduct for Teachers (Updated 2nd Edition 2016) Teaching Council
- Guidelines on School Placement (Revised edition 2021) Teaching Council
- Harassment and Sexual harassment Policy (Dignity at Work) Policy
- Health and Safety Statement
- Homework Policy
- Uniform Policy

13. Policy review

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