

Curragh Post Primary School

Introduction and Scope of this Policy:

This document sets out the policy of Curragh Post Primary School in respect of the relationships that the school aspires to develop and maintain with the new members of the school's teaching staff and student teachers. This policy is underpinned by three assumptions about the benefits of a well-managed school placement (for student-teachers) and school experience for all new teachers:

- to enhance the school experience for student teachers and new teachers
- to enrich learning outcomes for both current and future learners and
- to deepen the professional satisfaction and improve the status of teachers.

Relationship to school's Mission / Vision / Aims:

Curragh Post Primary School's Mission Statement is as follows:

Our School values the gifts and talents of students and staff in their development in an atmosphere of equity, caring and mutual respect. Can we achieve this? Yes, we can. Is Feidir Linn.

This New Teacher / Student Teacher Policy is informed by the school's Mission Statement which commits us to preparing all students for the challenges of adolescent and adult life and to respecting the dignity, worth and individuality of every member of the school community. The school's role in the development of young people supports and is enriched by the active participation of teachers in many aspects of their students' lives.

Rationale:

This New Teacher / Student Teacher Policy aims to ensure that appropriate opportunities and procedures are in place to enable the school

- to offer a quality, challenging and supportive employment opportunity to our new teachers;
- to offer a quality, challenging and supportive learning experience to our student teachers;
- to ensure that new teachers and student teachers are as fully informed as possible about the philosophy and procedures of the school, the standards expected of them and the supports they will receive as valued members of the school community;
- to ensure that new teachers and student teachers are encouraged to participate as fully as possible in school related activities.

Goals:

The school shall have in place appropriate means and processes

- to inform new teachers and student teachers about the work of the school;
- to involve new teachers and student teachers as fully as possible in the work of the school;
- to support new teachers and student teachers as fully as possible in their work with and for the school.

Role of All Teachers:

The school is a supportive organisation in respect of all staff. Our efforts to provide holistic education, in its various forms, are most meaningful and effective when all staff both understand and support our aims and activities.

Teachers, whatever their employment status, are most effective for the school when they do their best to ensure that

- they themselves have a positive attitude to education in general and this school in particular;
- support the work of the school and contribute to and implement school policies;

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- their students have a positive attitude to education in general and this school in particular;
- their students come to school and all classes with all of the required books, uniform, equipment and materials, etc.;
- their students are aware of and fully compliant with the school's Code of behaviour;
- their students work hard both within and outside school at their studies;
- they engage fully with parent – teacher meetings, parent information evenings and school events and
- they support the ongoing work of in school management, the Board of Management, all school staff, the Parents' Council and, where appropriate, the Students' Council.

Provision for New Teachers and Student Teachers:

In order to support new teachers and student teachers in their important roles, the school will ensure that, prior to taking up duty, the Principal and Deputy Principal will hold a relatively informal meeting with the personnel involved and explain the philosophy, mission, expectations and procedures of the school. As well as discussing the school's mission and ethos, as well as its various policies (both written and unwritten), at this meeting, the school will try to ensure that the teacher(s) involved is familiarised with and understands the school building layout and understands timetabling, classroom and supervision arrangements.

As with all staff, new teachers and student teachers are asked to note that they are expected to be professional in their relationships, language, dress, demeanour, etc.

New and Student Teachers:

The "Information Folder" provided to all staff will, for new teachers and for student teachers includes the following (where possible):

- Timetable;
- List of staff with full names;
- Booklist for all relevant school year groups to allow new staff to contact book companies prior to commencement of school year;
- Information regarding access to audio-visual equipment / library and computer access for class and personal use;
- Student Code of Behaviour for the school including samples of report sheets / credit sheets, etc. Summary document in relation to the operation of the "chain of command" in relation to breaches of discipline;
- Classroom Rules;
- School Plan;
- Health and Safety Statement;
- Supervision / Substitution requirements, including details of yard layout – out of bounds areas, etc.;
- Names of Year Heads – details of their roles and when to approach them (Schedule of Posts);
- Classroom keys / lockers, etc.;
- Information in relation to ordering goods / booking transport for trips, etc.;
- Guidelines about the operation of the class register;
- Fire Safety details;
- Homework and Study Policy;
- Homework procedures, e.g. following a student absence due to extra-curricular activity or illness, etc.
- Communication procedures: newsletter, notice board, staff meetings, etc.;
- Pupil history where appropriate (medical and behavioural), etc.

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All staff should remember that “***Student Teachers***” are here to listen and learn from all members of the school community. They need and are entitled to a greater degree of direction than colleagues. This school supports and welcomes team-teaching opportunities – cooperating teachers and student-teachers or new teachers and mentoring teachers working in pairs or teachers teaching together in triads / quads, i.e. teachers working together to plan, conduct and evaluate the learning activities for the same group of students and learners as a means for collaborative peer support amongst staff for the benefit of all learners in the classroom.

- The co-operating teacher should give a copy of the Subject Department Scheme of Work to the student teacher.
- The co-operating teacher should make out a detailed list of material to be covered over the year and give this to the student teacher. In doing so, the co-operating teacher retains primary responsibility for the progress of his / her students.
- The student teacher should observe as many classes as possible, especially in the first few weeks.
- The student teacher should be introduced to the class by the cooperating teacher.
- The co-operating teacher should observe the student teacher from time to time and give advice when necessary.
- The co-operating teacher should invite the student teacher to observe him / her teaching from time to time and give advice when necessary.
- The student teacher should meet with the co-operating teacher on a regular basis and not be afraid to look for advice and assistance.
- The student teacher should develop and maintain a positive and professional teacher – pupil relationship (keeping distance from students). The relationship should be one of mutual respect and co-operation.
- The co-operating teacher (not the student teacher) will attend and give advice / information to parents / guardians at the official annual school parent teacher meetings.
- The co-operating teacher should advise the Principal in a timely manner of any serious concerns regarding a student teacher’s practice or professional conduct.

As a general policy, the school will normally permit a maximum of two student teachers to be on the staff at any one time. The school will ensure that there is only one student teacher per subject area at any one time. A subject department should not be asked to take a student teacher on placement in two consecutive academic years. Prospective student teachers should be expected to meet with the Principal and, if available, their prospective cooperating teacher before the placement request is approved. Decisions in this regard will be made by the Principal.

Co-operating Teachers:

- Co-operating teachers should remain on school premises while their classes are being taught by the student teacher.

Role of Subject Department Teams / Coordinators:

In relation to both student teachers and substitute teachers, teaching colleagues have a vital role to play. In particular, at least one member of the subject department team should be asked, on behalf of the department, to liaise with the student teacher and / or substitute teacher and to advise him / her on schemes of work, lesson plans, department resources, assessment methods, etc. Each subject department will propose one of its own members to carry out this role on a voluntary basis; the final decision will be made by the Principal.

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Information re: Students with Special Educational Needs:

In relation to both student teachers and substitute teachers, the Special Educational Needs files, available to all teachers, will be made available and the Deputy Principal / Principal will liaise with the student teacher and / or substitute teacher and to advise him / her on students with special educational needs as regards lesson plans, methodologies, additional resources, assessment methods, etc.

Role of Year Heads:

In relation to new teachers, student teachers and substitute teachers, the different Year Heads will make themselves available (on request and by agreement) to liaise with the student teacher and / or substitute teacher and to advise him / her on students / classes in relation to lesson plans, methodologies, seating plans, expected standards of work and behaviour, etc.

Role of Principal / Deputy Principal:

In relation to new teachers, student teachers and substitute teachers, the Principal and Deputy Principal will make themselves available to liaise with the student teacher and / or substitute teacher (on request and by agreement) and to advise him / her on students / classes in relation to any / all aspects of their work in and contribution to the school. The Principal and Deputy Principal of this school will do their utmost to ensure that new teachers and student teachers receive comprehensive support, guidance and advice. The Principal assigns student teachers to co-operating teachers and to particular classes, in consultation with the subject department coordinator. He / she should avoid giving classes with behavioural problems to student teachers. The Principal should advise the college / university in a timely manner of any serious concerns regarding a student teacher's practice or professional conduct. The Principal and Deputy Principal will encourage student teachers and substitute teachers to contribute positively to many areas of school life, (co-curricular activities and staff meetings, for example), as well as to engage in ongoing professional development both within and outside the school.

Review Procedures:

The policy will be reviewed regularly and by the Board of Management every four years. Any staff member who is unhappy with the content or the implementation of any school policy may request a review at any time and such a request will be dealt with as quickly as possible.

Adopted by Board of Management: May 12th 2014

Review Date: March 2018