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Work experience and Student Placement Policy

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INTRODUCTION

In St. Mary's National School we recognise the value of supporting students who are pursuing careers in education or childcare through work experience and placement opportunities. This policy outlines the procedures and expectations for post-primary Transition Year students, third-level education students, and others seeking work experience or observation time in our school.

. Rationale

- To support the professional development of future educators and childcare workers.
- To ensure the safety and wellbeing of all pupils in our care.
- To maintain the professional and respectful environment of the school.
- To outline the procedures for applying for and completing work experience in the school.

This policy applies to:

- Transition Year students
- Leaving Certificate Applied (LCA) students
- Post-Leaving Certificate (PLC) students
- Third-level student teachers and Early Childhood Studies students
- Any individual seeking professional observation or work placement at St. Mary's National School

Application Process

All applicants must:

- Submit a written request (email or letter) to the school principal at least four weeks in advance of the proposed placement.
- Include the following information:

- Full name and contact details
- School/College name
- Course and year of study
- Preferred dates of placement
- Objectives for the placement or areas of interest

Applicants under 18 must have parental/guardian consent.

5. Garda Vetting and Child Protection

- All students over 16 must provide valid Garda Vetting documentation before starting placement.
- All students must read and sign the school's Child Safeguarding Statement and be made aware of their responsibilities under Children First Guidelines.
- Any breaches of child protection procedures will result in immediate termination of the placement.

6. Roles and Responsibilities

The Principal (or designated staff member) will:

- Approve or decline placements
- Assign a supervising teacher
- Ensure the visitor is properly briefed

Supervising Teachers will:

- Provide guidance during the placement
- Be a point of contact for any issues
- Ensure appropriate tasks are assigned

Work Experience Students must:

- Follow all school policies, including the Code of Behaviour, Child Protection, Health & Safety, and AUP policies
- Dress appropriately and behave professionally
- Maintain confidentiality and never share or record any personal or sensitive information related to pupils or staff
- Remain under staff supervision at all times

7. Confidentiality

Visitors must treat all information about staff, students, and the functioning of the school with strict confidentiality. No photos, videos, or social media posts are permitted during the placement.

8. Termination of Placement

The school reserves the right to terminate a placement at any time if:

- The visitor breaches any school policy or demonstrates unprofessional behaviour
- The presence of the student is deemed disruptive to the learning environment
- Required vetting documentation is incomplete or invalid

9. Insurance

It is the responsibility of the sending school/college to ensure the student is appropriately insured for the duration of their placement. Proof of insurance may be requested prior to starting.

10. Review

This policy will be reviewed every 2 years, or sooner if required due to changes in legislation or school procedures.

Signed:

Patricia Hughes

Chairperson, Board of Management - 8th of October 2025

Signed:

Thomas Gallagher

Principal - 8th of October 2025