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# Work Experience / Teaching Placement Policy

## Introduction

Saplings Special School Rathfarnham welcomes student teachers, Transition Year pupils and other categories of student (Early Childhood Studies, Childcare etc.) seeking to gain work experience here.

The central objective of this policy is to ensure that the high standards of education and behaviour management in Saplings Special School are met and that the welfare of the students in the school is paramount at all times.

## **Rationale**

The school recognises its obligation to share best educational and behaviour management practice with those seeking to gain experience in a school setting and will host students in accordance with the capacity of the school to accommodate such students and in accordance with the willingness and availability of teachers to accommodate them. However, the accommodation of student teachers / students on work experience is ultimately at the discretion of the principal. The Principal Teacher of the school, as an agent of the school and charged with the day to day running of the school, reserves the right to refuse or allow applicants a work placement in the school.

## **Aims**

This policy aims to promote:

- An awareness that the welfare of the students in Saplings Special School Rathfarnham is the primary concern.
- An awareness of the importance of confidentiality during the time spent in the school.
- A welcome to people who are accepted to work in the school on a short or a long term basis during the school year, be it as a student teacher or on work experience.

## **Application & Placements**

Applications for work experience should be made by email to the Principal / Secretary [saplingsrathfarnham@saplings.org](mailto:saplingsrathfarnham@saplings.org)

Applications should be accompanied by the following documentation:

- Letter of application, outlining details (dates, duration etc.) of work experience requested and furnishing any information / documents from the school / college / university that the student attends.

- A copy of the Insurance indemnification from the school / college / university that the student attends
- A copy of the recent Garda Vetting (relevant for those over the age of 18years)

### **Teaching Placements (Student Teachers)**

- With regards to applications for Teaching Placements, ordinarily, no more than one student teacher will be facilitated at any one time per class.
- Placements / Work experiences will be allocated on a first come first served basis.
- Placements are dependent on a teacher's willingness to facilitate a placement in their class. No teacher will be obliged to host a student teacher.
- Certain class groups will not ordinarily be considered for teaching placements
  - Newly opened class in Term 1
  - A class group who has had a student teacher with in the previous 12 months
  - A class where teachers are job-sharing

### **Transition Year Pupils**

- With regards to applications for Transition Year pupils, no more than one pupil will be facilitated at any one time per class.
- Preference will be given to those with a genuine interest in working in special education.
- Placements / Work experiences will be allocated on a first come first served basis, however the Board of Management reserves the right to alter agreed dates when necessary.

### **Other Work Experience / Work Placements**

- Ordinarily no more than one work experience student will be facilitated at any one time. However, the school will consider the overall benefit / skill set that a student on work placement might bring to the school / class group. E.g. Extra assistance in a classroom for a teacher, when considering extra placements.
- Preference will be given to those whose placement may benefit the school / class group.
- Placements / Work experiences will be allocated on a first come first served basis.

This policy will be discussed with students on placement, together with the ethos of our school and the procedures to be followed during their placement in the school e.g. Child Protection Policy, Code of Behaviour etc.

All candidates will be asked to sign a declaration (See Appendix A)

### **Co-ordinator**

The co-ordinator for work placements (teaching or other educational placements) will be the Principal. Transition Year work experience pupils will report to the Principal, who will co-ordinate their timetable and activities for the duration of their work experience.

### **Rotation of Placements**

Students and those on work experience will be assigned to a base class on a rotational basis. They will be working with all classes at the level where possible. Fair distribution of students across the levels will be maintained.

**For teachers who have work experience students in their class, they should:**

- a. Liaise with the Deputy Principal about the student's progress

- b. Inform the student of tasks to complete within the class with clear guidelines
- c. Assign a time during the placement to complete any documentation or answer any questions the student may have
- d. Encourage the student to work within the guidelines as set below
- e. Be mindful that class contact time for work experience students is important so that they receive the full experience of the teaching profession

**Responsibilities of all those on Teaching Placements:**

- a) To respect a code of confidentiality at all times.
- b) To carry out the duties and instructions given by class teacher.
- c) To plan and prepare appropriately for lessons to be taught, in consultation with the class teacher – to have relevant paper work & resources completed and gathered before the commencement of teaching.
- d) To ensure that classroom management approach is consistent with that of the class teacher & ensure the school's code of behaviour is adhered to.
- e) To respect school resources such as photocopier, computers, laminators etc and use them in a judicious way, as teaching aids and not for personal use.
- f) To exercise friendliness and courtesy to help and maintain a good working atmosphere.
- g) To arrive punctually, to take break at allotted times etc; to sign in and out at the school office each day; to contact the school if they are unable to attend, or will be late.
- h) To be dressed appropriately and neatly.
- i) To ensure that mobile phones are switched off during the school day.
- j) To report all accidents and incidents to the class teacher.
- k) To be aware of the Fire Procedure, Child Protection Policy and the School Code of Behaviour, Acceptable Usage of the Internet Policy etc.
- l) To present any reports/course work being completed relating to the teaching placement to the Deputy principal, in advance of teaching placement (title & format) and upon completion of said report. (This is to ensure that the school or any of its pupils are not identifiable).

**Responsibilities of all those on TY work experience/other placement:**

- a) To respect a code of confidentiality at all times.
- b) To carry out the duties and instructions given by class teacher and other staff.
- c) To work, at the discretion of the class teacher, with small groups of children.
- d) To exercise professionalism in their contact with the children.
- e) To arrive punctually & to take break at allotted times etc. To sign in and out at the school office each day; to contact the school if they are unable to attend, or will be late.
- f) To respect school resources such as photocopier, computers, laminators etc and use them in a judicious way, as teaching aids and not for personal use.
- g) To ensure that mobile phones are switched off during the school day.
- h) To be dressed appropriately and neatly.
- i) To report all accidents and incidents to the class teacher.
- j) To be aware of the Fire Procedure, Child Protection Policy and the School Code of Behaviour, Acceptable Usage Policy etc.
- k) To present any reports/course work being completed relating to the placement to the Deputy principal, in advance of work experience (title & format) and upon completion of said report. (This is to ensure that the school or any of its pupils are not identifiable).

**Possible Duties of TY work experience students / other work placements:**

Under the supervision of the class teacher and at his/her discretion, the student may be asked to undertake some of the following:

- Work with individual children / small groups of children on scheduled activities
- Reading to children and listening to reading
- Assist in setting out and preparing equipment, or in clearing up and putting away same.
- Reading aloud to a small group of children
- Organising resources; Photocopying; Shredding; Printing; Typing; Laminating
- Sorting equipment, compiling inventories
- Administrative duties through the office
- Any other work as set by class teacher/other staff

## **Further Information**

- All members of staff, pupils and the school community should be treated with courtesy and respect. Equally members of staff are required to treat students with courtesy and respect and to guide and mentor them as applicable.
  
- Confidentiality in relation to all matters relating to teachers, SNAs, ancillary staff, pupils and the organisation and administration of the school is an essential pre-requisite for students on any type of work placement. Breaches of confidentiality in relation to the school will be treated with the utmost seriousness.
  
- All student teachers are expected to behave in a professional manner at all times, to abide by Saplings Special School Rathfarnham Child Protection Policy & Code of Behaviour. Any concerns with regards to a student teacher's non compliance with the above will be referred to the Principal. This may be referred to the relevant College of Education, if necessary.
  
- While the school will always try to facilitate all work experience, including classroom management, the health, safety, wellbeing and education of our pupil's is always paramount. In this respect, a class teacher may interrupt a lesson / work experience moment, if deemed necessary.
  
- Student teachers, or any student on work experience must consult with the class teacher and/or principal before recording images of children (to ensure parental consent & the purpose required). The school's Acceptable Usage Policy should be referred to when undertaking tasks involving IT.
  
- In the event of course work or a report being written by the candidate on work experience it would be expected that nothing that could identify the school, or people in it, in a

negative light should be written. All such reports/course work should be presented to the principal, in advance of Work Experience

### **Implementation, Review and Communication**

This policy was approved and adopted by the Board of Management. The Board of Management will monitor the implementation of all aspects of this policy and amend as required.

Signed: Richard Woods (Principal)

Date: 20/6/18

Signed: for Jennell (Chairperson B.o.M.)

Date: 20/6/18

### **Appendix A**

#### **Declaration to be signed by Candidate**

I, \_\_\_\_\_ (print name) have applied for work experience / teaching placement in Saplings Special School Rathfarnham, I have read the 'Work Experience / Teaching Placement' Policy and will provide all the necessary documentation. I agree to abide by the terms set out in the

above policy.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_