



## Mercy Secondary School Kilbeggan

### Student Teacher Placement Policy

#### 1. Introduction

- The Board of Management of **Mercy Secondary School Kilbeggan** 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 HEIs 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.

## **2. 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.

## **3. Commitment to hosting student teachers**

Mercy Secondary School Kilbeggan 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.

## **4. 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 ITE programme.

## **5. 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.

## **6. 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 information 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.

## 7. 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.

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

The school management authority and the school's senior management 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.

## 9. 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 a copy is 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.

## 10. Child Protection

Mercy Secondary School Kilbeggan recognises that student teachers on placement in our school are mandated persons and must adhere to the current MSSK Child Safeguarding Statement and the Child Protection Procedures 2025 for Post Primary Schools.

## 11. Policy reviews

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

## 12. Date of policy adoption

Signed: **Theresa Dunne**

Chairperson of Board of Management

Date: **10<sup>th</sup> September 2026**

Signed: **Garrett Farrell**

Principal/Secretary to the Board of Management

Date: **10<sup>th</sup> September 2026**