

Work Experience Policy

**Introduction**

Scoil Mochua are a welcoming school who encourage the opportunity for collaborative learning. We work closely with many agencies who may at times request work experience. This policy was drawn up by the staff and Board of Management of Scoil Mochua in order to clarify our school’s position on the provision of temporary work experience to those who may be seeking an unpaid work placement. In all instances, the wellbeing of the pupils is our priority and will form the basis of all decisions regarding work experience applications.

**Rationale**

As an increasing number of secondary and third-level students, including adult students engaging in FETAC training have been asking us if they may do work experience in our school, it was important to establish:

* Who we would consider eligible for work experience
* How long we would consider the work experience to last for
* How many trainees/students we are prepared to take on in a standard school year.

**Aims and objectives**

Scoil Mochua welcome applications for work experience and strive to provide an environment where both students and work experience candidates benefit from arrangements. The aims of this policy are as follows:

* To provide student teachers and others who may be interested in working in a school environment with meaningful and hands-on work experience
* To minimise disruption to the teaching and learning process which is the core activity of our school.
* To streamline applications and provide students with fair opportunities to apply for work experience

**Allocation of work experience**

Teaching Practice

* The school will accept applications for student teachers pursuing a course in a recognised College of Education on a case by case basis.
* No more than one placement will be considered in each classroom for each school year. This is to minimize disruption to pupils and teachers.
* Certain classrooms will not host students if the principal deems the disruption of a student teacher would affect the behaviour or wellbeing of students in that classroom
* Students must present a Garda Vetting Certificate and an appropriate introductory letter from the Teaching Practice Department of the college that he/she is attending.
* A Statutory Declaration should be completed and furnished by the work experience candidate.
* Places will be allocated on a first-come, first-served basis.
* Application must be made to the school principal.

Trainee Special Needs Assistants

* The school will accept applications for student Special Needs Assistants pursuing a course in a recognised training course on a case by case basis.
* Application must be made to the school principal.
* Certain classrooms will not host students if the principal deems the disruption of a student would affect the behaviour or wellbeing of students in that classroom
* Students must present a Garda Vetting Certificate and an appropriate introductory letter from the college that he/she is attending.
* Places will be allocated on a first-come, first-served basis.

Community Employment Scheme

* The school will accept applications for Community Employment applicants on a case by case basis.
* Application must be made through our CE supervisor (Connor Raffertry).
* Certain classrooms will not host students if the principal deems the disruption of a student would affect the behaviour or wellbeing of students in that classroom
* Places will be allocated on a first-come, first-served basis.
* CE Scheme workers may also be employed by the school for subbing or bus escort roles.

Transition Year Work Experience

* The school will consider applications for placements from secondary school students seeking work experience as part of the Transition Year programme on a case by case basis, with preference given to relatives of current staff or pupils attending the school.
* Application must be made to the school principal.
* Transition Year students must furnish the school with appropriate documentation from the secondary school which they attend (letter requesting a placement for the student and evidence of insurance for the student.)
* All students must have completed successful Garda Vetting procedures prior to commencement. There is no exception to this.
* Secondary schools should be informed of the foregoing and its responsibility to inform its students in advance.

Others

* From time to time, other people who do not fit into these categories may seek observation time or work experience in the school. Their request for observation/experience may be granted by the Principal after consultation with the Chairperson of the Board of Management, if it is felt that such a placement would not be disruptive to the life of the school.
* Application must be made to the school principal.
* These placements will only be granted after categories (i) – (iii) have been considered.

**Guidelines for Students**

All Students on work experience should adhere to the following guidelines. An induction booklet will be given to each student on arrival and meeting with the principal or deputy principal.

All students work under the direction of the principal and class teacher.

Mobile Phone Use

* Mobile phones may not be used in any areas of the school building or on the school yard where children are present. Use should be restricted to the staff room.
* Phones should be turned off outside scheduled breaks.
* No photographs of students or their work may be taken on any students phones.

Dress Code

* Students on Teaching Practice must dress neatly appropriately. As Scoil Mochua is a school where staff work in a physically demanding job, students should be dressed in a manner that allows them to interact fully with the students.
* Shoes with covered toes and heels should be worn. Students that appear in open-toed, open-heeled or high heeled shoes will be asked to change shoes for safety reasons. In the context of Scoil Mochua, footwear such as runners are appropriate.
* The health and safety dress code guidelines will take precedence over college/school dress codes as the safety of students around equipment takes precedence.
* Jewellery should be limited for safety reasons. No hooped or dangling earrings should be worn. Only stud earrings should be worn for safety. All other jewellery should be worn at the wearers own risk. Scoil Mochua do not accept liability for damage to jewellery worn while on placement.
* Trainees should have appropriate outerwear as classes may be out and about in the community as part of their individual programs.

**Confidentiality**

Anyone who is engaged in work experience in our school is required to observe the following requirements of confidentiality:

* Confidential or private documents should not be read. No-one doing work experience may remove any documents or copies of same, from the school, unless with the consent of the Principal.
* School business and procedures should not be discussed outside of school by people engaged in work experience. It is particularly important to respect the confidentiality rights of children, parents, teachers and other school staff.
* If a written report must be compiled as part of work experience, nothing in it should indicate the names of individual pupils or teachers (except in neutral terms such as class lists, etc.)
* All written reports on the school done by people on work experience should in the first instance be shown to the Principal.

**Breaks**

* All people on work experience shall be entitled to a 15 minute break and a 25 minute break at times given by the class teacher. Breaks will be given at times that facilitate the appropriate running of the class and what works best for the students.

**Discipline and Child Protection**

* The teaching staff are responsible for discipline in the school.
* People on work experience may not discipline children of the school (although students on teaching practice may call the class or individual children to order while they are teaching.)
* If people on work experience have a concern regarding behaviour, they must report it to a member of the teaching staff.
* If people on work experience have any concerns regarding child protection, they should report it to the Designated Liaison Person (Sophia Casey) or the Deputy DLP (Anita Rimmer/Suzann Byrne).

**Refusal/Termination of work placement**

Request of work experience may be **refused** if :

* In the view of the principal sufficient placements have already been granted for the year.
* The Board do not feel that the work placement will be of benefit to the school.
* Evidence comes to light of child protection concerns regarding the applicant.

Work placement may be **terminated** if:

* The supervising teacher(s) or the Principal are not satisfied that the appointee is contributing adequately to the life and work of the school, or is creating friction among staff or pupils.
* Inappropriate behaviour, especially towards children.
* The Principal/Board becomes concerned about the suitability of the appointee.
* If someone on work experience is dismissed, both the person themselves and their sponsoring organisation (if applicable) will be informed of the reason(s) for the dismissal.If someone on work experience is dismissed, both the person themselves and their
* Principles of natural justice will be followed at all times

**Implementation**

This policy is effective immediately.

**Ratification**

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management in May 2025.

This policy will be reviewed by the full staff and Board of Management every three years. Any staff member, board member, parent, guardian, or student 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. The next review of this policy will occur before or during the school year 2027/2028.

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Matthew Swain Sophia Casey

Chairperson of BoM Principal/Secretary to the BoM