



WORK EXPERIENCE POLICY



Work Experience Jonah Special School

Introduction

This policy was drawn up by the staff and Board of Management of Jonah Special School in order to clarify our schools position on the provision of temporary work experience to student teachers and others who may be seeking an unpaid work placement.

Rationale

As an increasing number of third-level students, have been asking us if they may do work experience in our school, we felt it was important that we would 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

- To provide student teachers and others who may be interested in working in a school environment with meaningful and hands-on work experience.
- To minimize disruption to the teaching and learning process which is the core activity of our school.

Allocation of Work Experience

(i) Teaching Practice –

- The school will consider no more than two placements for student teachers pursuing a course in a recognised College of Education during a single academic year.
- If two placements are agreed by the Principal and Board of Management, they must take place in different classrooms. This is to minimize disruption to students and staff.
- 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.
- Places will be allocated on a first-come, first-served basis.

(ii) Third Level Autism Related Student Placements

- Students must present a Garda Vetting Certificate and an appropriate introductory letter from the Department of the college that he/she is attending.
- Places will be allocated on a first-come, first-served basis following a successful interview.
- Work Placements will be for a maximum of twelve weeks and during this time students will be expected to familiarize themselves with the individual programs designed for students and evidence based approach to teaching students with Autism.
- Where appropriate staff will allow students under supervision to teach students.



(iii) Nursing Students Placements

- Students must present a Garda Vetting Certificate and an appropriate introductory letter from the department of the college that he/she is attending.
- Places will be allocated on as per agreement with the Nursing Course.

(iv) 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 and/or the Director of Education, if it is felt that such a placement would not be disruptive to the life of the school.

Guidelines *(please read the student handbook for a more complete guide to the school)*

- The student works under the direction of the teacher in the classroom and assists in tasks set out. These may include classroom observation, help with group work, assisting with story-telling, P.E, Art or project work. It may also include assisting with preparation of resources or help with tidy-up of resources, games etc.
- The student should be punctual and in the event of illness, contact the Principal by phone.
- It is the responsibility of students to familiarise themselves with our Child Safe Guarding Statement and Child Protection Policy, available on our website www.jonahschool.ie.

Refusal/Termination of Work Placement

Request of work experience may be refused if –

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

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 undertaking work experience may remove any documents from the school, unless with the consent of the Principal.



- No pictures or video of the students must be taken on personal cameras, phones or any device other than the school cameras and devices.
- 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 and school staff.
- If a written report must be compiled as part of work experience, nothing in it should indicate the names of individual students or staff (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, Director or Board of Management.

Breaks

All people on work experience shall be entitled to a 30 minute break for lunch.

Discipline and Child Protection

- The staff are responsible for discipline in the school. People on work experience may not discipline children of the school. If people on work experience have a concern regarding behaviour, they must report it to a member of the staff.
- If people on work experience have any concerns regarding Child Protection, they should report it to the Designated Liaison Person (Caitriona Barry) or the Deputy Designated Liaison Person (Carol Deane).

Jonah Special School

Work Placement Policy

This policy was adopted by the Board of Management of Jonah Special School at its meeting held on:

Ratified by the Jonah Board of Management on: _____

Date

Signed: _____

Principal

Signed: _____

Chairperson, Board of Management

Next Review Period: *September 2026*