



## **Student Support Policy**

## **SCOPE**

This policy applies to our whole School community including students, staff, parents and the wider community.

## **RELATIONSHIP TO SCHOOL'S MISSION/VISION/AIMS AND OTHER POLICIES**

Coláiste Muire seeks to foster the personal development and pastoral care of each individual. We aim to foster the holistic development of each student. This policy is linked to our Code of Behaviour, Additional Educational Needs, Anti-Bullying, Child Protection, Crisis Response, Acceptable Use and Guidance policies.

## **RATIONALE**

The policy is necessary to ensure equal recognition of all abilities and talents in an atmosphere of respect for the dignity of all.

## **GOALS/OBJECTIVES**

- To support students as they progress through second level in our school.
- To ensure that students feel safe in school.
- To equip students with the skills to cope with life challenges.
- To enable students to find and develop their individual abilities and talents (social, academic, sporting, artistic, etc.).
- To provide a safe and caring environment for each student which will allow him/her to achieve his/her best at all levels and so develop high self-esteem.
- To encourage self-respect and respect for others and their property.
- To encourage parents to take an active role in all aspects of their children's education i.e. social, academic, emotional, spiritual, etc.

## **IMPLEMENTATION**

1. All staff will be familiar with the policy and its implementation.
2. All Junior cycle students are assigned a year head and senior cycle students a teaching mentor. The school also has a teacher who links in pastorally with 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> year students.
3. The school has a comprehensive induction programme for first year students aimed at student support and the transition from primary to post-primary school.
4. First year students join the Big Brother Big Sister programme where they are allocated a senior student mentor for their first year.
5. Student Support team meetings occur regularly with key staff meeting to identify pastoral needs among students. Members of this team may be assigned to work with particular students as the need arises.
6. The school has a Home Youth Liaison Officer who visits the school each Tuesday. Students may be referred to the HYLO on occasion and in this instance, parents are informed and consent is sought.
7. The school has an active Student Council with one student representing each class. The Student Council undergo training yearly with the Home School Liaison Officer attached to the school. The Student Council also attend Comhairle na nÓg annually. The Student Council represent all students' voices and meetings are held regularly between the Student Council committee and management.
8. The school communicates regularly with parents (via phone call, the school website, school text system, letter, email, newsletter, etc.) in relation to student support structures in school and resources available to them to support their child/ren.
9. The school run initiatives such as Wellbeing Week, Safer Internet Week, Friendship Week, Anti-Bullying Programmes (Garda talks, FUSE with DCU), Resilience Programmes, Restorative Practice programmes and Mental Health Awareness Programmes, e.g. Amber Flag
10. The school will liaise with outside agencies where appropriate to support the wellbeing of a student, e.g. NEPS, NCSE, Foróige.

## **ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

- **Board Of Management (BOM)** - will ensure that the policy is compliant with both the spirit and letter of the Education Act (1998), Education Welfare Act (2000), and Equal status Act (2000) along with the mission statement and vision of the school and it's trustees CEIST.
- **Principal/Deputy Principal** will:
  - Ensure policies are implemented.
  - Make provision for student support input into the timetable by facilitating school initiatives and student support team meetings.

- Ensure parents receive information on the student support structure in the school and resources available to them to support their child/ren
- Encourage all activities – social, academic, sporting, spiritual and acknowledge all efforts and achievements in various areas.
- Student Support Teams:
  - Coláiste Muire has two Student Support Teams (one for Junior students and one for Senior students) who meet regularly or as the need arises. Year Heads and teacher mentors are part of the team along with the Deputy Principal and Principal.
  - The team addresses pastoral issues among students and puts structures in place to assist students with difficulties.
  - A list of team members will be displayed on student and staff noticeboards and on the school website.
- Year Head:
  - Liaises with Student Support Teams, Class Teachers, Principal, Deputy Principal, other Staff and Parents on a regular basis. All Year Heads are members of the Student Support Team.
  - A list of year heads will be displayed on student and staff noticeboards and on the school website.
- Teacher Mentors:
  - Will develop a relationship with students in their care by meeting with them and developing an awareness of their needs, emotional development, progress and academic attainment. All teacher mentors are members of the Student Support team. A list of teacher mentors will be displayed on student and staff noticeboards and on the school website.
- Subject Teachers:
  - Will be familiar with and support the student support policy and report any concerns to a member of the Student Support Team(s).
  - Create a positive teaching and learning environment in the classroom and encourage the development of the whole person.
- Parents:
  - Are encouraged to support the student support policy of the school by attending school related meetings and reporting concerns about family members who attend the school to school management.
- Students:
  - Students experiencing difficulties of any kind may discuss matters with a member of the student support team, the Home Youth Liaison Officer or any member of staff.
  - The Home Youth Liaison Officer is available to students every Tuesday. For students to engage with this service, a parental consent form is required. This is available by contacting the Deputy Principal or Principal.

### **SUCCESS CRITERIA**

The performance of this policy will be measured by the use of the following criteria:

- Mutual respect evident between all members of school community.
- Good relationships achieved and maintained.
- Good attendance by students and no or few suspensions.
- Student/teacher feedback.
- Follow-up on meetings.
- Minutes of meetings circulated to staff.

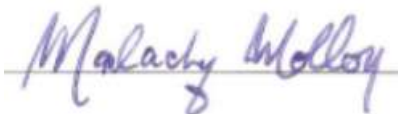
### **MONITORING PROCEDURES**

The success of this policy will be assured by:

The Student Support Teams meeting regularly and consulting with all school partners and will communicate, through the Principal, to the Board of Management.

### **REVIEW AND RATIFICATION**

This Policy was reviewed by staff, students and parents in December 2020 and ratified by the Board of Management on 10<sup>th</sup> December 2020.



Signed by Chairperson of the Board: \_\_\_\_\_