



## SCOIL RUÁIN



## Student Support Policy



Policy Area	Schools
Document Reference Number	SC.R/W.BEING/055/1
Version No.	1
Document Drafted by	Scoil Ruáin Killenaule
Date previous version: Ratified by SLT Noted by TETB	4 March 2021 23 March 2021
Date Reviewed/Amended by School	November 2023
Date Reviewed/Ratified by School BOM	8 January 2024
Date (Review/Amendment) noted by TETB	30 January 2024
Policy Review Date	Annually
Date of Withdrawal of Obsolete Document	8 January 2024 Document Ref. No. S7/C.R/W.BEING/055/0 Version No. 1

# Scoil Ruáin Student Support Policy

## 1. CORE VALUES STATEMENT

Scoil Ruáin is a co-educational, multidenominational ETB school that is underpinned by the core values of excellence in education, care, equality, community, and respect. At Scoil Ruáin, we work hard to give every student an equal chance to participate in curricular and extracurricular activities, to prepare our students to be open-minded and responsible citizens with a strong sense of our core values. Everyone in our school community is treated equally in all aspects of school life. Our aim is to provide an inclusive education that acknowledges the variety of identities, viewpoints, and values that students, parents and staff members have.

## 2. INTRODUCTION

Scoil Ruáin encourages students to reach their full potential in the classroom, on the field of play, and in any other arena they participate in. In this context the Scoil Ruáin Student Support and Wellbeing Programme has at its heart the academic, physical, social and personal wellbeing of each student. Student support is at its most effective when it is fully integrated into the school's daily curriculum, extra-curricular and co-curricular activities. As such, student support and wellbeing involve not only the Student Support Team but all members of staff.

## 3. DEIS STATUS

Scoil Ruáin is a school offering the DEIS (Delivering Equality of Opportunity in Schools) programme. DEIS is a national programme aimed at addressing the educational needs of children and young people from disadvantaged communities. This means the school delivers a range of supplementary resources including additional staffing, funding, access to literacy and numeracy programmes, and the Home School Community Liaison Scheme and School Completion Programme. Furthermore, Scoil Ruáin offers practical supports such as School Meals and Book Rental schemes. An evidence based DEIS plan underpins all teaching and learning in the school.

## 4. DEFINITION

Student support and wellbeing encompasses the mental, physical and emotional well-being of students.

Scoil Ruáin recognises the individuality of each person in the school community and acknowledges that individuals may need extra support during difficult times.

The Student Support and Wellbeing Policy endeavours to integrate the academic and social dimensions of the school so that an atmosphere of care prevails within the school community.

## 5. MISSION STATEMENT

This Student Support and Wellbeing Policy was created in accordance with the Scoil Ruáin Mission Statement:

***Scoil Ruáin will provide a quality education in a caring, respectful and trusting environment. We will encourage the development of the complete person in keeping with our school motto:***

***Ad Totam Personam.***

Scoil Ruáin is dedicated to the pursuit of excellence in a caring environment of mutual respect in order to foster the full potential of its students and staff.

## 6. WELLBEING

“Wellbeing is present when a person realises their potential, is resilient in dealing with the normal stresses of their life, takes care of their physical wellbeing and has a sense of purpose, connection and belonging to a wider community. It is a fluid way of being and needs nurturing throughout life”.<sup>1</sup> In Scoil Ruáin, wellbeing is supported by means of delivering the curriculum through enriching educational experiences. This takes place in collaboration with the teaching staff and management of the school, the partners in education, and external organisations. Wellbeing and student support are a whole school activity.

## 7. TEACHING AND LEARNING

Their education should enable students “to develop a broad range of skills, competences and values that enable personal well-being, active citizenship and lifelong learning. Learning experiences for all students should therefore be broad, balanced, challenging and responsive to individual needs.”<sup>2</sup> Teachers engage in highly effective practices to ensure that all learners experience success. Teachers engage in professional, respectful interactions with students and their colleagues. The DEIS plan highlights key targets for teaching and learning and identifies measures to meet those targets.

## 8. AIMS

### (a) School Aims

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<sup>1</sup><https://www.education.ie/en/Publications/Policy-Reports/wellbeing-policy-statement-and-framework-for-practice-2018%E2%80%932023.pdf>

<sup>2</sup><https://www.education.ie/en/Publications/Inspection-Reports-Publications/Evaluation-Reports-Guidelines/Looking-at-Our-School-2016-A-Quality-Framework-for-Post-Primary-schools.pdf>

- Scoil Ruáin strives to meet the second level educational needs of the community.
- Scoil Ruáin strives to educate students to their full potential in a safe and orderly environment.
- Scoil Ruáin aims to foster the participation of parents in the education of their children.

In partnership with parents, Scoil Ruáin strives to create a desire for life-long learning, respect for the individual, an awareness of the needs of the disadvantaged, concern for the environment and an appreciation of our own unique culture.

**(b) Aims of the Student Support Policy**

- To clarify roles, responsibilities, tasks and procedures.
- To provide a safe, caring and supportive environment for students.
- To care for and support every student in the school.
- To nurture teaching and learning relationships.

**9. TIPPERARY EDUCATION AND TRAINING BOARD**

The Scoil Ruáin Student Support Policy reflects the Mission Statement of our Patron, Tipperary Education and Training Board (TETB), which endeavours to provide “a quality education and training service, which creates diverse opportunities enabling learners and communities to unlock their potential.” (Statement of Strategy 2023-2027).

**10. CONSULTATION**

The following were consulted on the formation of this draft discussion document.

- School management
- Year heads
- Career Guidance teacher
- HSCLO
- School Completion Programme co-ordinator
- Coiscéim co-ordinator
- SEN co-ordinator
- BOM

**11. LEGISLATIVE CONTEXT**

The Student Support and Wellbeing Policy is developed in line with legislative requirements –

- The Education Act (1998)
- The Education Welfare Act (2000)
- The Equal Status Act (2000)
- Dignity at Work Charter (2007)
- Children First Act (2015)
- EPSEN Act (2004)
- Guidelines for Student Support Teams in Post-Primary Schools (Dept. of Education and Skills, 2014)

## **12. LINKS WITH OTHER POLICIES**

This policy should be read in conjunction with all other school policies, and in particular with:

- Scoil Ruáin COVID-19 Response Plan
- DEIS Plan
- Child Protection Policy
- Substance Misuse Policy
- Whole School Guidance Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Code of Behaviour
- Critical Incident Management Policy
- Admissions Policy
- Acceptable Usage Policy
- Learning Support Policy
- SEN policy
- RSE Policy
- SPHE subject specification.

## **13. CONFIDENTIALITY**

Each student is entitled to dignity and respect and this demands that any personal information be treated with confidentiality (within the norms established by Child Protection, civil and criminal law).

Each student has a right to maintain his/her privacy, however, Scoil Ruáin also recognises that the parent(s)/ guardian(s) of a minor has/have the right to be informed of intervention by the Student Support team.

#### 14. STUDENTS WHO ARE CONSIDERED TO BE IN NEED OF STUDENT SUPPORT

All	Some	Few
All students	Students with specific learning difficulties Students with specific behavioural issues Students who experience poor health Students who experience difficult personal circumstances Students who experience difficult financial circumstances	Students who experience a traumatic or tragic event

#### 15. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Every member of staff has a vital role in the area of student support and wellbeing. All teaching staff are mandated persons and are required to report harm of children, above a defined threshold, to Tulsa - Child and Family Agency. The Principal is the Designated Liaison Person (DLP) and the Deputy Principal is the Deputy Designated Liaison Person (DDL).

All staff have a responsibility to revisit and update their CP training annually.

A number of personnel have a specific role to play in the area of student support and wellbeing.

##### (a) Board of Management

The Board of Management will:

- Ensure that there is a Student Support and Wellbeing Policy in place and that it is implemented.
- Ensure that the policy is reviewed regularly.
- Support student support initiatives in the school.

##### (b) Principal and Deputy Principal

On behalf of TETB and the Scoil Ruáin Board of Management the Principal and Deputy Principal have overall responsibility for ensuring that the support needs of the school community are met.

The Principal and Deputy Principal will:

- Ensure that the programmes and curriculum on offer are responsive to the needs of students which will then allow students to develop to their full potential.
- Ensure that the structures are put in place to support students' needs.
- Create and foster a climate and culture of respect among all members of the school community that allows students to develop to their full potential.

- Support the continuous professional development of staff to manage the needs of the students
- Support staff in responding to the needs of students.
- Coordinate a whole school approach to student support and wellbeing.
- Proactively engage with the needs of all students including responding to the needs of students who may need extra supports.
- Provide a wide range of opportunities for students to develop all aspects and facets of their character.
- Support parents in the holistic development of their children.
- Proactively facilitate the contribution of external agencies to the development of the students in the school.

**(c) Career Guidance Counsellor(s) (CGC)**

- Promote wellbeing through respectful, professional interactions with students and colleagues.
- Communicate with and between staff, management and students.
- Attend Year Head, Student Support Committee, and subject choice meetings.
- Provide one-to-one support for students who might be undergoing social or emotional difficulties.
- Provide one-to-one career guidance for students.
- Maintain records of any professional communications and interventions with students.
- Report child protection issues that they become aware of to the DLP. In the absence of the DLP the matter should be reported to the DDLP.

**(d) Year Heads**

- Promote wellbeing through respectful, professional interactions with students and colleagues.
- Develop positive professional relationships with their students in the year group.
- Monitor the behaviour, attendance and academic progress of all students in their year group.
- Maintain records of any professional communications and interventions with students.
- Develop relationships by communicating with the parents/carers of their year group.
- Attend weekly meeting with management.
- Bring concerns from subject teachers and class tutors to management.
- Refer students to CGC as appropriate.
- Share relevant information with subject teachers and class tutors.
- Implement interventions in conjunction with SEN, SCP, class tutors and subject teachers



- Report child protection issues that they become aware of to the DLP. In the absence of the DLP the matter should be reported to the DDLP.

**(e) Class Tutors**

- Promote wellbeing through respectful, professional interactions with students and colleagues.
- Have regular timetabled contact with their tutor groups.
- Collect attendance notes and monitor student diaries.
- Note concerns about social, emotional or academic progress of students and communicate these concerns to year head/student support committee.
- Maintain records of any professional communications and interventions with students.
- Report child protection issues that they become aware of to the DLP. In the absence of the DLP the matter should be reported to the DDLP.

**(f) Subject teachers**

- Promote wellbeing through respectful, professional interactions with students and colleagues.
- Note concerns about social, emotional or academic progress of students and communicate these concerns to class teacher/year head/student support committee.
- Teachers of English/SPHE/PE should note that students are more likely to communicate with them due to the nature of the subjects. All concerns should be passed to the relevant year head.
- Maintain records of any professional communications and interventions with students.
- Report child protection issues that they become aware of to the DLP. In the absence of the DLP the matter should be reported to the DDLP.

**(g) Home-School Community Liaison Officer (HSCLO)**

- Promote wellbeing through respectful, professional interactions with students, parents and colleagues.
- Encourage the interest and involvement of parents in all aspects of their children's education.
- Create an atmosphere where parents feel valued, information is shared and communication is open at all times.
- Support pupils in their school life through regular contact with their parents.
- Attend Student Support Committee meetings.
- Maintain records of any professional communications and interventions with students.
- Report child protection issues that they become aware of to the DLP. In the absence of the DLP the matter should be reported to the DDLP.

**(h) Coiscéim Co-ordinators**

- Promote wellbeing through respectful, professional interactions with students and colleagues.
- Communicate with and between Coiscéim staff and students, and mainstream teachers and management.
- Develop relationships with parents/carers of students enrolled in Coiscéim.
- Provide a structured, safe learning environment for students to attend.
- Devise and implement activities and methodologies to support students with ASD in self-regulation.
- Develop IEPs through collaboration with staff, students and carers, and oversee their implementation.
- Attend Student Support Committee meetings.
- Maintain records of any professional communications and interventions with students.
- Report child protection issues that they become aware of to the DLP. In the absence of the DLP the matter should be reported to the DDLP.

**(i) SEN Co-ordinators**

- Promote wellbeing through respectful, professional interactions with students and colleagues.
- Communicate with all teaching staff and SNAs re. students with Special Education Needs (SENs).
- Plan and deliver educational interventions to support the learning of students with SENs.
- Plan, and support staff in delivering, behavioural interventions to support students with SENs.
- Support student transitions as they arise.
- Assist students and parents/carers in accessing disability supports such as RACE, DARE, assistive tech grant, etc....
- Attend Student Support Committee meetings.
- Maintain records of any professional communications and interventions with students.
- Report child protection issues that they become aware of to the DLP. In the absence of the DLP the matter should be reported to the DDLP.

**(j) School Completion Officer**

- Promote wellbeing through respectful, professional interactions with students and colleagues.
- Identify students needing support through consultation with students, parents, school staff and external agencies.

- Plan and implement interventions to support students at risk of early school leaving.
- Attend Student Support Committee meetings.
- Maintain records of any professional communications and interventions with students.
- Report child protection issues that they become aware of to the DLP. In the absence of the DLP the matter should be reported to the DDLP.

**(k) Student Support Committee**

- Comprised of principal, deputy, CGC, HSCLO, SCP, SENCo, Coiscéim co-ordinator.
- Meet weekly.
- Discuss concerns raised about students.
- Agree actions to be taken and personnel responsible.
- Review previous interventions and evaluate their effectiveness.
- Record and securely store minutes of meeting.
- Review the critical incident management plan.

**16. SNAS**

- Provide for the care needs of the students in their charge.
- Promote wellbeing through respectful, professional interactions with students and colleagues.
- Revisit and update Child Protection training annually.
- Maintain records of any professional communications and interventions with students.
- Note any medical, physical, social, emotional or academic concerns of students and communicate these concerns to class teacher/year head/student support committee/management.
- Report child protection issues that they become aware of to the DLP. In the absence of the DLP the matter should be reported to the DDLP.

**17. ANCILLARY STAFF**

- Report any concerns (e.g., bullying, no lunch, out of class etc...) they may have observed about a student to the relevant year head and/or management
- Report child protection issues that they become aware of to the DLP. In the absence of the DLP the matter should be reported to the DDLP

## **18. STUDENT TRANSITIONS**

At Scoil Ruáin, we acknowledge that periods of transition can be stressful for our students, so we implement measures to reduce that stress. Key periods where we provide extra support for our students are:

### **(a) Transition from primary to post-primary school. Transition activities include:**

- Inviting students to attend events in Scoil Ruáin, e.g., sport blitzes, subject taster days, involvement in literacy initiatives while students are still in national school, etc....
- Primary school visits by principal/deputy/HSCLO/SENCo.
- Meeting parents during entrance tests to explain school systems and answer questions.
- Class tutors meeting students on their first day and showing them the practicalities of school life, e.g., where toilets are, how to order lunch, timetables, etc....
- New first years receive survival pack created by student council.
- Ice-breaker activities on first day and lunchtime activities for first month.
- Earlier release from class to avoid crowds for first month.
- Individual meetings with parents/students when choosing option subjects.
- Students enrolled in Coiscéim and some SEN students may receive enhanced transition, as necessary.

### **(b) Transition from junior to senior cycle**

- Students undertake CAT tests, which are compared with their examination results and teacher reports.
- All parents and students are invited to attend a senior options information evening.
- Students and parents are invited to attend individual meetings where they are advised on suitable pathways to senior cycle.
- All students are encouraged to enrol in Transition year.
- Students attend interviews for Transition year and Leaving Cert Applied.

### **(c) Transition from post-primary to education, training or employment**

- Students are timetabled for career guidance/vocational preparation in senior cycle.
- Students attend individual meetings with CGC to discuss options for their future.
- TY, LCA, Leaving Certificate Year 1 and LCVP students participate in work experience, career investigations, interview preparation, mock interviews and a variety of other pre-employment activities as part of their programme of study and Scoil Ruáin participation in a School Business Partnership with Godolphin. (See Whole School Guidance Plan for full details of activities).

- Sixth Year students who have applied for a third level course are eligible to apply for a €6000 scholarship from Godolphin and a €3000 scholarship from Camida. Both scholarships are internal competitions for Scoil Ruáin students.
- Applications are made for Reasonable Accommodations in the Certificate Examinations (RACE) and Disability Access Route to Education (DARE) and subject exemptions on behalf of eligible students.

## **19. REVIEW**

This policy will be reviewed annually to ensure:

- (a) It is being implemented across the school**
- (b) It is effective and in keeping with best practices.**