**Sperrinview Special School**

Policy for Student Placements

**Rationale**

We recognise that the quality and variety of work that goes on in a special school makes it an ideal place for students on placement from schools, colleges and training organisations.

**Aim**

We aim to provide, for students with us on placement, experiences which contribute to the successful completion of their studies and which provide examples of quality practice in special education.

Sperrinview Special School is a Rights Respecting School and has the UNCRC at the heart of its core values. We prepare the community to recognise the universality of children’s rights and to support the rights of others locally and globally and ensure we have strong arrangements for protecting children from all forms of abuse and harassment.

We will accept students from:

* + Post-primary schools in the Dungannon/Cookstown Area Learning Community
  + South West College, Dungannon
  + Queen’s University/University of Ulster [Nursing and Psychology]
  + Stranmillis and St Mary’s Colleges – teacher training

In co-operation with local education providers we welcome students into the school on the following conditions:

* We require schools and colleges placing students with our school to vouch for their good character.
* Before a placement is confirmed, the candidate needs to:
  + Contact the school in person
  + Complete an application form
  + Attend an interview [for long-term placements]
* We require students over the age of 18 years to have an Access NI check for Supervised Volunteers
* We supervise students at all times and do not allow them to have unsupervised access to children.
* We hold Education Authority insurance that covers students on placement. We require schools/colleges/universities to provide their own their own Form of Indemnity for each of their students before placement commences.
* Students will be advised on our school policies for Child Protection, Code of Conduct and Confidentiality and expected to respect them.
* We co-operate with students’ tutors in order to help students fulfil the requirements of their course of study.
* Students will declare if they are related to any pupils or staff within the school. We will not place students in classes where they have family.
* We provide students with a short induction on or before their first day of placement.
* We communicate a positive message to students about the value of qualifications and training.
* We make the needs of the pupils’ paramount by not admitting students in numbers which would hinder the essential work of the school.
* We will encourage the student to integrate and participate in all aspects of the session.
* Students will have a named mentor to supervise and help them understand what is expected of them.

Induction

When or before a student begins they will be subject to an induction procedure.

* Induction is carried out by the Principal, Vice Principal or member of the Senior Leadership Team.
* A Student Placement Information booklet structures the induction process, covering the areas requiring explanation.
* A checklist ensures that all important information is relayed.
* Students read the following documentation:

1. Policy for Child Protection
2. Policy for Positive Behaviour Management
3. Code of Conduct.

* They sign to acknowledge that they have understood and an additional ‘quick guide’ to Child Protection is provided.
* Students are shown the staff room, staff toilets and the classroom they will be based in.
* Where possible, students are introduced to a member of staff from the classroom they will be based in.

Feedback

Students are encouraged to complete the feedback sheet in their Student Placement booklet and leave it with the Vice Principal on their final day in school.

This is to ensure that the standard of placement remains high, providing students with a good experience of special education.