

# Scoil Mhuire, Coolcotts, Wexford

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## Code of Practice for Parent/Guardian Volunteers

### Introduction

Parent/Guardian Volunteers bring with them a range of skills and experience to Scoil Mhuire that can enhance the learning opportunities of our pupils. The school therefore, welcomes and encourages Parent/Guardian volunteers, including Grandparents, from our school community.

### Aims

The aim of this policy is to provide a Code of Practice for Parent/Guardian Volunteers and in so doing to:

- Provide a safe and secure environment for our pupils and staff.
- Establish protocols and procedures that effectively monitor and manage Parent/Guardian Volunteers, whilst not compromising the open and inviting nature of our school.

### General Requirements for Parent/Guardian Volunteers:

Parent/Guardian Volunteers will:

- Be made aware of their role and responsibilities by the HSCL Coordinator.
- Complete the Scoil Mhuire Agreement (Appendix 1), which sets out the school's expectations and confirms they understand their obligations and have received a copy of this Agreement.
- Have completed the Garda Vetting process fully through Scoil Mhuire prior to commencing volunteering.

### Child Protection

The safety and welfare of our pupils is of paramount importance. All Parent/Guardian Volunteers will:

- Participate in an induction session with the HSCL Coordinator at which child protection matters and obligations will be explained fully.
- Receive a copy of this Code of Practice and sign the Scoil Mhuire Agreement (Appendix 1).
- Receive a copy of Scoil Mhuire's Child Safeguarding Statement and accompanying Risk Assessment.
- Be provided with hard copy access to the *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2017* and *Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children*.

Any concerns of a child protection or welfare nature that a Parent/Guardian Volunteer may have must be reported immediately to the Principal, who is the school's Designated Liaison

Person (DLP). In the absence of the Principal, the matter should be reported immediately to the Deputy Principal, who is the Deputy Designated Liaison Person (DDLDP). Any such matters may not be discussed with other school personnel and/or other Parents/Guardians.

### **Confidentiality**

Parent/Guardian Volunteers are bound by Scoil Mhuire's practice of confidentiality and they may not discuss any school-related matters with other Parents/Guardians, persons employed by Scoil Mhuire but not directly involved in their class setting or persons external to the school. Any information gained at school about a child, adult or activity must remain confidential, with the exception of child protection concerns as detailed above. Parent/Guardian Volunteers who are concerned about any matter in the school, related to a child, adult, work practice or other issue, must raise the matter with the Principal.

Where a Parent/Guardian Volunteer breaches Scoil Mhuire's practice of confidentiality, the matter will be dealt with, with the utmost seriousness, by the Principal, Board of Management and relevant external agency as necessary. Sanctions will include immediate discontinuation of volunteering in Scoil Mhuire.

### **Supervision of Parent/Guardian Volunteers**

All Parent/Guardian volunteers work under the direct supervision of the Class Teacher, HSCL Coordinator, or the full-time member of Scoil Mhuire staff designated by the Class Teacher to act in the direct supervision role. The Class Teacher retains ultimate responsibility for his/her pupils at all times, including the pupils' behaviour and the activity they are undertaking. Parent/Guardian Volunteers must ensure that they receive clear and unambiguous guidance from their designated supervisor as to how an activity is to be carried out and the expected outcome of the activity. In the event of any query or problem regarding a pupil's understanding of a task, or their behaviour or welfare, Parent/Guardian Volunteers must immediately seek further advice and guidance from their designated supervisor.

### **Engagement in Data Collection**

Parent/Guardian Volunteers are not permitted to record data on Scoil Mhuire pupils in any form, i.e. handwritten, electronic, photographic, videographic etc.

### **Complaints**

In instances where a Parent/Guardian Volunteer wishes to make a complaint about an area that is of concern to them, such a complaint should be made directly to the Principal. The Principal will consider the complaint made and work to resolve the matter as appropriate.

Any complaint about a Parent/Guardian Volunteer by a member of Scoil Mhuire staff or another Parent/Guardian should be referred directly to the Principal. The Principal reserves the right to take any of the following actions:

- Speak with the Parent/Guardian Volunteer about the alleged breach of the Scoil Mhuire Agreement (Appendix 1) and seek reassurance that this breach will not re-occur.
- Offer the Parent/Guardian Volunteer an alternative placement in Scoil Mhuire, e.g. assisting with another activity or in another class/setting.
- Based upon the facts identified in the Principal's investigation, it may be necessary for the Principal to inform the Parent/Guardian Volunteer that they may no longer continue in their role in the school. In such an instance, the Principal's decision will be final and no mechanism to review this decision will be permitted.
- In the event that the complaint/concern raised is of a child protection nature, the Principal/DLP will fully implement the provisions of Scoil Mhuire's Child Safeguarding

Statement and the *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2017* and report the matter to Tusla, and the Gardaí Síochána if appropriate.

**Monitoring and Review**

This policy was considered and ratified by the Board of Management on 20 November 2018. The Board will continue to monitor all aspects of this policy and accept feedback from relevant parties on the effectiveness of its implementation. This policy will be amended and updated as required.

Monsignor Denis Lennon  
Chairperson of Board of Management  
20 November 2018

Dr Mags Jordan  
Principal/Secretary to Board of Management  
20 November 2018

## Parent/Guardian Volunteer Agreement



Thank you for offering your services as a Parent/Guardian Volunteer at Scoil Mhuire. Your offer of help is greatly appreciated and we hope that you and your child/children will gain much from your experience with us.

Please read and sign this Agreement, to be witnessed by the HSCL Coordinator. If there is any point about which you are unsure, please ask for clarification on it. You will receive a photocopy of this Agreement for your own records.

1. I agree to act in a wholly professional manner at all times when engaging with the pupils and staff of Scoil Mhuire.
2. I agree to support Scoil Mhuire's aims and co-operate fully with its policies and practices.
3. I have received a copy of Scoil Mhuire's Code of Practice for Parent/Guardian Volunteers and I confirm that I understand my obligations.
4. I agree to treat information obtained from my activity in Scoil Mhuire in the strictest confidence, in line with the school's existing practice of confidentiality.
5. I have received a copy of Scoil Mhuire's Child Safeguarding Statement and accompanying Risk Assessment and I confirm that I understand my child protection obligations.
6. I confirm that I know that the Designated Liaison Person is the Principal, Dr Mags Jordan and that the Deputy Designated Liaison Person is the Deputy Principal, Mr Dermot McDermott.
7. I confirm that I have been made aware of my designated supervisor and that I understand my obligations to that person with regard to following directions and seeking advice regarding activities to be undertaken with pupils.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
BLOCK CAPITALS

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Witnessed by: \_\_\_\_\_  
Eimear Mooney, HSCL Coordinator