



## **Welcome to Salesian Secondary College.**

**We hope that you will be happy here. You are here to learn and to develop your teaching style. This starter guide is not intended to take the place of the work you will do to gain a thorough understanding of teaching and Salesian Secondary College.**

### **Your placement.**

**You may be with us for a few weeks or a few months, in block release or day release. Whatever the nature of your placement, use the opportunity which your placement gives you to:**

1. Learn from colleagues in your Department. Ask questions about curriculum and methodologies, classroom management and professional development. Observe professional behaviour with adults and young people.
2. Learn from your experiences in the classroom and in extracurricular life. Reflect on your practice and try out methodologies and approaches with different age groups and abilities.
3. Become an expert in your subject area. Use your non-contact time to observe colleagues in unfamiliar year groups (by arrangement), become well versed in your subject Syllabus and Specification.
4. Become part of the life of the school. Mix with staff in the staff room, do not become isolated. Get involved in as much as you can. Attend PT meetings, staff meetings, CPD events and so on. Use the Preparation Room for your classroom prep, please, not the staffroom.
5. Develop a professional profile: get to know your students and let them learn how you “tick” as a teacher, understand SEN and the documentation that pertains to students. Consider your attire and the way in which you conduct professional conversations with students, teacher, support staff and parents / guardians.
6. Learn how to use manage technologies: Google suite of classroom products, the school’s MIS, educational apps and software for the support of all students. Become familiar with students who use supportive technologies and their devices. Learn to share ideas and collaborate with your colleagues. Your early successes and failures will inform who you become as a teacher.
7. Understand the ethos of the school: research the mission and the foundation story. Understand the structures within the school: pastoral care, student behaviour, committee work etc. Volunteer!
8. Get to know school support personnel and learn how our roles interconnect for the benefit of the students.

We are here to support you in your development. You are here to get as much experience as possible. Teaching is a rewarding, challenging and inspiring profession and our role is to enable teachers of high quality to enter, contribute towards and remain in the sector.

### **Getting started.**

1. Our staff car park is on your left hand side, as you drive down the avenue. Come through the brown doors to get to the staffroom.
2. Your timetable is created in conjunction with one or more supervising teachers. You must consult with this teacher on every aspect of your time here.
3. Qualified teachers have up to 22 hours of class contact time, so try to get a sense of pacing your day and planning for rest and exercise.



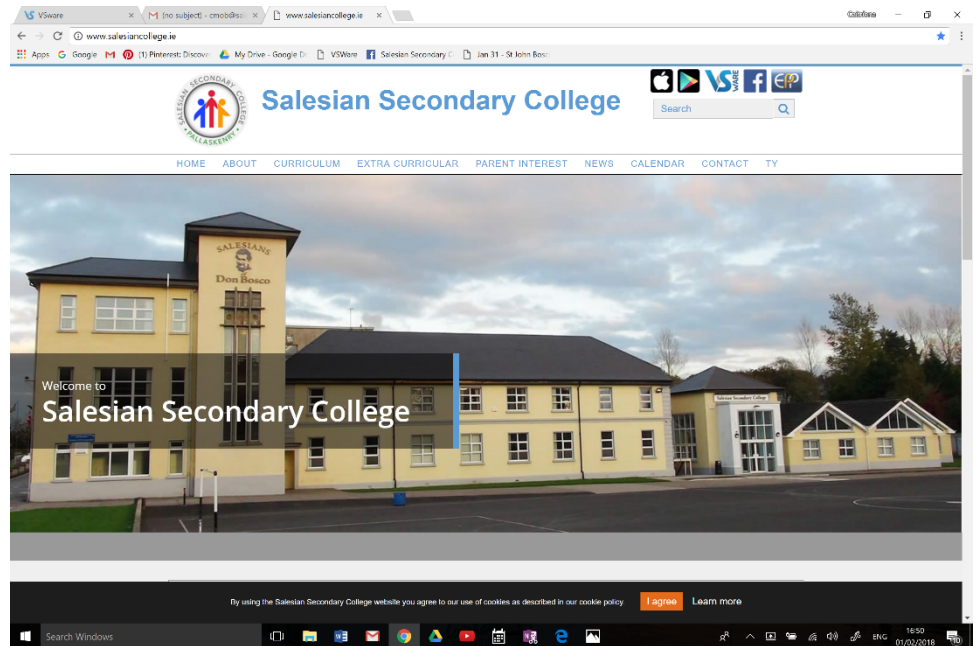
On top of this, qualified teachers are required to do Supervision periods for absent colleagues (up to three periods a week), after school time under the DES Croke Park Agreement, Parent Teacher meetings and more. Most teachers are involved in extracurricular activities also, so it is wise to get involved as much as possible, so as to get a real taste for what teaching life is like.

4. Please ensure you give a copy of your agreed timetable to one of the Deputy Principals and supervising teacher.
5. Please give your email address to your supervising teacher, so that you can be sent circular mail which is relevant to you.
6. Karen in Reception will need your bank details, PPS number, teaching council registration number and your mobile phone number. She will give you details about photocopying and printing.
7. Paul Whooley will set you up with log in details for use on school computers.
8. The school MIS system is VSWare. Please see Ms. Morgan-O'Brien for user name and password for your use during your placement. Once logged on for the first time, please choose your own password and keep this private. You may not use the SSC VSWare page after your departure from Salesian Secondary College.
9. The staffroom is a common area for staff to mingle, rest, have a coffee, prepare work, collaborate, grade papers and relax. PME students are asked to respect the privacy of the staffroom and to be aware that central tables are for the use of all staff. As numbers can be high, PME teachers are asked to use the Staff Preparation Room in the "new building" during the bulk of your non-contact time, please. Use of mobile phones in the staff room is not encouraged.
10. Notices are placed for staff attention on the Whiteboard in the staffroom. Please check this regularly throughout the day. You may also receive emails and text messages from School Management or Reception.
11. Tea and coffee are available in the staffroom. Our canteen serves good hot food and rolls. You are welcome to use these facilities.
12. Staff toilets are in the admin corridor and off the Central Area in the New Building.
13. Locker space is very limited. Please ensure your belongings are secure.
14. You will need to keep careful notes and plans for all your classes. Attendance must be taken for every class. You will be observed in your classroom periodically by members of staff or members of the Senior Management Team.

### VSWare, our school database.

VSWare (“Virtual School Ware”) is commonly used in schools across Ireland to manage student information, timetable, attendance etc. You are advised to become familiar with VSWare as a central tool in the operation of the school.

You can access VSWare in the top right hand corner of our website’s homepage. You will find it convenient to save this link to your personal device or mobile phone.



When you log on to VSWare, your dashboard will open for you. Here you will see notices for the day, student information, important documents for staff consideration, your timetable and classes you have been asked to cover. Your calendar will log all classes that you have supervised, but you are advised to keep your own personal copy of this also.

- Please access your class cover information by clicking on the RED CALENDAR under the “My Classes” section on your dashboard.
- This will bring you to a class list (click “toggle photos” under “Actions” in the upper right hand side to see images of your students.)
- You should take the roll for you substituted class from here. Click “Abs” and the space beside absent students to mark a student absent. Click on “SA” if your student is on school approved business. (It is wise to check with colleagues for the names of students on school business.) Use no other button, please. Remember to click “SAVE” at the bottom of the page to register your roll with the system.
- You will also see notes which a Deputy Principal or the absent teacher have left for you. (Note: you can access some of this information without going through the Red Calendar, however, you will not be able to see notes from the absent teacher.)
- You will need to cross reference your class cover allocations against the hard copy notice on the staffroom notice board each day. Please note that PINK denotes classes for which you can be paid. Check the notice for details of the teacher against whom the claim will be made, the location of the class and the class code. Check notes on the Red Calendar button for further information. You may be asked to supervise additional break times and lunch times. Green, Blue and Brown periods are not paid, but fall to teachers within the normal course of their school day occasionally.
- At the end of the week, please bring details of your claims to Karen in Reception. These are recorded on the X Sheet, which you must collect from outside Mr. Lavan’s office. Please use a separate sheet for each absent teacher. Claims which are not made against specific teachers are made against “Batt Hours” and will be indicated on the notes behind the Red Calendar. Claims against Batt Hours must appear on a separate X Sheet.

- You can access information for your own classes and students by going through My Profile / Timetable. Please note that it is essential that you keep a VSWare roll for ALL of your classes, as well as a written roll in your personal class diary.
- You can add positive and negative behaviour notes to students from here also. Please familiarise yourself with procedures around the management of behaviour. In every case, you should rely on the skills you develop yourself to manage behaviours in your classroom. Where these efforts fail, consult with your corroborating teacher early. Do not suffer in silence.

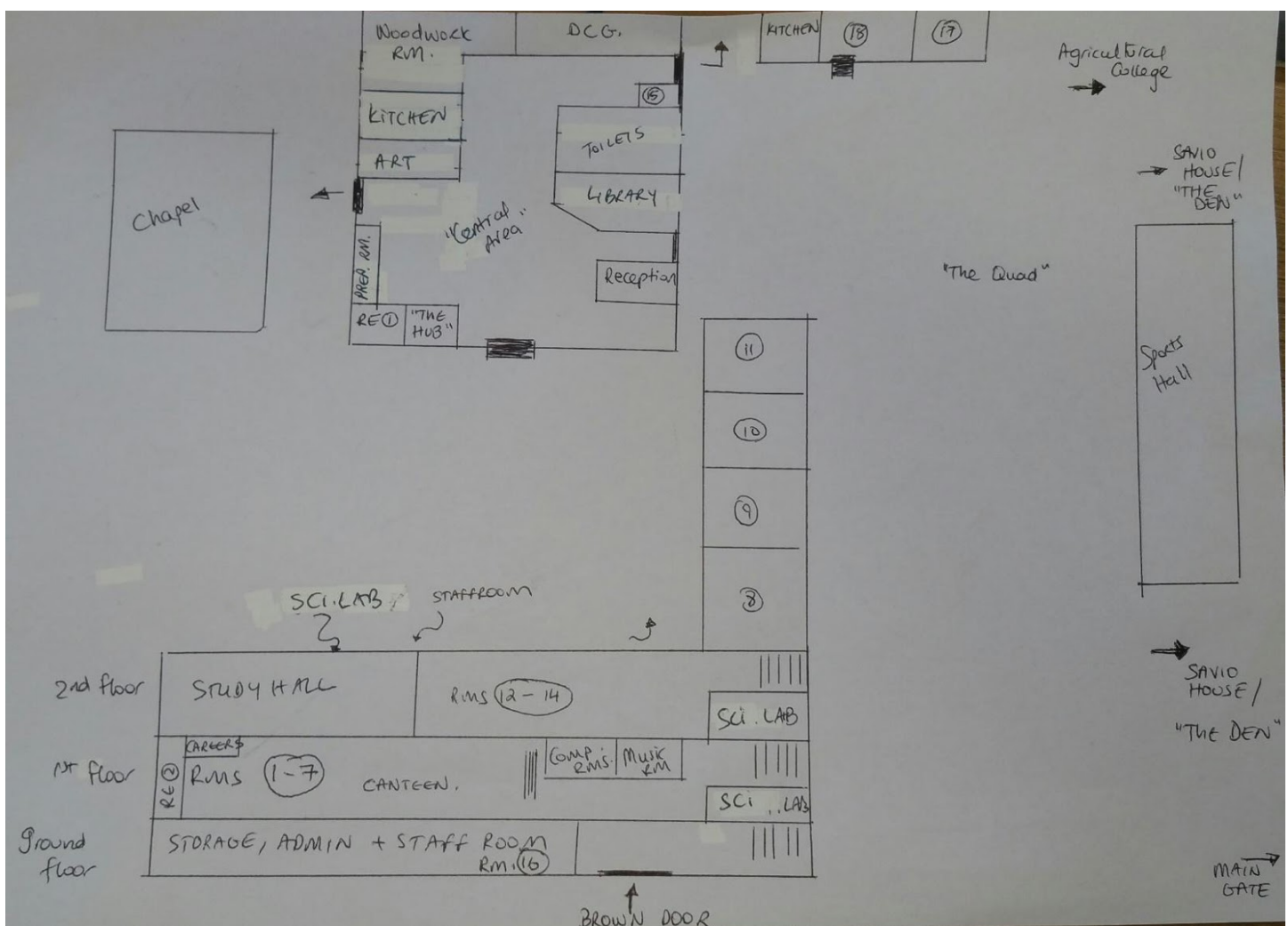
### Finding your way around the school.

Our school is divided into two campuses; the Secondary College and the Agricultural College. In general, the students do not mix for child protection purposes.

Although the site feels overwhelming at first, you will soon get used to the noise and the geography. You should aim to feel comfortable being in any part of the school you choose. Walk around and be "present" on the corridors. The students will appreciate this and you will soon get to know their ways. It is expected that you would remind students of good behaviour and our anti-litter policy as you move around the school.

The site comprises the "Main Building" (existing on three floors and housing admin offices, general purpose classes and specialist rooms), the "New Building" (which houses specialist rooms, "The Hub" and Reception), "Savio House" (which houses SEN, "The Den" and general purpose classrooms), the Sports Hall and lots of outside space.

Below is a rough sketch of the school.



## **School Policy.**

School Policy is always evolving and you are encouraged to become part of that process by engaging with the many committees which exist for that purpose. Copies of school policies are available from Reception and from the Principal.

In particular, you should note the contents of the Policy for the Management and Support of Teachers in Training, 2018.

The School Code of Behaviour is owned by all the staff, students and parents, and you should be familiar with it.

Year Heads rotate from year to year. The annual team is listed on the staffroom notice board, as are the coordinators for SEN for each year group.

Uniform is the responsibility of all teachers. Please do not allow students breach the uniform code. Students may not wear jackets in class or facial / tongue piercings. Students who refuse to comply with your requests should be referred to the Year Head.

Detention is a last resort and should not be your default response to challenging behaviour. Please consult with your supervising teacher. Remember, you are here to develop a teaching style which will enable you to build enriching, positive, respectful and mutually satisfying relationships with your students. Foul language is not acceptable. Outdated "class punishments" and "lines" are not acceptable.

Please familiarise yourself with Child Protection Guidelines and Procedures 2017, our Child Safeguarding Statement and related documents, which are available as downloads on VSWare. Any concern you have about the welfare of a student should be referred directly to the Designated Liaison Person (The Principal) or the Deputy Principals, without any promise of confidentiality to the student. Your role is to listen, record without prompting answers from the student and to report to the DLP.

You will have access to a teacher's diary, in which we have published summarised versions of many of our policies. This is an important book and should not be left lying around.

You may be asked to become part of committees which review policy. Your unique perspective is valuable.

## **FAQs**

### **Q. What if I am ill during my Teaching practice year?**

A. Student teachers should contact one of the Deputy Principals and the Principal and advise of absence and length of absence. Please telephone as soon as you are aware of the absence i.e the night before or from 7.45am each morning.

### **Q. What are my responsibilities as a student teacher? What policies I should be aware of?**

A. Student teachers should be sensitive to, and adhere to staff-room routines and conventions and to any health & safety requirements and policies of the school. Consult the website for information about responsibilities and policies.

### **Q. What is expected of me during my experience?**

A. Student teachers are expected to:

- Be professionally presented in terms of attire and appearance in the classroom.
- Be punctual and remain with the assigned class for the entire class period.
- Respect the privacy and confidentiality of all members of the school community.

**Q. Do I need to pre-approve every lesson with our cooperating teacher beforehand?**

A. All lessons should be checked by your class teacher. As you become more familiar with the curriculum you are teaching, you may not have to have every lesson plan approved first. If you lack knowledge in a particular content area you must work closely with the class teacher before teaching a lesson. This is an area you need to work out with individual class teachers.

**Q. Who do I contact for getting classroom resources?**

A. The student teacher must consult with the class teacher as regards access to any school resources e.g. Visual Arts materials, P.E. equipment, ICT equipment.

**Q. Are student teachers required to participate in extracurricular programs?**

A. Student teachers must decide for themselves if they choose to participate in any extracurricular programs. Some student teachers actively participate in these programs while others choose not to. It is the student teacher's choice.

**Q. If a problem occurs with a child and a parent needs to become involved, what is the student teacher's responsibility?**

A. It is the student teacher's responsibility to contact the parent but no contact should be made without prior consent of the class teacher.

**Q. Are student teachers required to attend meetings?**

A. As a student teacher you are required to attend the same meetings as the class teacher.

**Q. Do student teachers have to attend parent teacher meetings?**

A. Yes. You may be required to attend parent teacher meetings if the class teacher feels comfortable with it. Most student teachers are asked to conduct a parent teacher meeting.

**Q. Mobile phones in school?**

A. The student teacher's mobile phone should be turned off/silent throughout the school day.