

Mercy Secondary School Kilbeggan

Policy on Staff Professional Development

Relationship with Mission:

The Board of Management of Mercy Secondary School, Kilbeggan, is committed to encouraging and supporting members of staff to engage in self development and in particular to participate in professional development which will assist them in their teaching and broader contributions to the life of the school. This commitment emanates from the Teaching Council Guidelines which outline the importance of continuous professional development and lifelong learning. It also stems from the vision put forward in the CEIST Charter which encourages that schools do not exist primarily for the service of the economy but for the service of the human person who is called to live in solidarity with other persons in search of the common good. Similarly this vision extends towards empowering and enabling young people reach their potential while assisting teachers to inspire their students to meet the challenges that await them. The Board is also aware of its responsibilities outlined in Section 9 of the Education Act (1998), “to use its available resources to ensure that the needs of personnel involved in management functions and staff development needs generally in the school are identified and provided for.”

Principles and Aims:

- This policy will create an awareness of opportunities open to staff and will encourage initiative to address professional needs.
- The policy will promote the school as a community of learners.
- The policy will act to encourage and support all staff to engage in professional development.
- The policy will provide a framework for the granting of funding by the Board of Management for any such activity in a manner that is open and transparent.
- This policy will be driven by the dynamic vision that underpins all actions associated with the Mercy philosophy

Eligibility:

The Board will agree and publish on an annual basis, as part of the budgetary process, the total fund available for Staff Professional Development. All staff members are eligible to apply subject to the following conditions:

- A member of staff must have completed at least two years continuous employment in the school.
- The course in question must be relevant to the priority needs of the school as determined by the Board of Management.
- Where courses extend to more than one academic year the applicant must reapply for funding for each year.
- The course must have appropriate accreditation. No grant may be paid to any teacher unless there is appropriate proof presented to the Board that the same course has been completed.

Administration:

- All applications for support must be made to the Board of Management on an official application form. Application forms are available from the Principal.
- The Board has agreed that the closing date for receipt of Application Forms for Staff Professional Development will fall on the first Friday in May of each year. If available funding has not been drawn down, the Board may consider late applications.
- A decision on each application will be conveyed to all applicants on or before the first Friday in June of each year.
- Applicants will be forwarded the agreed amount of the approved grant on completion of each module/ discrete section of the course.
- Applicants will be expected to give a clear indication of the steps they have taken to apply for support from other sources, e.g. Teacher Fee Funding Scheme.
- The board shall determine the amount to be granted to each successful candidate, to a maximum of €500 per year.
- Successful applicants should be willing to share knowledge, skills and expertise gained on programmes supported by the school with colleagues.

Evaluation: This policy will be reviewed by the Board of Management.

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Application Form for Professional Development Support

Name: _____

Current Qualifications: _____

Subjects and levels taught: _____

Special Roles/Responsibilities in the School:

Number of Years Employed in the school : _____

Course Title: _____

Title of Course Provider: _____

Brief details of the course: _____

Award, if any, available on completion of course: _____

Duration of course: _____

Dates of course: _____

Details of course fee: _____

Benefit to: 1) Staff member _____

2) _____

Benefit to: 1) School community _____

2) _____

Other sources of funding pursued: _____

Details, including dates, of any previous financial support awarded to you by the Board for Professional Development:

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Application forms, addressed to the Secretary, Board of Management, must arrive not later the First Friday in May 20__