



PME & Cooperating Teacher Policy of ETSS Wicklow

School Address: The Glebe, Wicklow Town

Roll number: 68345R

School Patrons: Educate Together

Rationale:

This policy endeavors to ensure that the appropriate procedures are in place to enable the school:

- To support the PME/student teacher in an open and transparent manner consistent with the ethos of the school and legislative requirements.
- To put in place a framework which will ensure effective and productive relations between a PME/student teacher and the school community.

Aims:

The policy aims:

- To provide professional support and advice to PME/student teachers.
- To build on the knowledge, skills and competences developed during the initial teacher education and training stage.
- To support the new teacher to feel that he/she is a valuable member of staff with an important contribution to make
- To ensure the new PME/student teacher becomes familiar with their surroundings and the day-to-day running of the school in order to carry out their work successfully.

Roles and Responsibilities:

BOARDS OF MANAGEMENT

- Initiate and develop a policy on school placement, in consultation with the whole school community.
- Ensure that the whole school community (staff, parents and students) is aware of the school placement policy.
- Ensure that the relevant Higher Education Institutes are aware of the school's placement policy.
- Review and monitor the implementation of the placement policy.

SCHOOL PRINCIPALS

- Lead a whole-school approach to school placement in accordance with the policy formulated by the Board of Management.
- Facilitate student placement, in consultation with appropriate staff and having regard to school capacity.
- Work collaboratively with Higher Education Institutes and placement tutors to support the school placement
- Assign student teachers to host teachers as appropriate.
- Provide a school orientation to the student teacher at the outset of the placement.
- Afford the student teacher opportunities to work alongside other teachers.
- Encourage the student teacher to seek advice and support when needed.
- Are available to student teachers for professional support and advice.
- Advise Higher Education Institutes in a timely manner of any serious concerns relating to a student teacher's practice or conduct.
- Facilitate Higher Education Institute staff wishing to update their teaching experience, where feasible
- Facilitate cooperating teachers availing of discretionary time while student teachers are teaching independently
- Will, where appropriate, delegate the above functions to the deputy principal or other members of staff.

CO-OPERATING TEACHERS

- Provide professional advice and support to the PME/student teacher during placement
- Work collegially with the PME/student teacher by sharing and helping him/her to develop good practice in the creation of effective learning opportunities and strategies for pupils
- Encourage, support and socialize the PME/student teacher in the school environment
- Where a PME/student teacher is struggling, engage with the PME and, either through the school principal or the PME's college tutor, inform the college of the need for additional support for them.

Prior to starting:

- Meet the student teacher and provide information on their class(es) - year, size, ability, special needs, plan of work, class rules and procedures
- Introduce the student teacher to: the learners, the classroom, the teacher's plan of work for that class and the roles of other staff directly involved with the learners in the class.

During the placement:

- Retain primary responsibility for the progress and reporting of the pupils
- Afford the PME/student teacher opportunities to observe their teaching

- Observe the PME/student teacher's practice and provide feedback to the student teacher in an encouraging and sensitive manner:
 - Areas of achievement
 - Areas for development
 - Agreed targets
- Encourage the PME/student teacher to seek advice and support where necessary, and support and facilitate the student teacher in: planning; critical reflection on his/her practice; the use of a variety of teaching methodologies; and, in engaging with and responding appropriately to feedback from pupils
- As the student teacher's competence develops, the co-operating teacher should allow him/her to teach more independently
- Assign the teaching of areas of the curriculum to the student teacher while retaining the primary responsibility for the progress of the learners.
- Discuss the student teacher's planning and resources with him/her, as appropriate
- Advise the principal of any serious concerns regarding a PME/student teacher's practice or professional conduct (punctuality, deportment or professional and collegial behaviour) and if convenient, should meet with the placement tutor when they visit the school
- Be available on site in the event of any PME absence or to provide support as needed, for the duration of those lessons.

Monitoring procedure

The co-operating teacher, who shall report to the principal as required, shall monitor the operation of the policy.

Success Criteria

The success of this policy relies on the co-operation of all members of Management and Staff. Feedback received (formal or informal) from the PME/student teacher may be used to gauge the extent to which the policy has achieved its aim.

The practical indicators of the success of the policy include:

- The successful provision of professional support and advice to PME/student teachers
- Positive feedback from PME/student teachers regarding the building on knowledge, skills and competences developed during the initial teacher education stage
- Positive feedback from PME/student teachers regarding feeling that he/she is a valuable member of staff with an important contribution to make
- Positive feedback from PME/student teachers regarding becoming familiar with their surroundings and the day-to-day running of the school in order to carry out their work successfully
- Positive feedback from co-operating teachers, Deputy Principal and Principal regarding all of the above success criteria

PME/ STUDENT TEACHERS

- Engage constructively and collaboratively in a broad range of professional experiences as part of the school placement process.

- Meet with the principal, deputy principal and co-operating teacher(s) to plan the placement.
- Recognise their stage in the learning-to-teach process and how this should inform their interactions with the school community.
- In collaboration with the co-operating teacher and other teachers in the school as appropriate, seek and avail of opportunities to observe and work alongside other teachers.
- Take a proactive approach to their own learning and seek and avail of support as a collaborative practitioner.
- PME/Student teachers must keep schemes of work and lesson plans up to date before, and during their placement.
- PME/Student teachers should plan lessons that actively engage their students, include assessment for learning and differentiation practices.
- PME/Student teachers should have their lesson plan available on the day of a lesson to show to their cooperating teacher, the Deputy Principal or Principal
- Be familiar with the school's Code of Behaviour, Homework Policy, Assessment Policy, Child Protection Policy and other relevant policies
- Always be conscious that learners' needs are paramount and that a duty of care obtains.
- Engage with constructive feedback from Higher Education Institute tutors, co-operating teachers and principals.
- Engage with other student teachers in the context of peer learning, insofar as practicable.
- Work towards becoming critically reflective practitioners.
- Engage with all in the school community in a respectful and courteous manner.
- Recognise that they have much to contribute to the school community.
- Support the characteristic spirit (ethos) of the school.
- Have due regard for the ethical values and professional standards which are set out in the Teaching Council's Code of Professional Conduct for Teachers.
- In the event of an unexpected absence from school, PME/student teachers should inform the Deputy Principal at their earliest possible convenience, who will inform the cooperating teachers.
- PME/Student teachers must inform their cooperating teacher(s) and the deputy principal if they are not available to teach a class for any reason.
- If a PME/student teacher is having difficulty with their workload, they should contact their college and inform the liaison teacher. Through discussion with cooperating teachers, it may be possible to reduce a student teacher's timetable temporarily.
- PME/Student teachers are encouraged to engage in extra-curricular activities. Information on extra-curricular activities is available from the co-operating teacher.
- Respect the privacy of others and the confidentiality of information gained while on placement.
- Participate fully in all aspects of school life during their placement, to develop their teaching skills and meet the placement requirements of their Higher Education Institute.

HIGHER EDUCATION PLACEMENT TUTORS

- Ensure that the student teacher is appropriately supported in all matters pertaining to the placement.
- Assess the student teacher's practice in accordance with the HEI's requirements.
- Reinforce with the student teacher key considerations regarding teaching and learning in accordance with the Higher Education Institute policy.
- Discuss with the co-operating teacher good practice in class planning and the use of teaching and learning resources.
- Support the co-operating teacher and student teacher in engaging in reflective dialogue.

- Acknowledge the role, work and commitment of the host school and co-operating teachers in supporting student teachers on placement.
- Are cognisant and respectful of the characteristic spirit (ethos) of the school, school policies, the school timetable and any special school-based arrangements.
- Are open to learning from the principal, the co-operating teacher(s) and other staff within the school.
- Collaborate with the co-operating teacher(s) and acknowledge his/her role in supporting the student teacher.
- Observe the student teacher teaching and engage him/her in a dialogue when giving constructive feedback.
- Discuss the student teacher's practice and experience with the co-operating teacher, as appropriate.
- Engage with the principal in relation to the student teacher's practice and experience, as appropriate.
- Encourage the student teacher to engage fully in the life of the school.

Timetable for Review

This policy was ratified in 2025 and will be reviewed every two years thereafter.

It was formally ratified on _____.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Chairperson

Board of Management

Last reviewed: 24/11/25	Next review: Nov 2027

