



Student Council Policy of ETSS Wicklow

School Address: The Glebe, Wicklow Town

Roll number: 68345R

School Patron/s: Educate Together

NAME

The organisation shall be known as the ETSS Wicklow Student Council.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The principal reasons for the Student Council are:

- To promote a good working relationship between teachers and students.
- To promote the general welfare of the school and the community.
- To develop leadership qualities and organisational skills within the membership.
- To provide a forum for students to voice their opinions on issues that are relevant to them, giving them the experience of being involved in a consultative, democratic process.
- To promote and encourage a greater school spirit.
- To raise awareness and take an active role in school and extra-curricular activities. This may include the organisation of fund-raising initiatives.
- To encourage a positive involvement of all students in the life of the school.
- To provide a structured forum through which students may make suggestions, offer feedback, and contribute to the review of school policies in a consultative capacity, through appropriate school channels, while recognising that final decisions rest with school management and the Board of Management.
- To discuss any aspect of school business which involves the students, with the exception of any uncomplimentary mention of any member of staff or management or student by name or implication.

STUDENT COUNCIL CODE OF CONDUCT

All Student Council members are expected to uphold high standards of behaviour and represent their peers constructively and respectfully. Council members must:

- Attend meetings regularly and participate actively.

- Support and abide by decisions made democratically by the Council.
- Represent the views of their fellow students fairly and honestly.
- Maintain respectful and professional relationships with staff, students, parents, and school management.
- Adhere to all school policies and the Code of Behaviour.
- Communicate in a respectful manner when acting on behalf of the Student Council.
- Act in accordance with the aims and objectives of the Student Council and the wider school community.

Failure to adhere to this Code of Conduct may lead to removal proceedings under the Removal of Members procedure outlined in the Policy.

NOMINATIONS

- Prior to the nomination process, the outgoing Student Council, under the guidance of the Liaison Teacher, will prepare a briefing, outlining how nominations to the Student Council work, the role and work of the Student Council, and the benefits of student involvement. This briefing will be delivered to students during tutor time over the intercom.
- Nominations will take place in the tutor class setting in September. Students may nominate themselves and/or nominate other students from their tutor class to run as candidates.
- Names of all nominees will be submitted to the tutor, who will pass the list of nominees on to the Liaison Teacher.
- Should a nominated candidate not wish to go forward to the election stage, the nomination is void and the next highest nominated candidate will progress to elections.
- Nominees will have five school days to canvass for votes. All manifestos will be delivered over the school intercom at a time decided by school management. Canvassing must be conducted in a respectful manner and must not disrupt teaching and learning.
- The outgoing Student Council, under the guidance of the Liaison Teacher, will facilitate a lunchtime meeting for all candidates to explain the nomination and election process and procedures as outlined in this policy.

ELECTIONS

- Elections will be conducted one week after the canvassing period by way of secret ballot. Voting will be anonymous and will take place during an extended tutor time.
- Three candidates will be elected to represent each year group. These candidates do not need to be from different tutor groups.
- Elections will be by the first-past-the-post system. In the event of a tied vote, a re-election may be necessary. In the event of a close vote, a re-count may be necessary.
- The list of elected members will be published not more than ten working school days after the date of the election.
- The Principal and Year Heads reserve the right to veto any individual whose discipline has been poor during the previous school year.
- Results are final and may not be appealed.

MEMBERSHIP

- The Student Council shall sit from September to May.
- The Council membership shall consist of one staff member – Liaison Teacher and eighteen students, elected from the student body as follows:
- Three students from each Year Group.
- A student who has already served on the Student Council may be re-elected but students may serve no more than two consecutive terms of office and may not hold the same role i.e. the role of officer's changes annually.
- The Principal and Board of Management reserve the right to suspend the Student Council in the event of it pursuing a course of action deemed detrimental to the school.

It is recommended that the outgoing officers on the Student Council should have a role to play in the training of incoming officers which may include a handover sheet.

MEETINGS

- The Student Council shall meet formally at least once a month at a time agreed by the officers, Liaison Teacher and/or by all members of the Council in consultation with the Principal.
- Formal meetings with an agenda will take place monthly, alongside weekly drop-in meetings for any student who wishes to raise issues or for members to work on Council business.
- Ten members and the Liaison Teacher (or a nominated staff proxy) must be present at a formal meeting in order for it to be valid.
- The Principal and/or Deputy Principal reserve the right to attend meetings.
- An agenda must be made available to all council members in advance of the official monthly meeting.
- Any student or member of staff may suggest items for inclusion on the agenda. This may be done by any of the following means, at least one week before the date of a meeting:
 - Using the suggestion box at the Student Council notice board (Such suggestions must be signed.)
 - Using one's school e-mail account to write to the school e-mail account of any member of the Council or the Liaison Teacher, not during class time.
 - Speaking directly to any member of the Council or the Liaison Teacher during the weekly meeting.
 - Where possible, an agenda will include an item of "any other business" (AOB), to allow for the discussion of later submissions.
 - When making a decision, any member of the Council may call for a vote to be held, and where the votes are divided evenly, the Chairperson will have the casting vote.
 - The final decision will rest with the Principal. (The Liaison Teacher does not have a vote.)
 - Minutes of all meetings shall be recorded by the Secretary.

The following matters are excluded from meetings:

- any negative mention of staff, management or pupil by name or implication,
- individual grievances between student and teacher,
- ongoing disciplinary matters involving a student or group of students.

COMMUNICATION

The Student Council values open, respectful, and transparent communication as a key part of representing the student body. The following procedures are intended to support effective student voice while ensuring clarity, consistency, and appropriate consultation within the school community. The Student Council will have a dedicated Student Council noticeboard, where the Council representatives for the year will be communicated to students along with any other relevant information and upcoming initiatives.

- The Student Council may communicate, in a representative and consultative capacity, with the wider school community, including students, staff, school management, the Parent Staff Association (PSA), and the Board of Management.
- Two Student Council members and the Liaison Teacher will attend Board of Management Meetings in a monthly basis to provide short (approx. 5 minute update) update on Student Council work, progress, and current initiatives. Student Council representation will be shared among the members to give all students an opportunity to present to the Board.
- All formal communication issued on behalf of the Student Council (including emails, letters, reports, surveys, meeting requests, website or social media content) must be discussed and agreed at an official Student Council meeting and recorded in the minutes.
- All communication must receive prior approval from the Liaison Teacher before being issued.
- Approval will be given at:
 - a scheduled weekly Student Council drop-in meeting, or
 - an official monthly Student Council meeting.
- Where communication is intended for external bodies such as the PSA or the Board of Management, prior consultation with school management is required before the communication is sent.
- Communication on behalf of the Student Council shall be issued only by the Chairperson(s) or a nominated officer, under the guidance of the Liaison Teacher.
- The Student Council recognises that its role is to represent student views and contribute to consultation and review, and that decision-making responsibilities rest with school management and the Board of Management.
- All communication must:
 - reflect agreed Student Council positions rather than individual opinions
 - be respectful, factual, and aligned with the school's ethos and policies
 - use agreed school communication channels (e.g. school email accounts/official student council email)

These procedures are intended to ensure that student voice is heard clearly, constructively, and appropriately within the school community.

Failure to follow the agreed communication procedures may be addressed by the Student Council officers, Liaison Teacher, and school management, in line with this Policy.

OFFICERS

- The Student Council membership shall include the offices of Chairperson(s), Assistant Chairperson, Secretary, Treasurer, Assistant Treasurer, Two Joint Public Relations Officers, Website and IT Officer, Equality Officer and Attendance Officer elected annually at the first meeting of the Student Council. Officers must be rotated annually.
- Vacancies among the officers shall be filled by a special election within the Council.
- It is advised that Sixth Year Members not be elected as officers to the Council, so as to ensure that they are free from any distraction from their studies that appointment as an officer might cause. However, if a Sixth Year Member is nominated to hold a position as an officer to the Council, the student has the right to accept or refuse the nomination.
- Other roles may be created according to the Council's and the school's needs (e.g. Art Director, Policies Coordinator, etc). Such roles may cease to exist if no longer deemed necessary by the council.

RESPONSIBILITIES

1. THE CHAIRPERSON(S)

The Council reserves the right to elect two Chairs if deemed necessary.

- Act as chief spokesperson of the council.
- With the secretary, draw up the agenda for each meeting.
- Chair meetings in a fair manner, ensuring that all have an equal say.
- Sign any letters, notices, etc. that are issued by the Council.
- Liaise with the Liason Teacher and Management.
- Ensure that the council is run effectively and efficiently.

2. THE VICE-CHAIRPERSON

- Take over the responsibility of the chairperson when unavailable.
- Assist the chairperson in the running of the Council.

3. THE SECRETARY

- Take the minutes at meetings and write them up.
- Distribute and read out the minutes from previous meetings.
- Make progress reports, keep records of all work being carried out, and post those records on the notice board of the council.

4. TREASURER

- Keep financial records in order and report to the council regularly on the current financial status of the Council.
- Be present and assist with all collection of money.
- Count and sort money with the vice-treasurer (or one other Council member if Vice is unavailable) raised during fundraising and communicates with school

secretary to lodge money.

- Must obtain the permission of the Chairperson and Senior Management before expenditure can take place.
- Prepare and present a financial report to the council at the last Council meeting of the summer term and present the financial report to the Principal.

5. ASSISTANT TREASURER

- Assist the treasurer in all financial matters.
- Be present and assist with all collection of money.
- Count and sort money with the treasurer (or one other Council member if Treasurer is unavailable).

6. PUBLIC RELATIONS OFFICERS

- Keep students informed about the activities of the Council by means of the school intercom, year group assemblies, updating the Student Council notice board, posters etc.
- Maintain and update the notice board of the council regularly.
- Feed information on Council activities into student and parent publications where possible and liaise with the staff PR co-ordinator.

7. EQUALITY OFFICER

- Make sure every student in a minority group is represented equally and ensure facilities and extracurricular clubs are available to all students.
- Promote equality on a student level and inform the council of any upcoming events campaigns or other information regarding student level equality.
- Be involved in the organisation of Culture Day.

8. WEBSITE AND IT OFFICER

- Ensure the student council presence on the website is maintained and updated regularly by linking in with the teacher responsible for this.
- Create and manage online forms that may be required for surveying students/staff.
- Feed information on Council activities to the staff PR co-ordinator.

9. ATTENDANCE OFFICER

- Keep a record of attendance at every meeting.
- Give apologies for Council members who are unable to attend a meeting.

LIAISON TEACHER

- Appointed by the Principal to assist in the establishment and proper functioning of the Student Council.
- Assists the Student Council in the drafting of the Student Council Policy.
- Acts as a link between Staff and the Student Council, ensuring a clear line of communication, advising the Council resourcefully, organising training, and ensuring proper procedures are followed.
- Has a voice but not a vote.
- Is a source of information.

SUB-COMMITTEES

The Student Council reserves the right to form sub-committees following consultation with management. A sub-committee will consist of at least three members. Any activity proposed by a sub-committee is subject to the approval of the Student Council. Sub-committees must report regularly to the Council on their progress. For example: organising of an event.

FILLING VACANCIES

Where a vacancy occurs on the Council, the vacancy shall be filled by an election within the year group concerned.

REMOVING MEMBERS OF THE STUDENT COUNCIL

The Student Council, in consultation with the Principal and the Board of Management, reserves the right to remove a member, from their position where there is just cause, which includes (but is not limited to):

- Persistent non-attendance; 3 or more meetings, without valid reason.
- Repeated failure to engage with Student Council activities.
- Conduct that breaches the Student Council's Code of Conduct or the school's Code of Behaviour.
- A student leaving the school.
- A student being suspended or involved in serious breaches of school rules where advised by school management and the Board of Management.

PROCEDURE FOR REMOVAL

- A concern must be raised by individual Council members and submitted in writing to the Liaison Teacher.
 - The member in question will be informed and may receive a warning.
 - If breaches continue or are serious, the Council will discuss the matter at a meeting with the member present and give at least one week's notice of a proposed vote.
 - The member has the right to make a defence to the Council before any vote is taken.
 - A vote will be held at an official meeting. A two-thirds majority of members present is required to remove the member.
- In circumstances where the Board of Management has advised that a student's continued membership is untenable (e.g. serious breach of school policy), the Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, and Liaison Teacher may consult with senior management and take appropriate action, up to immediate removal.
- Senior management reserve the right to remove any student with immediate effect.
 - Vacancies arising from removal shall be filled by a by-election or through co-option, as determined by the Council.

AMENDMENTS AND RATIFICATIONS

- This Policy is subject to ongoing review and amendment by school community and the Board of Management, as necessary.
- Where changes are proposed, the Student Council will be consulted, where appropriate, and given the opportunity to provide feedback prior to

implementation.

- The Student Council Policy shall be ratified by the Board of Management.

