



Student Teacher Placement Policy

Mission Statement

Coláiste Abbáin endeavours to provide quality education for all students in a caring, disciplined and respectful environment. We aim to prepare students for life and responsible citizenship and motivate them towards the achievement of their full potential.

1. Introduction

The Board of Management of Coláiste Abbáin acknowledges the following regarding initial teacher education and the role of school placement in this process.

Positive school placement experiences are critical to ensuring appropriate initial teacher education for all student teachers.

Close collaboration between schools and HEI's is essential to positive and meaningful school placement experiences for student teachers.

It is desirable that schools host student teachers for placement and in doing so provide student teachers with the opportunity to observe teaching and to teach classes independently, in collaboration with suitably qualified practising teachers.

In the course of the school placement, student teachers require the support of the whole-school community in their journey towards professional competence.

Hosting student teachers on placement is enriching for the learners in a school, student learners, co-operating teachers, the wider school community and HEI's. In particular, learners benefit from a greater variety of newer approaches to teaching and learning through its engagement with student teachers and HEI staff.

HEI placement tutors benefit from partnership experiences with schools and from being in the actual setting of a school during visits to student teachers.

2. Development of Policy

This policy was developed by the Board of Management following consultations with all members of the school community – school management, teachers and other relevant staff, parents and students.

3. Commitment to hosting student teachers.

Coláiste Abbáin is committed to hosting student teachers for school placement and in this context, adopts without modification as part of this school placement policy the Guidelines on School Placement developed by the Teaching Council in consultation with all relevant education partners.

4. Implications for the School Hosting Student teachers on placement

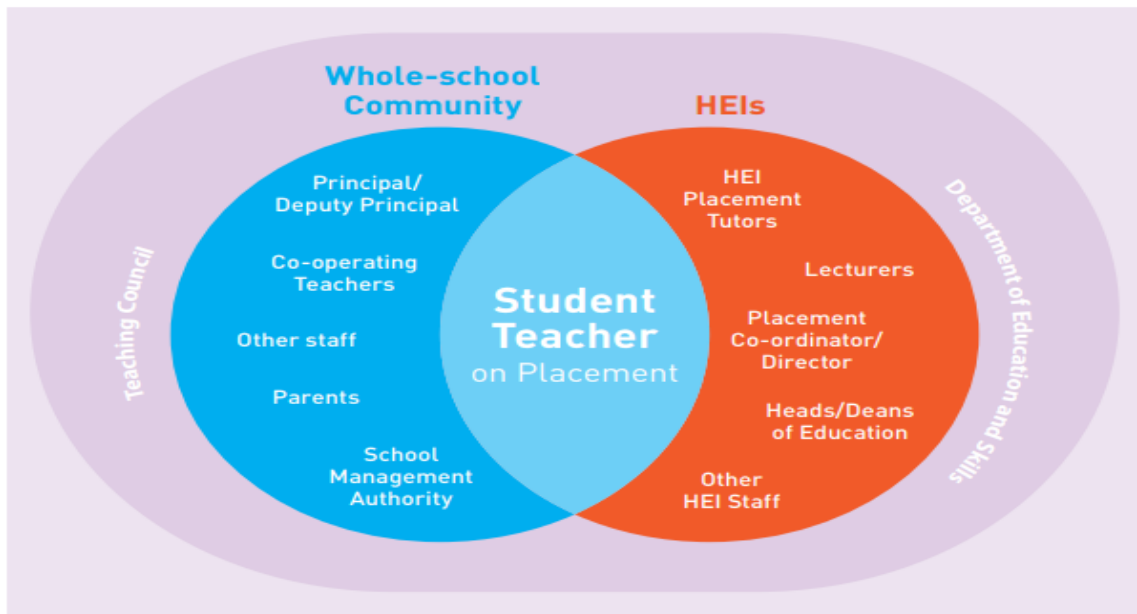
Hosting a student teacher on placement will, inter alia, involve the student teacher observing classes being taught by members of the school's teaching staff. It will also involve student teachers teaching classes, in the first instance, while being observed and supported by the teacher with primary responsibility for the welfare and educational progress of the class (the co-operating teacher). Then as the student teacher's competence develops

5. Scheduling of student teachers on placement

The principal, or staff members to whom this task is delegated, will allocate student teachers to co-operating teachers and classes, having regard for: the stage the student teacher is at in his/her initial teachers education programme: the particular needs of the learners in a particular class; the requirement for the student teacher to experience an appropriate range of placement contexts; and any special circumstances of which the co-operating teacher has an awareness.

6. Induction of student teachers on placement

Student teachers will, prior to commencing their placement, be provided with an orientation to the key personnel, ethos and work of the school. This orientation shall involve student teachers being provided with an information pack that will include details of key school policies, in particular the school's Code of Behaviour, Child Protection, Health and Safety, Homework and Student Teacher Placement Policies.



7. Supports for the student teacher

The school community is committed to supporting positively and sensitively the student teacher in accordance with Guidelines on School Placement developed by the Teaching Council in consultation with all relevant education partners. Furthermore, the school is committed to allocating the student teacher to (an) appropriate co-operating teacher(s) and to the classes essential to him/ her undertaking his/her school placement successfully. The school will also provide the student teacher with the teaching facilities and resources necessary to his/her work during the placement.

8. Continuing professional development for staff involved in supporting/facilitating student teacher placement

The school management authority and the school's senior management are committed to promoting and facilitating the participation of school staff in continuing professional development programmes essential to ensuring the successful operation of student teacher placement in the school.

9. Communication of school placement policy to school community

A copy of the school placement policy is made available to school personnel and the parents association and the policy is readily accessible to parents on request. A copy is made

available to parents/guardians of all learners enrolling in the school and all new teachers at the point of their employment, either electronically or in hard copy.

It is a policy of the school that student teachers have an opportunity to work closely with experienced teachers and the wider school community.

The following will be outlined to student teachers:

- A suitable timetable will be agreed following an initial meeting between the principal, deputy principal and student teacher.
- In general, class groups for STP will be from 1st – 4th year and in some cases 5th year (bearing in mind the status of the student teacher).
- Student teachers will meet with assigned cooperating teachers at an agreed time.
- A scheme of work and lesson content will be agreed with the cooperating teacher.
- Student teachers must submit lesson plans to the cooperating teachers for comment and approval. Cooperating teachers review the submitted work.
- Student teachers are encouraged to observe classes of their cooperating teacher and other subject teacher, with their consent, in the first weeks of placement.
- Cooperating teachers are encouraged to observe classes of the student teacher during the first week of the placement as well as intermittently throughout the placement period.
- Student teachers should provide evidence of work e.g. test results, class work, project work, presentations to the cooperating teacher at agreed times.
- Student teachers will recognise the rights of pupils with whom they are working.
- At all times they will show a high regard for the personal safety, moral welfare and the intellectual progress of pupils.
- Student teachers will uphold the school policies and procedures in working with pupils to maintain a positive learning environment.
- Student teachers should endeavour to participate as fully as possible in the life of the school community, staff meetings, subject planning meetings, policy development meetings, aren't teacher meetings etc.
- Student teachers are expected within reason to be available for such activities as the supervision of classes and to participate in the co-curricular activities outside of class time.
- Student teachers are required to exhibit appropriate professional relationships with the students and the school staff.
- Student teachers have a responsibility to take particular care with their online profile and social networking.
- Should a student teacher be unavailable for class they must inform the school and the cooperating teacher(s) at the earliest opportunity.
- Student teachers should consider the guidelines of the Teaching Council when on placement.

10 Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed by the school management periodically

11 Date of policy adoption

The policy was adopted by the Board of Management on 9th May 2018

Abbreviations	
HEI	Higher Education Institution
ITE	Initial Teacher Education

Appendices

Appendix 1: Guidelines on School Placement – 1st Edition 2013 (The Teaching Council, An Comhairle Mhuinteoireachta); School Placement for Student teachers, A Quick Reference Guide for Schools.

Appendix 2: Student Teacher Procedures in Coláiste Abbáin, as adapted from the Teaching Council Guidelines.

Appendix 3

Coláiste Abbáin: Student Placement Procedures as adapted from The Teaching Council Guidelines.

Elements of School Placement

As well as direct teaching to a designated class, the school-based element should include the following activities:

Planning for teaching, learning and assessment (assigned classes)

Assessment of learning (assigned classes)

Assessment for learning (assigned classes)

Structured observation of classroom practice

Participation by student teachers in school-based orientation programmes

Professional conversations with experienced teachers

Structured feedback from HEI placement tutors and co-operating teachers on practice observed

Critical reflection on practice, both individually and with colleagues

Structured and supported participation in school life, as appropriate to the school placement

The school-based element may also include, as deemed appropriate by the HEI and the host school, some or all of the following activities:

Learning support and resource teaching

Attendance at staff meetings

School-based research which is relevant to the school placement

Supported engagement with parents

Supported engagement with other professionals

Engagement with school-based continuing professional development and/or school development planning

HEI-directed placement activities may include:

Micro teaching or equivalent

Preparation for the placement

School placement reflection workshops

On-line discussion fora

Development of a reflective journal / professional portfolio

Alternative placement experiences in educational settings other than recognised schools, including, inter alia, Centres for Education.

Roles and Responsibilities

Student Teachers

- Engage constructively and collaboratively in a broad range of professional experiences as part of the school placement process.
- Meet with the principal and co-operating teacher(s) to plan the placement having regard to the breadth of activities set out in Figure 1.
- 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.
- Prepare and deliver lessons to a standard commensurate with their stage of development and in line with HEI requirements and the policies of the host school (in particular homework, assessment and other relevant teaching and learning policies).
- Be familiar with the school's Code of Behaviour, 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 HEI 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*.
- Respect the privacy of others and the confidentiality of information gained while on placement.
- Participate fully in each placement to develop their teaching skills and meet the placement requirements of their HEI.

Co-operating Teachers

- Introduce the student teacher to: the learners, the classroom, the teacher's plan of work for that class, class rules and procedures, and the roles of other staff directly involved with the learners in the class.
- Afford the student teacher opportunities to observe their teaching (and that of their colleagues).
- Inform the student teacher regarding learners' needs and attainments.
- 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.
- Observe the student teacher's practice and provide oral or written feedback to the student teacher in an encouraging and sensitive manner.
- Encourage, support and facilitate the student teacher in: critical reflection on his/her practice, the use of a variety of teaching methodologies and in engaging with and responding appropriately to feedback from learners.
- Encourage the student teacher to seek advice and support where necessary.
- Allow student teachers to teach independently, as their competence develops (in line with HEI requirements for the particular placement), and as deemed appropriate by the co-operating teacher and the principal.
- Work collaboratively with the student teacher, the HEI placement tutor and the school principal.
- Advise the principal of any serious concerns regarding a student teacher's practice or professional conduct.
- Have discretionary time while student teachers teach independently to facilitate engagement with the student teachers at other times.

School Principals

- Lead a whole-school approach to school placement in accordance with the policy formulated by the School Management Authority.
- Facilitate student placement, in consultation with appropriate staff and having regard to school capacity.
- Work collaboratively with HEIs and placement tutors to support the school placement.
- Assign student teachers to co-operating 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 HEIs in a timely manner of any serious concerns relating to a student teacher's practice or conduct.
- Facilitate HEI staff wishing to update their teaching experience, where feasible.
- Facilitate co-operating teachers availing of discretionary time while student teachers are teaching more independently.
- Will, where appropriate, delegate the above functions to the deputy principal or other members of staff.

School Management Authority

- 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 HEIs are aware of the school's placement policy.
- Review and monitor the implementation of the placement policy.

Whole-school Communities

- Recognise the importance of school placement in the personal and professional development of the student teacher and engage in the development and implementation of policy on school placement.
- Recognise the challenges faced by student teachers and support them in meeting those challenges.
- Value the school placement experience and how student teachers can benefit from engagement with co-operating teachers and the school community.
- Recognise that the student teacher can bring new and innovative practices to the classroom which may benefit the school and its community.
- Recognise the particular roles and responsibilities of all within the school community in relation to school placement.

Parents

- Contribute to the development of a school policy on school placement.
- Recognise the importance of and support the school's commitment to hosting student teachers on placement.
- Receive communication in relation to the school's policy on school placement in a manner which enables them to be supportive of the student teachers while on placement.

