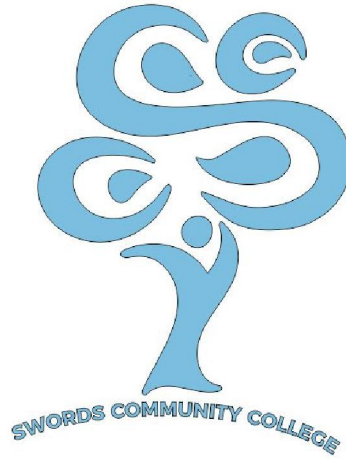




Student Teacher Placement Policy
Swords Community College
June 2026

Date for review: June 2027

Chairperson of the Board

Secretary to the Board

Date

Date

Mission Statement

At Swords Community College, we believe there is a place for everyone. We are a welcoming, inclusive, multi-denominational school where students' opinions matter and their learning and welfare are at the center of all we do.

We support our learners to aim high and reach their full potential through strong pastoral care, engaging teaching which encourages and supports students individual learning styles, in a respectful and caring environment. Learning in our school blends traditional methods with digital technologies to create an experience that encourages curiosity and independence.

Through a rich and varied programme of extra-curricular activities, designed to cater to all interests and abilities, we encourage students to explore their passions, develop new skills and build confidence beyond the classroom.

Guided by our four pillars of Respect, Excellence, Resilience and Teamwork, we empower our students to become confident learners, active citizens and well-rounded individuals, prepared for further education and for life beyond school.

This policy is informed by:

1. Children First Act 2015
2. Child Welfare Act 2000
3. Children First – National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2011
4. School Placement for Student Teachers – Teaching Council

In Swords Community College, we are committed to providing a comprehensive and effective learning environment which is child-centered and empowers young people to make informed decisions with the support of their parents or guardians. We also aim to acknowledge the particular importance of the professional role subject teachers and guidance counsellors play in supporting students in making informed decisions around subject options and level choice in line with their best interests. Students are empowered to work collaboratively with parents or guardians, subject teachers and guidance counsellors as they form their decisions. Students are encouraged to develop personal responsibility, initiative, personal growth and leadership during their time in SCC.

This policy is subject to periodic review through the appropriate channels such as Student Council, Staff Council, Parent Council and Senior Leadership Team and the Board of Management.

Introduction

The Board of Management of Swords Community College 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 Swords Community College and Education Colleges is essential to positive and meaningful school placement experiences for student teachers.
- It is desirable that Swords Community College 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 practicing teachers.
- During 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 our school, student

teachers, co-operating teachers and the wider school community. In particular, learners benefit from a greater variety of teaching, learning and co-curricular experiences through the structured participation of student teachers our school. Furthermore, Swords Community College gains access to a variety of newer approaches to teaching and learning through its engagement with student teachers and Education Colleges' staff.

- Education Colleges placement tutors benefit from partnership experiences with Swords Community College and from being in the actual setting of a school during visits to student teachers.

Commitment to hosting student teachers

Swords Community College 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.

<https://www.teachingcouncil.ie/assets/uploads/2023/09/school-placement-for-student-teachers.pdf>

Implications for the school hosting student teachers on placement

Hosting a student teacher on placement will involve the student teacher observing classes being taught by members of Swords Community College 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, the student teacher will move to teaching classes independently in line with Education Colleges requirements and the student teacher's particular stage of development on the PME programme.

Scheduling of student teachers on placement

The principal, DP 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 teacher 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 will also be considered.

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 Swords Community College. 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 Positive Behaviour, Child Safeguarding, Health and Safety, Student Teacher Placement Policies.

Supports for the student teacher

Swords Community College is committed to supporting positively and sensitively the student teacher in accordance with the 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 them undertaking their 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.

Continuing professional development for staff involved in supporting and facilitating student teacher placement

Swords Community College is 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.