



Holy Spirit GNS Garda Vetting Policy

This Garda vetting policy operates in conjunction with the Child Safeguarding Statement which serves to ensure the safety of all children in Holy Spirit GNS. The policy was drawn up by the staff members in cooperation with the BOM.

Rationale for the Policy

The staff and Board of Management (BOM) of Holy Spirit GNS endeavour to keep potential unsupervised access to children to a minimum. This is as much for the safety of the children as for the adults who may find themselves on their own with a child or children.

The staff and BOM fully recognise the limitations of Garda Vetting and realise that it does not provide clearance for any individual.

As it is compulsory for all persons who are in contact with children in a school to be Garda Vetted (DES circular 31/2016), it is the policy of Holy Spirit GNS that any individual aged 16 or over must be Garda Vetted if they wish to undertake work or activities in the school with a child or children on an ongoing basis.

This includes members of the BOM and non-teaching staff if such a situation may arise.

Based on advice to the Board of Management children under the aged of 16 years who cannot be vetted will not be accepted for work experience as per the school work experience policy.

Aims of the Policy

- To ensure that the school is a safe and secure environment for the children in our school.
- That Garda Vetting becomes part of the process of ensuring the protection and safety of all members of the school community.

Functions of Garda Vetting

The process of Garda Vetting is carried out by the Garda Central Vetting Unit (GCVU). The function of the GCVU is to provide details of "*all prosecutions, successful or not, pending or completed, and/or convictions*" in respect of an applicant to a registered organisation.

Procedure involved in Garda Vetting

The applicant completes the Garda vetting form, which is then sent to the Diocesan Office. The Garda vetting form is then forwarded to the GCVU. All rules of Data Protection will be observed in respect of any data received following a Garda Vetting:

- Information will be obtained and processed fairly
- Information will be kept for a specified, explicit and lawful purpose
- Use of and disclosure of information obtained occurs only in ways compatible with these purposes
- Information will be kept safe and secure
- It will be retained only while necessary for the purpose obtained

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- Information received from the Vetting Unit will be shared with the individual at their request

Teaching staff are vetted by the Teaching Council and must hold the Garda Vetting Certificate and Statutory Declaration prior to applying for a position in the school.

All offers of employment to non-teaching staff such as secretaries, SNA's, caretakers, volunteers who offer to work in the school, employees of other external agencies who wish to engage in work in the school, and people who offer to transport children to matches or other school outings are "subject to satisfactory vetting by the Garda Vetting Unit".

Failure to complete the Garda Vetting form will automatically disqualify the candidate. The provision of inaccurate information on the Garda Vetting form, such as inaccurate date of birth or address, may also disqualify a candidate.

Decisions on whether to accept an applicant or not will involve consideration of a number of criteria as well as the Garda Vetting findings. In the case of convictions, cognisance will be taken of the nature and dates of the conviction, restorative justice and rehabilitation of offenders.

Candidates will be able to challenge the information provided by the GCVU, in particular to avoid errors or cases of mistaken identity. In such cases, re-vetting will take place.

In all decisions, it is recognised that the school will take as its first priority its responsibility to the protection of children attending school activities.

Communication and Implementation of the Policy

This policy will be communicated to parents via email, and it will be published on the school website. The Principal in conjunction with the BOM will be responsible for the implementation of this policy.

Review:

The effectiveness of the policy's implementation will be reviewed every 5 years.

Ratified and Approved by the BOM on: 25/02/26.

Review Date:

Signed: 
Chairperson of the BOM