

KILKENNY SCHOOL PROJECT
NATIONAL VETTING BUREAU POLICY

1. The Kilkenny School Project (“KSP”) uses Garda vetting as part of a wider process to ensure the protection and safety of all members of the school community and, in particular, all KSP pupils. The aim of this policy is to ensure that the school is a safe and secure environment for all KSP pupils.
2. Pursuant to the provisions of the National Vetting Bureau (Children and Vulnerable Persons) Act 2012 which came into operation on the 29th April 2016, all members of the KSP community (ie teaching staff, non-teaching staff and volunteers) who have necessary and regular access to, or contact, with children must successfully undergo Garda vetting through the NVB, prior to commencement of employment or relevant volunteer work in the school.
3. Furthermore, those individuals who were employed by, or who were volunteering in, the KSP prior to the 29th April 2016, and not being individuals to whom paragraph 4 below refers, must make an application for retrospective vetting prior to the 31st December 2017 in line with s.21 of the Act of 2012.
4. Any individuals who were employed by, or who were volunteering in, the KSP prior to the 29th April 2016 and who were vetted prior to the 29th April 2016 (ie under the previous legislation), must make a fresh application (referred to as an application for re-vetting) under the current legislation but a time limit has not yet been put in place for such vetting (ie the relevant section of the Act of 2012 (s.20) has yet to be commenced).
5. The vetting of teaching staff is governed by the Teaching Council of Ireland and, as such, is outside the remit of the remainder of this Policy.
6. All offers of employment by the Board of Management (“the Board”) to non-teaching staff, and the acceptance of all volunteers within the KSP, are subject to satisfactory Garda vetting disclosures.

7. Volunteer roles which require vetting, as specified in the Act of 2012 and in the DES Circular 0031/2016, include those volunteers who assist in the school on a regular basis (rather than occasionally) and whose role involves coaching, mentoring, counselling, teaching or training of children. Roles which do not fall into these categories may not require vetting but best practice suggests that any volunteer who is in direct contact with pupils should be vetted and this includes, in the view of the Board, volunteers who bring KSP children (other than their own children) to matches and other off-site activities. There are many other aspects of parental volunteerism that also require vetting and thus, the view of the Board is that all parental volunteers should be vetted if at all possible, unless the activity is deemed by the Principal/Board not to require vetting (ie that the volunteering activity does not come within the remit of the Act of 2012 or the applicable DES Circular).

8. The process of Garda vetting is carried out by the National Vetting Bureau (“NVB”). The function of the NVB is to provide Garda vetting disclosures in respect of an applicant to a registered organisation (eg Educate Together (“ET”). Disclosures can either:
 - a. be “nil”, which means that no criminal record was found and no specified information was available in respect of the applicant; or
 - b. consist of details of convictions, together with details of ancillary or consequential orders, and/or a record of any prosecutions pending and/or specified information in respect of the applicant.

Procedure

9. The KSP recognises that it has an obligation to manage Garda vetting applications within a human rights, legislative and natural justice framework, together with its obligations under data protection legislation.

10. All prospective employees and volunteers are asked to complete a vetting application through ET and in line with the attached:

- a. ET Garda Vetting Guidelines;
 - b. ET Guide to the eVetting Process;
 - c. ET Guidelines for Completing Vetting Invitation Form (NVB 1);
 - d. ET Garda Vetting Verification ID Form;
 - e. Parent/Guardian Consent Form (NVB 3) – where relevant;
11. Failure to complete the Garda vetting process will automatically disqualify an applicant for any position. The provision of inaccurate information may also disqualify the applicant.
 12. Applicants will be invited to a meeting regarding any disclosures of a criminal record or other information, including to address errors or cases of mistaken identity. In such cases, re-vetting will take place.
 13. All returned Garda vetting disclosures will be handled in strictest confidence and in line with data protection obligations.
 14. Garda vetting disclosures will only be retained by the school in the event of a successful appointment and will be appropriately sealed and retained in a secure location.
 15. In all decisions, it is recognised that the Board's first priority is its responsibility to all KSP pupils and thereafter to the wider school community.
 16. This Policy will be reviewed as necessary, and particularly to comply with any relevant legislative changes.

This Policy was adopted by the KSP Board of Management at its meeting on the 16th February 2017

Signed: *Sara Phelan* (BoM Chairperson) **Signed:** *Mary Nicholson* (School Principal)