

Approved Date:	27/04/2023
Review Date:	April 2026

Garda Vetting Policy

The Garda Vetting Policy operates in conjunction with the Child Protection Policy which serves to ensure the safety of all children in the school.

The staff and Board of Scoil Cholmcille 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 Board and staff fully recognise the limitations of Garda Vetting and realise that it does not provide clearance for any individual. As it is now 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 Scoil Cholmcille to Garda Vet any individual who may find themselves in a position on their own with a child or children. This includes members of the Board of Management and non-teaching staff. Vetting of non-teaching staff should be renewed every 5 years.

Ref. also Circular 31/2016

Aims of the Policy

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

What is 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

The applicant completes the Garda Vetting invitation form, which is then sent to the Diocesan Office.

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

All offers of employment to non-teaching staff and volunteers are 'subject to satisfactory vetting by the Garda vetting Unit'. Teaching staff are vetted separately by the Teaching Council.

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.

Decisions on whether to accept an applicant 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 especially 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.

Completing a Garda Vetting Form

Please use BLOCK CAPITALS when completing the form. It is imperative that you complete the Garda Vetting Invitation Form fully and correctly. Do not leave any part of the form blank. Please provide a valid email address that you check regularly. Once you receive the e-vetting link please complete it, without any delay.

If the form is not completed correctly it will be returned to you for further completion/ verification. Please note that this could significantly slow your appointment/ Garda Vetting process.