

*Meánscoil na mBráithre Críostaí, Cill Chainnigh*  
**Christian Brothers Secondary School, Kilkenny.**

Phone: 056 7721402 Fax: 056 7763652 email: [office@cbskilkenny.ie](mailto:office@cbskilkenny.ie)



VETTING POLICY April 2020

- School Name:** Christian Brothers Secondary School, Kilkenny
- School Address:** James's Street, Kilkenny
- School Details:** CBS Kilkenny is a Voluntary Roman Catholic Secondary School under the Trusteeship and the Patronage of the Edmund Rice Schools Trust. The School is grant aided by the Department of Education & Skills and is a single sex (boys) school.
- School Management:** The Board of Management of CBS Kilkenny is a statutory Board appointed pursuant to the provisions of the Education Act 1998.

**Mission Statement**

Inspired by its founder, CBS Kilkenny aims to provide Catholic education in the Edmund Rice tradition. The school endeavours to be a caring Christian Community which promotes to the best of its ability the personal, spiritual, physical and intellectual development of its students.

**Ethos**

As an Edmund Rice School, CBS Kilkenny seeks to promote the five key elements of an Edmund Rice School as espoused by the ERST Charter:

- Nurturing faith, Christian spirituality and Gospel-based values
- Promoting partnership in the school community
- Excelling in teaching and learning
- Creating a caring school community
- Inspiring transformational leadership.

## **Introduction**

In the context of the CBS Kilkenny Mission Statement and of its commitment to the care and protection of its students and of all who work in the school, the Board of Management has adopted the policy set out hereunder to govern its application of vetting as part of its recruitment practice.

The policy has been framed in compliance with:

- DES circular letter 31/2016
- The Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools 2017
- The National Vetting Bureau (Children and Vulnerable Persons) Act 2012 as amended by the Criminal Justice (Spent Convictions and Certain Disclosures) Act 2016
- The Data Protection Acts/GDPR
- Employment Equality Acts 1998 and 2004
- Equal Status Act 2000
- Industrial Relations Act 1990

## **Goals**

- To ensure that CBS Kilkenny is a safe and secure environment
- To ensure that vetting of CBS Kilkenny personnel is carried out to the highest standards of good practice, in compliance with all legal and ethical obligations and in an open, transparent and just manner.
- To ensure that all applicants for vetting are assured that the highest standards of confidentiality are observed.

## **The Policy**

The principal will be designated as the contact person who will be responsible for the implementation of this policy and for liaising with the liaison person in the Joint Managerial Body (JMB).

The principal will conduct the process on behalf of the school in conjunction with the Teaching Council, the JMB and with the Vetting Bureau.

**The National Vetting Bureau (Children and Vulnerable Persons) Act 2012, section 12 requires a school authority to obtain a vetting disclosure from the Vetting Bureau prior to employment of, contracting of, permitting or placement of a person to undertake relevant work or activities with children or vulnerable persons. This applies to all appointments of any duration including full-time, part-time and substitute positions. It is a criminal offence for a school authority to commence the employment of an employee to do relevant work or activities without first obtaining a vetting disclosure from the Bureau in respect of that person.**

“**Relevant work or activities**” in the context of a school or centre for education means any work or activity carried out by a person where a necessary and regular part of that work or activity consists mainly of the person having access to, or contact with, children or vulnerable persons.

In cases where no statutory vetting obligation exists (see sections 5.3 and 6.4 of Circular 31 of 2016) ... a school authority must consider, having regard to its duty of care to its pupils, whether it should seek an up to date vetting disclosure in respect of the person.

**DES FAQs number 12.** A (person) who helps on an occasional basis is therefore not subject to vetting **as long as the (person) is not involved in the coaching, mentoring, counselling, teaching or training of pupils.**

**Exemption** - a school is not required to obtain a vetting disclosure from the Bureau:

In the case of the employment of, or entering into a contract for services with, a person on behalf of the State Examinations Commission (SEC) - locally appointed superintendents of special centres, aural examinations and practical examinations etc. (Nonetheless, JMB advises that such recruitment is carried out in a prudent manner and that, where possible, all such personnel are vetted. If vetting is not feasible such persons should provide a Statutory Declaration and Form of Undertaking – see appendices 3, 4.)

**Non-employees – contractors, volunteers, coaches etc.**

Vetting requirements in respect of non-employees occur where a school authority:

- (a) Enters into a contract for services that constitute relevant work or activities or
- (b) Permits any person to undertake relevant work or activities on the school's behalf, whether or not for commercial or any other consideration or
- (c) Places or makes arrangements for the placement of any person in work experience or activities that involves participation in relevant work or activities. (e.g. work experience)

**Exemptions** - the school is not required to obtain a vetting disclosure prior to commencing the contract, permission or placement in the following circumstances-

**Unpaid volunteers** who assist on an occasional basis provided such assistance does not involve the teaching, coaching, mentoring, counselling or training of children or vulnerable persons.

**Following the completion of retrospective vetting in April 2018, all personnel doing relevant work or activities in schools must have been vetted.**

## **Recruitment**

Thorough recruitment procedures must always be followed and are an essential element of child protection practice. Vetting does not take the place of recruitment procedures but is to be used as part of those procedures.

- Best practice in checking references and previous employment history is essential.
- A number of questions concerning child protection will be asked of job applicants.
- The school will give job applicants a leaflet setting out its recruitment policies and procedures, with particular reference to its recruitment practice with regard to child protection. This leaflet will alert applicants to the child protection-related questions which they will be asked to answer in writing (see appendix 1).

## **Procedures for all categories:**

- Prospective employees must confirm in writing that their appointment is subject to the satisfactory outcome of vetting.
- At the completion of the selection process, when the preferred candidate has been selected, the candidate must, if he or she is a qualified teacher, apply to the Teaching Council to be vetted. If the candidate has already been vetted by the Vetting Bureau, he or she must enable the principal to access the vetting disclosure online so that it can be downloaded and assessed.
- All others must complete a Vetting Bureau Application Form and submit it to JMB through the school.
- Failure to complete the Vetting Application Form will disqualify the candidate and no offer of employment can be made to him or her.
- The provision of inaccurate information on the Vetting Application Form may disqualify.
- Failure to disclose a conviction will disqualify, other than as provided for in section 14 A of the National Vetting Bureau (Children and Vulnerable Persons) Act 2012, as amended.
- A Statutory Declaration and a Form of Undertaking must be signed by all those appointed to teaching and non-teaching posts of any duration (see appendices 3,4).
- Where a person changes employment from one school to another the Statutory Declaration is valid if made in the same or previous calendar year.
- A statement confirming that he/she has read and understood the school's Child Protection Policy must be signed by the candidate.

### **Teaching Personnel:**

- Persons being appointed must be vetted prior to appointment to any teaching position, regardless of the duration of the appointment.
- Where the teacher to be appointed is a registered teacher or has applied to be registered, vetting is carried out through the Teaching Council. The teacher must enable the school authority to access the vetting disclosure on the Teaching Council's Digitary platform.
  - (a) The school will download the vetting disclosure in respect of the teacher and
  - (b) Retain a copy for its records

**IT DOES NOT FOLLOW THAT VETTING DEEMED SATISFACTORY FOR TEACHING COUNCIL PURPOSES WILL, IN ALL CASES, BE SATISFACTORY FOR EMPLOYMENT PURPOSES. IT IS THE BOARD'S VETTING POLICY ONLY THAT WILL DETERMINE THIS.**

The Teaching Council's determination as to whether a particular vetting outcome is satisfactory for its purposes is made within the statutory framework within which the Teaching Council works. It is possible that an outcome which meets the Teaching Council's requirements might not be acceptable to the school's board of management for employment purposes.

### **Non-Teaching Personnel**

- Vetting for all non-teaching personnel is carried out through JMB as above.

### **Other Appointees (volunteers, coaches, etc.)**

- The principal will meet with and interview all volunteers, coaches, trainers, etc. who may be involved in relevant work or activities in the school from time to time.
- The board will have persons in this category vetted through JMB prior to their engagement by the school. However, it is permissible for two or more organisations to agree in writing that one organisation will have the person vetted, e.g. the school could agree with the GAA that the GAA will have the person vetted. In such a case, the school must receive written confirmation from the other organisation that the person has been vetted and the school should require a copy of the vetting disclosure from the person who has been vetted by the organisation with which the school has entered into a written agreement.

### **Student Teachers**

- Student teachers must be vetted through JMB unless there is a prior written agreement between the school and the college. The school must receive written confirmation from the college that the student teacher has been vetted. The school should also require that the student teacher furnishes to the school their disclosure from the Vetting Bureau to enable the school to determine if the disclosure amounts to satisfactory vetting in terms of the school's vetting policy.

### **Students and Work Experience**

- Where a student is participating in work experience which requires that the student be vetted, a completed Vetting Application Form (NVB 1), downloadable from [jmb.ie](http://jmb.ie), should be submitted to JMB.
- Persons not yet 16 years old cannot be vetted.
- Where the student is 16 or 17 years old on the date on which the vetting application form is signed and dated, the application must be accompanied by the Parent/Guardian Consent Form (NVB 3) available on the JMB website.
- Vetting may be conducted in respect of students over 18 years of age on his/her written authorisation where required for an individual participating in work experience.

#### **CBS Kilkenny Duty of Care to Students going on Work Experience**

- Students going on work experience are prepared by the school to cope with potentially difficult situations. They are assured of school support in such instances.
- Safety of students is discussed with employers before placements begin.

## Disclosures

The attached schedule sets out those offences or categories of offences which will disqualify candidates.

It should be noted that a disclosure from the Vetting Bureau may also include “specified information”. “**Specified information**” or “soft information” in relation to a person who is the subject of an application for a vetting disclosure means information other than criminal convictions held by An Garda Síochána that leads to a bona-fide belief that a person poses a threat to children or vulnerable persons.

*The Act states that ‘Where a member of staff of the Bureau considers there is specified information relating to a person who is the subject of an application for vetting disclosure, he or she shall refer the matter to the Chief Bureau Officer for assessment and determination under section 15 as to whether the information concerned should be disclosed.*

*(3) The Chief Bureau Officer shall assess the application for vetting disclosure and the specified information relating to the person who is the subject of that application but he or she shall not make a determination that that information concerned should be disclosed unless—*

*(a) he or she reasonably believes that that information is of such a nature as to give rise to a bona fide concern that the person concerned may—*

- (i) harm any child or vulnerable person,*
  - (ii) cause any child or vulnerable person to be harmed,*
  - (iii) put any child or vulnerable person at risk of harm,*
  - (iv) attempt to harm any child or vulnerable person, or*
  - (v) incite another person to harm any child or vulnerable person,*
- and*

*(b) he or she is satisfied that its disclosure is necessary, proportionate and reasonable in the circumstances for the protection of children or vulnerable persons or both, as the case may be.*

**Because of the nature of “specified information” and the requirements in the Act, including an appeal process available to the vetting applicant before “specified information” can be disclosed, the board of management will determine whether a vetting applicant whose disclosure from the Bureau includes “specified information” is a suitable person to be employed in the school. In such a case the vetting applicant will be afforded an opportunity to make representations to the board of management before the board comes to a decision on the matter.**

The following schedule also sets out other offences or categories of offences which may disqualify. In deciding whether a particular conviction renders a candidate unsuitable for appointment, the school will have regard to:

- the nature of the offence and its possible relevance to the post;
- the age of the offence (offences many years in the past may be less relevant than more recent offences);
- the frequency of the offence (a series of offences will give more cause for concern than an isolated minor conviction).
- Offences which are not sexual or violent in nature or drug related offences of a minor nature committed before the age of 18 will be judged in the light of the age of the applicant at the time of the offence.
- Where the vetting process discloses pending prosecutions or unsuccessful prosecutions, such prosecutions will be assessed in the light of the nature, age and frequency of the alleged offence(s) and of the age of the candidate at the time of the alleged offences.
- Statutory vetting will, in addition to a check for criminal records, include a check for any relevant "soft information". "Soft information" referred to as "specified information" in the Vetting Act, is information other than criminal convictions held by An Garda Síochána that leads to a bona-fide belief that a person poses a threat to children or vulnerable persons.

The principal will meet the applicant in person and in privacy. The applicant will be informed of the nature of the disclosure and will be given an opportunity to respond to it.

The principal is authorised by the board to determine if the outcome of the vetting of a candidate has been satisfactory or not, the determination being made in accordance with this policy. Should the principal deem it necessary, he/she may consult the chairperson of the board of management before reaching a decision.

The only circumstance in which a disclosure of convictions or prosecutions would be made known to the board of management would be where the applicant consents that they be consulted.

A copy of the vetting disclosure document will be given to the applicant.

**The Eight Rules of Data Protection** will be strictly observed by the school.

The rules are:

1. Gather and process information fairly
2. Keep it only for one or more specified, explicit and lawful purposes
3. Use and disclose it only in ways compatible with these purposes
4. Keep data safe and secure
5. Keep data accurate and up-to-date
6. Ensure that it is adequate, relevant and not excessive
7. Retain it no longer than is necessary for the purpose or purposes
8. Give a copy to the individual, on request

### **Implementation**

This policy is effective from the date of adoption by the Board of Management. The school's Vetting Policy is made available to candidates for employment, paid or unpaid. It will be included on the school's Job Application Form(s), such that the candidate's signature on that form confirms that he/she is aware of the school's policy on vetting and accepts the school's policy that satisfactory vetting is an essential requirement for appointment to a post in the school. By signing the Vetting Application Form, the job applicant authorises the principal to receive disclosure of the outcome of vetting and to have regard to it in determining if the candidate may be appointed to the post.

### **Important note on re-vetting**

On April 16 2020, the Teaching Council website states the following:

*The Teaching Council is commencing the re-vetting of all registered teachers on a three-year cycle. This will ensure that all teachers will hold recent vetting should the Minister for Justice and Equality announce a cycle for re-vetting for all persons working with children or vulnerable persons.*

*Teachers who hold a National Vetting Bureau Disclosure which is three years old will be issued a re-vetting request on a scheduled basis.*

However, this has been suspended temporarily due to Covid-19.

## Categories of Offence

The following schedule sets out those offences or categories of offence which will disqualify candidates. It also sets out other offences or categories of offence which may disqualify. In deciding whether a particular conviction renders a candidate unsuitable for appointment, the school will have regard to:

- the nature of the offence and its possible relevance to the post;
- the age of the offence (offences many years in the past may be less relevant than more recent offences);
- the frequency of the offence (a series of offences will give more cause for concern than an isolated minor conviction).
- offences which are not sexual or violent in nature or drug related offences of a minor nature committed before the age of 18 will be judged in the light of the age of the applicant at the time of the offence.
- Where the vetting process discloses pending prosecutions or unsuccessful prosecutions or ‘specified information’ as defined in the Vetting Act, such disclosures will be assessed in the light of the nature, age and frequency of the alleged offence(s) and of the age of the candidate.

Category/Type of Offence	Automatic disqualification from employment	May or may not disqualify	May be acceptable
Homicide	Murder	Manslaughter	
Sexual offences	Rape Rape under section 4 Unlawful carnal knowledge Aggravated sexual assault Sexual assault Sexual offences (other)		
Assault	False imprisonment Abduction Assault causing harm Non-fatal offences against the person including threats to kill, syringe attacks, endangering traffic	Assault (minor) Assault (other)	
Theft/ Burglary/Robbery	Aggravated burglary	Theft from person Theft (other) Burglary Robbery of establishment/ cash/goods Robbery from	

		person	
Criminal Damage	Arson	Criminal damage	
Drugs	Possession of drugs for sale or supply	Simple possession	
Firearms	Possession of firearms Discharge of firearm Possession of offensive weapon		
Traffic		Intoxicated driving a vehicle Intoxicated in charge of a vehicle Unauthorised taking of a vehicle Dangerous driving causing death Hit and run (leaving the scene of an accident)	Speeding Dangerous driving Careless driving General road traffic offences
Public Order Offences		Drunkenness offences	
Fraud offences		Fraud offences	
Explosives Offences	Explosives offences		
Money laundering	Money laundering		
Trafficking of illegal immigrants	Trafficking of illegal immigrants		
Terrorist Offences	Terrorist offences		

**Policy Review**

This policy will be reviewed as necessary and particularly to comply with any relevant legislative changes.

Policy adopted by the Board of Management of CBS Kilkenny.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Chairperson, Board of Management

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## APPENDIX 1 – Recruitment Process and Child Protection

### **Information Leaflet:**

The school thanks you for your interest in applying for the position of ..... in the school. I enclose a standard application form which I would ask you to complete and return to the school before the stated closing date for applications.

This school owes a duty of care to its pupils. The school has a duty to satisfy itself that no person employed by the school poses a threat to pupils or staff. The school must therefore make certain enquiries of all applicants for employment in the school, and these enquiries will include both:

- (a) Questions to each applicant at interview (see below) and
- (b) Enquiries with previous employer(s), and the National Vetting Bureau.

The questions which you will be asked at interview and also invited to answer in writing may include the following:

- Where have you been residing during the previous five years?
- Were you ever the subject of an inquiry by Tusla/ the HSE concerning a child welfare matter?
- Were you ever the subject of a garda criminal investigation arising from a complaint of child abuse?
- Were you the subject of any allegation of criminal conduct or wrongdoing towards a minor?
- Are you aware of any material circumstance in respect of your own conduct which touched/touches on the welfare of a minor?

Please note that it is a fundamental term of your employment that you make appropriate full disclosure in respect of the questions outlined above, and a fundamental term will be included in any future contract of employment to this effect.

You should also note that if the school is satisfied, in the future, that you have made incomplete or inaccurate disclosure, you may face disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal.

The school undertakes that all responses furnished by you in respect of the above questions will be treated as confidential, subject to any reporting obligations which may be imposed on the school, pursuant to “Children First” published by the Department of Health, the Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools published by the Department of Education and Skills or pursuant to any legal obligation imposed on the school to facilitate the effective investigation of crime.

## **APPENDIX 2: Recruitment Process and Child Protection**

(NOTE: This clause can also be inserted into a letter of appointment in the case of a short-term casual appointment.)

Draft Clause to be inserted into Contracts of Employment

*It is a fundamental term of your employment in this school that you agree that you have made full, truthful, accurate and appropriate disclosure in reply to questions asked or information sought at interview, relating to any child welfare issues. If it transpires, during the course of your future employment, that you have not made such full, accurate and appropriate disclosure, the failure to make such disclosure will be treated as a fundamental breach of this contract of employment, which may lead to disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal.*

### Form of Undertaking

For administrative ease, the Department's payroll appointment forms will incorporate this undertaking. However, for any appointment (teaching or non-teaching) that does not require completion of a payroll appointment form, this Form of Undertaking must be completed prior to the person being appointed unless the person has previously provided this school authority with a Form of Undertaking and associated statutory declaration both of which were made during the same or previous calendar year.

I confirm that, since the date on which I signed the attached statutory declaration, to the best of my knowledge and belief there is nothing, from a child protection perspective, in relation to my conduct, character or personal background of any nature that would adversely affect the position of trust in relation to children or vulnerable persons in which I would be placed by virtue of my appointment to a teaching or non-teaching post in \_\_\_\_\_ (insert name of school authority).

I also undertake to inform the above school authority of any changes to the above stated position that may affect my suitability, from a child protection perspective, for continued employment with the school authority or for any subsequent employment with the school authority.

I am aware that I am not now, or in the future, required to disclose to a school authority details of any convictions regarded as spent under the Criminal Justice (Spent Convictions and Certain Disclosures) Act 2016.

I acknowledge and understand that any false or misleading confirmation as to my conduct, character or personal background or any failure of mine to inform the school authority of relevant changes that may affect my suitability, from a child protection perspective, will constitute a breach of my contract of employment and may be grounds for summary dismissal by the school authority.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Prospective employee

Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Witnessed by: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
(on behalf of school authority)

Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_

### APPENDIX 3: Form of Undertaking

## APPENDIX 4: Statutory Declaration

### Statutory Declaration

This statutory declaration must be completed prior to a person being appointed to any teaching or non-teaching position with a school authority unless the person being appointed has previously provided that school authority with a statutory declaration which was made during the same or previous calendar year.

"I \_\_\_\_\_ of, \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

in the county of \_\_\_\_\_ aged eighteen years and upwards do  
SOLEMNLY AND SINCERELY DECLARE as follows:-

that to the best of my knowledge and belief there is nothing, from a child protection perspective, in relation to my conduct, character or personal background of any nature that would adversely affect the position of trust in which I would be placed in relation to children or vulnerable persons by virtue of my appointment to any teaching or non-teaching position in any recognised primary or post-primary school or any other state funded centre of education for children or vulnerable persons.

I am aware that I am not now, or in the future, required to disclose to a school authority details of any convictions regarded as spent under the Criminal Justice (Spent Convictions and Certain Disclosures) Act 2016.

Within a child protection context:

- I hereby confirm my irrevocable consent to each of the employing school authorities to the making of such enquiries as they deem necessary in respect of my suitability for the post(s) in respect of which the applications are made.
- I hereby accept and confirm the entitlement of each of the employing school authorities to reject my application or terminate my employment (in the event of a contract of employment having been entered into) if I have omitted to furnish the school authority with any information relevant to my application for the position or my continuing employment with the school authority.
- I understand that any false or misleading information submitted by me in relation to my application for a position or my continuing employment with each of the school authorities will render me liable to automatic disqualification or render me liable to dismissal, if employed.

And I make this solemn declaration conscientiously believing the same to be true and by virtue of the Statutory Declarations Act 1938.”

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Applicant

Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Declared before me \_\_\_\_\_ [*name in capitals*] a [notary public][commissioner for oaths][peace commissioner] [practising solicitor]by \_\_\_\_\_

\*who is personally known to me,  
or

\*who is identified to me by \_\_\_\_\_ who is personally known to me,

Or

\*whose identity has been established to me before the taking of this Declaration by the production to me of passport no. [*passport number*] issued on [*date of issue*] by the authorities of [*issuing state*], which is an authority recognised by the Irish Government]

Or

National identity card no. [*identity card number*] issued on [*date of issue*] by the authorities of [*issuing state*] [which is an EU Member State, the Swiss Confederation or a Contracting Party to the EEA Agreement]

Or

[Aliens Passport no. (*document equivalent to a passport*)] [*passport number*] issued on [*date of issue*] by the authorities of [*issuing state*] which is an authority recognised by the Irish Government]

Or

Refugee travel document no. [*document number*] issued on [*date of issue*] by the Minister for Justice, Equality and Law Reform]

Or

Travel document (other than refugee travel document) [*document no.*] issued on [*date of issue*] by the Minister for Justice, Equality and Law Reform

at

in the City/ County of

on the \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_ 20\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
**\*Practising Solicitor / Commissioner for Oaths / Notary Public /  
Peace Commissioner  
\* Delete as appropriate**

**Note:** Further information in relation to Commissioners for Oaths and Peace Commissioners is available on [www.citizensinformation.ie](http://www.citizensinformation.ie).