

ST JOSEPH'S SCHOOL POLICE VETTING PROCEDURE



Every board is responsible for taking reasonable measures to protect students from harm (NAG 5) and ensure that all employees maintain proper standards of integrity and conduct (State Sector Act s77A).

St Joseph's School have procedures relating to employees, volunteers, and contractors on:

- appointments
- employee information
- privacy and official information
- code of conduct/behaviour

Guidelines

1. All non-teaching employees (s78C) who work St Joseph's School are required to undergo a police vet. This vet must be applied for no later than two weeks after the person begins work at the school.
2. Contractors, and employees of contractors, (s78CA) must be police vetted if they are likely to have unsupervised access to students at the school during normal school hours. A police vet must be obtained before the person has, or is likely to have, unsupervised access to students at the school during normal school hours (s78CB).
3. Section 78CD requires that strict confidentiality is observed in the handling of police vets and the person concerned is given reasonable time and opportunity to validate what is in the police vet before any action is taken.
4. Teaching staff are currently vetted by the Teachers Council as part of their registration process .
5. All current employees who work at the school during normal school hours must have their police vets renewed every three years.
6. All appointments are conditional on a "satisfactory" police vet. To avoid dispute about what "satisfactory" means this will be discussed with the prospective employee at the time of the appointment.
7. At St Joseph's School a "satisfactory" Police Vet does not include the following police vet results
 - (a) a conviction for sexual offences or offences involving violence
 - (b) convictions involving possession or supply of drugs
 - (c) fraud/theft convictions if the job involves handling money

Vetting Support Staff

Vets must take place approximately every three years.

Vetting contractors

Contractors and their employees that work in the school during the normal school day and are likely to have unsupervised access to students will need to be vetted.

Safeguarding privacy:

The information gained in the vet is confidential and should be treated in the same way as an employee's personnel file. Access to it should be restricted to the board (as employer), the principal (as chief executive), and any employee tasked with handling the information.

This responsibility is delegated by the board to the Chairperson to minimise information "leakage" and it would be expected that this would be the principal in most cases (particularly for existing employees).

While the result of a vet is being considered it should be kept in a secure place. The information must not be retained longer than is required but you need to keep a record that the vet has been undertaken.

Volunteers

1. Volunteers who are not parents/caregivers of a student at the school will be vetted, at the school's expense, if they are in a situation that requires them to be unaccompanied with students for more than thirty minutes – a period of "vulnerability" or a "window of opportunity".
2. Parents/Caregivers who are staying overnight on school trips or camps may be police vetted at the school's expense. The decision to acquire a police vet of a parent/caregiver will be at the sole discretion of the Principal.
3. In the event of the Principal requiring a police vet of a parent/caregiver, very clear and simple information sheets will be sent to those parents/caregivers so they understand the need and process of police vetting. These sheets will detail what would be deemed unacceptable offences so those parents/caregivers who erred in youth with minor offences will not be unnecessarily alarmed.
4. The parent/caregiver and school will complete the form and send it to the Police.

5. If the vetting is “clear” the Principal will inform the teacher organising the trip/camp and the parent/caregiver.
6. If the vetting indicates something is amiss the Principal will inform the parent/caregiver and discuss that person’s options: either to provide proof that the information is wrong or to withdraw from the trip or camp. At this stage the teacher in charge of the trip or camp will **not** be informed (*see 8 below*). If the parent/caregiver opts to prove the information is wrong, the parent/caregiver must have a reasonable time to do this, say two weeks. It is important to know how much time there is between getting the report of the police vetting and the actual date of the trip or camp.
7. If the parent/caregiver proves that the information is wrong and the original vetting report is amended, the parent/caregiver will be informed that they can continue with the trip/camp. If the parent/caregiver cannot disprove the original vetting report then the teacher in charge of the trip of camp will then be informed.

Police Vetting Register

The school will operate a Register of all requests made for a police vetting. The headings will include the –

1. subjects name/DOB
2. category (*support staff, contractor, contractor’s employee, volunteer*).
3. date posted to Police
4. date the result is received
5. outcome (“*pass*” or “*fail*”)
6. date the vetting expires
7. comment (*for result of appeal etc*).

Reviewed: 31 July 2017

Next Review Due: 2020