

External Coaches/Teachers Policy - St. Patrick's Primary School



1. Introduction

St. Patrick's Primary School has developed a tradition of acquiring the services of many professionals & volunteers, who have provided their expertise in the areas of Art, Drama, Sports & Music etc. This policy covers all external persons charged with providing services relating to school curricular or extracurricular activities, and sets out to ensure that services provided to students by external facilitators are of the highest quality and to mitigate the risk of harm to students.

2. Induction of external persons

External persons will, prior to commencing their programmes, be provided with an insight to school life, introduction to key personnel (Principal, members of the ISL team if necessary and the DLP and DDL), ethos and work of the school. They will be reminded about the correct Child Safeguarding procedures.

3. Rationale

St. Patrick's Primary School is committed to providing its students with the highest level of curricular and extra-curricular education. Whilst recognising that qualified classroom teachers are the best placed professionals to work with students in most curricular and extra-curricular school activities, the school acknowledges that in certain circumstances external expertise can enhance the education and activities provided.

When external persons are employed or invited to provide services to students, the school is responsible for ensuring, as far as is possible, the quality of the services provided and the safeguarding of students.

4. Procedures

- External facilitators are approved by the principal in consultation with the relevant teaching staff.
- All external facilitators are compliant with the school's child protection policy and other relevant school policies and procedures.
- The school authority satisfies itself, having regard to its own legal advice if required, that it has met any vetting obligations that arise under the Vetting Act and in line with Circular 0031/2016, for such external facilitators.
- External facilitators in classroom provision always work under the guidance and supervision of the relevant classroom teacher.
- Further requirements and guidelines in relation to Wellbeing provision by external facilitators are outlined in DES Circular 0043/2018.

5. Responsibilities of the External Persons

- Have current Garda Vetting (GV) through their club, and seek GV directly through the school.
- Report to the school office, and sign in upon arrival on the school grounds.
- Work directly alongside a designated class teacher.
- Ensure the emphasis is on participation and enjoyment during lessons.
- Ensure full participation of all pupils, and provide for differing levels of ability.
- Take all necessary safety precautions.
- Help to establish community/club links where relevant.

6. Responsibilities of the class teacher:

The class teacher will retain overall responsibility for the care and well being of pupils in the class, and be present throughout the entire teaching/coaching session. The class teacher will also liaise with the external coach in relation to the following:

- Communicate with the external coach/teacher before, during and after lessons.
- Provide information and assistance regarding the needs of the children.
- Adopt an active role in lessons when necessary e.g. building relationships, dealing with behavioural issues, assisting with equipment.
- Evaluate the contribution of the external coach within the context of the class / school plan, and report any concerns/key observations to the Principal for future reference.

7. Responsibilities of the Principal or Co-Ordinator of School Visitors

- Ensures that the external person is suitably qualified in their particular activity.
- Evaluates the contribution of the external person within the context of the school plan.
- Assesses the suitability of the external person to work with primary school children by ensuring that the external persons works within the relevant guidelines e.g. Code of Ethics (Irish Sports Council, 2000), Children First (DYCA 2017)
- Ensures the external person has current Garda vetting through their club where relevant, and facilitates GV directly through the school.
- Ensures that the external person is covered by the school's insurance policy or has their own professional insurance.
- Provide the external person with an insight into school life
- Introduce the external person to key personnel (Principal, members of the ISL team if necessary and the DLP and DDLP), ethos and work of the school.
- Inform the external person about the correct Child Safeguarding procedures.

8. The policy operates within a legislative framework and takes account of the following:

- Children First Act, 2015
- Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools, 2017
- DES Circular 0043/2018: Best practice guidance for post primary schools in the use of programmes and/or external facilitators in promoting wellbeing consistent with the Department of Education and Skills' Wellbeing Policy Statement and Framework for Practice
- DES Circular 0031/2016: Commencement of Statutory Requirements for Garda Vetting

9. Communication of the External Coach Policy to the school community

A copy of the External Coach Policy is made available to school personnel. The policy is readily accessible to parents on request.

10. Adoption of Policy & Policy Review

A copy of the school placement policy is readily accessible on the school website. This policy will be reviewed as necessary by the staff and Board of Management of St. Patrick's Primary School.

This policy was ratified on 16th October 2024.

Signed: *Fr. Tony Finn (Chairperson of the Board of Management)*

Signed: *Riona Donoghue (Acting Principal)*

Date: **16/10/2024**

** Please note that the signed copy of this policy is in the school office*