



St. Mary's Secondary School, Nenagh

Policy to select external facilitators who support the curriculum

1. Purpose and Scope

This policy sets out to establish clear procedures for selecting external facilitators who deliver curriculum-supporting activities at St. Mary's Secondary School. It aims to ensure that all facilitators meet high standards of professionalism, child protection requirements, garda vetting requirements and educational quality. These aims are set in line with the Children First Act 2015, Department of Education and Youth requirements, and the CEIST core values of promoting spiritual and human development, being just and responsible, showing respect for every person, achieving quality in teaching and learning and the dignity of each person and creating community.

2. Guiding Principles

- **Children First Act 2015:** All external facilitators must comply with child protection legislation and school safeguarding procedures
- **CEIST values:** Activities must reflect Catholic ethos and CEIST's five core values (Promoting Spiritual and Human Development, Achieving Quality in Teaching and Learning, Showing Respect for Every Person, Creating Community, and Being Just and Responsible)
- **Curriculum expertise:** Facilitators must demonstrate appropriate expertise and pedagogical skills.
- **Dignity and inclusion:** Programmes must respect the dignity of every person and be accessible to all students regardless of ability, background, or belief.
- **Stewardship:** Services must represent responsible use of school resources.

3. Selection Criteria

3.1 Mandatory Requirements

All external facilitators must:

- Hold current Garda vetting appropriate to their role with children and/or be willing to be vetted by St. Mary's Secondary School as set out in the school's vetting policy.

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- Demonstrate compliance with Children First Act 2015 and Children First National Guidance.
- Demonstrate that they possess relevant qualifications and/or significant experience in their field.
- Confirm understanding of and adherence to the school's Child Safeguarding Statement.
- Respect the school's ethos and CEIST Charter of the school.

Some facilitators may be required to provide professional indemnity and public liability insurance (minimum €6.5 million), depending on the activity being facilitated.

3.2 Educational and Ethos Suitability

Facilitators should demonstrate:

- Clear alignment with curriculum objectives (Junior Cycle/Level Two Learning Programme/Transition Year/Senior Cycle/Leaving Certificate/Leaving Certificate Applied).
- That they use age-appropriate content and methodologies that respect the wide range of backgrounds and beliefs of students and staff.
- Their experience working with children in educational settings.
- Their understanding of differentiation and inclusive practice.
- An approach consistent with the school's mission to nurture the whole person—academic, spiritual, intellectual, physical, emotional, and social development.

3.3 Professional Standards

Preference will be given to facilitators who:

- Hold recognised qualifications in education or their specialist area.
- Provide evidence of continuing professional development, if requested.
- Have established track record in second-level schools and can demonstrate this track record.
- Can provide examples of previous work/testimonials, if requested.
- Demonstrate sensitivity to diverse faith backgrounds within an inclusive Catholic school community.
- Show commitment to social justice and ethical practice.

4. Selection Process

4.1 Initial Enquiry

When approached by or considering an external facilitator, the following elements will be considered:

1. Proposal:

- Programme description and learning objectives
- Curriculum and CEIST values alignment
- Costs and duration
- Facilitator qualifications and experience

2. Verify credentials:

- Request copies of qualifications, where necessary
- Confirm current Garda vetting
- Obtain insurance certificates, where necessary
- Check professional references, where necessary

4.2 Evaluation

The Principal and relevant curriculum coordinator shall assess:

- Curriculum alignment and educational quality
- Consistency with Catholic ethos and CEIST Charter
- Risk assessment provided by facilitator
- Cost-effectiveness and responsible resource stewardship
- Accessibility and respect for dignity of all students
- Contribution to holistic student development

4.3 Approval

- The Principal will provide final approval in consultation with Board of Management, where appropriate
- A written agreement will be established outlining expectations, schedule, costs, safeguarding responsibilities, and ethos considerations
- The facilitator will be provided with relevant school policies (Child Safeguarding Statement, Code of Behaviour, Health and Safety, CEIST Charter, Mission Statement)

5. Safeguarding Requirements

5.1 Before Engagement

- Facilitator must sign declaration confirming receipt and understanding of Child Safeguarding Statement and awareness of school ethos

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- Garda vetting verification completed and recorded
- Designated Liaison Person (DLP) informed of facilitator's presence in school
- Risk assessment reviewed and approved

5.2 During Engagement

- External facilitators must never be left alone with students; school staff must remain present
- Facilitators must report any child protection concerns immediately to DLP
- Standard school supervision ratios maintained
- Sign-in/sign-out procedures must be followed at all times. This includes signing in and out in the front office and wearing a visitor lanyard.

6. Monitoring and Review

6.1 During Programme

- A member of teaching staff must observe sessions
- Assessment of educational quality, student engagement, and ethos alignment
- Any concerns addressed immediately with facilitator and/or Principal

6.2 Post-Programme Evaluation

- Teacher feedback obtained
- Student feedback gathered (age-appropriate methods)
- Assessment of learning outcomes and contribution to holistic development
- Evaluation of alignment with CEIST values
- Value-for-money review
- Decision recorded regarding future engagement

6.3 Record Keeping

Maintain records of:

- Facilitator credentials and vetting confirmation
- Signed agreements and declarations
- Attendance records
- Evaluation outcomes including ethos considerations
- Any incidents or concerns

7. Termination of Services

The school reserves the right to terminate services immediately if:

- Child protection concerns arise
- Insurance or vetting lapses
- Educational standards are not met and/or maintained
- Facilitator breaches any school policies
- Content or conduct inconsistent with CEIST values or the school's mission statement

This is not an exhaustive list. The school reserves the right to terminate such services where the Board of Management deems it necessary.

8. Roles and Responsibilities

Principal: Overall responsibility for implementation; final approval authority; guardian of school ethos.

Board of Management: Oversight of policy; approval of significant contracts; ensuring CEIST ethos maintained.

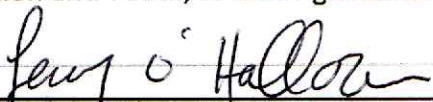
Curriculum Coordinators: Assessment of educational suitability; liaison with facilitators.

Designated Liaison Person: Oversight of safeguarding compliance.

Class Teachers: Supervision during sessions; evaluation of learning outcomes and ethos alignment.

9. Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed every two years or following significant legislative, Department of Education and Youth, or CEIST guidance changes.

Signed: 
Policy Adopted: 16th April 2026
Chairperson, Board of Management

Signed: 
Secretary, Board of Management