

Code of Conduct

Patronage in the establishment of new post-primary schools due to open in September 2017 & 2018

Please note that this Code of Conduct is MANDATORY

In this code, the term “patrons” refers to existing registered school patrons and prospective new patrons.

- Patrons agree to provide factual information in respect of the underpinning ethos of schools under their patronage.
- In describing the ethos of schools under their patronage, patrons may identify agreed and well-understood distinguishing features of that ethos. No reference to, subjective statements about, direct commentary on, or description of, schools under other forms of patronage will be made.
- Patrons agree to maintain expenditure on promotional material within overall limits established for each identified area where the new schools are to be established in 2017 and 2018. A limit of €300.00 (incl of VAT) per patron will be maintained for expenditure in each area for which a new school is to be established. Where a group of organisations is engaged in a joint application or applications, the collective expenditure of the groups should not exceed €300.00 (incl of VAT) in an individual area.

Patrons agree to provide statements of expenditure for the purpose of satisfying these requirements. Patrons should be able to produce any necessary documentation, if requested to do so by Department officials, for the purposes of verification of expenditure incurred in connection with this application process. This could include for example relevant receipts, invoices and the corresponding transactions as they appear in the organisation’s accounting and payment systems and bank account.

- Patrons may seek to directly canvass parents to establish their patronage preference.
- The role of representatives of patrons should be to provide factual public information on their form of patronage. Contentious commentary, value statements or descriptions of schools under other forms of patronage will not be made.
- While the limitation of the influence of patrons is recognised, nevertheless, it is expected that patrons will encourage schools and other groups affiliated to them to abide by the spirit of this code of conduct.

- A breach of this Code of Conduct will render the patron's application invalid and will result in their elimination from the patronage process on this occasion.

- The process is as follows:
 - An alleged breach may be brought to the attention of the Department.
 - An alleged breach will be brought to the attention of the relevant patron by the Department.
 - The relevant patron will be given an opportunity to respond and remedy the situation as appropriate.
 - Any alleged breaches and responses will be dealt with in the relevant area assessment report.
 - The New Schools Establishment Group (NSEG) will consider the matter in the context of the report.

Department of Education and Skills
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