

Diocesan Safeguarding Policy Statement

The Diocese of Ferns values and encourages the participation of young people in the 'Spirit' youth group. Their active involvement in this work can help to enhance their spiritual, social, physical and emotional development.

The diocese undertakes to do all in its power to create a safe environment for young people and to ensure their protection from neglect, physical, sexual and emotional abuse.

This is achieved by:

- * Ensuring that all Spirit Leaders are carefully recruited, selected, trained and supported.
- * Ensuring that there is adequate preparation and training in best practice guidelines.
- * Appointment of Designated Child Protection Officers for Spirit youth group.
- * Making people aware of procedures for responding to any protection concerns.
- * Having a code of conduct for all leaders and young people.

In all cases any concerns and details of incidents will be shared with the Safeguarding Co-ordinator; Colette O'Doherty (087) 9474513 and the Diocesan Designated Person: Ms Marian Stack, (085) 1055992

The welfare of the young person is paramount in all decisions, activities and programmes involving young people.

How to become a Spirit Member

Spirit Leaders will call to each of the secondary schools and application forms will be made available to all interested students to be co-signed by their parent/guardian to be returned to the following address by the closing date on the form:

Colette O'Doherty
Safeguarding Co-Ordinator
Spirit Youth Applications
Bishop's House
Summerhill
Wexford Town
Co. Wexford.

Please note:

- ◆ All Spirit members (over 16 years of age) will be Garda vetted in line with safeguarding procedures.
- ◆ Members will sign up to a Code of Conduct.
- ◆ Members will be involved in structuring and evolving the Spirit group.
- ◆ Spirit adheres to all safeguarding requirements in line with the National Board for Safeguarding Children in the Catholic Church (NBSCCC)

Application does not guarantee membership.

Spirit

ferns diocesan youth group



What is Spirit all about?



Safeguarding Office
Bishops House
Summerhill
Wexford
Tel: (053) 9174972

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What is Spirit?

'Spirit' is a dynamic, exciting and motivational youth group aimed at Transition Year Students. The framework of the group is devised to encourage team work, positive peer support, friendship and a supportive value ethos.

This will be achieved through the following:

- * Weekly meetings
- * Community workgroups
- * Inspirational guest speakers
- * Trips and outings
- * Personal & Spiritual Development Programme
- * Radio programming
- * Working with the Opera and local theatre
- * and much, much more.

How does youth group work?

- ◇ The Spirit youth group leaders will invite applications from Transition Year students through schools.
- ◇ Each leader and youth member is assigned a workgroup of interest to them.
- ◇ During the year the member will give an hour a week to a workgroup as well as meeting once a week as a full group to allow for updates on the workgroups, as well as planning for other events.
- ◇ The group will run from October to June outside of school hours.

Spirit Activities

Weekly Meetings

All leaders and members will meet once a week to discuss their workgroups, future guest speakers, support of social issues whilst also enabling them to get to know each other.

Community Workgroups

- Animal Welfare
- Meals on Wheels
- Wexford Branch of the Special Olympics
- Radio Programming
- Activities with the Elderly
- National Opera Theatre
- Environmental Projects
- Able Disable

Personal & Spiritual Development Course

10 week course covering interpersonal communication techniques, self-image, relationships, peer support and creativity. This course has a proven track record in strengthening friendships, building positive self-image and self-awareness, trust and self-confidence. The course has a spiritual based foundation which provides a deeper and more meaningful relationship within the journey of life.

Radio Programming

Members will get a chance to prepare and present programmes which will be aired on South East Radio.

Trips & Outings

There will be outings to places of inspiration both locally and outside of the Diocese e.g. beaches, local walks, etc.

Guest Speakers

Inspirational speakers will be invited to tell their stories.

Spirit Leaders

- ◆ Spirit Leaders will be made up of clergy, religious and lay people.
- ◆ Leaders will be Garda vetted and fulfil all safeguarding requirements.
- ◆ Each workgroup will be supervised by leaders who will support and account for its members.
- ◆ Leaders will be fully trained and adhere to a stringent code of conduct.
- ◆ The role of leaders will be to support and enable Spirit members to fully benefit from their participation in the group.
- ◆ Two Leaders will be given the role as Designated Persons whose role will be to hear any concerns/issues from its members.
- ◆ The number of leaders will be in line with the supervisory requirements of the Diocesan Safeguarding Policy.

Presentation of Certificates

At the end of their year with Spirit, all members will receive a Certificate of Membership during a formal Presentation Ceremony which will be attended by local dignitaries, representative from the workgroups, parents, and key note speakers.

Future employers value a CV that includes participation in initiatives such as Spirit as it indicates to the employer qualities such as teamwork, value system, participation in the community and personal initiative, to name but a few.

After the year, it is hoped that each member will have grown emotionally, spiritually and socially,