

<b>SET Board Document Record</b>	
<b>Title:</b>	<b>Policy on Selection and Recruitment of Trustee Nominees for School Boards of Management</b>
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<b>Purpose of Draft:</b>	<b>For BoD scrutiny</b>
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<b>Proposed next stage</b>	<b>Adoption by Incorporal Meeting</b>

## **SPIRITAN EDUCATION TRUST**

### **Policy on Selection and Recruitment of Trustee Nominees for School Boards of Management**

#### **Context and Norms**

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The function of a Board of Management is to manage the school on behalf of the Patron.

The **Education Act 1998** requires the Board of Management to

uphold, and be accountable to the Patron (Trustees) for so upholding, the characteristic spirit of the school, as determined by the cultural, educational, moral, religious, social, linguistic and spiritual values and traditions which inform and are characteristic of the objectives and conduct of the school ... (EDA S15(2)(b))

The **Articles of Management for Catholic Secondary Schools** state:

the school shall be conducted in accordance with the religious and educational philosophy of the Trustees as defined in Schedule Two which is attached to the Articles of Management. (AOM 2c)

Through the AOM, the Trustees devolve their powers to the Board of Management, which now undertakes responsibility for the conduct, management and financial administration of the school, in accordance with the ethos of the Trustees and under their general supervision and control (AOM 2)

The Board of Management is required by the Education Act 1998 to “consult with and keep the Patron (Trustees) informed of decisions and proposals of the Board” (EDA S15 (2))

The AOM state that the term of the office of an outgoing Board expires on the 15th October in the third year after the Board was constituted (AOM 3(e)). The new Board assumes its duties on 15th October.

The BOM consists of 8 persons, made up as follows: (AOM 3(a))

- Four members nominated by the Trustees of the School one of whom is appointed by the Trustees as Chairperson of the Board of Management
- Two parents/legal guardians of children currently attending the school, elected by parents/legal guardians whose children also currently attend the school;
- Two permanent, full-time teachers, elected by their permanent, full-time teaching colleagues.

Following their nomination or election, all eight members of the Board are appointed by the Trustees. (AOM 3(a) and EDA S14 (4)). Trustees, Parents and Teachers should take account of gender balance when nominating or electing members of the Board. The responsibilities of the Board of Management are many and varied and besides being nominees of Trustees or elected by Teachers and Parents/Guardians, and with gender balance in mind, the skills required for an effective Board of Management ought to be taken into account in recruiting members.

### Criteria for Selection of Trustee Nominees

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For the Spiritan Education Trust the following **criteria** for the recruitment of Trustee Nominees, including the selection of a Chairperson for a School Board of Management, should include:

- A person who has a commitment to Gospel Values and /or Catholic Education and who is willing to uphold the “Spiritan characteristic spirit” (7 core values) in their work on the Board.
- A person with a particular talent/skill/experience relevant to the needs of the Board/School, e.g. Financial Skills, Educational Skills, Business Management Skills, Leadership Skills, Human Resources Skills, Communication Skills/PR Skills, Childcare, Health & Safety or Legal Skills.

The **qualities** one might look for in a person for a Board of Management are:

- Interest in being on a Board — time commitment, interest in the type of work it entails;
- Commitment – attendance at Board meetings, preparatory time before the Board meetings, participation in discussions, willingness to be on sub-committees, willingness to attend initial and further training with relevant bodies;
- Ability to maintain confidentiality and an understanding that the Board is a “body corporate”.

### Procedure for Appointment of Trustee Nominees for Boards of Management

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1: Various groups should be asked for suggestions of suitable people of both genders, with a view to forming an initial panel of names.

(a) These groups include, but are not confined to:

Members of the SET Board of Directors, the Spiritan Congregation, the current and past Chairpersons and Trustee Nominees of our Boards, the past and present Principals/Deputy Principals of our schools, as well as other suitable sources.

(b) It is very important that the names of persons being proposed are not themselves approached in advance by those proposing their names.

(c) The skills and qualities outlined above are highlighted to those being asked for suggested names.

2: The names and background data of suggested people (on an on-going basis/as they are received) will be brought to the Board of Directors, proposed by the Education Committee, for approval, before being placed on the panel.

3: When a casual vacancy on a Board of Management arises, or when the end of the three-year term is approaching, a person (a Director, or the Executive Officer) will be requested to make the initial approach to gauge the general interest of one or other panel person to serve on such a Board.

(a) If the panel person indicates initial interest, then one or two people (the Chairperson of the SET Board, and/or another Director who may come from the Education Committee, and/or the Executive Officer) will meet with the panel person to discuss the matter further.

(b) At this meeting, the panel person will be given information (verbal and written) on Spiritan Ethos; an outline of the school in question with written relevant, supporting documentation; an outline of the role of the Board of Management, and the training available; and an outline of the Spiritan Education Trust and its role and functions.

(c) The Panel person will be engaged in a discussion to further assess their suitability and interest.

4: If both parties are satisfied, the panel name will be brought to the Board of Directors for ratification, either by the Education Committee or by the Chairperson. A formal letter of appointment to the Board of Management is then made.

If the appointment being made is to fill a casual vacancy, the appointment will have to be made efficiently and the Chairperson of the Board of Management ought to be kept informed of progress.

5: If the appointment is due to the end of term of a Board, some cognisance ought to be given to “continuity” for the next term, but a policy of not more than two terms should be respected, as reflecting best practice. However, an exception can be made to appoint to a third term, if, for example, one or two of those terms is spent as Chairperson, or if Board of Management would benefit from the particular skills and/or presence of an individual Trustee Nominee. It should be rare that a Chairperson be appointed for a third term.

6: It is a statutory duty of the Board of Directors to appoint all members of the Board of Management of a school. As a number of trustee nominees are put in place over the summer months when the Board of Directors does not meet, one of two methods of appointment of Trustee Nominees can be used:

(a) Through a corporeal meeting of the Education Committee (with at least two Directors in attendance), chaired by the Chairperson or Deputy-Chairperson of the Directors, who formally made the necessary appointments. These are later ratified by the Board of Directors at its next ordinary or extraordinary meeting;

(b) Through an incorporeal meeting of the Board of Directors set up by the Chairperson of the Directors. Data Protection sensitivities require that the no

more than the name of a prospective Nominee and the school Board to which he or she is being proposed is given in the email. The incorporeal meeting is deemed to have been valid if responses (other than “out of office” notices) are received by the deadline given, from at least the minimum number of Directors required to form a quorum (currently, this number is set at five).

(c) The Chairperson or Deputy-Chairperson must be involved in either process.

7: Communication of the appointment is given to the Principal/Secretary to the Board of Management, and to the Spiritan Education Trust Education Office personnel (if this person is different to the Executive Officer).

8: The overall responsibility for guiding this process rests with the Education Committee, whose responsibility it is to ensure that the Board of Directors is party to decisions being made.