

School of the Holy Spirit- School Leavers Policy

We set out below the *Guidelines and Procedures for Students Leaving School of the Holy Spirit to attend adult services.*

School of the Holy Spirit places great emphasis on a smooth transition for students from school to adult services.

In the last two years of the students' time in School of the Holy Spirit, the student's parents will be contacted and made aware of the school leavers procedure.

A liaison process will be established between the Occupational Guidance Officer (HSE), the student and their parents. This process will begin with information-sharing sessions between all parties concerned.

Parents are invited to an information night held by the HSE. All service providers and the Occupational Guidance Officer give a presentation. There is an opportunity for informal meetings. After this information night, parents are advised to visit with their son/daughter any service that interests them.

Throughout the student's time in the School Leavers programme, familiarity with the various services is enhanced for the students through the various class informal visits during the last two / three years of school. This is also helped by our past school leavers coffee morning in June.

The school also collaborates with external support "The Ability Project" to enhance transition planning and community link development. The Ability Project will maintain informal contact with families following transition to support continuity during the initial adjustment period, usually until the following March of their first year post school.

In 6th Year, the HSE Occupational Guidance Officer will carry out profiling meetings in the school with parents/guardians, the class teacher and the student. The student's voice remains central to this process.

Following on from these the Occupational Guidance Officer will suggest appropriate placements. Arrangements will be made for sampling in relevant services. The sampling experience and level of support provided will differ for each student depending on individual needs, placement chosen and ability to engage meaningfully in the setting. Special Needs Assistant support will be arranged for these sampling periods for as long as deemed necessary. Where appropriate and safe, students may be encouraged to attend part of the second sampling period with increased independence. Usually students sample two choices of 1 week each. The students' experience is evaluated taking all relevant parties' opinions/advice, and most importantly the student's views, into account.

During their final year, students will develop a School Leavers Communication Passport. This is a live working document that evolves throughout the transition process. It outlines the student's strengths, communication style, support needs, sensory preferences, successful strategies and personal goals. The Passport forms part of the formal handover to adult services. The Communication Passport remains a live document and, with the student's informed consent, may continue to be used within adult services to support ongoing communication and shared understanding between the young person, their family and service providers.

In the final term, students will be supported to reflect on their senior cycle journey, review sampling experiences and make an informed decision regarding their post-school placement.

Transition is recognised as a significant milestone. Students will participate in a school and family celebration event marking their time in the school community. This graduation event will take place in June.

School of the Holy Spirit acknowledges that this is a very anxious time for the student and their family. The graduating class teacher is available at any time to address any concerns that may arise from the student and their family. Past students from School of the Holy Spirit have taken up successful placements in various HSE services in Kilkenny.