



# An Garda Síochána

## Policy Document

### Garda Schools Programme

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<b>Approved by</b>	Garda Executive
<b>Introduced by</b>	HQ Directive 023/2026
<b>Policy Owner</b>	Assistant Commissioner, Roads Policing & Community Engagement

## 1. Purpose

The Garda Schools Programme is a partnership programme between An Garda Síochána and the Department of Education. The Garda Schools Programme is an important tool for engagement with children and young people in the area of community safety and crime prevention. The Garda Schools Programme affords the organisation an opportunity to engage with children and young people to help An Garda Síochána enhance engagement, trust and confidence of communities.

The objectives of the programme are to:

- Increase accessibility of An Garda Síochána to children, teachers and the community;
- Strengthen relationships between Garda personnel and the community;
- Give children an understanding of the consequences of criminal behaviour;
- Reduce the level of offending behaviour by early engagement and intervention;
- Increase the wellbeing of children through crime prevention awareness and advice;
- Enhance young people's appreciation of the need to be caring and law abiding citizens; and
- Promote road safety awareness among children and young people.

The existing programme, which commenced in 1991, has been updated and the scope of the programme has been extended to incorporate all school ages in early years, primary and post-primary education.

This policy introduces the Garda Early Years Programme which has been developed to allow Gardaí to further engage with children from a young age. This programme will be delivered over three sessions, preschool, junior infants and senior infants. The minimum number of annual visits to primary and post-primary schools has been extended from five to eight visits for primary school and six visits over junior and senior cycle for post-primary.

This policy will ensure a consistent and professional national approach to engagement with children and young people in early years, primary and post-primary education.

## 2. Scope and Compliance

Compliance with this document and all associated documentation is mandatory for all An Garda Síochána personnel as defined by Section 44 of the [Policing, Security and Community Safety Act, 2024](#). This includes Garda Trainees, other persons seconded to An Garda Síochána and Police Officers from the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI) and in accordance with Sections 53, 93 and 94 of the [Policing, Security and Community Safety Act, 2024](#) respectively.

## 3. Policy Statement

An Garda Síochána fully supports and actively implements the Garda Schools Programme. The principles of the Garda Schools Programme centre on enhancing community safety and positive relationships by providing education and awareness to primary and post-primary students on topics like road safety, personal safety, crime prevention, online safety, responsible online behaviour and the role of An Garda Síochána.

The Garda Schools Programme is delivered in schools by Community Policing Gardaí, who are trained and equipped with all necessary educational material.

## 4. Legal & Human Rights Screening

This document has been Legal and Human Rights screened in terms of the respective obligations placed on An Garda Síochána for the subject area concerned.

## 5. Ethical Standards & Commitments

An Garda Síochána Personnel must observe and adhere to the standards and commitments set out in the [Code of Ethics for An Garda Síochána](#) and uphold and promote this Code throughout the organisation.

## 6. Post-Implementation Review

This document and all associated documentation will be reviewed twelve months from its date of effect and every three years thereafter or as appropriate.

## 7. Disclaimer

This document is not intended to, nor does it represent legal advice to be relied upon in respect of the subject matter contained herein. This document should not be used as a substitute for professional legal advice.

## 8. Data Protection

All Garda Personnel will process personal data for legitimate business purposes only and in line with a clearly defined lawful basis under the [General Data Protection Regulation \(\(EU\) 2016/679\)](#) and/or [Data Protection Acts 1988-2018](#), as applicable. All necessary measures will be put in place to ensure the personal data is kept safe and secure and only authorised personnel shall have access to personal data. Only relevant personal data will be processed, and will not be retained for longer than is necessary. All personnel are required to ensure that individual's data protection rights are adhered to and to identify and mitigate against any suspected data breaches.