



Scoil Chaoimhín Naofa

St. Kevin's Primary School

Gleann dá Loch, Co. Chill Mhantáin
Glendalough, Co. Wicklow
Tel: (0404) 45460

Religious Education Policy

Introductory Statement

Scoil Chaoimhín Naofa is a Catholic school under the patronage of the Catholic Archbishop of Dublin. The school models and promotes a philosophy inspired by belief in God and traditional Catholic values. We promote religious education for the pupils in accordance with the doctrines, practices and ethos of the Catholic Church. This school enrolls pupils of other faiths or no faith in the school, subject to the enrolment criteria, and respects their beliefs and practices in accordance with the school ethos of inclusivity. This policy was formulated by the Board of Management, principal and teachers.

The Catholic Church And Primary Education

Relationship to school ethos

The Schedule for the Catholic School is displayed in our reception area, as is our ethos statement and mission statement. Our school promotes Religious Education for the pupils in accordance with the doctrines, practices and traditions of the Catholic Church and promotes the formation of the pupils in the Catholic Faith. A Catholic ethos permeates the school and the life of the school. There is a spirit of prayer in the school. Children of all faiths are encouraged to pray to God as they are taught by their parents to do so at home. Children of no faith are encouraged to respect prayer time and to use the quiet time for reflection. Arrangements are made within each class to accommodate children who do not take part in the religious education programme. The staff and children learn about other religions through reading and listening to their peers.

The spiritual nourishment of teachers is understood by the Board of Management to be an integral part of the religious education programme undertaken by the school. Prayer and reflection before staff meetings and Board of Management meetings provide opportunities for staff to pray together. Teachers are supported in the teaching of Religious Education at staff meetings and through the sharing of resources and planning guidelines.

Aim Of Religious Education Policy

At Scoil Chaoimhín Naofa we follow the aims of the schedule for Catholic schools that state 'A Roman Catholic school (which is established in connection with the Minister) aims at promoting the full and harmonious development of all aspects of the person of the pupil: intellectual, physical, cultural, moral and spiritual, including a living relationship with God and with other people. The school models and promotes a philosophy of life inspired by belief in God and in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. The Catholic school provides religious education for the pupils in accordance with the doctrines, practices and tradition of the Roman Catholic Church and promotes the formation of the pupils in the Catholic Faith.'

GENERAL INFORMATION

a) Diocesan Information

- Diocese: Dublin
- Archbishop: Dermot Farrell
- Director of Education: Msgr. Dan O' Connor

b) Parish Information

- Parish: St. Kevin's
 - Parish Priest: Fr. John Greene
 - Chairperson of Pastoral Council: Lucy Devitt
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c) **School Information**

- Patron of School: Catholic Dublin Diocese
- Name of Chaplain: Fr. John Greene
- Board of Management members: Paul Carter, Fr. John Greene, Caroline McCoy, Pat Reid, Pádraig Murphy, Rebecca Dunne, Betty Kenny and James Traynor
- Religious Education Coordinator: Marian Farrell

Materials

The *Catholic Preschool and Primary Religious Education Curriculum for Ireland* is the foundation document for all Religious Education and this guides the planning of Religious Education in our school.

Main Programmes:

The *Grow in Love* programme has been adopted for use in all classes: Each teacher has the programme resources: Teacher handbook, CD, posters, interactive resources and workbook. Children engage with the programme both at school and at home. *Grow in Love* programme Information for parents is available on our school website.

The *Grow in Love* programme is in use in the Senior classes. Each teacher has the programme resources: Teacher handbook, CD, DVD, posters, textbook, workbook and Home Link pages. Each child has a copy of the textbook. Teachers are encouraged to send the Home Link pages home as and when relevant to work being covered.

The Religious Education programme is differentiated to meet the special education needs of the pupils in our school.

Additional Resources:

The school has a set of Bibles e.g. Collins *Contemporary English Version*.

The bibles are stored in the book rental room and teachers can take them as required.

Sacred Spaces:

There is a central school sacred space in the school reception area. In the sacred space there is a candle, cross, holy water, age appropriate bible, fabric/ribbon (colour changes to match liturgical seasons) and posters which change to reflect a seasonal theme e.g. picture of St. Kevin, blessing for start of school year, Christmas, Easter etc. Other seasonal items are also placed in the school sacred space e.g. advent wreath.

Each class also has a sacred space. Each teacher is given key items for their sacred space: bible, cross, holy water, statue of Mary and cloths for each liturgical colour.

Teachers are encouraged to add other items to the sacred space to reflect topics being learned and to encourage children to contribute to the prayer space.

There is a storage area for Religious Education resources in the general store room.

Prayer

Prayers recited throughout the day in classrooms include:

The Sign of the Cross

Morning Prayer

Evening Prayer

Grace Before Meal

Grace after Meals

Other prayers said in class include:

Our Father

Hail Mary

Glory be to the Father

The whole school mediates for five minutes at 12:00pm each day.

We pray together as a school at monthly assemblies, occasional prayer services and school Masses. We invite family and community members to join us in prayer at school Masses, Christmas nativity dramas / carol services and at our annual Grandparents' Day prayer service.

Children are led in different types of prayer: aloud, silent and with actions / movement. Both formal and spontaneous prayers are encouraged. A prayerful atmosphere is created in the classroom and meditation room through the use of posture guidance, discussion on respect, awareness of class sacred space etc. Teachers take direction from the class Religion programme for a programme of formal prayers to be taught throughout the year.

Doctrine

- Children learn the doctrine from the *Grow in Love* programme.
- Senior classes study the traditional format Ten Commandments.

Sacramental Preparation

Preparation for the sacraments begins in Junior Infants and continues throughout the school. The whole school celebrates the specific sacraments of Confirmation and First Communion. Pupils in 2nd and 5th/6th class attend Mass with the community in the local church in preparation for their specific Sacrament.

Sacrament of Confession and Sacrament of First Holy Communion

Children in 2nd class make their First Confession (second term) and Communion (usually third term) in St. Kevin's church. Children are thoroughly prepared in all aspects of this Sacrament by the individual class teacher in keeping with the Catholic ethos of the school. Teachers follow the *Grow in Love* guidelines on preparing children for the Sacraments. Children keep a record of their Sacramental preparation e.g. in the form of a scrapbook. 2nd class children participate in the C.O.T.E. (Children of the Eucharist) eucharistic adoration programme. Parents of children preparing for First Holy Communion are invited to participate in the 'Do This in Memory of Me' programme facilitated by the parish team. Meetings are held during the liturgical year which parents are invited to attend.

Sacrament of Confirmation

Preparation for the Sacrament of Confirmation takes place every second year. 5th and 6th class pupils celebrate the Service of Light and Confirmation in St. Kevin's church. They are prepared thoroughly in all aspects of these sacraments by the individual class teachers in keeping with the Catholic ethos of the school. Teachers currently follow the *Grow in Love* programme on preparing children for the Sacraments. Children keep a record of their Sacramental preparation e.g. in the form of a scrapbook. Parents of children preparing for Confirmation are invited to participate in the *You Shall Be My Witnesses* programme. Confirmation pupils attend a Confirmation retreat/pilgrim walk in the second term. Children also go to confession before making their Confirmation..

As space in the church is limited, children's immediate family members are accommodated at Sacramental services. Where there is an issue with space, every effort is made to accommodate as many as possible in a fair way. Families are notified well in advance of the arrangements in each specific year.

Children and parents follow the school policy on money and gifts.

Implementation Of Religious Education Throughout The School Year

Each class timetable includes half an hour a day for Religious Education.

All teachers in the school have a recognised Certificate in Religious Studies.

Religious education is integrated with all aspects of the curriculum especially the Arts, English, Gaeilge and SPHE. Morning and evening prayers are recited in all classes with specific prayers chosen by the class teacher. A variety of feast days are celebrated in school such as Christmas, Easter, Lent, Shrove Tuesday, Ash Wednesday, St. Brigid's Day, St. Patrick's Day and St. Kevin's Day.

The school chaplain, Fr. John Greene is very supportive to the school and he is a welcome visitor to all classes.

Missionary awareness and charity support is actively encouraged in Scoil Chaoimhín Naofa. Each advent we participate in the Team Hope Shoebox Appeal. At Christmas time children bring in food items for St. Vincent De Paul Hampers. The school takes part in Trócaire's Lenten campaign by engaging with the Lenten message and collecting in their Trócaire boxes. We also respond to other charity appeals and missionary projects.

Teachers participate in in-service training in Religious Education whenever it is available.

All staff and BOM members are invited by email to attend the annual School Mass organised by the Archdiocese.

Our school participates in Catholic Schools' Week. Each class engages with the recommended lessons. Posters are displayed in the reception area sacred space. We hold a whole school prayer service on Grandparents Day where we celebrate and give thanks for our grandparents as well as praying around the theme of Catholic Schools' Week. Parents and grandparents are invited to attend.

Partners In Religious Education

Home/School

Parents are encouraged to support their child's religious education through the following:

- prayer at home
- homework
- parent/teacher meetings
- sacrament preparation meetings
- Do This in Memory and You Shall Be My Witnesses Sacramental programme
- Sacrament celebrations
- 1st class parents prepare the Communion Reception in school
- School Masses
- joining community at Mass on holy days of obligation
- Catholic Schools Week prayer service
- supporting the Catholic ethos of the school
- Information and prayers on our school website with links to www.education.dublindiocese.ie

School/Parish

The following programmes are implemented in our parish:

- *Do This in Memory* programme for First Holy Communion and *You Shall Be My Witnesses* programme for Confirmation organised by parents, parish priest and teachers. Meetings are held to organise Masses and services. These programmes are coordinated by the parish office in consultation with the different partners.
- School Masses, prayer services and confession – planned by priest, school and parents

Pupils Of Other Faiths And None

Pupils of other faiths are very welcome at Scoil Chaoimhín Naofa. When they enrol it is clearly stated that they are enrolling in a school with a Catholic ethos and that this ethos permeates the whole school day. Children are not removed from class during the religion lesson but can work at other curricular tasks if this is the parents' wish. Children of other faiths and their families are most welcome to join their class at any Sacramental or liturgical celebration.

Roles & Responsibilities

Staff

- Deliver Religious Education programme
 - Cooperate with Chaplain/Parish and diocesan advisers
 - Avail of In-Service support
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- Actively support the ethos of the school

Parents

- Engage with Religion homework
- Support the school during times of sacramental preparation
- Avail of support at information meetings throughout the year
- Actively support the ethos of the school

Religious Education Co-ordinator:

- Teachers volunteer to take responsibility for the coordination of different subject areas and aspects of school life. The Religious Education co-ordinator is agreed in this way at a staff meeting. His/her responsibilities are:
 - Facilitate the formulation of the Religious Education Policy.
 - Avail of the resources on www.education.dublindiocese.ie
 - Facilitate the prayer life of the school throughout the liturgical year e.g. prayer at assemblies, special feast days etc...
 - Encourage the use of sacred spaces in classrooms and in school common areas, and to ensure the prominence of religious symbols and icons.
 - Distribute resources throughout the Liturgical Year.
 - Coordinate *Catholics Schools Week* activities.
 - Provide input on religious education at staff meetings, in order to maintain a conscious profile of the subject.
 - Facilitate links with parish personnel
 - Liaise with Diocesan Advisers

Principal

- Overall responsibility for maintaining and strengthening the Catholic ethos in the school.
- Facilitate supportive interaction between all parties in implementing the programme.
- Facilitate the formulation of the Religious Education Policy.
- Facilitate the prayer life of the school throughout the liturgical year, e.g. prayer at assemblies, special feast days etc...
- Provide input on religious education at staff meetings, in order to maintain a conscious profile of the subject.
- Facilitate links with parish personnel.
- Enable parents to take an active role in the religious education and formation of their children.
- Liaise with Diocesan Adviser.

Success Criteria:

- An acknowledged sense of God, Faith, prayer and worship within the school community
- Respect for all within the school community
- Parental interest in Religious Education
- Recognisable links between home, school and parish
- An outward-looking care for those less fortunate in society.

Review

This policy will be reviewed every two years or as issues arise.

Ratification & Communication

The Religious Education Policy will be presented to the Board of Management at a meeting on 25th October 2016 and was last reviewed in October 2022

Mr. Paul Carter BOM:

Date:
