



Avoca National School S. N. PHÁDRAIG NAOFA

**Scoil Náisiúnta Phádraig Naofa,
Avoca,
Co. Wicklow.
Roll No 18198A**

Religious Education Policy

Introduction:

Scoil N. Phádraig 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.

Rationale:

This policy has been implemented in response to the necessity to accommodate the likely influx of 'new Irish' of other faiths into the school community over the coming years.

Relationship to school ethos:

This school enrolls pupils of the faiths or no faith in the school subject to full enrolment criteria and respects their beliefs and practices in accordance with the school ethos of inclusivity. Our vision motto is 'Tobar an Léinn and we actively encourage all in our school community to encourage and support each other positively.

Aim of Religious Education Policy

At Scoil N. Phádraig 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: Archbishop Diarmuid Martin

Director of Education: Anne Mc Donagh

Diocesan Advisers: Karen Brady

b) Parish Information

Parish: Avoca

Parish Priest: Fr B. McKittrick

Teacher input:

In this school the following areas are covered;

- . In-service for Grow In Love
- . Study of Grow In Love Teachers Guide
- . Prayer Services

Materials

The Board of Management and teachers have adopted the Grow In Love programme approved and recommended by the Irish hierarchy for use in Catholic schools. A full outline of the religious programme can be found at;

<http://www.education.dublindiocese.ie>

All teachers have a Grow in Love kit for their class. All classes use a religion copy as well as other religious materials from the diocesan website. Confirmation pupils use worksheets from the Confirmation workbook from Veritas.

See Appendix 1 for Useful Websites.

School Procedures:

Every child is welcome into the school having satisfied enrolment procedures, but the school cannot undertake to educate children of other faiths in their own faith. The Board of Management and teachers have adopted the Grow In Love programme approved and recommended by the Irish hierarchy for use in Catholic schools. This programme is delivered each day for the recommended 30 minutes. The programme is taught to each class. All Catholic feasts are celebrated

- Christmas – tree and cribs, Christmas Stories,
- Feast of St. Brigid – making traditional crosses
- Feast of St. Patrick – depiction of story and shamrock, St. Patrick's Day Cards, entry in St. Patrick's Day 'Windows of the World'
- Lent – Symbols of repentance, visit of local clergy to school to school to distribute ashes
- Easter – Easter cards, story of the death of Jesus and resurrection, artwork and workbooks
- Observance of Holy Days of Obligation
- Family masses throughout the year

Sacred Space and Symbols

Each classroom has a Sacred Space set up which is used during Prayer services, daily prayers and moments of reflection. This space also displays the children's work on current themes of the 'Grow In Love' programme and changes throughout the Liturgical Year. At Christmas an Advent wreath and crib are displayed in the Welcome Area.

Doctrine

Prayers recited throughout the day include;

- The Sign of the Cross
- Morning Prayer
- Evening Prayer
- Grace Before Meal
- Grace after Meals
- Our Father
- Hail Mary
- Glory be to the Father

(Senior classes will recite prayers in Irish.)

Special emphasis is put on hymns for Christmas and liturgical & sacramental ceremonies.

Suggested songs and hymns include;

2nd class

- Connected
- Circle of Friends
- How Lucky We Are!
- The Twelve Tribes
- Silent Night
- Being Connected
- The Way To Be
- I'm Sorry God
- Mary Our Mother
- Listen
- The Lords Prayer
- Come Holy Spirit
- Happy in the Presence
- My Shepherd is the Lord
- This is the Day
- We Come to You Lord Jesus
- Holy Holy
- Love
- Let the Children Come
- Eat this Bread
- Lets All Join Together

3rd/4th class

- Communion Choir
- Happy in the presence of the lord
- My Shepherd is the Lord
- This is the Day
- Holy Holy
- We come to you Lord Jesus
- Love
- Let the Children Come
- Eat This Bread
- Lets All Join Together

5th/6th class

- Fan the Flame

- The Cloud's Veil
- Song of Confirmation
- Come Holy Spirit
- Confirm Us Today
- Christ Be Our Light
- Today & From Now On
- Be Not Afraid

Communion choir -

see relevant hymns above

- Connected
- Lamb of God
- Gloria
- Alleluia
- This is the day
- Wonderfully made
- Circle of Friends

Christmas hymns

- Away in a Manger
- Carol of the Journey
- Mary will you take this baby boy
- Silent Night
- Joy to the World
- Hark the Herald Angel
- The First Noel

Liturgical Celebrations:

Highlights of the liturgical year are embraced and celebrated including advent, Christmas, Lent, the Triduum & Easter. Children receive ashes in school each Ash Wednesday from the school chaplain. The local priest visits the school on a regular basis and celebrates a number of Masses with the 6th class throughout the year. A nativity prayer service is held each year before our Christmas Concert. Parents are invited to participate.

Teachers are invited to an annual Diocesan to bless the beginning of the school year.

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 each year. Pupils in 2nd and 6th classes 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 and Communion in St. Patrick's Church, Avoca. Children are thoroughly prepared in all aspects of this sacrament by the individual class teacher in keeping with the Catholic ethos of the school. 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 coordinator. Meetings are held during the liturgical year which parents are invited to attend.

Sacrament of Confirmation

6th class pupils celebrate the Service of Light and Confirmation in St. Patrick's Church. Children are prepared thoroughly in all aspects of these sacraments are held during the liturgical year which parents are invited to attend. All 6th class pupils attend a Confirmation retreat in the third term organised by the parish priest. The priest also arranges confession for 6th class pupils in the school before Confirmation.

Implementation of Religious Education throughout the school year:

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 and our patron saint, St. Patrick.

All staff support the class teacher of each sacrament whether it is assisting in art work, supervising trips to the church, preparing booklets, practising prayers & hymns, preparing the school choir and supporting the teacher with questions and queries. Each sacrament is a whole school celebration and most staff attend the actual sacrament celebration in the church

Missionary awareness and charity support is actively encouraged in Scoil Náisiunta Phadraig Naofa. At the end of each term we hold non uniform days and donations for this are given to nominated charities. We also participate in a Jersey Day for GOAL.

A school retreat takes place each year for 6th class pupils. This is organized by the parish and takes place in Glendalough. Staff and BOM members attend events in Dublin city such as Child Protection training and other advisory evenings.

The local priest visits the school regularly. No specific arrangements are in place as the parish priests are very busy and come when they have a free moment. He visits all classes but spends additional time with the sacrament classes.

Partners in Religious Education:

Home/School

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

- prayer at home
- homework
- curriculum meeting at beginning of the school year
- parent/teacher meetings
- sacrament preparation meetings
- sacrament celebrations
- 1st class parents prepare the Communion Reception in school
- supporting the Catholic ethos of the school

School/Parish

The following programmes are implemented in our parish;

- Baptismal programme
- Do this in memory programme

The two school linked programmes are coordinated by the local priest who liaises with parents through 2/3 parent reps and the class teacher & Principal. A number of parish based masses are held throughout the year which are coordinated by the parent reps.

Pupils of Other Religious Traditions:

Pupils of other faiths are very welcome at Scoil N. Phadraig Naofa. When they enroll it is clearly stated that they are enrolling in a school with a strong Catholic ethos and that this ethos of caring and consideration for others permeates all in the community. Alternate arrangements are discussed and agreed upon. Children of other faiths and their families are most welcome to join their class at any sacramental or liturgical celebration.

Roles and Responsibilities:

Staff

- Deliver the 'Grow In Love' Programme
- Cooperate with local priest and diocesan advisers
- Avail of In-Service support
- Actively support the ethos of the school

Parents

- Support the school during times of sacramental preparation and assist at home with Religious Education homework
- Avail of support at information meetings throughout the year
- Actively support the ethos of the school

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...
- Encourage the use of sacred spaces in classrooms and in school common areas, and to ensure the prominence of religious symbols and icons.
- Provide input on religious education at staff meetings, in order to maintain a conscious profile of the subject
- Facilitate links with chaplains and parish personnel
- Enable parents to take an active role in the religious education and formation of their children, e.g. use of home links in Grow In Love
- Liaise with Diocesan Advisers
- Distribute resources, e.g. Lenten and Advent resources, Bible Society material, Trócaire boxes etc

Success Criteria:

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

Ratification and Review:

This policy will be reviewed every three years or as issues arise. This policy was most recently ratified at a Board of Management meeting on_____

Marian Canavan (Chairperson) Mary Cahill (Principal)

APPENDIX 1

USEFUL WEBSITES

- <http://www.dublindiocese.ie> – the website for the Archdiocese of Dublin contains a comprehensive section on Liturgical Resources with materials available in both English and Irish
- <http://www.ress.ie> – Religious Education Support Service
- <http://www.antobar.ie> – a religious education resources site compiled by An Tobar, Coláiste Mhuire, Marino Institute of Education, Dublin
- <http://www.glencree.ie> – for information on the Glencree Centre for Peace Education Programme
- <http://www.theresite.org.uk> – an extensive range of resources relevant to religious education
- <http://www.interfaithcalendar.org> – a listing of all the major religious events and dates
- <http://www.adherents.com> – up-to-date statistics about numbers and distribution of major religions
- <http://www.faitharts.ie> – arts resources for religious education in Catholic schools in Ireland
- <http://www.religion-online.org> – a collection of essays and books on topics of theology by reputable scholars
- <http://www.cpsma.ie> – Catholic Primary School Management Association
- <http://wellsprings.materdei.ie> – a programme to deepen the awareness and appreciation of the identity and ethos of Catholic primary schools
- <http://www.catholicireland.net> – a registered charity set up to promote and support the work of the Catholic Church in Ireland and abroad on the World Wide Web
- <http://www.catholiceducation-ni.com> – Northern Ireland Commission for Catholic Education
- <http://www.staffroom.ie> – advertises posts for principals and teachers. Supported by CPSMA and the Irish Episcopal Conference
- <http://www.ceist.ie> – the trustee body for the voluntary secondary schools of five religious congregations
- <http://www.lecheiletrust.ie> – the Le Chéile Trust represents the educational responsibilities of twelve religious congregations
- <http://www.desplaces.ie> – represents the educational association of the Congregation of the Holy Spirit (Spiritans)
- <http://www.loreto.ie/education> – represents the educational responsibilities of the Loreto Sisters