



Religious Education Policy

This policy was written in consultation with the staff, parent's association and the Board of Management of Scoil Chualann in September 2018.

Aims

- To support parents in nurturing and developing their children's faith
- To support school staff in teaching Religious Education effectively
- To affirm that the ethos of the school is built on Gospel values
- To develop a whole school approach to the teaching of Religion

General Information

Scoil Chualann is an All Irish school with a Catholic ethos. Diarmaid Martin, Archbishop of Dublin is our patron. Queen of Peace Church is adjacent to the school. We celebrate the sacraments in this Church. We are supported by the Parish but at present there is no priest available to administer the sacraments through the medium of Irish.

It is the parents who decide to present their children for the Sacraments.

We do not have a school chaplain at present.

Resources

The new religious programme "Grow in Love"/I nGrá Dé based on "The Catholic Preschool and Primary Religious Education Curriculum for Ireland "

The "Beo go Deo " (Alive O) programme is also in use as "I nGrá Dé" is unavailable for senior classes at present

All resources associated with i nGrá De are made available to class teachers. Teachers have a password to access these resources.

The children bring the "Grow in Love" book home regularly.

There is a children's Bible in every classroom.

All Catholic children take part in Religious Education classes.

Symbols

Various symbols are on display to identify that the school is a Catholic school. These include a Crucifix, a statue of Our Lady, Holy Water Font, a picture of St Kevin of Glendalough our school patron saint.

Prayer Space

There is a Prayer Space in the school hall. The aforementioned symbols are on display in the Prayer Space .

Each class has a Prayer Space. The school community looks after the school Prayer Space.

Liturgical symbols are displayed throughout the school year.

Children are invited to add something (photo, prayer)to the Prayer Space if they so wish. Sometimes they put a Mass booklet or a photo of a deceased relative in the Prayer Space.

There is a definite connection between the symbols on display and the themes being discussed in class.

Prayer

We have daily assembly in Scoil Chualann. We say morning prayers at assembly. We discuss religious feasts during assembly.

All classes say a prayer before and after lunch and when they are leaving school in the afternoon.

The children learn prayers in class and at assembly. Mass responses are taught at assembly and in class when preparing for school Masses, First Communion and Confirmation.

We celebrate 8 December (Mass) The Feast of the Immaculate Conception, 6 January (Mass) The Epiphany, Catholic Schools Week, St Brigid's Day, St Patrick's Day, Ash Wednesday, Easter and Christmas.

A candle is lit on these occasions to foster respect.

The Sacraments

We hope that parents, priests and teachers will play an important role in fostering the children's faith and preparing them for the Sacraments.

Parish engagement and parents' religious practice within a Catholic community are essential elements of children's sacramental preparation. The school can do very little to foster faith without this ongoing support.

We acknowledge that parents are their children's primary educators.

It is the parents who decide if their children are to receive the sacraments

We assist with preparation for the Sacraments: Sacraments of Reconciliation and Eucharist in 2nd class and the Sacrament of Confirmation in 6th.

Preparation for the Sacraments is an ongoing feature of our religious classes from Junior Infants to sixth class.

All teachers in scoil Chualann are qualified to teach Religion and to prepare classes for the Sacraments.

2nd class wear their school uniform for first Confession and an alb for First Communion. 6th class wear uniform for the Service of Light and an alb for their Confirmation.

Sacrament of Reconciliation

The terms Sacrament of Reconciliation and First Confession are used.

Children in 2nd class receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation once the school receives written permission from the parents.

Information is sent to parents to assist them in preparing the children for the Sacraments.

Sacrament of the Eucharist

The term First Communion will be used in Scoil Chualann. Children in 2nd class receive the Sacrament of the Eucharist when the school receives written permission from the parents.

The online resources available to the school for the InGrá Dé programme are used by the class teachers when planning their classes.

Parents and children will be invited to take part in the "Do This in Memory of Me" programme which will be organised by the parish for the school year 2018/19.

The Sacrament of Confirmation

Children in 6th class are prepared for and receive the sacrament of Confirmation when the school receives written permission from the parents.

We will continue with the Beo Go Deo programme until InGrá Dé is available for all classes.

The children must know the symbols, gifts and fruits of the Holy Spirit for Confirmation.

It is advised that children's promise to refrain from taking alcohol and drugs should be independent of the Service of Light which is celebrated before Confirmation. We allow the children to make these promises after the Service of Light.

Alcohol and drug abuse are also discussed as part of our Social Personal Health Education programme.

Parents and children of 6th class are given the opportunity to take part in the Faith Community " programme organised by Queen of Peace Parish during the school year 2018/19. This is a Parish based programme.

Religious Education during the school year.

Religious education is taught formally four days a week during the school year. Assembly takes place daily. All teachers in Scoil Chualann are qualified to teach religion. Parents are informed before their children start school that religion in Scoil Chualann is taught in the context of a Catholic ethos. Children are encouraged to think of those less fortunate than themselves and those who may be suffering as a result of illness, famine or war. We help these people by organising collections from time to time during the school year. The children are given information about missionary and charitable work during assembly and in class. We support Trócaire during Lent. Teachers are given a list of prayers at the beginning of the school year.

Arrangements for students who will not be attending religious instruction.

The constitutional right of parents to withdraw their children from Religious Education is acknowledged. We would like to draw parents/guardians attention to the following:

- We insist that all children attending Scoil Chualann respect our Catholic ethos. This means remaining silent and respectful at assembly and in class at prayer time.
- Parents/guardians must confirm in writing at the beginning of the school year (pupil's first term in school) that they wish to opt out of Religious Education
- We are unable to provide an alternative room for children who do not attend religious instruction due to accommodation constraints and limited availability of staff. These children are welcome to remain in the classroom for the duration of the lesson. Parents may choose to collect their children before Religious Education class begins if they so wish (12.50pm infants, 1.50pm all other classes).
- Pupils who remain in class will be given class appropriate work/ research by the class teacher
- In cases where the class is rehearsing for the Sacraments the children will be sent to another classroom. It is important that parents explain this arrangement to their children.
- In cases where the class is attending Mass at the beginning of the school year, at the end of the school year or on certain Feast days which may fall on school days parents/guardians may make arrangements to have their children collected from school. If parents/guardians are unable to have children collected, the children will be asked to go to another classroom (Infants to First class) until the Mass is over. This arrangement may be subject to change depending on numbers in classes.
- While Scoil Chualann welcomes pupils of all faiths and none all other religious faith instruction must take place outside of school hours.

Roles and Responsibilities

All class teachers have to teach religion.
Religious Education will be discussed at staff meetings from time to time.

Review

This policy will be reviewed when necessary.