

# Religious Education Policy

## St Pius X GNS

### Introduction

St Pius X GNS is a Catholic school under the patronage of the Catholic archbishop of Dublin, Dr Diarmuid Martin.

St. Pius X National School is committed to helping its pupils grow and mature towards self discipline and good behaviour and the pursuit of excellence in education within a supportive Christian environment.

Home and school both play essential roles in the development of the spiritual, moral and emotional development of each child; hence co-operation between parents and teachers is vital.

This Religious Education Policy focuses on Catholic faith, belief and teaching, and it aspires to continue to develop and deepen this awareness for the Catholic pupils enrolled at the school.

### Rationale

School ethos:

“St. Pius X Girls National School is dedicated to providing a caring and supportive environment for all its pupils through positive affirmation, clear communication and a genuine partnership between the home, the school and the community”.

#### Aims of RE in the school:

- To reflect a distinctive vision of life and a corresponding philosophy of education
- To create an open, happy, stimulating and mutually respectful community environment
- To worship God through prayer and the celebration of liturgy and the sacraments
- To be inspired by the Gospel
- To respect the freedom, attitudes and dignity of all other people, religions and creeds.
- Deepen the appreciation and understanding of the Catholic Tradition within the child.
- To foster and deepen the child’s faith
- To contribute to the child’s religious and moral development
- To promote open, mutually respectful and inclusive attitudes
- To value and uphold the partnership between the home, the school and the parish.

### School Procedures

Every child is welcome into the school having satisfied the enrolment procedures, however bearing in mind the Catholic ethos of the school, every effort will be made so that the school is as inclusive as possible. While Catholic education and the ethos of the school permeates the day, children of other faiths or none, **where request is made in writing**, will be excused from attendance at formal religious instruction classes and specifically Catholic liturgies. It will not be possible to arrange alternative supervision for children at these times. Girls may be excused from participation but will have to stay in the room. It will not be possible however to provide religious instruction in other faiths.

The Board of Management and the teachers have adopted the Alive-O and Grow in Love programme approved and recommended by the Irish Hierarchy for use in Catholic Schools. The programme is taught to each class. Each class kit consists of a teacher's manual, a pupil's workbook, a CD, posters and online resources.

#### All Catholic feasts are celebrated.

Christmas – tree and cribs, Christmas stories, Carol services.

Catholic schools week – Prayer service and Grandparents visit.

Feast of St Brigid - making traditional crosses, stories of St Brigid.

Feast of St Patrick – stories, symbol of shamrock, cards, parade.

Lent – Symbols of Repentance, visit of clergy to distribute ashes, prayer service.

Easter – Easter cards, story of the death of Jesus and the resurrection, artwork and workbooks.

Observation of Holy Days of Obligation, December 8<sup>th</sup> and January 6<sup>th</sup>.

Celebration of the opening of the school year with school mass and the graduation of senior pupils with school mass.

Each class will have a sacred space and there will be a crucifix in each classroom. Other religious symbols i.e. statues, pictures, rosary beads, will be displayed in the sacred space.

The colour of the sacred space will be adapted each month of the liturgical cycle

The entrance hall will have a sacred space table.

### **Liturgical Celebrations**

The school celebrates the sacraments of Confirmation and First Communion. Children receive the sacraments of Confirmation and First Holy Communion in St Pius X parish church. Children are prepared for the sacraments through the parish programmes e.g. Do this in Memory and by the individual class teachers in keeping with the Catholic ethos of the school.

First communion pupils are prepared for the Sacrament of Reconciliation and the Confirmation pupils are prepared for the Service of Light by the class teachers.

### **Teacher Input**

In St Pius X GNS the following areas are covered.

The teaching of the Religious Education programme is timetabled for two and a half hours per class each week.

In-service on delivering the new Grow in Love and Alive-O programmes

Prayer services

Nativity plays

Teach the pupils the recommended prayers for the age level.

Teach the pupils the responses to the mass in accordance with the specified responses and prayers suggested in the teacher's manual

Carol services

Charity: awareness of social justice and missionary work, in-class project work, whole school donations to selected charity groups, class donations to selected charity groups

### **Success criteria**

An acknowledged sense of God, Faith prayer and worship within the school community

Respect for all within the school community

Parental interest and support

Recognisable links between the home, school and parish.

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

### **Staff:**

Deliver the Grow in Love and Alive-O programmes  
Co-operate with the Chaplain/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  
Parents attend information talks and meetings given by the parish priest Fr Aquinas Duffy in advance the preparation of the children for the sacraments

### **Principal:**

Facilitate supportive interaction between all parties in implementing the programmes.  
Co-ordinate the compiling and implementation of the Religious Education Policy in the school in conjunction with the staff member who has the responsibility for RE in the school.  
Disseminate information relating to Religious Education.  
Facilitate the attendance of staff at Religious Education CPD courses.  
Ensure that every class has the programme kit, Catholic symbols, created a sacred space and has a classroom Bible.

**This policy will come into effect on \_\_\_\_\_.**

**It will be reviewed after \_\_\_\_\_ year/s.**

**Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Chairperson**

