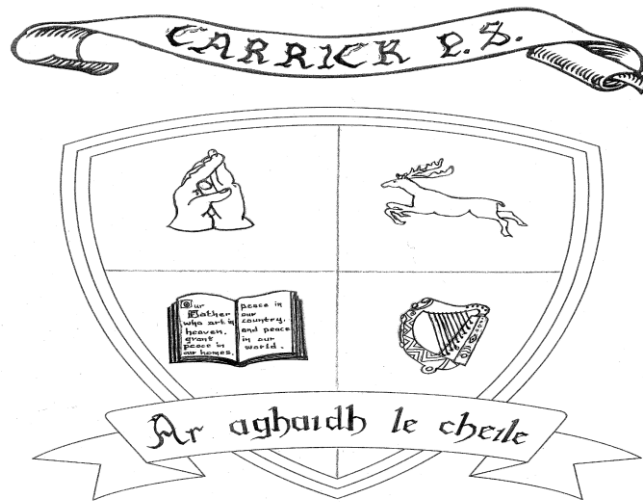


# Carrick Primary School Burren



## Religious Education Policy

March 2024

# **Carrick Primary School**

## **Vision Statement**

Forward Together: Ar aghaidh le chéile.

## **Mission Statement**

In Carrick Primary School we aim to provide a safe, caring and stimulating environment, in order to realise and celebrate the academic and non-academic potential of all our pupils. We expect our pupils to work hard and encourage parents to assist us in helping children to learn and to become lifelong learners.

## **School Aims**

We aim to:

- develop and strengthen each pupil's understanding and love of Catholic values by promoting the Catholic ethos throughout the school;
- create a safe, enjoyable learning environment, in which effective learning is facilitated and quality teaching is provided;
- implement all aspects of the Northern Ireland Curriculum;
- help our pupils to develop a positive attitude towards life and a love of learning;
- value, respect and nurture every child in our care;
- encourage pupils to respect themselves and others and to support and care for one another;
- equip our children with the necessary life skills to enable them to participate in a fast changing society;
- Endorse the United Nations' Convention on the Rights of the Child and work towards the implementation of policies and practices which reflect the Convention;
- involve the parents, Board of Governors and wider community in the life of the school and in the holistic development of the children in our care.

## **The Aims of Catholic Education**

Providing effective education for all our children.

Developing effective Pastoral Care systems in our school.

Establishing links with the home, the parish and the wider community.

### **Religious Education**

Religious Education in Carrick Primary School is available for all children and extends beyond the requirements of the core curriculum agreed by the main churches. The school is committed to the aims, values and teachings of the Catholic faith which influences the whole curriculum and shapes the daily pattern of school life. It prepares each child for participation in the liturgy and Sacraments of the Catholic Church. There is regular corporate worship, instruction by class teachers, class assemblies and visits by the Priests.

In Carrick Primary School Pastoral Care permeates all aspects of school life. It reflects the values, attitudes, beliefs and practices of our Catholic Faith and involves all members of our school community – children, parents and all other adults who contribute to the well being of each child.

We strive to create an atmosphere where God's love is experienced by all members of the school community, through their relationships with each other; where Christ is an example to all and where each child is helped to develop to his/her potential.

We believe that our Catholic School is not just an environment for providing a series of lessons; it stems from an educational philosophy which strives to meet the needs of the young people of today in the light of the Church's faith. As a result, all that happens in our school, the curriculum, discipline and our relationships, should speak to us of God's loving care for each individual.

### **RIGHTS RESPECTING SCHOOL**

We, the staff of Carrick Primary School, endorse the Convention on the Rights of the Child and are working towards the implementation of policies and practices which reflect the Convention.

#### **Article 14**

Every child has the right to choose their own religion and beliefs. Their parents should help them decide what is right and wrong and what is best for them.

### **Personal Development and Mutual Understanding (PDMU), Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) and Religion**

The delivery of the RE Curriculum is greatly enhanced by the presence of PDMU and RSE as areas of study in the curriculum. PDMU and RSE have much in common with religion, as they focus attention on the children's emotional development, health and safety, relationships with others and development of moral thinking, values and actions. Both areas of study encourage each child:

- to become aware of their own unique existence; to become personally, emotionally, socially and physically effective;
- to lead healthy, safe and fulfilled lives;
- to become confident, independent and responsible citizens, making informed and responsible choices and decisions throughout their lives.

An integral part of the PDMU and RE curriculum is the provision of RSE. As a Catholic school, Carrick Primary School advocates the promotion of a 'Personal Development' approach to RSE, whereby the children in our care are equipped with the life skills to help them make informed decisions based on their own intrinsic self-respect and self-esteem. The Rights Respecting Project in which Carrick Primary School is engaged, complements both the PDMU Curriculum and the RSE Curriculum. Pupils are encouraged to recognise their individual needs, wants and responsibilities in relation to the needs, wants and responsibilities of others. RSE is a lifelong process which involves the acquisition of knowledge, understanding and skills and the development of attitudes, beliefs, morals and values.

### **Our Aims**

Our aims are directly related to our Mission Statement.

We strive to:

- Enable the spiritual development of each child;
- Facilitate a growth in knowledge of daily prayer;
- Reflect and affirm Christian values and teach the meaning of a Christian community;
- Help children to become familiar with the traditional forms of worship in the Catholic Church;
- Develop an understanding that there are other faith traditions;
- Create a learning environment in which every child is encouraged and enabled to develop to their full and unique potential as human beings, made in the image and likeness of God;
- Form pupils who will unselfishly use their gifts for the common good and are committed to work towards a caring society;
- Be a welcoming and inclusive community which is respectful and tolerant of all religious traditions and beliefs;
- Work in partnership with parents and with the parish community to keep the light of faith which was received at Baptism, burning brightly;
- Provide opportunities for worship through prayer, the celebration of liturgy and the Sacraments.

### **The concepts we wish the children to develop include:**

- Creation – the uniqueness of each of us and our role as caretakers of the earth;
- Family – community, the church community and the world family;
- Symbol – ritual, prayer, celebration and Sacrament;
- Gospel – bible stories, parables and religious language;
- The links between beliefs and values, between religion and life;
- The importance of commitment.

### **The knowledge we wish to impart includes:**

- The historical facts of the birth, life, death and resurrection of Jesus;
- Some basic ideas of sacred scripture – Gospels, Revelation and Tradition;
- The value of the human person, loved by God, and loved by others;
- The value of the Sacraments; they enrich each child on his/her journey through life;
- The call to be Christian involves a growing awareness of the rights of others and a sense of duty and commitment to the underprivileged and less fortunate.

### **Schemes of Work and Learning and Teaching Strategies**

The principles of good teaching and learning experiences for children relate just as much to RE as to any other curriculum subject.

Children will study sometimes as a whole class, sometimes working in group situations and sometimes individually. Children can link their learning across subjects. They will be given the opportunity to discuss, question, debate and reflect in small groups. Sharing one's perspective with others is particularly important in Religion.

Our schemes of work are based on the Catholic Religious Education Programme Grow in Love. The schemes follow many of the same themes each year but at an appropriate level for each year group.

Being a Catholic Maintained School, Carrick Primary School's duty, is to provide Catholic education for the children of the parish of Burren and beyond. Carrick Primary is proud of the fact that, throughout the years, its doors have been open to children of other religions and should these children wish to enrol, they will be more than welcome, provided that they meet the admissions criteria. However, parents may ask for children to be excused from attending religion classes.

Children will be prepared for the sacraments of First Confession and First Holy Communion during their P4 year and for the Sacrament of Confirmation during their P7 year. There will also be a formal school assembly on two mornings per week, where staff members and pupils say prayers and sing together. Each class also has the opportunity to lead the assembly, and children participate in readings, singing, music and drama. During the month of January each year, there is a special programme of events to mark "Catholic Schools' Week".

The school will provide supervision for pupils who have been withdrawn from Religious lessons but will not **provide additional teaching**. A pupil may be required to work in another class for the duration of the religion lesson/religion teaching. Pupils will usually remain on school premises where it is feasible and appropriate. Whilst parents or carers have a right to withdraw children from RE, **they should note that children may also encounter religions and beliefs and wider aspects of faith in other areas of the curriculum from which there is no right of withdrawal**. On occasion, spontaneous questions about religious matters are raised by pupils or by staff. Issues related to religion may also arise in other curriculum subjects such as World Around Us or Personal Development and Mutual Understanding (PDMU). For example, schools promote community cohesion and help to develop pupils' understanding about identify and diversity, feelings and emotions within both religious and non-religious contexts.

### **Collective Worship Policy**

We believe that the Collective Worship undertaken in our school community helps to support the shared values expressed in our Mission Statement, those of care and respect for each other, thus deepening our understanding of God and his loving care for each one of us.

We value worshipping together as an integral expression of ourselves as a community.

#### **Attitudes we wish to develop**

Moral values and responsibility  
Community spirit and belonging  
Fairness  
Respect  
Empathy  
Wonder and Awe

#### **Skills we wish to develop**

Listening  
Reflecting  
Enquiring  
Sharing  
Evaluating  
Praying

### **Organisation**

Daily Prayer takes place in all classes. Each class has a prayer corner/sacred space. Opportunities are given for participation through singing, reading, praying together and silent meditation.

Monday – Foundation Stage/Key Stage One and Key Stage Two assembly in the school hall – Led by Principal.

Wednesday – Foundation Stage/ Key Stage One and Key Stage Two assembly in the school hall – Class assemblies on a weekly rota basis. The assemblies include drama, readings, singing, dance and prayers.

### **School Masses**

P4 and P7 pupils are involved in Pre-Sacramental Masses and Post-Sacramental Masses in the second and third terms. These take place in St Mary's Parish Church on a Saturday evening or a Sunday morning. Families of all the pupils involved are invited to attend with the pupils. The P6 pupils are also involved in a Christmas Mass.

### **Local Community and the Wider World**

The Diocesan Advisor for Religious Education visits the school annually. The staff and pupils in Carrick Primary School welcome this visit and see it as an opportunity to share our knowledge of faith, prayer and the sacraments and to make improvements, where necessary.

Parish links will be forged wherever possible through the Sacraments of First Confession, First Holy Communion and Confirmation.

The school is aware of the needs of the local community and supports local charities and organisations. Occasionally missionaries from the third world countries may visit the school and speak to the pupils about the needs of children in other parts of the world.

In Lent the school undertakes fundraising activities for Trócaire. Fundraising events for various charities are also organised throughout the year.

### **Resources**

The school's Religion resources are supplemented with text books, posters and other resources, as and when required.

### **Conclusion**

Thank you for taking the time to read this Religion policy. It has been reviewed and updated in consultation with the staff, parents, pupils and Governors. Further reviews of the Religion Policy will take place every three years, in consultation with all relevant stakeholders.

Signed: Dr A Cassidy (Principal)

Signed: Mr G Murdock (Chairperson of Board of Governors)

Date: March 2024

Review Date: March 2027