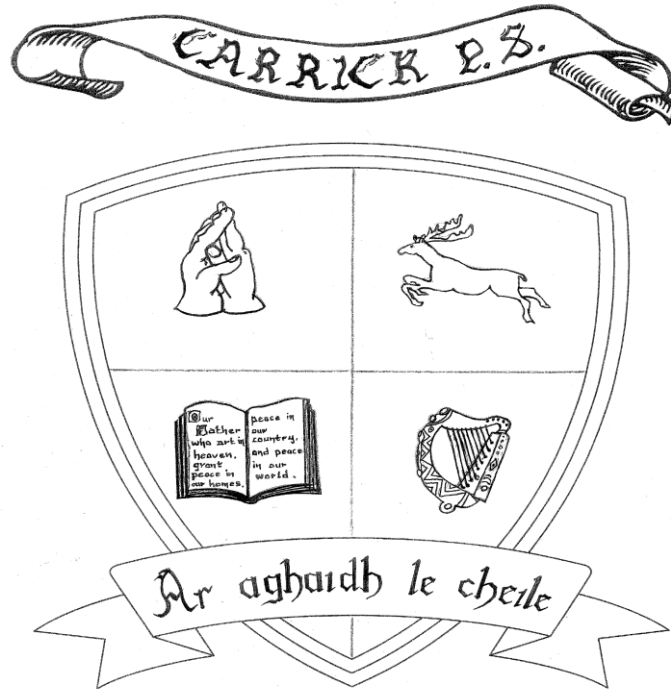


Carrick Primary School



Staff Development Policy

December 2023

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.

Carrick Primary School

In Carrick Primary School, we believe that a central requirement of all school improvement programmes, must be the promotion of a culture of reflection and professional responsibility, and the development of programmes which suitably empower staff, to meet the challenges ahead. Our aim within Carrick is to arrange continuing professional development for all staff which is imaginative, innovative and fit for purpose. Such arrangements will support staff as they deliver and sustain the school's improvement agenda. The arrangements will also support the implementation of the Department of Education's "Every School a Good School" Policy.

The teaching profession's document 'Code of Values and Professional Practice', articulates clearly the relationship between teacher professionalism and continuing professional development (CPD). It states:

"Teachers will, in keeping the concept of professional integrity, assume responsibility for their ongoing professional development as an essential expression of their professionalism".

However, the General Teaching Council of Northern Ireland has sought to enshrine the principle of 'right of access' to professional development, within its statement of guiding principles for CPD. This principle has been articulated further in the Council's Charter for Education'. The Charter states:

"We recognise the right of all engaged in the processes of education to ongoing professional development appropriate to their needs".

In recognition of the responsibility to provide ongoing professional development and the associated right to appropriate continuing professional development, the Council affirms that PRSD, if appropriately structured, can serve as a useful vehicle for a needs' analysis in relation to teachers' professional development and, it is upon such professional development, that school improvement can be promoted and sustained.

Dimensions of Development

As teachers progress in their careers they will encounter different challenges and expectations. They grow in confidence, share in the knowledge of colleagues and learn from experience. It can also be anticipated that their practice will become progressively more sophisticated and nuanced. This will be evidenced by:

- A greater complexity in teaching;
- The deployment of a wider range of teaching strategies;
- Teaching which is based on a wider range of evidence, reading and research;
- Extending one's impact beyond the classroom and participating more fully in the life of the school;

- The capacity to exercise autonomy, to innovate and to improvise;
- A pronounced capacity for self-evaluation and self-improvement;
- The ability to impact positively on colleagues through mentoring, coaching, and modelling good practice;
- Contributing to the literature on teaching and learning and the public discussion of professional issues; and
- Leading staff development, based on the capacity to theorise about policy and practice.

In seeking to make more explicit the attributes, skills and knowledge that teachers as professionals should possess and exemplify, the Council has set out the 27 competence statements, under three broad headings:

- Professional Values and Practice (as enshrined within the ‘Code of Values and Professional Practice’);
- Professional Knowledge and Understanding;
- Professional Skills and Application
 - Planning and Leading;
 - Teaching and Learning; and
 - Assessment.

The above groupings of the competences provide teachers with a focus upon which to base their PRSD. The competences will also give teachers a sense of ownership of the process and a framework against which they can enter into positive professional dialogue with other colleagues, using a shared language and professional understanding. This is also supported by the Council’s view that the development of competence goes well beyond the simple acquisition of knowledge and skills. These competences are seen as developmental, open-ended and context dependent and are well aligned with and supportive of our school improvement agenda. Although curricular knowledge and pedagogical skills are important, it must be emphasised that teaching is both an intellectual and a practical activity, with significant emotional and creative dimensions. It is therefore important that the competences are used to inform not only the technical proficiency of teachers but also the creative, emotional and moral demands of professional practice.

The PRSD Process

The success or otherwise of the PRSD process, depends heavily upon the quality of the reflective practice which underpins it.

As a staff we believe that competences can be developed through reflection upon practice and through dialogue with colleagues. The GTCNI endorses this in

“Teaching: the Reflective Profession”, when it states:

“Reflective practice needs to be internalised as part of a teacher’s professional identity; it cannot be simply bolted on as an additional skill, rather it becomes part of the professional mind-set and it is integrated within all the competences in a holistic way”.

Ongoing Development of Classroom Assistants and all Staff Members

As a staff, we acknowledge the importance of providing developmental opportunities for classroom assistants and all staff members, which are appropriate both to their needs and to the school’s needs.

Details of Professional Development Opportunities

All details of professional development opportunities which are availed of by members of staff, are listed in C2K’s Public A13 folder “In-Service Training Records”.

Review

This policy has been reviewed following consultation with parents, staff and Governors. This policy will be reviewed every three years, or sooner if required, in consultation with the relevant stakeholders.

Signed: Dr Anne Cassidy (Principal)

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

Date: December 2023

Review Date: December 2026