

## **Curricular Policy Religious Education**

### **Ethos**

This school is a rural school meeting the needs of the Church of Ireland and related Protestant communities within the parishes of Kingscourt, Carrickmacross and Shercock. It is a 3 teacher school, with additional Learning Support and Resource staff.

The school endeavours to promote the moral, spiritual, emotional, intellectual, physical and social development of all the pupils in its care. The school reflects the ethos of the Church of Ireland and values of honesty, charity, kindness, patience and personal responsibility are encouraged. Equally it encourages and practises respect for the traditions and teachings of other churches and spiritual communities.

The teaching of Religious Education in this school does not involve religious formation or specifically confessional teaching as this is a matter for each family and their Church. The constitutional right of parents to withdraw their child from Religious Education is acknowledged. However the attention of parents is drawn to the note on integration below.

Due to accommodation constraints and the limited availability of staff a child who is withdrawn from RE will have to remain in the classroom for the duration of the lesson and may work on alternative activities. Those parents who do not wish their children to attend a whole-school worship assembly may supervise their children quietly in the classroom while the assembly is taking place. Parents wishing their children to be exempt from religion must do so in writing. This request will be kept on file.

### **The aims of Religious Education in this school are to enable children:**

- To develop a knowledge and understanding of beliefs, worship and witness of the Christian faith, and in particular of the Church of Ireland and other principal reformed traditions.
- To explore the biblical witness to God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
- To develop their own religious beliefs, values and practices through a process of personal search and discovery.
- To develop an awareness of and a sensitivity towards those of other faiths and none.

### **The Strands of Religious Education deal with the following areas**

- Celebrations, festivals, ceremonies and customs
- Sacred writings, stories and key figures
- Beliefs
- Sacred places, worship and symbols
- Moral values and attitudes
- Personal search
- Other World Religions

### **Parish /School Links**

Parish / school links are promoted and valued by both school and parish.

- As per our Enrolment policy, children of our parish group are given priority for admission to the school.
- The Reverend may visit and speak with the classes regularly in consultation with the principal and the class teacher.
- A Worship based assembly takes place in the school hall each Tuesday morning. Children are encouraged to take part. The Reverend of St. Ernan's Church, Kingscourt and visiting ministers will take this assembly on a rotational basis.

The principal will take a whole school assembly in the school hall every Friday. While this is mainly to discuss upcoming events, to revise school rules and to celebrate school achievements, new songs/ hymns may be taught within this time.

- School services at Christmas and in June will be held in the school hall or St. Ernan's Church, Kingscourt.
- Children from the school may be invited to take part in a number of other church services during the year.

### **Inclusion of other traditions**

As outlined in our ethos statement, our school caters primarily for the needs of the Church of Ireland community, while also encompassing other Christian traditions. Children of other faiths and none are welcomed and affirmed within the constraints of space (see enrolment policy).

The Follow Me Programme caters for children of the Church of Ireland, Presbyterian and Methodist communities together with those of other Christian communities.

All parents should be made aware of the ethos and traditions of the school together with the educational programme at the time of application.

### **Timetabling:**

RE teaching is timetabled for 30 mins each day. This time will be used for classroom based teaching, preparation for worship and weekly assembly. Discretionary time may also be used on occasion for Religious Education.

The school community inculcates a respect for those from other religious traditions or none while upholding the understanding of the Christian faith as practised by the church of the sponsoring community and related churches. However the ethos of the school may influence the entire school day and reference may be made to religious topics at any point and in any curricular area. This accords with the approach to integration in the Primary School Curriculum.

### **Approach in a Multi-class Situation:**

RE will be taught to the entire class group.

In a two class group the appropriate books will be used in alternate years. A group involving First and Second would rotate **Stepping Out** and **Moving On** in alternate years. In a room involving more than two classes the teacher may decide to draw on two texts in the year to accommodate the range of abilities in the room or use one text and draw on resources from two of the modules. Thus one or two of the **Follow Me Modules, Here We Go, On Our Way, Stepping Out and Moving On** will be selected and adapted to suit the varying ages and abilities in the room. This choice will alter from year to year and will be an educational decision made in consultation with the other teachers. It is intended that a child proceeding through the school will have experienced the complete **Follow Me** programme though it is not envisaged that any child would experience the entire content.

### **Resources Needed:**

- Each pupil will have his/her own copy of the RE textbook from the Follow Me series.
- Pupils from *4<sup>th</sup> Class* up will have their own Bible.
- The Follow Me Programme comprising Here We Go, On Our Way, Stepping Out and Moving On (Follow Me Programme)
- Primary RE - teacher's books for Middle Standard and Senior Standard
- Children's Bible.
- Sing & Pray.
- Church Hymnal / CD & copies for children
- Big Blue Planet & tape
- Junior Praise
- Kidsource (*Songs and Hymns*)
- Children's copies of Bible

*Policy ratified by the Board of Management of Cabra Central School in 2016*