

# Naul National School



## Religious Education Policy

### Archdiocese of Dublin

‘God is love’ (1 John 4:8) Grow in Love Religious Education Programme

#### **Introductory Statement**

Naul National School is a Catholic primary school under the patronage of the Catholic Archbishop of Dublin. This Religious Education (RE) policy has been formulated in consultation with the Board of Management, teachers, chaplain, parents/guardians, and ancillary staff.

Naul N.S. seeks to enable each child to develop his/her potential in a caring environment where the talents of each child are nurtured, valued and celebrated. The school’s catholic ethos is created by the actions and behaviour of everyone in the school. In Naul N.S. our motto is ‘**Learn, Respect, Achieve**’, meaning to grow in knowledge which underpins the values and ethos of our school.

The ethos of all the school community is founded on our Catholic values some of which include; respect, kindness, happiness, faith, inclusion and belonging.

**Mission Statement:**

Naul National School, a Catholic school strives to promote inclusion and creativity in a respectful learning environment, nurturing children to reach their full potential all the while promoting a positive attitude to school life and respecting the Catholic ethos of the school community.

**History of the School:**

Naul National School has a long-standing tradition of Catholic education and commitment to the holistic development of its students. The school is located in Naul, County Dublin. It has a rich history dating back to its establishment in 1834. Over the years, the school has undergone significant developments to accommodate the growing educational needs of its community. In 1991, a new school building was constructed to provide modern facilities for students and staff. Further expansion occurred in 2017, reflecting the school's commitment to maintaining a contemporary learning environment. More extension works have been approved. As of the 2024/2025 academic year, Naul National School has an enrolment of 159 pupils.. The school's motto, "Learn, Respect, Achieve," encapsulates its ethos of fostering mutual respect and encouraging excellence in all aspects of the curriculum and personal development. Throughout its history, Naul National School has remained a cornerstone of the Naul community, adapting and expanding to meet the evolving educational needs of its students.

**Rationale:**

This policy is formulated to outline the aims, curriculum, and implementation of religious education, ensuring a faith-based approach to learning.

**Catholic Identity:**

The school displays Catholic symbols, including a crucifix and a statue of Our Lady in the staffroom. School assemblies incorporate prayer, reflection and scripture readings.

**2. The Catholic Church and Primary Religious Education**

Naul N.S. will promote gender equality amongst the teachers and pupils. We shall strive to provide a balanced curriculum which follows the principles of the Primary School Curriculum.

1. To make learning opportunities challenging and enjoyable.
2. To encourage pupils to be self-confident.
3. To encourage enquiring minds.
4. To encourage pupils to value a non-material dimension to life.

5. To encourage activities which allow for friendly rivalry, development of team loyalty, and provide opportunities for leadership.
- Staff are supported in RE teaching through professional development and guidance from diocesan advisors.
  - The Schedule of a Catholic School is displayed in our school office and Principal's office.
  - Religious Education is taught for 30 minutes daily, as recorded in class timetables.
  - Religious Education is included in our scéim coicíse and cuntas miosúil.

### **3. Aim of Religious Education Policy**

The aim of the RE curriculum is to help children mature in their spiritual, moral, and religious lives through their encounter with the Catholic faith. The curriculum follows four interrelated strands:

- **Christian Faith:** Developing religious literacy in Catholic beliefs and practices.
- **The Word of God:** Introducing children to Scripture in an age-appropriate manner.
- **Liturgy and Prayer:** Encouraging participation in liturgical celebrations and personal prayer.
- **Christian Morality:** Teaching children ethical values based on the life of Jesus.

### **4. General Information**

- **Diocesan Information:**
  - Archdiocese: Dublin
  - Patron/Archbishop: Archbishop Dermot Farrell
  - Director of Education Secretariat: Karen Brady/Beatrice Reilly
- **Parish Information:**
  - Parish: Naul
  - Parish Priest: Very Reverend Derek Farrell
  - Parish Pastoral Council Chairperson: Paul O' Boyle
  - Parish Deacon: Declan Colgan
- **School Information:**
  - School: Naul N.S., Naul, Co. Dublin, A92 K32PX40- Roll No: 01170G
  - Patron: Archbishop Dermot Farrell
  - Chaplain: Very Reverend Derek Farrell

- Board of Management Members:
  - Tom Duff
  - Séamus Hynes
  - Kate Henry
  - Niamh Carney
  - Joe Keane
  - Russell Nearing
  - Emmett Mc Carroll
  - Kathy Magrane
- Religious Education Coordinator: Ms. Niamh Carney

## 5. Religious Education Materials

- The Catholic Preschool and Primary Religious Education Curriculum for Ireland (2015) is the foundation document for RE.
- The school follows the **Grow in Love** Religious Education Programme.
- Teachers have access to **Grow in Love** manuals, CDs, and online resources.
- Each student has **Grow in Love** resources made available to them.
- Approved Bibles include the Contemporary English Version, Good News Bible, and The Catholic Children's Bible.
- Monthly memos from the Education Secretariat are circulated to staff.

## 6. Prayer Space

Each classroom will have a designated prayer space, which changes with the liturgical calendar, as guided by the **Grow in Love** programme.

## 7. Prayer in School

- Daily prayers take place in class.
- Whole-school prayer gatherings occur at key liturgical times.

## 8. Sacramental Preparation

- Collaboration between home, parish, and school is essential.
- Students prepare for **First Holy Communion** and **Confirmation** in partnership with Naul Parish.
- **First Confession (Sacrament of Reconciliation)**: Before receiving Communion, children prepare for and celebrate their **First Penance** (Confession).
- **Special Masses**: The Parish organise ‘**myfaith.ie**’ Masses, where students and their families attend monthly preparation Masses in the lead-up to First Communion.

- **Visits from the Parish Priest:** The parish priest may visit classes to discuss the sacraments and answer questions.

### **Practical Preparation**

- **Practice Sessions:** The school arranges rehearsals in the church, teaching children how to receive the Eucharist reverently.
- **Liturgical Music & Readings:** Children may learn hymns and prayers they will use on the day of First Holy Communion.
- **Creating Symbols:** Students may create art, such as chalice drawings or banners, to decorate the church.

### **Preparation for Confirmation (6th Class)**

- Confirmation strengthens the child's faith through the gifts of the Holy Spirit and completes their initiation into the Church.

### **Religious Education Curriculum**

- Lessons focus on:
- The role of the Holy Spirit
- The Seven Gifts of the Holy Spirit (Wisdom, Understanding, Right Judgment, Courage, Knowledge, Reverence, and Wonder & Awe)
- The responsibilities of being a fully initiated Catholic
- Learning about their chosen Confirmation saint

### **Prayer and Reflection**

- **Receiving the Gifts of the Holy Spirit:** Students reflect on how they can use these gifts in daily life.

### **School and Parish Collaboration**

- **Confirmation Enrolment Ceremony:** Children and parents attend a special Prayer Service where students commit to preparing for Confirmation.
- **Mass Participation:** The school encourages students to attend **Sunday Mass** regularly.

### **Choosing a Sponsor & Saint Name**

- Each student selects a **sponsor** (a practicing Catholic who guides them in faith).
- Students choose a **Confirmation saint** whose virtues they admire and wish to emulate.

### **Practical Preparation**

- **Practice Sessions:** Students rehearse the Confirmation ceremony, including responses, prayers, and the laying on of hands.

### **Celebration of the Sacraments**

- On the day of **First Holy Communion** or **Confirmation**, students participate in a special Mass led by the parish priest (or sometimes bishop for Confirmation).
- Family and school staff attend to celebrate the occasion with the children.
- The school often marks the day with **post-sacrament celebrations**, including class parties or a blessing ceremony.

## **9. Religious Education Throughout the School Year**

- Religious education is integrated across the curriculum.
- Catholic ethos is actively fostered within the school community.
- Staff receive continuous professional development in RE.
- The school encourages participation in the annual **Mass for the Opening of the School Year** and attendance at Mass for Lent (2<sup>nd</sup> class upwards).
- Catholic Schools' Week is celebrated with various activities including Grandparents' Day.
- Feast Days e.g. St. Brigid's Day are celebrated.
- Holy Days of Obligation e.g. Ash Wednesday are observed.

## **10. Role of Parents/Guardians in Religious Education**

- Parents are encouraged to support religious education at home.
- Home-school links are established through the **myfaith.ie** programme.

## **11. Pupils of Other Traditions**

- The school is inclusive and respectful of students from other faith traditions.
- Non-Catholic students may attend RE classes and are invited to participate in school celebrations.
- (a) No pupil shall receive any Religious Instruction of which his/her parents / guardians disapprove.
- (b) Children who do not receive religious instruction will receive self-guided wellbeing activities to complete during this time.

## **12. Children with Special Educational Needs**

- Religious education is adapted to meet the needs of students with special educational needs, ensuring inclusivity.

### **13. Role of the Religious Education Coordinator**

- The principal has overall responsibility for maintaining the Catholic ethos.
- The RE coordinator supports the principal in overseeing the RE programme and Catholic ethos development.

### **14. Ratification and Review**

This policy and its implementation will be reviewed by the BOM regularly and will be made available to school personnel, published on the school website (or will *be otherwise readily accessible to parents and pupils on request*) and provided to the Parents' Association. This policy will be made available to the Department of Education and to the patron if requested.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Date:

Tom Duff

Chairperson

Board of Management Naul N.S.

### **We are working towards:**

Displaying more religious symbols in our school

Developing sacred spaces in all our classrooms