

Castletroy College Religious Education Policy



Table of Contents



1. Cover Page
2. Contents
3. Mission statement
4. Explanation of School Crest
5. Religious Education, Religious instruction and types of learning in Religious Education
6. Religious Education links with current circulars and the NCCA guidelines
7. Pg 6 cont
8. Parental involvement and when a request for 'opt out ' for Religious Education is made
9. Role of Religious Education Coordinator, Staffing and Staff support
10. Diocesan Advisor and Diocesan support,
School Prayer room and further information on RE curriculum/Syllabus and initiatives offered e.g. Retreats, Outreach programmes, Leadership training and fundraising initiatives.
11. Links with other initiatives & Sustainability -SDG's (Sustainable Development Goals
12. Policy monitoring, review and impact on our School community
13. Chaplain, Parents, Guardians & Students and End of Policy
14. Appendices - Chaplain's policy, Bereavement support policy and links to Dept., of Education Circulars on Religious Education



Castletroy College Mission Statement

"Our mission in Castletroy College is the holistic education of the individual, enabling students to become responsible, caring members of society as well as encouraging them to reach their full potential. In our daily lives, we value the principles of justice and mutual respect embracing all denominations and cultures. We endeavour to nurture and maintain a school community, which involves the partnership of staff, students, parents, trustees and the local community.

In the pursuit of this ideal we provide a broad and balanced range of curricular and extra-curricular experiences for all students."

John 10:10: "...I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full."

The Golden Rule - is the **principle of treating others as you want to be treated.**

(The Golden Rule is a maxim that is found in one form or another in most of the world's major religions and cultures).

School Crest



A great deal of thought and effort has gone into the design of the Castletroy College Crest in an endeavour to symbolise the uniqueness of our School.

Firstly, the mythical “Salmon of Knowledge” is seen leaping in the nearby Shannon River, against a background of the “**Rising Sun**” – symbolising a new beginning, in which it is hoped that our students will also rise to meet their full potential in our new School. Behind the sun, the **Castle of Castletroy** is portrayed, identifying our locality, including the colours of the Troy family. There is also an “Open Book” signifying learning, which has two pages displayed – on the left is the “**Ardagh Cross**”, which is an integral part of the crests of the Limerick Diocese and County Limerick VEC, both of whom are co-trustees of Castletroy College. On the right, is **MM**, signifying the year 2000, when the school first opened its doors to the children of Castletroy and its environs.

Lastly, the motto “**Ut Sint Unum**” or “**That They May be One**”, symbolises the ideal of partnership between students, teachers and parents in ensuring the best possible educational experience for the pupils of Castletroy College. (2000)

SCHOOL CONTEXT- Castletroy College is a designated community college, where the Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board (LCETB) is the patron, with the Roman Catholic diocese of Limerick as a trustee partner. It is co-educational and has a defined geographical catchment serving the local suburban and rural community on the eastern side of Limerick City. (WSE Report 2017)

In Castletroy College, **Religious Instruction** is organised and offered by the Chaplain. All in the school community are invited to actively participate and engage in collective worship on occasion. All are provided with the opportunity to worship, to consider spiritual and moral issues and to explore their own beliefs; to encourage participation and response, whether through active involvement in the presentation of worship or through listening to and joining in the worship offered; and to develop community spirit, promote a common ethos and shared values, and reinforce positive attitudes.

In Castletroy College, **Religious Education** may be defined as “Religious Education is an examinable subject just like History or Geography for example. It aims to develop the students’ ability to examine questions of meaning, purpose and relationships, to help students understand, respect and appreciate people’s expression of their beliefs, and to facilitate dialogue and reflection on the diversity of beliefs and values that inform responsible decision-making and ways of living. Crucially, it is not delivered from any one religious perspective.” (Circular 13/2018)

Three types of learning in Religious Education are evident in our school.

1. **‘Learning into religion’**

Catholic Christian Students are provided experiences, such as prayer and sacramental participation that will help them to grow into their faith and in their understanding of the Catholic tradition.

2. **‘Learning about religion’**

All students are exposed to a broad range of religious traditions and to the non-religious interpretation of life. Such a broad exposure seeks to develop in students, powers of tolerance and mutual understanding and the skills needed to engage in meaningful dialogue with those of other, or of no religious traditions.

3. **‘Learning from religion’**

Students evaluate both *what* has been learned and *how* it impacts on their lived commitments. Students are invited to learn from what they are discovering and to make free informed choices.

Religious Education that the school provides is open to, and inclusive of, all students, of all faiths and those of none.

Religious Education plays a pivotal role in the holistic development of the student. ***“The aim of Junior Cycle Religious Education is to provide students with a framework for encountering and engaging with the variety of religious traditions in Ireland and elsewhere. Junior Cycle Religious Education seeks to promote an understanding and appreciation of why people believe, as well as tolerance and respect for the values and beliefs of ALL.” (2019 NCCA Religious Education Syllabus)***

As part of the Key Skills of the new Junior Cycle programme, 'Being Spiritual' is listed as one of the elements under 'Staying Well'. Please click on following link for further information-

[https://www.curriculumonline.ie/getmedia/def48e3f-68f9-42e4-95de-f30086321fd0/JSE_C_Key_Skills_of-JC_English\).pdf](https://www.curriculumonline.ie/getmedia/def48e3f-68f9-42e4-95de-f30086321fd0/JSE_C_Key_Skills_of-JC_English).pdf)

All students are welcome to participate at all times in Religious Education classes. Castletroy College encourages the holistic development of all of its students. All students have their own personal journey that is encouraged and respected. As a co-patron, multi denominational school we will respect and acknowledge all religions and none.

The Principal along with the Chaplain's support, outlines to Parent(s)/Guardian(s) of incoming students the importance of attending R.E. class. We encourage all students to participate in R.E. and that the school R.E. curriculum is a subject for ***'all religious faiths and none.'***

There may be occasions where the Parent(s)/Guardian(s) wish to withdraw a student from the class. Any request for withdrawal and non-participation must be allowed in accordance with Article 42 of the Constitution. 1.

"The State acknowledges that the primary and natural educator of the child is the Family and guarantees to respect the inalienable right and duty of parents to provide, according to their means, for the religious and moral, intellectual, physical and social education of their children"

A letter stating Article 42 (1) must be submitted to the Principal prior to the student entering the school. The reason for the students' non participation is recorded so that all stakeholders in this process (management, parents, teachers and students) are kept informed.

According to circular 0013/2018, it is a matter for a parent to come forward where a school is proposing to offer religious instruction rather than the school seeking information from parents about their religion. It is proposed that a calendar of all multi faith services (and reflection for all) would be made available to parents via the school website and student journal at the beginning of the academic year. This will also include any religious activity related to bereavement within the school community, please refer to the chaplain's policy.

All members of the R.E. Department and our Chaplain are committed to inclusive religious education and strive to provide and deliver a curriculum that **caters for all faiths and none as outlined in the NCCA Syllabus.**

Effective Religious Education does not just happen spontaneously or accidentally. The very nature of the Religious Education class requires Teachers of Religious Education to keep 'upgrading' and enhancing their teaching skills and resources.

Religious Education has a very high degree of visibility in our school. Religious Education permeates and pervades the entire school community.

The NCCA curriculum guidelines for RE are followed.

We always hope that no Parents / Guardians will wish to withdraw their children from all or part of the subject.

We present a full and comprehensive ppt to all students and Parents/Guardians during the first month of RE classes and also on our school website to inform all of our full, diverse, inclusive and holistic curriculum.

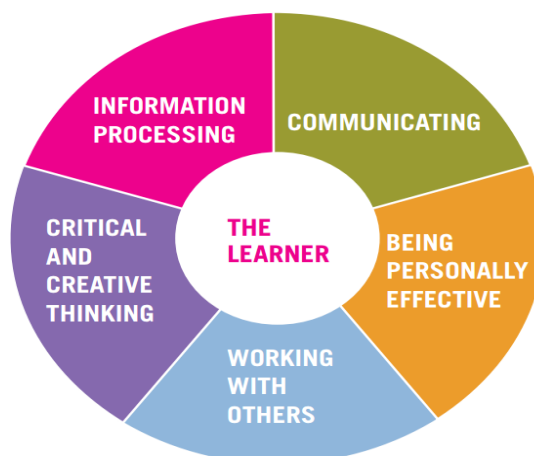
Please see www.curriculumonline.ie for further information

Nevertheless, it remains the right of Parents / Guardians, to withdraw their child from RE (and / or collective worship) if they wish to.

Senior Cycle Key Skills

Key Skills In senior cycle, there are five key skills identified as central to teaching and learning across the curriculum. These are **information processing, being personally effective, communicating, critical and creative thinking and working with others.**

[New Leaving Cert Senior Cycle Key Skills](#)



Castletroy College respects and acknowledges the rights of Parents/Guardians who require their son or daughter to be excluded from Religious Education. The manner in which such an 'opt out' is facilitated is related to available resources within the school and complies with the school's policies on curriculum, supervision and safeguarding.

When a request for 'opt out' from Religious Education is made:

The student will be provided with an alternative programme of work or read a book from own beliefs/ complete a book review and remain in the classroom,

An appropriate procedure to facilitate a request for withdrawal from Religious Education is as follows:

1. A written notification from the parent's/guardian's to the Principal
2. The Principal directs Parents/Guardians to the Religious Education policy available to view on policy section on school website – www.castletroycollege.ie

PARENT INVOLVEMENT

There is an opportunity for parents to be informed about the content of the Religious Education programme via the school website www.castletroycollege.ie and through:

- Enrolment meeting with parents.
- Parent-Teacher meetings.
- First year and Transition Year information night.
- Contact with Parents/Guardians regarding the Pastoral care of students

Parents are involved in the Religious Education programme by their presence at:

- Inter-faith Graduation Service and Ceremony for all.
- Option to participate and contribute to various fundraisers organised by the R.E. dept.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION CO-ORDINATOR

The role of the Religious Education co-ordinator is to:

- Establish and overlook the subject plan for each year level.
- Liaise with the Management and Chaplain on matters relating to Religious Education.
- Maintain and upload resources to R.E. Department Google classroom
- To foster and promote a high and effective delivery of Religious Education.
- Support Religious Education teachers in and out of the classroom.
- Organise regular meetings of the R.E. department.
- Liaise with the Diocesan Advisor re school visits. In-service days etc.
- Implement and review the Religious Education Policy.
- Review to be suggested as to the selection and rotation process for our Head of Religious Education

STAFFING

We consider Religious Education to be such an integral part of our school ethos and school community that it is imperative that we give it the status it deserves. That means looking at the appointment and selection of qualified teachers and its place on the school timetable and the allocation of class periods.

STAFF SUPPORT AND DEVELOPMENT

- Management is supportive of Religious Education both in and out of the classroom.
- All Religious Education teachers are encouraged to attend the Religious Education INSERVICES.
- Coordinator and Chaplain members of RTAI and School Chaplain Association

Outside support is received from:

- Diocesan Advisor.
- Trustee of the school.
- Religious Education Support Service e.g. RTAI and School Chaplain Association.
- Diocesan Clergy.

DIOCESAN SUPPORT - [Limerick Diocese](#)

It has been the tradition that The Diocesan Advisor visits the school twice a year to meet with the Principal, Religious Education Coordinator, Chaplain and Religion teachers.

The Diocesan Advisor provides:

- Update on Diocesan and National programmes of events.
- Advise on policy and subject plan.
- Creative ideas and resources for religion lessons, meditation and liturgical events.
- Monthly online resources.
- Support by attending Masses, concerts and other celebrations.
- Support for a school when there is a critical event.
- On-going support through letter, telephone, email and regular zoom meetings for our Chaplaincy group

Our School prayer room-

The school prayer room is open daily and available to staff and students of all religious faiths and none. It is used for class groups and smaller groups for ecumenical and interfaith services. The Prayer room is also used for the School Student Chaplaincy Team for meditation, prayer services, reflection time & in time of critical incidents as a safe , quiet and comfortable place to offer students a time to gather,reflect &/or to light a candle and to pray. The Chaplain oversees the function and maintenance of the prayer room.

For further information on our Religious Education curriculum and schemes of work textbooks and resources - Please contact - admin@castletroycollege.ie

Also offered in our Religious Education programme – are Retreats, Guest speakers, and many Outreach programmes, Leadership and Fundraising initiatives, such as -

Anois (leadership Programme Lk Diocese), Foróige - Leadership for Life Programme, Pay it Forward LK, CAS School Ambassador Programme, SVP, Focus Ireland and Novas, DS Lk Ice-cream fundraiser, Enable Ireland- Christmas Cards, Fundraising CF Ireland and Carol singing, WWGS (Worldwide Global Schools along with supporting Staff initiatives.

Links with our Green-Schools team with the Pope Francis' encyclical 'Laudato Si'- 'Care of the Earth'. also connecting with the 'sustainable development Goals 2030 - with the aim of incorporating sustainability into all our services and practices eg student representatives as our GCE (Global Citizen Education Captains)

SDG's - Many topics covered in our RE Programme link to the SDG's

[SDG Sustainable Development Goals](#) eg SDG 1,2,3,5,6,12,13,16



Policy Monitoring and Timeframe

Effective policy requires constant monitoring and evaluation to ensure successful implementation and to review what adjustments may be necessary from time to time. In order that the tasks of monitoring and evaluation are effective, consideration of the following are to be considered:

Monitoring and Review of Policy

- The R.E. The Department in consultation with the Senior Management Team along with the Board of Management will monitor policy implementation.
- At the end of each year, the R.E. Department will meet to evaluate the success of the policy implementation.

This policy will come into effect on 15/1/24

It will be reviewed after three years.

This Religious education policy will impact on the whole school community. The scope will reach:

Principal and Deputy Principals

To support the procedures of the policy and ensure its effective implementation.

Board of Management

To approve the policy and ensure its implementation.

School Staff

As Teachers of Castletroy College, the whole staff embraces and safeguards the ethos of the school and supports the cross-curricular nature of Religious Education.

Teachers of Religious Education

To implement and review the policy.

To ensure a high standard and effective delivery of Religious Education.

Chaplain [Role of Our School Chaplain](#) (School website link)

To assist in the holistic development of students. The Chaplain respects the denominational, religious and personal convictions of all. Please refer to the Chaplain's policy

Parents / Guardians

To support the RE Programme in the school.

Students

To participate in the RE programme and to cultivate an openness to other religious traditions.

POLICY ENDS HERE

Appendices

Appendix 1

Chaplain's policy

Appendix 2

Bereavement support policy

Appendix 3

Dept of Education Circulars on Religious Education

https://www.education.ie/en/Circulars-and-Forms/Active-Circulars/cl0062_2018.pdf

https://www.education.ie/en/Circulars-and-Forms/Active-Circulars/cl0013_2018.pdf

Report and recommendations by B.O.M,