

CBS Charleville Secondary School

Faith Development Policy



Introduction

A Catholic school, of its very nature, exists as a faith community and faith development is a process through which this community deepens its Christian life. Spiritual and moral development cannot be relegated to the realm of Religious Education only but are nurtured by the whole curriculum. Each member of the school community has a responsibility to live in a way that witnesses to the Gospel so that faith permeates all aspects of our school life.

Catholic schools are guided in all they do by an important and coherent vision of education. This vision is based on the truth revealed by God about ourselves, our life together in community and our ultimate destiny with God. This gives rise to an educational endeavour centred on the person of Jesus Christ, who is our way, truth and life.

The Catholic school participates in the evangelizing mission of the Church and is the privileged environment in which Christian education is carried out. In this way "Catholic schools are at once places of evangelization, of complete formation, of inculturation, of apprenticeship in a lively dialogue between young people of different religions and social backgrounds".

Mission Statement

As an all boys secondary school in the Edmund Rice tradition, C.B.S. Charleville aspires to the intellectual, moral, spiritual, physical and social formation of all members of our school community.

We seek to inspire our students to reach their potential, to foster integrity, inclusivity and a spirit of service for the greater glory of God.

- C.B.S. Charleville is an Edmund Rice Schools Trust (ERST) boys school providing an inclusive learning environment for all, in the tradition of Edmund Rice.
- We recognise and respect each student as an individual, embracing a variety of learning and teaching styles and aspiring to encourage each student's unique skills and talents.

- C.B.S. Charleville encourages the involvement of parents through home school contacts and through the involvement in the development and growth of the Parents Council.

Scope of the Policy

This policy involves students, staff, parents and the local parish, as we strive to create a faith community in which Gospel values ensure a culture of good relationships, sensitive to the needs of each person and to the common good. Faith formation is the responsibility of the whole school community.

Aims

- **Develop the whole person:**
The Edmund Rice School offers balanced, integrated and innovative teaching and learning experiences. It recognises that the human person has, for example, personal, physical, intellectual, social, spiritual, moral, emotional and aesthetic dimensions and seeks to promote the student's development in all these areas.
- **Promote a distinctive spirituality:**
The Edmund Rice School – in partnership with the home and the parish – seeks to nurture and encourage a distinctive Christian spirituality. Religious education and practice is shaped to a significant extent by the desire to promote growth in spirituality. The spiritual life of each person is developed through reflection, prayer, the sacraments, liturgy, symbols, religious art and music, sacred stories and other rituals, and the services of the school chaplaincy. Celebration of the Eucharist as a school community is a nourishing, living expression of shared faith. We seek to encourage each member of the school community to deepen their personal relationship with Jesus Christ which will give meaning and purpose to their lives, and in whom the full truth of the human person is revealed.
- **Celebrate diversity and values difference:**
The Edmund Rice School welcomes and cherishes students of different Christian denominations and of other religious faiths. It encourages them to grow in their own faith and religious practice while at the same time respecting the distinctive Catholic ethos of the school. It celebrates the richness and diversity of the school community
- **Foster a living faith through working for social and ecological justice:**
An awareness of social issues and action for social justice permeate the entire curriculum of the Edmund Rice School. Environmental and justice issues are intertwined in how humans are called to relate to God's creation. The Edmund Rice School encourages the whole school community to work for social and ecological justice in the school and in society generally.
- **Prioritise resources:** Because of its mission, the Edmund Rice School gives priority to religious education, spirituality, pastoral care and action for social and eco-justice in the allocation of human and other resources.

Rationale

The rationale of the Faith Formation Policy of CBS Charleville Secondary School is based on the ERST Charter and on the characteristic spirit of Blessed Edmund Rice. This policy will articulate this school's commitment to its Catholic ethos and to the religious and moral development of our students. It will ensure that in striving to achieve academic excellence, this school will also provide holistic education and spiritual formation that each student may learn to live in solidarity with other persons in search of the common good.

Goals

- To promote awareness of the reality that faith formation belongs to the whole school community.
- To support and encourage parents in exercising their responsibility for their child's spiritual growth and faith formation in partnership with the school and their parish communities.
- To develop a sense of the presence of God in the lives of our students.
- To provide the framework for a school faith community which will be able to enable its students to become catalysts for social transformation.

Relationship to Admissions Policy

In line with its admission policy and the Catholic ethos of the school, this school is open and accessible to all without discrimination. All aspects of the Catholic Faith will be presented in the classroom within a framework which is invitational and informative, never coercive.

Children of all faiths (or of no faith) are welcome to this school. Each child is welcome to attend and benefit from the religious education programme of the school. R.E. plays a pivotal role in the holistic development of the student.

Parents of students (and students over 18 years of age) who wish to opt out of RE class are invited to meet with the Principal, Deputy Principal, Chaplain and/or RE teacher to discuss their options. However, after these discussions have taken place, the constitutional right of the parent/ student (over 18 years) will be recognised by the school.

In the event of a student opting out of RE class, it is not possible for the school to provide supervision of the student outside of the classroom. The following two options are available:

- Students may stay within the RE classroom where they will be offered opportunities to reflect on their own faith tradition or ethical practice. Appropriate texts, or novels with moral or philosophical content, can be provided. A programme of general philosophy, based around the NCCA philosophy curriculum, and centred on the human search for meaning may also be followed. This programme of work will be agreed with, provided by and monitored by the RE teacher, and the student will be expected to complete all classwork and homework assigned by the teacher.
- Parents may remove their son from the school premises for the duration of Religious Education.

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

1. A written notification from the parent/guardian to the principal.
2. The principal meets with the parent/guardian.
3. The principal explains the Religious Education policy, subject specification/curriculum and the options the school can provide for the withdrawal of their son from Religious Education classes.
4. Parent/guardian confirms in writing the option they wish to exercise.

Roles and Responsibilities

It is essential that all members of the school community commit to the implementation and practice of the Faith Development Policy:

Board of Management

- To commit to, to promote and to support the Catholic ethos of the school.
- To proactively initiate the drafting of a Faith Development Policy and to encourage its progress.
- To approve the policy and ensure its implementation.

Principal and Deputy Principal

- To ensure the procedures of the policy and work towards its effective implementation.

All School Staff

- It is vital that all staff members understand the values underpinning Catholic education and that they subscribe to engaging in the implementation and cultivation of a culture of faith in the life of the school.

Teachers of Religious Education

- Formation will happen through formal programmes – but a Faith Development policy will ensure whole school support for the R.E. team in promoting the liturgical and sacramental life of the school.

School Chaplain

- Chaplaincy is provided to CBS Charleville by the priests of Holy Cross Parish, Charleville, especially in the area of school liturgies and services of Reconciliation. The RE department will act as the point of liaison and co-ordination between the school and the chaplain.

Pastoral Care Team

- Pastoral Care is at the heart of the Catholic school. The support and guidance given to students by the pastoral care team will be informed by the culture of faith which permeates the school.

Parents and Guardians

- To accept responsibility as the primary religious educators of their children.
- While understanding that the Catholic ethos of the school is respectful of, and open to, students of all faith traditions and none, parents must be prepared to acknowledge and support the Catholic ethos of the school.

Students

- Will participate in the R.E. programme, undertake to live the values of the ERST Charter to the best of their ability and endeavour to become involved in the liturgical celebrations and various social justice programmes undertaken by the school.

Faith Formation and the Liturgical Year

Retreats

Retreats are spiritual experiences that recognise and acknowledge the human context of the students but go beyond this to the faith context. We offer retreat days to all year groups. All students are expected to attend for retreat days whether organised on or off campus.

Prayer Room

There is a designated prayer room available to all religion classes. It is an area used for meditation, prayer and quiet reflection, which takes place in individual classes on a regular basis throughout the school year. The room is also available to individual staff and students for private prayer and reflection.

Prayer and Ritual

We recognise the importance of providing our students with experiences of prayer, ritual and liturgical experience. Religion teachers prepare and carry out liturgical celebrations during the year.

There can be important unplanned events in the school which require a response and through rituals we respond to these events in a prayerful manner. We try and make provision for prayer, meditation, reflection, a listening ear, silence and above all we try to witness the love of God.

Religious Imagery

Religious images and symbols are a part of our Catholic school. Images and symbols are used during the school year such as the Bible, November tree, Christmas crib, Advent wreath etc.

Justice and Peace

Justice and peace are an integral part of a Religious Education programme. Students are encouraged to empathise and show compassion for local and global justice issues by getting involved in supporting the work of agencies such as Trócaire, St. Vincent de Paul Society, the shoe box appeal, supporting the work of local charities etc.

Staff Support and Development

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 upskilling and enhancing their teaching skills and resources. Therefore, it is important that:

- Management is supportive of all Religious Education both in and out of the classroom.
- Opportunities are provided for the whole staff to engage in days of retreat and reflection which are supportive of their faith development.
- All Religious Education teachers are encouraged to attend in-service for Junior Cycle, Senior Cycle and the diocesan in-service.
- Financial support is provided to support teaching and learning in this area.
- Outside support is received from the Diocesan Advisor, the Edmund Rice Schools Trust, Religious Education Support Service and Diocesan Clergy.

Liturgical Calendar

September	Mass to open Academic Year
November	All Saints The Commemoration of All the Faithful Departed (All Souls)
December	Advent Christmas
January	Catholic Schools Week
February	Ash Wednesday
March	Lent
April	Easter
May	Feast Day of Blessed Edmund Rice 4 th and 6 th Year Graduation

This calendar represents the major liturgical events in the school and the continual occasions where prayer takes place either as year groups or whole school celebrations.

Signed: *Pui Savage*

Date: 17/06/2021

Chairperson, Board of Management

Signed: *Andrea Murphy*

Date: 17/06/2021

Principal