

A Model Home-School-Parish Policy

Rationale

We believe that faith development is a gradual, life long, and community process. It is primarily a partnership of home, school and parish. As a Catholic school community we believe that the education of children to and in the faith ideally takes place in the home backed up and supported by the local Christian community.

Practice

Home

Our belief is that parents educate their children in faith mainly through *“the witness of their lives, a witness that is often without words”*(General Directory for Catechesis N169)

Their love and care for their children are, for the children, the first, and therefore a very profound experience of the love and care of God.

Whenever children experience love, patience, acceptance, forgiveness then they experience the love of God and gospel values.

- In all that we do with parents we need to help them to become aware of God's presence in the midst of family life and to develop and heighten awareness.

The first and primary educators of children are their parents. Schools should seek to help parents be more conscious of their role and establish partnership. It is impossible to do too much along these lines - Religious Dimension of Education in a Catholic School. (RD)

The family is the basic cell of society. It is the cradle of life and love, the place in which the individual 'is born' and 'grows'.We cannot make too great an effort to prepare parents to be catechists of their own children - Christifideles Laici (CL)

It must be emphasised that the pastoral intervention of the Church in support of the family is a matter of urgency Familiaris Consortio (FC)

School

It is fundamentally important that the school ethos speaks to all of the love of God. Nothing is more important than this.

We recognise the limitations of the school. Expectations of the religious education which may be given, and of the growth in faith of its pupils, must be

realistic. The school alone cannot be expected to produce the fully committed member of the Church and cannot take the place of a Christian home.

We will provide:

- a knowledge and understanding of the Catholic faith
- the experience of living liturgy.
- practical and realistic support systems for parents
- experience of a Christian serving and caring community

Religious Education '*can become empty words falling on deaf ears, because the authentically Christian witness that reinforces it is absent from the school climate*'. RD

'.. without love, it will do me no good whatever ..' 1Corinthians 13:3

Parish

The role of the parish in accompanying families in their journey of faith is accomplished through:

- Knowing, visiting and encouraging families
- Providing welcome and acceptance
- Sharing faith with them and providing suitable catechetical resources and courses
- Celebrating with them through liturgy, sacraments and prayer

The school is an integral part of this provision.

The parish community must continue to be the prime mover and pre-eminent place for catechesis.

Catechesis takes place within a community living out its faith at a level of space and time not available to the school; a whole lifetime. (RD)

The parish must rediscover its vocation which is to be a welcoming family home where those who have been baptised and confirmed become aware of forming the people of God. Catechesis in Our Time (CT)

Implementation and Review

This policy is an integral part of our school development planning. Specific action is identified there and will be reviewed annually.

{an example of this will be inserted later}