



# *St. Francis of Assisi*

*Primary School, Belmayne, Dublin 13*

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION IN ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI PRIMARY SCHOOL, BELMAYNE**

### **MISSION STATEMENT**

*'Dedication to the provision of high quality educational experiences to all our students in an environment that is safe, friendly, respectful, caring and nurturing, enabling all children to reach their full potential - academically, socially, emotionally, physically, spiritually and morally'*

### **SCHOOL MOTTO**

*Be the best you can be*

St. Francis of Assisi Primary School Belmayne is a Catholic, vertical, co-educational school under the patronage of the Archbishop of Dublin, Archbishop Dermot Farrell. Opened in 2008, purpose-built temporary accommodation, the school transferred to a permanent, state-of-the-art building on Belmayne Avenue, in April 2019.

The school models and promotes a philosophy inspired by belief in God. Religious education / faith formation for pupils is in accordance with the teaching of the Catholic Church. Subject to the school's Admission Policy, we enrol children of all traditions / of no religion, and respect the beliefs and practices of all in accordance with an ethos of inclusivity.

### **Purpose of this Document**

This document is drawn up to provide information to all partners on the practices and procedures regarding Religious Education in St. Francis of Assisi Primary School Belmayne.

### **Aims of Religious Education**

The aim of the Religious Education curriculum is to help children mature in relation to their spiritual, moral and religious lives, through their encounter with, exploration and celebration of the Catholic faith.

The curriculum distinguishes four interrelated strands:

1. Christian Faith

Teaching and learning in this strand assists children to become religiously literate in key truths, doctrines and practices of the Catholic tradition.

2. The Word of God  
In this strand, children are introduced to an age-appropriate way to sacred scripture in the life of the Church.
3. Liturgy and Prayer  
Children are encouraged to engage with liturgical signs, symbols and rituals which nurture their relationship with God as Father, Son and Spirit, and to develop their capacity for personal prayer and for participation in the liturgy the Church.
4. Christian Morality.  
The teaching and learning in this strand helps children to grow to awareness of their identity as persons created in the image and likeness of God and called to live in loving, respectful relationship with God, other human persons and the whole of creation. The children are introduced to Jesus as the example for living an ethical life and are formed in gospel values and in love of God and neighbour.

The four strands overlap and interact to form a holistic learning experience for the child.

### **Implementation of the Curriculum in the School**

- As a Catholic school, Religious Education is an integral part of the curriculum and ethos of St. Francis of Assisi Primary School.
- The Catholic Preschool and Primary Religious Education Curriculum for Ireland is the foundation document for all Religious Education in Catholic Primary Schools.
- We follow the *Grow in Love* programme (approved for use in Catholic primary schools in Ireland) in all classes - Junior Infants to 6<sup>th</sup>. Each class has a complete kit which includes Teacher's Manual, posters and login code for the *Grow in Love* programme, including music / hymns, using the school's email address. The religion kits are returned to a central source to be checked and redistributed the following September. Each class also has a class set of the Pupil's Book to which pupils have free access throughout the year.
- Religious Education is time-tabled for a 30-minute period daily. To facilitate Learning / Language Support teaching and to avoid children being absent for the Religion lessons, teachers arrange the time for their own class.
- In addition to the daily lessons, prayers are recited throughout the day i.e. morning, lunch and home time. Children also participate in silent prayer and meditation which helps develop capacity for personal prayer. Prayer is included, also, in all school assemblies. Furthermore, Catholic, Christian ethos pervades all the workings of the school in the way each member of the school community interacts with and treats the other, and in the way the school conducts its business.
- Catholic Schools Week is celebrated annually throughout the school in January / February.
- Staff are facilitated to attend relevant Continuing Professional Development (CPD) / training provided by the Archdiocese.
- The school is represented at the annual school Mass organised by the Archdiocese; information regarding the Mass is forwarded to the Board of Management and staff by the Principal.

- Workbooks / Copies: Classes Junior Infants to 2<sup>nd</sup> use the *Grow in Love Pupils' Workbook*. Classes 3<sup>rd</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> use an A4-sized hard-backed copy, carried through from 3<sup>rd</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup>. In all classes, the workbook / copy is sent home on Wednesdays.
- Pupils preparing for First Eucharist have a specific copy and pupils preparing for Confirmation compile a Confirmation scrapbook.
- As in all curricular areas, support in any aspect of Religious Education will be provided should it be required by any pupil with additional needs.
- Children who are not of the Catholic faith are invited to participate in and engage with the religious education classes. As per the school's Admission Policy, where a parent(s)/guardian(s) requests in writing that their child attend St. Francis of Assisi Primary School, Belmayne without attending religious instruction in the school, a meeting will be arranged for the Principal to meet with the parent(s)/guardian(s) to discuss how the request may be accommodated by the school – See Admission Policy of the school on [www.stfrancispsbelmayne.com](http://www.stfrancispsbelmayne.com).

### **Symbols on Display Identifying the School's Catholic Ethos**

- School Crest: The school crest is divided into four sections by the Christian symbol of a cross. Included in two of the sections of the crest are: 1. The Tau cross, associated particularly with St Francis of Assisi and 2. A seven-pointed star representing the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit.
  - A Tau crucifix is on display in each classroom.
  - Each teacher organises a Prayer Space in their classroom. The Prayer Space changes in accordance with the liturgical calendar / *Grow in Love* programme
- Colours:
- Purple: Advent and Lent
- White: Christmas, Easter, Feasts of the Lord (except the Passion), feasts associated with Mary (blue also used in Prayer Space on these occasions)
- Green: Ordinary Time
- Red: Feasts of the Holy Spirit
- Posters related to the *Grow in Love* programme are displayed in classrooms
  - A list of formal prayers is on display in classrooms
  - A copy of The Catholic Children's Bible is available in each classroom.
  - The Schedule for the Roman Catholic School is on display on the wall outside the Administration Office
  - An Advent Wreath is used annually during the season of Advent.
  - A crib is erected in the front hall every year.
  - Statue of St. Francis of Assisi – Principal's Office

### **School Events**

- Prayer Service for the start of the school year
- Feast of St. Francis of Assisi – 4<sup>th</sup> October: A Blessing of Pets ceremony is held in the school annually, on the Saturday nearest the 4<sup>th</sup> October. The event is open to all families and also to members of the wider parish community.
- Remembrance Service: November
- Prayer Service during the weeks of Advent
- Christmas Plays are performed in each class every year during the month of December
- A crib is erected in the front hall

- In December annually, the school choir sings carols and Christmas songs to entertain residents of local care. The choir also sings in Donaghmede Shopping centre as a charity fund-raising event
- Prayer Service for the Feast of the Epiphany – 6<sup>th</sup> January
- Catholic School’s Week is marked in all classes and a thought for each day is read out on the school speaker system. The school also participates in a parish celebration of Sunday Mass for Catholic School’s Week
- Prayer Service for the Feast of St, Brigid
- Feast of St. Patrick – work in all classes.
- Blessed ashes are distributed on Ash Wednesday – members of the parish community visit the school.
- Prayer Services are held during the weeks of Lent. Trócaire boxes are available each Lent. Children are encouraged to help those who are less fortunate than themselves.
- Stations of the Cross / Events of Holy Week / Easter Sunday are marked during the last week of the 2<sup>nd</sup> term
- Befriending Programme – 6<sup>th</sup> Class pupils visit resident of a local care ho.me.
- The school choir / pupils from the school perform as part of the Bealtaine Festival in a local Nursing Home.
- Prayer Service to mark the end of the school year.

### **Sacramental Preparation**

Children are prepared (by the class teachers) for the Sacraments of Reconciliation and First Eucharist (Holy Communion) in 2<sup>nd</sup> Class and for Confirmation in 6<sup>th</sup> Class. Parents / Guardians who wish their children to receive the sacraments must register with the Parish. The Parish Office communicates directly, with those who have registered, regarding the Parish ‘Do this in Memory’ (Reconciliation and First Eucharist) and Faith Friends (Confirmation) programmes and other relevant details regarding the ceremonies. The school supports the parish-based programmes.

### **Roles and Responsibilities**

- The school recognises parents / guardians as the primary educators of their children and encourages them to be involved in all aspects of their child’s education, including Religious Education, and in school life. Children are encouraged to recite / learn prayers at home, and worksheets / copies are sent home regularly.
- Class teachers deliver the Religious Education programme.
- The Principal has overall responsibility for maintaining and strengthening the Catholic ethos of the school. As Religious Education Coordinator, the Principal also leads and supports staff in the teaching of Religious Education. Monthly Memo drawn up by the Education Secretariat are provided to all teaching staff by the Principal via the school’s Aladdin system. The Memos and other resources are also available on the Dublin Diocese website [www.dublindioces.ie/educationsecretariat](http://www.dublindioces.ie/educationsecretariat).
- In consultation with staff and parents / guardians, it is the responsibility of the Board of Management to approve agreed practices and procedures with regard to Religious Education in the school, and to communicate these to all partners. Communication regarding the practices and procedures may be via email / Aladdin system / school website. The Board also provides funding for resources required for the delivery of the Religious Education curriculum.
- Fr. Gerard Corcoran is the parish priest of the parish of Donaghmede-Clongriffin-Balgriffin, a member of the school’s Board of Management and Chaplain to the school. The school maintains positive links with the parish.

## **General Information**

### **a) Diocesan Information**

- Archdiocese: **Dublin**
- Archbishop: **Archbishop Dermot Farrell**
- Episcopal Vicar for Education: **Monsignor Dan O'Connor**
- Diocesan Advisors: **Sr. Anne Neylon, Sr. Maureen Matthews**

### **b) Parish Information**

- Parish: **Holy Trinity Parish, Donaghmede-Clongriffin-Balgriffin**
- Parish Priest: **Fr. Gerard Corcoran**

### **c) School Information:**

- Patron of School: **Archbishop Dermot Farrell**
- Chaplain: **Fr. Gerard Corcoran**
- Board of Management Members:  
**Micheál Ó Braonáin, Fr. Gerard Corcoran, Phyllis Carolan O'Driscoll, Aengus Murray,  
Michelle Egan, Leo Kennedy, Brian Hughes, Assumpta Kerins**
- Religious Education Coordinator: **Assumpta Kerins**

Using the *Suggested Guidelines Towards the Formulation of Religion Education Policy for Catholic Primary Schools* provided by the diocesan advisors of the Dublin Archdiocese, this document, Religious Education in St. Francis of Assisi Primary School, Belmayne was drafted by the Board of Management, in consultation with teaching staff, and parents/guardians, in the school year 2021/22. The content of the document was approved by the Board on 26<sup>th</sup> April 2022 and will be reviewed and updated as required.