

Religious Education Policy



Central Technical Institute

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Mission Statement

The Role of our school is to facilitate the students and people of Clonmel and its environs in the acquisition of general and specialised education.

We seek:

To encourage the development of the full person through imparting knowledge and skills and through inculcating values:

To develop critical thinking and to promote informed decision- making skills in students;

To bring students to an awareness of their identity in a multi-denominational, multi-cultural context;

To enable the transition to further education;

To encourage the participation of parents in the education of their children;

To respond to the educational needs of the local community.

ETHOS.

Ours is a co-ed school, its ethos being Christian and Irish. We are proud of our national identity, heritage and traditions, while extending a welcome to those students of different traditions and denominations. The school shall be a safe location where mutual courtesy and respect, justice and equality permeate all interpersonal contacts. These principles underlie all the policies of the school, some of which principles are explicit, some others implicit but all based on consensus and ownership by the entire school community.

C.T.I. is a school under the auspices of Tipperary E.T.B. It is a multi –denominational school, which does not discriminate regarding student admission on the basis of religion, culture, gender, sexual orientation, race, political opinion and social or national origin. However, our school community is a part of the wider community primarily composed of Roman Catholics, and the majority of our students are Roman Catholic, and the ethos of the school reflects this. Therefore Religious Education is a fundamental component of the curriculum in the school. Religious Education is not concerned with indoctrination or teaching a person a way of life. It focuses on enabling students to speak the language of religion; to comprehend and appreciate the place of religious and philosophical beliefs and practices in human life; to understand the need for dialogue among peoples of all faiths and none.

CENTRAL TECHNICAL INSTITUTE
RELIGIOUS EDUCATION POLICY

The Scope of Policy

1. At C.T.I , our Religious Education Policy permeates the life of the whole school community.
2. Religious Education is a compulsory subject in C.T.I. Regardless of religious belief, all students are obliged to follow the R.E. Programme in Coláiste Chluain Meala/ Gaelcholáiste Chéitinn because it is a fundamental component of the curriculum.
3. The delivery and implementation of the Policy is fostered by the following:

Board of Management

Which approved the Policy and ensures its implementation.

Principal and Deputy Principal

Support the Policy and ensure its effective implementation.

School Staff

Our Mission Statement and our school ethos guide staff in their work in the school. Thus the cross-curricular support for Religious Education is enshrined as a fundamental tenet of the school ethos.

Teachers of Religious Education

Implement the policy and review it on a regular basis. This is to ensure a high standard and effective delivery of Religious Education.

Chaplain

Assists in the faith development of students.

Pastoral Care Personnel (Class Tutors/Guidance Counsellors)

Monitor the need for a spiritual intervention for students if required and alert the R.E. department accordingly.

Parent(s)/Guardian(s)

Parents are the primary educators of their children and, accordingly, it is they who have the primary role in facilitating the faith formation of their children.

Our R.E. Policy works in conjunction with parents/guardians in so far as is practicable in this role.

The delivery of our R.E. programme to students is dependent on parents/guardians supporting our endeavours, as is the case with all other subjects on the curriculum. Students participate in the Religious Education Programme and cultivate an openness to all other religious traditions. Faith formation is governed by the majority religion, 90% of the students being Roman Catholic. Students are offered faith formation in addition to R.E. as a subject.

Aims of Religious Education

at Coláiste Chluain Meala/ Gaelcholáiste Chéitinn

- ☉ To allow students to appreciate the variety and richness of religious faiths
- ☉ To nurture the spiritual life of the student body and of each student
- ☉ To enable students to deepen their understanding of their own faith tradition and to develop powers of empathy for and sensitivity towards people of other religions and beliefs.
- ☉ To enable students to speak the public language of religion.
- ☉ To enable students to deepen their understanding of faith traditions other than their own.
- ☉ Within the practicable ordering of school life, to enable students to mark major religious components and events of their faith traditions
- ☉ To assist students in developing a moral code that is in harmony with their faith traditions and with the common good of humanity
- ☉ To prepare students to live in community with other people of their own faith, other faith traditions and none.

Goals of the R.E. Policy

To maintain the status of RE in the school.

To promote through religious education the spiritual and overall development of the students.

To help students appreciate the richness of religious traditions through providing a framework to encounter these traditions.

To provide all stakeholders with clarity in respect of aims, procedures and roles for RE in the school.

Staffing

As R.E. is underpinned by our school ethos which is fully supported by the school community, it is imperative that we continue to give R.E. the status it deserves. Currently, the R.E. curriculum is delivered by a number of teachers, not all are qualified Catechists. The R.E. Co-ordinator is Mairead Bergin, BA Theology. She leads the programme, advising those teaching the subject about curriculum content and methodologies. As an ETB school we are directed to provide Religious Education for two hours per week. In line with other subjects, R.E. class is two timetabled classes per class group per week .

Curriculum and Resources

As a fundamental component of the curriculum, Religious Education is a core subject right through from 1st to 6th Year. Religious Education is taken as a non-examination subject. Junior Cycle Religious Education follows the RE syllabus, while the Transition year and Senior Cycle programme follow a programme that has been formulated in conjunction with the R.E. Department.

The Text book used at Junior Cycle is "Pathways to God 1& 2" by Kevin Mullally, (Gill & Macmillan). No formal text book is used in senior cycle but resource materials are provided by teachers. The following books are available "Inner Place" by Tom Gunning, (Veritas) "Into the Deep" by Tom Gunning, (Veritas) ,"Challenge of God" by Anne & Niall Boyle, (Gill & Macmillan).

The DES RE syllabus allows for the study of a number of faiths in depth. In accordance with our aims all students are expected to study these faiths, regardless of their personal beliefs. Therefore, no student may opt out of formal RE classes.

However, C.T.I respects and acknowledges the rights of the parents who require that their son or daughter 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 child safeguarding.

Three options that C.T.I. can provide for students when a request for 'opt out' from R. E. is made include:

1. Staying within the R.E. classroom following specific/ educationally appropriate work assigned by teacher.
2. Parents /Guardians removing their son or daughter from the school premises for the duration of R.E.
3. Parents/ Guardians provide supervision within the school for their son or daughter during R.E classes.

'Opt out' from R.E. may only occur when a parent/guardian has made a formal request in writing to the Principal.

Resources

A variety of resources can be availed of by teachers within the school. These include newspaper articles, magazines – "Reality", "Face-up", photocopies, audio visual materials – DVD's, powerpoint presentations and appropriate I.T. sites. Teachers based in their own classroom store their own resources, other resources are stored in the R.E. Co-ordinators room, Room 33. These resources are updated by the Religious Education Department on a continuous basis. Resources are also shared among staff within the department.

Staff Support and Development

Support is provided through the following:

Provision of finance for resources and in-service

Support Services

Diocesan Advisor:

Chaplain: Fr. Ray Reidy

Retreats are provided for Transition Year Students.

Faith Formation and the Liturgical Year

In keeping with the ethos and traditions of the school, a number of liturgical events are marked in the school. These celebrations are inclusive of all faith traditions and all students are encouraged to participate. These include:

Mass for opening of the school year held in the Franciscan Church, Clonmel

Celebrations of the sacrament of Reconciliation

Advent and Lenten liturgies

Blessing of throats on St Blaise's Day

Application of ashes on Ash Wednesday

Graduation mass/ service for Leaving Cert students

Other prayer services as appropriate, e.g bereavements etc.

School assembly every Monday morning with prayer, reflections

Religious symbols that are visible in our school environment are drawn from Christian, Buddhist, Islamic, Hindu and Jewish traditions.

Symbols used will have a written explanation to educate staff and students regarding their meaning.

To celebrate Christmas e.g. it is a tradition in C.T.I. to display the crib. Likewise, it is a part of our tradition to have a May Altar during the month of May.

Outreach Programmes.

Reflection on local and global social issues is encouraged through the following:

1. Participation in fundraising events for Safe House Centre, Cambodia. This is a charity the whole school community is involved in supporting for the last number of years. Funds are raised throughout the year and presented to the orphanage twice yearly by Mairead Bergin. It has proved very useful in the teaching of Development Education. This project, as part of Development Education, opens up the eyes and minds of students to their responsibilities regarding the rights and needs of people in Third World countries.


2. Guest speakers are invited to talk to students on a range of religious, social moral and ethical issues.

This Policy was approved by the Board of Management on 3.12.2014


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SIGNATURES

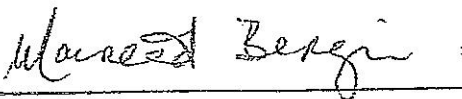
Board of Management



Principal



Religious Co-Ordinator



Diocesan Representative

Date

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