

St. Augustine s College, Dungarvan



Religious Education Policy

Mission Statement

St. Augustine s College is a caring community committed to offering all of its students and staff, a happy and safe environment in which they can work, learn and play. We endeavour to facilitate the academic, personal, moral, spiritual and social development of each member of this school community. Our aim is to provide a balanced and well rounded education for all our students.

Vision Statement

While we welcome all faiths it must be understood that we are a catholic school teaching in the tradition of St. Augustine. An Augustinian school endeavours to contribute to the understanding of the faith and to the experience of God. At the centre of any Augustinian school is the chaplain who is primarily a faith presence striving to build a Christian community inspired by the teaching and the spirit of St. Augustine.

The core values of Unitas, Veritas, Caritas are central to the philosophy of Augustinian Education. The triangle of unity, truth, love we believe, forms the foundation for our education of young minds and we aspire to not just practice these values but to live them on a daily basis in our school community.

SECTION 1

The objectives of the policy

- To ensure the status of RE in the school.
- To promote the religious and overall development of the students.
- To appreciate the richness of religious traditions and to provide a framework to encounter these traditions.
- To lead to a greater degree of clarity in respect of aims, procedures and roles for RE in the school.

Inspiration

This RE Policy is inspired by the vision of St. Augustine.

- We seek to live by Christian values.
- We recognise the dignity of each individual.
- We look with special concern to the under-privileged.
- We seek to promote the growth and development of the whole person – spiritual, moral, intellectual, social, emotional and physical.

Aims of Religious Education

- To contribute to the religious and faith development of our students.
- To develop care for the vulnerable, foster justice and fairness towards all, and co-operation between pupils.
- To provide opportunities to deepen sacramental awareness.
- To develop understanding of our core values (unity, truth and love).

SECTION 2

The RE policy will involve the whole school community.

Board of Management

To approve the policy and ensure its implementation.

Principal and Deputy Principal

To support the policy and ensure its effective implementation.

School Staff

To embrace and safeguard the Catholic ethos of the school.

Teachers of RE

To implement, review and monitor the policy and to ensure the effective delivery of Religious Education.

Chaplain

To assist in the faith development of students.

Pastoral Care Personnel

To monitor the effects of the policy and to provide support and guidance to the students.

Parents / Guardians

To support the RE Programme in the school and facilitate the faith formation of their children.

Students

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

SECTION 3

- **Staffing**
- **Department Meetings**
- **Curriculum**
- **Resources**
- **Opting Out**
- **Staff Support and Development**
- **The Liturgical Year**
- **Parental Involvement**
- **Diocesan Advisor**
- **Monitoring of the Policy.**

Staffing

It is imperative that RE is given a status on a par with other subjects. This means:

- Looking at the appointment and selection of qualified teachers.
- RE's place on the school timetable.
- The allocation of class periods.

Department Meetings

R.E. teachers meet at the start of the year and from time to time to review the programme; also on occasions where a liturgy is required or where a crisis arises that concerns anyone/group in the school community.

Curriculum

- Two class periods are devoted to R.E. weekly. During the year other classes are allocated for liturgical celebrations.
- R.E. programmes in use at Junior and Senior cycle:
All students have non-exam R.E. classes.
- The programme follows the guidelines laid down by the Catholic hierarchy; standard text books are used.
- All religion classes are not banded.
- Our school chaplain meets all senior students every two weeks on a class by class basis.

Resources

Resources available for the teaching of R.E in the school:

- Church
- Meditation room
- Set of bibles.
- Class sets of religion books.
- Powerpoints in Religion Department folder on teacher s server.

Opting Out

- Pupils whose parents request that their sons or daughters do not receive instruction in Religious Education and pupils who are non-Catholic or of no denomination are exempted from participation in R.E. classes and liturgical services. Participation is voluntary. Attendance is required for health and safety reasons.
Such students are required to stay in the room under teacher supervision.

Staff Support and Development

- Resources requested by the R.E department are given favourable consideration.
- Outside support Services for RE teachers:
Diocesan Advisors.
Inside support services for RE teachers:
Chaplain
- R.E.teachers are encouraged to attend inservice.
- St Augustine s College is an integral and committed member of the AVI's (Augustinian values institute).
- There is a budget for R.E.

Liturgical Year

The following services are held with the Chaplin during the year:

- A beginning of the year mass for all year groups.
- End of term prayer service in October.
- Each class has an individual class mass for the dead in November.
- Reconciliation services and carol services for each year in December.
- Mass for each year on the 6th of January for the beginning of the new year.
- A service for the beginning of Lent on Ash Wednesday.
- During Lent there are weekly prayer services.
- Reconciliation services for each class before Easter.
- End of year services for each year in May .
- Graduation mass for Leaving Cert students and their parents at the end of May.
- Third year students and their parents are invited to attend a pre-junior mass at the end of May.

Parental Involvement

- Parents of first year students are encouraged to attend a mass in September with their son/daughter.
- In May parents of sixth year students are invited to attend the graduation mass of their son/daughter.
- Parents are given an outline of the school's R.E. programme at the Open Day .

Diocesan Advisor

- The Diocesan Advisor visits the school several times a year.
- Communication is maintained through regular e-mails offering advice, encouragement and ideas for class topics.

Monitoring of the Policy.

- The RE department will monitor policy implementation.
- At the end of each year, the RE department will meet to evaluate the success of the policy implementation.