



# Religion Plean Scoile

St. Louise de Marillac Primary School  
Drumfinn Road  
Ballyfermot  
Dublin 10

### **Introductory Statement**

St. Louise's Primary School, founded in 1958, is a Catholic school under the patronage of the Catholic Archbishop of Dublin. The school promotes a welcoming, loving, compassionate, forgiving, respectful, hopeful and enabling culture in the tradition of St. Vincent de Paul and St. Louise de Marillac, co-founders of the Daughters of Charity. It is linked to the Parish of St. Matthew's, Ballyfermot.

### **Rationale**

This policy has been reviewed in line with our three year review cycle.

### **Relationship to School Ethos**

Pupils of all faiths or of no faith are enrolled in our school. Their practices and beliefs are respected in accordance with the school ethos of inclusion.

### **General Information**

#### **Diocesan Information:**

Name: Dublin Diocese

Patron: Archbishop of Dublin

Director of Education: Education Secretariat, Dublin Diocese

Website: <http://education.dublindiocese.ie/>

Diocesan Advisors: Primary Diocesan Advisers

#### **Parish Information:**

Name: St. Matthew's Parish

Parish Priest: Fr. Piaras MacLochlainn

Area Bishop: Fr. Paul Thornton PP of Brackenstown Parish, Swords (covering the position at the moment)

#### **School Information:**

Our school is called St. Louise de Marillac Primary School. Our chaplain is Fr. Piaras MacLochlainn. Currently we are fortunate in having the support of Sr. Cabrini DC to support our parents and children for sacramental preparation and organisation of prayer services for the school community.

Board of Management Members: Gerry Berry (chairperson), Mary Hogan, Vincent Jackson, Gary Creighton, Lynette Daly, Anna Gibbons, Claire O' Dwyer and Alma Quinn

#### **School Procedures**

Having satisfied the Admissions Policy, every child is welcome into the school. However the school cannot undertake to educate children of other faiths in their own religion. The school uses "Grow in Love", the Religious Education series for Catholic Primary Schools in Ireland from junior infants to sixth class. Religious Education is delivered in each class for 30 minutes daily.

## Aims of Religious Education

In the "General Directory for Catechesis" the fundamental tasks of catechesis are stated to be:

- Promoting knowledge of the faith
- Liturgical education
- Moral formation
- Teaching to pray
- Education for community life
- Missionary initiation

## Implementation of Religious Education throughout the school

### Prayer

Prayer is a regular feature of the school day. Teachers say the following prayers with their classes daily:

- *Morning Prayer*
- *Prayer Before Meals*
- *Prayer After Meals*
- *Evening Prayer*

The *Hail Mary* is said daily during May and, when appropriate, within the classroom. Other prayers are taught in accordance with the religious programme.

### Mass

Children are taught some of the Mass rituals within the classroom. All classes are welcome to attend morning Mass occasionally in St. Matthew's Church. Second and sixth class pupils should attend regularly to practise for the sacraments of First Holy Communion and Confirmation. Depending on the availability of a celebrant, the school may celebrate Mass during the year and Sr. Cabrini leads several prayer services throughout the year. Children can also watch Mass on the RTE Player or on the live link to St. Matthew's Church.

### Materials

The "Grow in Love" programme is being used in the school. The resources include:

- Teacher's Book
- Child's Book
- Child's workbook
- Posters
- Resource packs
- Online resources
- RTE Player
- Website recommended by the Diocesan Advisors: [www.education.dublindiocese.ie](http://www.education.dublindiocese.ie)

### Symbols/Sacred Space

Each classroom has a sacred space appropriate to the class level, which changes in accordance with the liturgical cycle. Our reception area also has a sacred place, where a statue of St. Louise is on display. All classes

are encouraged to set up a May altar during the month of May. Displays for different religious feast days and festivals may be displayed. A large crib is set up in December.

### Catholic Feasts

The staff and children celebrate the feast days in a variety of ways, from learning about them within the class, to celebrating as a whole school. The school chaplain/Sr. Cabrini is regularly invited to help us celebrate these events.

- Feast of St. Vincent de Paul - 27<sup>th</sup> September
- Feast of St. Catherine Labouré/ Miraculous Medal - November 27<sup>th</sup> - children receive a medal
- Immaculate Conception - December 8<sup>th</sup>
- Advent - Advent wreath and calendar
- Christmas - large Nativity crib displayed, carol service held for the whole school
- The Epiphany - January 6<sup>th</sup>
- Catholic Schools Week (Mass for grandparents)
- Feast of St. Brigid - February 1<sup>st</sup>
- Feast of St. Louise - May 9<sup>th</sup> (changed from March 15<sup>th</sup> in 2016)
- Feast of St. Patrick - March 17<sup>th</sup>
- Lent - ashes distributed on Ash Wednesday
- Easter - at class level
- Celebration of the closing of the school year with school Mass
- 6<sup>th</sup> class prayer service for graduation

### Sacramental Preparation

#### First Confession and First Holy Communion

The children begin learning prayers in Junior Infants. Parents of second class children are asked to help their children learn the prayers and responses needed for First Penance and First Holy Communion. The doctrine associated with the sacraments is taught in accordance with the "Grow in Love" programme. Second classes attend Mass / visit the church more often before the First Penance and First Holy Communion. The children will participate in the programme organised by the parish in preparation for the sacraments.

#### Confirmation

The sixth class girls are encouraged to learn the following:

- The Ten Commandments (modern format)
- The Seven Sacraments
- The Gifts
- Symbols of the Holy Spirit
- Be familiar with the Mysteries of the Rosary

The doctrine associated with the sacrament is taught in accordance with the religious programme in use. The girls compile a scrap book that outlines their growth in the Catholic community. They participate in a Service of Light ceremony some weeks prior to the Confirmation ceremony.

## **Partners in Religious Education**

### **Home / School**

- Textbooks/ workbook/copies sent home regularly with illustrations, stories, poems and activities for families to do together
- Letter from “Grow in Love” resource pack to be sent home termly with link to the diocesan website [www.education.dublindiocese.ie](http://www.education.dublindiocese.ie)
- Parents are invited to any meetings held about preparation for First Communion and Penance and Service of Light and Confirmation
- Parents are encouraged to take the children to Mass regularly and participate in the sacramental preparation programme offered by the parish
- Encouraged to view the aforementioned website

### **School/Parish**

- Sacramental preparation programme
- Visits from Chaplain
- Children from all classes welcome to attend Mass occasionally during school day
- Children from older classes welcome to attend Confession with prior arrangement

## **Roles & Responsibilities**

### **Staff**

- Deliver “Grow in Love” programme
- Cooperate with the chaplain/parish and diocesan advisors
- Avail of in-service support

### **Principal**

- Facilitate supportive interaction between all parties in implementing the programme

### **Parents**

- Actively support the ethos of the school
- Support the school during times of sacramental preparation and assist at home with Religious Education homework

### **Pupils of Other Religious Traditions**

We welcome children of other or of no faith in accordance with the school’s Admissions Policy. The following, taken from our Admissions Policy, are the school’s arrangements for students, where the parents have requested that the student attend the school without attending religious instruction in the school. These arrangements will not result in a reduction in the school day of such students:

- The student will remain in their classroom while religious instruction takes place.
- The student will engage in an age appropriate, alternative and independent activity such as reading, project work etc. while the religious instruction takes place.

- The school celebrates religious feasts throughout the year. Ceremonies take place in the school hall. Children, not attending religious instruction, may be present at these ceremonies but do not participate. If supervision is available, these pupils may be supervised in an alternative location in a non-instructional capacity.
- When sacramental preparation takes place it involves visits to St. Matthew's Church. The children, who are not preparing to receive the sacraments, may stay behind in a different classroom in the school, which will include teacher/SNA supervision.
- A written request should be made to the Principal of the school. A meeting will then be arranged with the parent(s) to discuss how the request may be accommodated by the school.

#### **Evaluation Criteria**

- An acknowledged sense of God, faith and prayer within the school community
- Respect for all within the school community
- Parental interest
- Recognisable links between home, school and parish

#### **Review**

The Religious Education Policy will be reviewed through observation and staff and parent discussions. As per our agreed systematic cycle of review, it will be reviewed after three years unless circumstances arise that necessitate an earlier review. Having been ratified by the Board of Management, it will be available for viewing by staff and parents on the school website/blog and in the policy folder in the staffroom and parents' room.

The above policy was discussed and ratified by the Board of Management.

*Dr. Gerry Berry*

Signed on behalf of B.O.M. by Chairperson:

Date: 27<sup>th</sup> April 2021

## Appendix A: World Religious Holidays/Celebrations

### **Islam**

- Al-Hijra — Islamic New Year. Marks the end of Mohammad's journey from Mecca to Medina.
- **Eid ul-Adha** — Festival of Sacrifice.
- **Eid ul-Fitr** — End of Muslim month of fasting (Ramadan)
- Prophet's Birthday -- Celebration of the **birth of the Prophet Muhammad**
- Ramadan — Muslim Month of Fasting.

### **Hinduism**

- Diwali — Festival of Lights is a major holiday that is also celebrated by Buddhists, Jains and Sikhs.
- Dussera — This is the important tenth day of Navratri.
- Ganesha Chaturthi — celebration the birth of Ganesha, son of Shiva
- Holi — Festival of Colors
- Navratri — Nine Nights.

### **Buddhist**

- Chinese New Year
- Nirvana Day
- Losar
- Songkran Festival
- Wesak
- Wassana
- Obon
- Dhamma Day
- Confucius's Birthday
- Pavarana
- Kathina
- Bodhi Day

### **Christian Orthodox:**

- The Nativity of the Theotokos
- The Elevation of the Holy Cross
- The Presentation of the Theotokos
- The Nativity of the Lord
- The Theophany (Epiphany) of the Lord
- The Presentation of the Lord
- The Annunciation

- The Transfiguration
- The Dormition (Falling Asleep) of the Theotokos

#### **Appendix B: Possible Parental survey questions**

If a child of a religion other than Catholicism is enrolled in the school, the teacher may like to circulate this survey to the parents to gain some background information.

Q. Are there any specific religious traditions that your child partakes in that the school and the class teacher should be aware of?

Q. Are there any religious holidays that your child celebrates that we could incorporate into their classroom? (e.g. Al-Hijra or Diwali)

Q. Are there any religious customs that your child follows that you would like the school and class teacher to be made aware of?