

The Special Status of Religious Education

In using Christ as "our family role model", it follows that the path to full achievement of potential is, for each person, only to be found through sound knowledge of His teachings, followed ever more closely through a deepening spiritual awareness of His presence in our lives. Since as Catholics we believe that a person's potential can only be fully realised through a lived commitment to Christ, based upon an informed understanding of His way, it follows that Religious Education is central to St Joseph's curriculum. It is also essential to the rounded development of each pupil and will therefore form a core part of our curriculum. St Joseph's school also recognises that the spiritual and moral development of each pupil is not the sole responsibility of the Religious Education Department, but rather, in word and in deed, by teaching and by example, and at all times that of every member of the school community.

The Curriculum and the Community

The school recognises that close involvement with the community enhances the quality of teaching, learning, attainment and progress. Where resources permit it, we aim to take every opportunity to:

- use the knowledge and expertise of members of our local, national and international communities to enrich the work of departments.
- use the facilities and environment of the community as teaching and learning resources in helping to develop pupils' knowledge, skills and attitudes.
- develop a healthy community approach in our pupils by introducing them to important local, national and international issues, and by encouraging them to become actively engaged.
- involve the pupils practically in community work (e.g. SVP, choir; assemblies, Masses, primary schools; help with community projects etc).
- ensure that each department updates and revises schemes of work to include new community projects as they are introduced.

In this way, "the community" is regarded as a natural resource, to be drawn upon across the curriculum as an essential part of school life.

Partnership with Parents

In meeting its responsibilities to parents, St Joseph's seeks to foster an open door policy. The school endeavours to inform parents as fully as possible on the progress of their child, and on the performance of the school as a whole. Parents are welcome into school at any time to discuss their child's schooling and are warmly invited to attend the many functions and celebrations which take place during the school year.

The school will endeavour to ensure that;

- i) All pupils are positively engaged in the whole range of curricular provision.
- ii) All curricular areas contribute towards a broad and balanced education.
- iii) All curriculum areas contribute towards the moral and spiritual development of each individual.

- iv) Access to the curriculum is extended to pupils having special educational needs through the provision of appropriate support.
- v) Wherever possible, parents are engaged in the process of supporting children through the education programme.
- vi) Due consideration is given to recognising the importance of community involvement in enhancing the quality of teaching, learning, attainment and progress.
- vii) Processes of assessment and recording enable pupils' strengths to be extended and limitations reduced.
- viii) Manageable processes of recording ensure continuity and progression of pupils' learning
- ix) The school curriculum as a whole promotes high expectations of pupils' performance.
- x) The delivery of the curriculum encourages the development of self-esteem.

St Joseph's curriculum will be reviewed regularly in order to reflect current educational understanding, the changing nature of the school's intake and the latest governmental and national requirements and the available resources.

