

# SECTION ONE

## SCHOOL RESOURCES



A-E = Characteristics  
A1-E10 = Targets



### ETHOS REFLECTION

#### A: The school is founded on a Catholic understanding of education

The spiritual development of pupils is a central educational aim in Catholic education. The school values a broad curriculum and co-curricular activities in order to foster a deeper sense of the whole person, life and reality as a whole. Staff and pupils seek excellence, including academic achievement, in the context of a broad Christian philosophy of education. The school seeks to nourish the person through a varied academic curriculum, involvement in the arts, physical education and sporting activity, and a commitment to moral development and personal responsibility. In a more multicultural society Catholic schools welcome all that is positive in this new diversity and instil an attitude of respect for the good of the other and the importance of the spiritual and religious dimension of education.

<h3>Targets</h3> <p>Please ✓ in appropriate box</p>	This is very true of our school	This is true of our school but we can do better	We are weak on this issue	This has never been part of our school
<p><b>A1.</b> The school understands all pupils, as human persons made in the image of God, are called to share in God's love forever by following the example of Christ.</p>				
<p><b>A2.</b> Values inspired by the Gospel, such as dignity, forgiveness, justice and option for the poor, are integral to decision-making within and on behalf of the school.</p>				
<p><b>A3.</b> The school consciously attends to the moral development of the pupils in its policies and planning.</p>				
<p><b>A4.</b> Pupils of other faiths and world views who are members of the school community are welcomed into the life of the school as the board of management, principal and staff are aware of the importance of ecumenism and inter-religious dialogue and the place of encounter and learning from other traditions in Catholic education.</p>				
<p><b>A5.</b> All members of the school community – teachers, parents, pupils and staff – are aware of their responsibility to cooperate and collectively work towards the realisation of the common educational project of building up the Kingdom of God and the experience of God's love.</p>				
<p><b>A6.</b> Excellence in school life is an ideal to which we aspire while acknowledging that it must be understood, written and spoken about not as an absolute measure but as the best that each individual child is capable of attaining.</p>				
<p><b>A7.</b> The school works in close partnership with other Catholic primary schools in the same geographical area.</p>				
<p><b>A8.</b> Education is written and spoken about by the principal and the teachers as something broad and holistic; as embracing the academic, physical, social, spiritual and religious development of the child from a Christian perspective.</p>				



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#### B: The school is a Catholic community

Schools are communities made up of pupils, parents, staff, board members, patrons/trustees and others associated with the school. Parents are the most important educators of their children. Catholic primary schools are rooted in parish communities where they are an important part of local life and foster a sense of shared responsibility for Catholic education.

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<p><b>B1.</b> <i>Share the Good News – The National Directory for Catechesis in Ireland</i> is based on a vision of partnership between home, school and parish. Catholic pupils are prepared for the sacraments in accordance with this vision. Catholic pupils are prepared for the sacraments through a partnership of home, school and parish.</p>				
<p><b>B2.</b> The school is active and visible in parish and local community events.</p>				
<p><b>B3.</b> The contribution of parents to the life of the school is encouraged and welcomed in accordance with the vision of <i>Share the Good News – The National Directory for Catechesis in Ireland</i>.</p>				
<p><b>B4.</b> Child safeguarding is a priority in the school so as to ensure that there is a safe and caring environment for pupils and employees – supports are provided for individual members of the school community to foster their deeper development.</p>				
<p><b>B5.</b> The members of staff of the school are confident in articulating its Catholic ethos.</p>				
<p><b>B6.</b> There is an active, living link between the school and the local Catholic parish community, which in turn supports the school.</p>				
<p><b>B7.</b> Issues relating to the Catholic identity of the school appear frequently on the agenda for board of management meetings.</p>				
<p><b>B8.</b> Meetings within the school (board of management, staff, parents' association, etc.) usually begin and/or end with prayerful reflection.</p>				

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**C: The school is an agent of personal growth and social transformation**

The school community is committed to growth in moral awareness and to the search for justice, integrity and care for the earth. There is emphasis on pastoral care and student support, not least for those who are educationally disadvantaged. A dialogue between faith and contemporary culture is fostered in an age-appropriate manner.

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<b>C1.</b> All school planning and policy development is clearly linked to and inspired by the school's mission statement.				
<b>C2.</b> Visitors to our school experience an atmosphere that reflects the values of justice, forgiveness, integrity and respect for the needs and rights of pupils, parents and members of staff.				
<b>C3.</b> Our pupils, in a spirit of mutual respect and trust, can approach staff and share concerns.				
<b>C4.</b> The school participates in and supports justice and peace initiatives such as Trócaire's Lenten campaign.				
<b>C5.</b> Pupils receive an age-appropriate introduction to media studies as they learn to critique what they see on their TV and computer screens (e.g. how cartoons and advertisements work; the models of 'success' and 'happiness' being promoted) and are invited to reflect on the uses, influences and dangers of modern means of communication: Internet, Facebook, Twitter, mobile phones.				
<b>C6.</b> The school teaches pupils to care for creation by encouraging authentic changes in lifestyle such as 'avoiding the use of plastic and paper, reducing water consumption, separating refuse, cooking only what can reasonably be consumed, showing care for other living beings, using public transport or car-pooling, planting trees, turning off unnecessary lights, or any number of other practices.'				
<b>C7.</b> As a Catholic school we challenge all members of the school community to live a simpler life, based on sharing the earth as our common home with all people.				
<b>C8.</b> Pope Francis teaches that a passionate concern for our world cannot be supported without 'a spirituality capable of inspiring us'. In stimulating pupils towards exercising a greater concern for our world, the school community is animated by the Church's rich spiritual heritage.				



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### ETHOS REFLECTION

#### D: Religious education is an integral part of the life of the school

The religious education provided in the school is inspired by *Share the Good News – The National Directory for Catechesis in Ireland*. The religious education programme includes faith formation, prayer and sacramental experiences, and a growing awareness of being stewards of God's creation. There is support for staff, principals, pupils, parents and members of boards in opening their hearts and minds to the presence of God, as religious education is not just a school subject but embraces the whole journey of life.

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<p><b>D1.</b> There is a policy statement in the school on religious education which includes faith formation, prayer, sacramental experiences and awareness of the stewardship of God's creation. This is stated as a developmental, year-by-year policy and integrated with relevant policy documents across other aspects of school life.</p>				
<p><b>D2.</b> The religious education programme receives its allotted time for each year and the school follows the curriculum and textbooks approved by the Irish Catholic Bishops' Conference.</p>				
<p><b>D3.</b> The principal or the RE representative work with class groupings in planning the work for the year and this is clearly stated and communicated to parents, staff and the local parish as a basis for mutual understanding and a partnership approach.</p>				
<p><b>D4.</b> The school participates in Catholic Schools Week each year and continues to utilise the resources developed for Catholic Schools Week throughout the school year.</p>				
<p><b>D5.</b> At the beginning and end of each school day and at other specified times during the day, there is time devoted to prayer and/or reflection.</p>				
<p><b>D6.</b> There is a developmental programme in the school on environmental and ecological education, which is inclusive of religious education, as the school promotes 'a new way of thinking about human beings, life, society and our relationship with nature' in accord with Pope Francis' encyclical <i>Laudato Si'</i>.</p>				
<p><b>D7.</b> Adult members of the school community participate in opportunities for spiritual support and growth provided in partnership with the diocese and other bodies.</p>				
<p><b>D8.</b> The school makes explicit mention – in its literature, statements and oral communications at key events – that the spiritual development of pupils is a central educational aim.</p>				

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### ETHOS REFLECTION

E: We are called to be followers of Christ				
<p>The vision that underpins all aspects of school life informs us that the human person is made in the image of God (<i>Imago dei</i>) and is called to share in God's own life forever. All Christians who are part of the school are invited to constantly rediscover what it is to be a follower of Christ and to give witness to the centrality of the Gospel. The school continues the mission of Christ entrusted to the Church to go and teach.</p>				
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<b>E1.</b> The school has a mission statement clearly rooted in the mission of Christ.				
<b>E2.</b> All members of the school community are cherished and valued as Christ would welcome them.				
<b>E3.</b> At regular school assemblies there is ongoing reflection on the Christian way of life.				
<b>E4.</b> Members of staff are provided with opportunities to develop their understanding of Jesus Christ.				
<b>E5.</b> Children are introduced to and experience a variety of ways of praying including guided reflections, periods of silence and participation in the liturgy.				
<b>E6.</b> The seasons of the Christian year are highlighted by appropriate and relevant spiritual celebrations to which all in the school community are invited.				
<b>E7.</b> There are Christian symbols (such as crucifix, art works) in each classroom and place of gathering in the school.				
<b>E8.</b> Copies of the Bible are available for use in senior classes and the Bible is always treated with respect in the school community.				