



# Presentation Senior School

*"A community of learners inspired by the vision and values of Nano Nagle"*

## Presentation Senior School Ethos

**Rationale:** The education mission of our school is informed not just by the gospels and by the Church but also by the charism of Nano Nagle. This policy has been prepared to articulate the distinctive characteristics of our Presentation primary school. While there is no single component of the vision, mission and practice of a Presentation school that determines its distinctiveness, this document sets out the characteristics and features of the Presentation school which combine to enrich the ethos of the school.

It is intended to be a living document and so it will evolve over time in response to the demands of our changing times and in the light of an unchanging Gospel. All members of our school community, past and present, are invited to contribute to its development and evolution. It is intended that the process of development and review will help us to reflect on what it means to be a Presentation school, to understand more fully the values that lie at the heart of the matter and to give them the fullest and richest expression possible in the daily life of the school.

**Relationship to Mission Vision & Aims:** The Vision/Mission Statement of this school reflects its identity as a Catholic school in the Presentation tradition.

This school is a Catholic School - The Catholic school is founded on Gospel values, on the writings of the New Testament which give witness to the life, teaching and mission of Jesus. It is informed also by the tradition of the church in education and the influence of the Spirit.

The Catholic school promotes the development of a community of faith inspired by Gospel values and aims to enable each child

- to develop in an open, happy, stimulating and mutually respectful environment
- to develop a love of learning and an openness to life long learning
- to develop moral values and the ability for good decision-making to live a full life as a unique individual and to develop with confidence the full range of their abilities and talents in a balanced and integrated way
- to develop as a social being who lives and cooperates generously with others and so contributes to the good of society

Nano Nagle believed that education liberates and empowers the individual, enabling each person to live life to the full. This belief lies at the heart of the Presentation approach to education which is informed by the principles of the Catholic school set out above and also by the charism of Nano Nagle which resulted in her unique, selfless and generous response to the circumstances and needs of her time.



This school is a Presentation School - As a Presentation school particular emphasis is placed on:

- developing a common vision and mission for the school that is shared by staff, students, parents and management
- respecting the dignity of each pupil, staff member and parent
- cultivating good relationships
- being inclusive and being especially mindful of the disadvantaged and those with special needs
- providing a holistic education, enabling each student to achieve their full potential
- striving for excellence in all aspects of school life
- promoting a sense of responsibility and a spirit of service and care.
- promoting justice and care for the earth and all of God's creation
- being rooted in our local parish and wider community; being truly a resource for the local community and mindful of local needs
- being open to alternative approaches to education especially for those who are most disadvantaged
- engaging in reflective practice at all levels

As a school with convent status we welcome occasional visits from Sisters or other representatives of the congregation and we are delighted to facilitate meetings with class groups and staff for the promotion of the story of Nano Nagle and the Presentation charism and to engage in dialogue about how Gospel values and the charism of Nano may find expression in today's world and, in particular, in the life of the school.

**Goals of this Policy:**

- To give expression to and to enhance the Presentation ethos of the school and to ensure that the values of the Presentation ethos are lived out in the daily life of the school
- To assist parents in the process on handing on the Christian faith and values to their children

The school strives to achieve these goals through

- its mission statement,
- the broad range of educational opportunities it provides for its pupils,
- the methodologies it employs,
- its policies, procedures and management style and
- the quality of the relationships between all members of the school community

All of our school policies will be influenced by this statement of ethos.

This policy sets out below the steps taken by the school to give effect to these goals.



## **Giving Expression to the Presentation Ethos:**

### **Mission Statement:**

- The school has a mission statement which refers to Presentation values in education and which was adopted by the Board of Management following a process of consultation with the staff, parents and the trustees of the school
- The Mission Statement and the Schedule of the Catholic School are prominently displayed in the school and are referred to regularly at meetings of the Board, staff and parents and at school assemblies
- The school views the mission statement as the standard by which its success is measured by all members of the school community
- The school provides a broad range of programmes – curricular and extra-curricular – to help it achieve its mission; these programmes include elements which heighten awareness of injustice locally, nationally and around the world and which also address care for the earth and all of God's creation
- The school promotes an awareness of the story and charism of Nano Nagle
- The Principal and staff lead by example and embody the vision and mission of the school
- The school provides induction for all new staff members and the Presentation charism is promoted as part of the induction process
- Staff meetings, Board of Management Meetings and Parents' Council meetings all begin with a prayer, often with reference to the charism of Nano Nagle and Presentation Values in education
- All school Information Booklets, promotional material and, in particular, enrolment documentation refer to our mission statement and our identity as a Presentation school
- Our School Website highlights our mission statement and our identity as a Presentation school

### **Reflective Practice:**

- The school acknowledges that it is accountable for the achievement of its mission
- The Board of Management issues information and reports to the trustees, the Department of Education and Science, staff and parents as appropriate
- The mission statement of the school is reviewed at least every five years; staff, parents and trustees are consulted as part of the review process
- The school creates opportunities whereby the Board, staff and parents can engage with the mission statement of the school and reflect on how well it is lived out in practice.
- The Board also creates opportunities from time to time for whole-school reflection, involving all of the stakeholders together
- The school strives to achieve excellence in every sphere of activity; it is committed to the process of school development planning and to evaluating outcomes
- The school has a comprehensive range of school policies in pursuit of its vision for the school and keeps them under regular review, involving all stakeholders in the process
- The school involves parents appropriately in the school planning process
- The school is committed to identifying in-service needs for staff and to providing for same as resources allow



**Relationships:**

- The school shows respect for all, acknowledging the dignity of every individual. It understands that the quality of relationships at all levels and between all stakeholders in the school is the cornerstone on which its mission is built
- The school strives to model the Gospel values of truth, freedom, compassion, justice, love, tolerance and forgiveness in all relationships.
- The school works hard to ensure that every child feels cared for; it takes measurable steps to ensure that all pupils receive appropriate pastoral care
- The school strives to build the self-confidence of every child, helping each one to discover their talents and takes steps to affirm achievement at all levels
- The school promotes a spirit of service and care and encourages all stakeholders to look beyond themselves
- In consultation with all in the school community, the school develops and reviews a code of behaviour and disciplinary procedures which are supportive, fair, consistent, which promote the Presentation ethos and which emphasise affirmation, self-esteem and good relationships

**Inclusiveness:**

- The school has an effective admissions and participation policy which is open, transparent and inclusive. It welcomes students from all backgrounds, particularly those who are disadvantaged or who have special needs
- The school strives to create for every pupil a sense of belonging and takes positive steps to encourage optimum participation by every pupil
- Parents, as the primary educator of their children, are made to feel welcome in the school and they are encouraged to participate, as appropriate, in the life of the school
- The work of students is regularly displayed around the school in a manner that affirms the best efforts of all pupils
- The school promotes service to others; it promotes a commitment to justice and care of the earth through involvement in projects such as Green Schools, the Presentation Sisters Challenge to Change Programme and the Presentation Sisters Adult Immersion Experience

**Religious Education and Formation, Prayer & Worship:****The school has the following aims for religious education and formation:**

- to teach the children about God, Jesus and the Holy Spirit – in particular to
  - to encourage belief in God and in the person of Jesus Christ as portrayed in the Bible
  - to encourage an age-appropriate understanding of doctrine
  - to encourage the practice of prayer and worship
  - to encourage and develop moral growth
  - to encourage the development of community spirit
- to teach the children how to pray through songs, music and prayer encourage the children to live good Christian Catholic lives
- to prepare children for the Sacraments



Religious education has two dimensions which are religious knowledge and faith development. Children are led to know about God and to know God. Each dimension is addressed both at classroom level and whole school level. The Catholic education offered to the children informs and permeates the atmosphere and ethos of the school. The school acknowledges that

- the first teachers in the journey of faith are the parents, whose primary responsibility it is. The school is committed to supporting parents in their role
- it does so in conjunction with parish and diocese and it commits itself to forming positive relations with both
- the RE class differs from other subject areas because an exclusively intellectual understanding is not a sufficient outcome. A response from the heart is also called for, a response which results in action on the part of the learner
- the right to appropriate religious instruction applies also to pupils of other denominations and the school will be happy to engage with parents/guardians to facilitate this

The school cooperates with the Diocese on all aspects of Religious Education and facilitates visits from and engagement with diocesan representatives for this purpose.

#### **School Ambience:**

- The nature of the school as a Catholic Presentation school is reflected in the ambience of the school and each classroom
- Religious pictures, icons and reflections are on display throughout the school and in the hall and every classroom has an altar or a sacred space
- From time to time throughout the school year, special displays promote the story of Nano and reflect her charism
- We celebrate Presentation Day every year on 21<sup>st</sup> November; we also honour 24<sup>th</sup> December as the day on which the congregation was founded and 26<sup>th</sup> April, the anniversary of Nano's death
- Books, booklets and other resources on Nano Nagle, available from the Presentation Sisters and/or through their website ([www.presentationistersunion.org](http://www.presentationistersunion.org)) are used in classes from time to time. These include dramas and concert materials.
- Every year we collect money for worthy causes, e.g. Operation Christmas Child, Chernobyl, Trócaire, Sightsavers, Goal, Simanjoro, MS etc.
- Our school crest and motto recognise indicate our commitment to living out the Christian values exemplified by Nano Nagle.
- In the entrance lobby of the school the following can be clearly seen:
  - Our Mission Statement
  - The Roman Schedule for Catholic Schools
  - A painting of Nano Nagle which strongly represents our commitment to inclusion
  - Mosaics which strongly represent our commitment to the influence of Nano Nagle

#### **Prayer & Worship:**

- We start school every morning with a prayer in each classroom



- There are regular school assemblies and prayer services which refer to the story of Nano and how her values are given expression in the life of the school
- In the month of May each year we honour Our Lady
- Our Chaplain visits classrooms regularly to talk to the children and to discuss and affirm the values of Nano Nagle.
- The priests hear confessions in the school once per year.
- We celebrate Special Masses at different times of the year e.g. Start of Year Mass, Presentation Day Mass and Graduation Mass

#### **RE Programme:**

- The school follows the RE programme and policies on Religious Education and formation as advised by the Diocese. The school currently follows the Alive-O Programme from 3<sup>rd</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> Class. Lessons from the programmes for Junior Infants to Second Class are also appropriately differentiated for the children in the Autism Unit.
- The Board of Management and the Parish provide suitable and sufficient resources to teach the programme including charts, videos, DVD's and teachers text books
- The programme is taught every day in each class for the time prescribed by the diocese in conjunction with the Department of Education & Skills

#### **Preparation for the Sacraments:**

- Children in the Autism Unit prepare for First Confessions and Holy Communion with a class in the Presentation Junior School.
- The 6<sup>th</sup> class girls attend a retreat in the weeks leading up to their Confirmation
- The priests visit the school on many occasions during the year to visit the classes preparing for the Sacraments

#### **Teachers:**

- Teachers employed by the Board of Management hold a Diploma in Catholic & Religious Education and are committed to implementing the Religious Education Programme in the school.
- Teachers attend appropriate in-service for the Alive-O Programme when provided
- Teachers strive to model the Gospel values of truth, freedom, compassion, justice, love, tolerance and forgiveness in their relationships with management, other staff, pupils and parents

#### **Pupils of other faiths or none:**

- Children of any faith or no faith are welcome to the school.
- When parents are enrolling their children, it is emphasised that our school is a Catholic school
- Each child is welcome to attend and benefit from the catholic religious education programme. However, if parents have difficulty with the children attending the religious education programme in the class, the teacher will assign another activity to the child during that time.
- When a class is attending a Mass or a Prayer Service, and if parents object to their child(ren) being present at these events, parents may collect their child(ren) before the event, by prior arrangement. If the parents are unable to collect them, it is the policy of the school – for health and safety reasons – that the child(ren) may be obliged to be present at these events but will not be invited or encouraged to participate



- All pupils have a right to appropriate religious instruction as part of their holistic development. The school will be happy to engage with parents of children of other denominations with a view to facilitating appropriate arrangements that they may wish to make

### **Success Criteria**

- Children can, appropriate to their age, speak confidently about their religious beliefs
- Links have been established between parish, parents and school
- This policy is reviewed regularly and it is owned and implemented by all staff
- Staff Meetings are held regularly and the school's mission and ethos lies at the heart of decision-making

### **Roles and Responsibilities**

- The Board of Management shall provide resources for this policy
- Staff will deliver the Religious Education & Faith Development Programme
- The staff will work together with the Chaplain and the Parish Priest
- Parents will co-operate and support the school with the preparation of children for the sacraments.
- A post holder will review this policy on consultation with the staff; hence any amendments will take place.

### **Timeframe for Review**

This policy will be reviewed every five years or sooner in the light of incidents that may arise.

**This policy was adopted by the Board of Management at a properly convened meeting of the Board on \_\_\_\_\_**

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
Chairperson, Board of Management

