



## Religious Education Policy

*Ratified by the Board of Management on:*

*Date: 25/11/2025*

*Signature: Shane O'Donoghue*  
(Chairperson of the Board of Management)

# School Mission Statement

## Context

Ours is a Presentation secondary school, inspired by the vision of Nano Nagle, and in response to her we welcome and cherish all our students irrespective of ability or background.

We aim to develop a vibrant community based on Gospel values such as justice, truth and honesty, in accordance with the ethos of the school and our agreed Code of Behaviour.

## Mission

We aim to assist in the development of the full potential of each person in a vibrant, inclusive, and safe environment, where the dignity of each member of our school community is recognised, affirmed and valued.

Inspired by these values we dedicate ourselves to the continued development of our Presentation School.

## The Presentation Ethos

Presentation Education is committed to on-going whole-school development in collaboration and partnership with the Board of Management, Staff, Pupils, Parents, and the wider community.

Our school was founded by the Presentation Sisters and became part of CEIST in 2007. Our current student population is 317.

## CEIST

Five Catholic Religious Congregations engaged in post primary education for over three and a half centuries – *Daughters of Charity, Presentation Sisters, Sisters of the Christian Retreat, Sisters of Mercy, Missionaries of the Sacred Heart* – have, in the spirit of their Founders, together established **CEIST – Catholic Education, an Irish Schools Trust**, thus providing a new moral and legal trustee framework enabling their schools to continue to offer post-primary Catholic education into the future as a viable option and as an integral part of the Irish school system.

CEIST is built on the founding vision of the five Congregations, emphasising the dignity and rights of the human person, empowering the most vulnerable in society and enabling young people to become catalysts for social transformation throughout the world. It is committed to honouring this rich heritage, promoting inclusion, hospitality, excellence and compassion in a teaching and learning environment inspired by the Gospel and by the unique wisdom of its respective Founders.

CEIST aims, in a spirit of collaboration, to continually invite its members to reach their potential, in the context of a school faith community which seeks to consciously embody a true expression of the Reign of God as announced by Jesus Christ. CEIST is committed to building school faith communities where good personal relationships are fostered, where the staff are supported and facilitated in their vital role within the school. CEIST faces unprecedented challenges today as it attempts to anticipate, define, and meet the evolving needs of young people in the Third Millennium.

CEIST schools endeavour to work closely with members of other Christian traditions in a spirit of ecumenical dialogue, emphasising what is held in common while valuing their own unique Catholic identity and Church community. CEIST engages with all people of good will

to promote a preferential option for those made poor, to act for justice, and to exercise care of the earth in a spirit of respect and welcome for diversity.

### **What we value**

*Promoting Spiritual and Human Development*

*Achieving Quality Teaching & Learning*

*Showing Respect for every person*

*Creating community*

*Being just & responsible*

## **1. Rationale**

Presentation Secondary School Listowel is an all-girls Secondary School run by a Board of Management under the trusteeship of CEIST. The distinctive philosophy of the school is derived from the Presentation Sisters, founded by Nano Nagle.

In Presentation Listowel we endeavour to continue to provide a caring community and a supportive environment which encourages each student to develop her full spiritual, intellectual, moral, emotional and social potential/conscience. Education in this school is person-centred and holistic.

As a Catholic school the person of Jesus Christ is at the heart of our community and Gospel values permeate the entire school experience.

The purpose of this policy is to recognise the complex framework of Religious Education in Presentation Listowel. Religious Education is considered from a multifaceted approach; it is a platform for providing religious information, faith formation, personal moral development, social and cultural awareness, Senior Cycle RSE, and the celebration of religious ceremonies.

## **2. Context**

In the context of our rationale we recognise the significant role Christianity plays in shaping our vision of ourselves, our world, and our relationships with others. At the centre of our rationale we acknowledge the role the school has in facilitating the spiritual development of our students.

We acknowledge that the fabric of the Catholic school population in Ireland has changed considerably. Growing secularism and multiculturalism bring students of other faith traditions and no faith traditions into the Catholic school environment. There are varying levels of faith experience and faith commitment in our school reflecting the wider cultural context of the Church in Ireland today.

Within this context we endeavour to facilitate all students, while remaining true to the characteristic spirit of our school and the Gospel values that motivate Catholic education.

## **3. Aims of R.E. in the School**

The aims and objectives of the Department of Education, Religious Education Syllabus and our school:

- To foster an awareness that the human search for meaning is common to all people of all ages and at all times.
- To explore how this search for meaning has found, and continues to find expression in religion.
- To identify how understandings of God, Religious traditions and in particular the Christian tradition, have contributed to the culture in which we live and continue to have an impact on personal lifestyle, interpersonal relationships and relationships between individuals and their communities and contexts
- To appreciate the richness of Religious traditions and to acknowledge the non-religious interpretation of life.
- To contribute to the spiritual and moral development of the student.
- To invite a response to God with love and gratitude through a variety of experiences, through the celebration of the liturgical year and the use of religious symbols.

- To respond to the needs of the wider community through social and community care projects (Faith Friends/carol singing in nursing homes/Charity work/gifts to the crib, etc.)

In summary, the religious education of students in our school promotes open, mutually respectful and inclusive attitudes among students of different social, ethnic and religious backgrounds and highlights ecumenism as an essential feature of modern Christianity.

#### **4. Subject Provision**

Religious Education is a core subject in our school.

Number of class periods in each year:

- Two classes per week at Junior Cycle.
- Two classes per week in Transition Year.
- Two classes per week at Senior Cycle (Fifth and Sixth year).

#### **5. Assessment**

- Assessment for Junior Cycle students will be formative and summative: continuous assessment and classroom based assessment.

#### **6. Facilities and Resources**

- The Sacred Space
- Sisters of the community visit on occasion
- I.T. - classroom projector, 1-1 devices, class set of student laptops in trolley
- Computer Room
- Shared resources on MS Teams
- School monitor - located at reception

#### **7. Retreats**

Retreats seek to include all students of the school. Retreats encourage an awareness of the spiritual in students' lives. Retreats are of benefit to students of all faiths and those of none; they provide an opportunity to explore mindfulness and meditation. They

provide time and space to discuss, reflect, pray and meditate on an array of topics prevalent in the lives of each year group.

One day retreats are organised for Junior and Senior Cycles. These are reviewed every year.

## **8. Prayer and Ritual**

Our school strives to celebrate the liturgical seasons throughout the academic year. We mark liturgical events and seasons; Advent, Christmas; Carol Service and Christmas Crib, Lent; Ash Wednesday and the Lenten Ceremony, and Easter. We aim to recognise and acknowledge the major feasts of other traditions.

The Catholic characteristic spirit of our school is celebrated throughout the year. The whole school come together to celebrate the Opening Year Mass marking the beginning of the academic year. The whole school gathers together celebrating Presentation Day and CEIST day. To mark the end of the school life of our sixth-year students, we celebrate the Graduation Mass. Our Sacred Space is an important aspect of the students' personal faith experience. Time is set aside for each class to take part in meditation, mindfulness and reflective group activities. The room is open during break and lunch time for prayer and reflection for all students and teachers.

## **9. Inclusion of Students of Other Faiths**

Religious Education is a core subject on the school curriculum and an integral part of the ethos of our school. All pupils are encouraged to participate in RE. Our Catholic identity is clearly stated in our Admissions Policy: Presentation Listowel “is a voluntary secondary Catholic school”. Parents or guardians of all students are aware of the Mission Statement on enrolment. Parents or guardians who are concerned about the content of the RE class can contact a member of the Religious Education Department.

It is important to note that the syllabus is a state syllabus, written to encompass all faiths and none. ‘Religious Education should ensure that students are exposed to a broad range of religious traditions and to the non-religious interpretation of life. It has a particular role to play in the curriculum in the promotion of tolerance and mutual understanding. It seeks to develop in students the skills needed to engage in meaningful dialogue with those of other, or of no religious traditions.’

Presentation Listowel supports the principles of: Respect for the diversity of values, beliefs, traditions, languages and ways of life in society.

### **10. Withdrawal from RE Class**

Presentation Listowel recognises that some parents have concerns and may wish to withdraw their child from RE class, as is their constitutional right. If a parent or guardian wishes to withdraw their daughter from lessons in RE they must contact/meet their daughter's allocated Religion teacher. The allocated time on the timetable for Religious Education, in accordance with JMB / AMCSS guidelines, April 2010, should be used by students of other faiths to study something relating to their own religious traditions, e.g. sacred texts, or if a student is a Humanist or non-believer, relevant literature or philosophical texts should be read during this time. A withdrawn student will be supervised in the RE class.

If a parent or guardian requests that their child is not present during RE, the responsibility for supervision at such times lies with the parent or guardian, not the school.

### **11. Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE)**

R.S.E. is located in the overall framework of S.P.H.E. In Presentation Listowel the Senior Cycle RSE Programme is the responsibility of the RE Department. All Senior Cycle RE teachers are required to attend the Senior Cycle RSE S.P.H.E two day inservice.

If a parent/guardian wishes that their daughter is withdrawn from R.S.E. class, they must inform the school in writing.

