



**DOWN AND CONNOR
CATHOLIC SCHOOLS' SUPPORT SERVICE**



TERMS OF REFERENCE

Ethos Link Governors

and

RE Link Governors

THE DOWN AND CONNOR
CATHOLIC SCHOOLS' SUPPORT SERVICE TEAM



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THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS AND ETHOS

The Board of Governors of a Catholic school exercises certain functions in relation to the management, internal organisation, and curriculum policy of the school, subject to Education Orders and Regulations, and in accordance with the school's Scheme of Management, including Trustee and Diocesan Policy. Governors' responsibilities include ensuring that an authentic Catholic ethos is cultivated, promoted, and respected across all aspects of school life.

The mission of the Catholic school is to give witness to Gospel values. Christ is at the centre of every Catholic school. Education and evangelisation are implicit in the school's daily life. The Catholic school is called to be an "intentional" community that promotes and delivers its distinctive ethos. This ethos should identify and manifest Gospel values in the Catholic tradition. It provides every pupil with excellence of educational opportunity, upholding the dignity of every individual so that each can have life and have it "to the full" (John 10:10). Parents who choose a Catholic school for their child have a right to expect this ethos and its values to be present in all aspects of the life of the school.

As such, the Bishop of the Diocese and the Trustees ask that each school in the Diocese of Down and Connor appoints from within the existing Board of Governors an Ethos Link Governor and an RE Link Governor. All governors share responsibility for ethos and overall school development. However, the Ethos Link Governor and the RE Link Governor will take specific responsibility for supporting the principal and wider school community in responding to their sacred mandate of providing education within an environment where Catholic ethos and values are respected, witnessed, practised, and nurtured.

TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE ETHOS LINK GOVERNOR

TIME COMMITMENT	The function of the Ethos Link Governor will normally be carried out within the existing framework of meetings of the Board of Governors and its committees.
RESPONSIBILITIES	The nominated Ethos Link Governor will liaise with the principal, the Board of Governors, and the Diocesan School Support Service in supporting and reviewing ethos development.

The responsibilities of the Ethos Link Governor will include:

SPIRITUALITY	In partnership with the RE Link Governor, ensure that there are regular acts of Christian prayer, worship, and sacramental celebrations; the Church year is reflected in the school; opportunities for retreats for pupils and staff of the school are integral to the school calendar; a sacred space(s)/Oratory are open and available to the school community.
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CHAPLAINCY	Provides for developing personal witness and the authentic living of the Gospel message. “The Catholic school is an essential resource for the new evangelization.” <i>(Pope Benedict XVI)</i>
LEARNING AND TEACHING	Be attentive to the work of the school curriculum team in terms of their work in providing a broad and balanced curriculum that serves the educational needs of all pupils. Collaboration with and sharing of best practice within the family of Catholic schools and other sectors is encouraged.
EXTRA- CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES	Those offered by the school should develop the moral, social, spiritual, physical and academic dimensions of all pupils.
CHARITABLE OUTREACH	The school engages with local and global charities that reach out in solidarity and support to the marginalised.
VOCATIONS	A culture of promoting vocations to the religious life is evident. The CEAIG policy and practice of the school highlights and signposts pupils to a life of dedication within priesthood, religious orders, and the service of the laity.

SCHOOL POLICIES	These are to be reviewed to ensure that they reflect the Gospel values and teachings of the Church. The school's behaviour policy advocates and promotes personal responsibility, justice, forgiveness, healing and reconciliation. (An understanding of the key Gospel values is found in the Beatitudes and are outlined in the Vision Statement).
SCHOOL CAMPUS	Is a place that is welcoming and inclusive to all. Outward signs and expressions of the teachings of Christ and the teachings of the Church are visible. The general facilities and estate of the school are be maintained to a high standard and quality so as to contribute to a well-resourced, accessible, safe, and stimulating learning and teaching campus.
AFFIRMATION	The achievements and successes of all pupils and the school community are recognised and celebrated.
ACCOUNTABILITY	The Ethos Link Governor will liaise with the RE Link Governor. Ethos and RE are to be on the agenda of every Board of Governors meeting. The Annual Report of the Board of Governors will include a section on Ethos and RE.

TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE RE LINK GOVERNOR

TIME COMMITMENT	The function of the RE Link Governor will normally be carried out within the existing framework of meetings of the Board of Governors and its committees.
RESPONSIBILITIES	The full governing body has responsibility for promoting the teaching of RE and the centrality of spiritual, religious, and moral formation throughout the school in response to all statutory requirements and in accordance with the responsibilities and regulations of the Diocese. The nominated RE Link Governor will take a special interest in this area to ensure that issues relevant to RE remain high on the school's priorities.

The responsibilities of the RE Link Governor will include:

RELATIONSHIPS	Develop a close professional, supporting relationship with the Head of RE/RE Co-ordinator; meet once a term with the Head of RE/RE Co-ordinator; affirm the work of RE throughout the school; be willing to attend, when possible, RE related events that are organised by the school.
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SPIRITUALITY	In partnership with the Ethos Link Governor, ensure that there are regular acts of Christian prayer, worship and sacramental celebrations; the Church year is reflected in the school; opportunities for retreats for pupils and staff of the school are integral to the school calendar; a sacred space(s)/Oratory are open and available to the school community; reviewing the range and variety of spiritual and liturgical events available to the whole school community.
THE RE CURRICULUM	Ensure that the RE curriculum supports the ethos and values of the school; the needs and ability of the pupils; is adequately resourced in terms of budget share and qualified teaching staff; RE is given appropriate time on the overall school curriculum schedule; have a knowledge and active interest in the RE curriculum at each key stage; have a knowledge of the school's policy and practice on Relationships and Sexuality (RSE); discussing with Head of RE/RE Co-ordinator how progress and achievement in RE is communicated to parents/carers.

WHOLE SCHOOL RE	Have a knowledge and understanding as to how the school community reflects the Gospel values and their mission as members of a Catholic school; reviewing and reporting on the quality of experiences that the school provides so as to nurture and enhance the spiritual development and lived faith experiences/faith in action of pupils, staff, and families.
WORKING FOR THE KINGDOM	Liaise with the Head of RE/RE Co-ordinator as to how the school is working to promote peace and reconciliation, justice, fair-trade, environmental awareness, charitable outreach, mission, and evangelisation within the school, in partnership with other Catholic schools, with schools from other sectors and with the local and global communities.
SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT PLAN	Have a working knowledge of the RE Action Plan and how it contributes to the overall School Development Plan and sharing this with the full governing body.
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN RE	Liaise with the Head of RE/RE Co-ordinator regarding the training needs within the RE department and in the wider school community so as to have high quality catechesis and sacramental preparation within the school. Where possible, attend RE INSET training.

COMMUNICATION	Ensure that parents/carers are informed as to how the school caters for the RE and faith development of all pupils including those from other faith traditions and none; ensure that RE has a prominent profile on the school website.
ACCOUNTABILITY	Provide a report on whole school RE at each full meeting of the governors, ensure a full RE report is included within the governors' Annual Report. The RE Link Governor will liaise with the Ethos Link Governor.
STANDARDS AND ACHIEVEMENTS	Awareness of the RE programmes of study, schemes of work and achievements in public examinations.