**Coláiste Éamann RísC.B.S.**

**Religious Education Policy**

**SECTION ONE**

**This policy aims to inform the teaching of Religious Education in Coláiste Éamann Rís**

**MISSION STATEMENT**

As an ERST school we are inspired by the vision of our founder, Blessed Edmund Rice who devoted his life to the service of others. Coláiste Éamann Rís is privileged to serve its local community. Our school motto, Uaisleacht, evokes this spirit of service to others. We challenge each student to fulfil his unique potential as a student and a human being.

**THE VISION OF OUR SCHOOL**

Our school is inspired by the Gospel values of Jesus Christ formed in the dream of Edmund Rice. In his time Edmund made a difference in the lives of others. Coláiste Éamann Rís is privileged to continue this tradition of service begun on Sullivan’s Quay in 1828.

● We seek as a school community to live Gospel values in respect for each other and for God’s creation.

● We seek to help our students to be aware of the needs of others around us.

● We aim to be aware of the need to develop the whole person, mind, body and spirit.

● We want to help our students to develop their own unique personal relationship with Jesus.

● We want our students to have a worldview and a respect for difference.

**AIMS OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

We live in changing times but also challenging times for people of faith. In the area of Religious Education our aims are to help our students to develop their faith or else to discover their faith. To do this we aim:

● At allowing our students opportunities to reflect and to introduce students to new forms of Prayer.

● At creating a caring community within the school, through training students in leadership and mentoring.

● At fostering Sacramental awareness in our students.

● At offering students the passion for the possible and the desire to change the impossible.

**RATIONALE**

As a Catholic School in the Christian Brother tradition we are committed to the importance of Religious Education in our school. This policy allows us as a school faith community to focus on what it means to be a Christian school and on the role that we can play. As a school must look again at the founding vision of Edmund Rice and how that vision speaks to us today in Deerpark. We believe that this policy is only a starting point of discussion for all within the school. We strive to read the signs of the times. We strive to pass on the light of Faith in new ways both in the formal teaching of Religions Education and in our students’ experience of God in their own lives.

Our prayer room is a place apart. Our Prayer Room is a sacred space and it offers our students a space to reflect and pray. In our prayer room our students can deepen their awareness of God in their lives and not feel threatened by outside pressures. In this third millennium we believe that the vision of Edmund Rice is more needed than ever before, it offers a view of the dignity of every person and the relationship between God and each of us.

. **THE OBJECTIVES OF OUR POLICY**

o To ensure the status of Religious Education in the school. o To clearly state the school’s commitment to the Vision and Dream of Edmund Rice. o To provide our students and staff with programmes to encourage faith development.

**SECTION TWO**

**CONTENT**

§ Staffing

§ Curriculum and Resources

§ Staff Support and Development

§ Faith Formation and Liturgical Year

§ Outreach Programmes

**STAFFING**

The teaching of R.E., is entrusted to three qualified R.E. teachers. Management policy is determined that R.E. teaching must be done by teachers who are fully committed to our gospel values and the vision of Edmund Rice.

The school does not have a chaplaincy team, but co-operates with the South Parish and the Lough Parish to celebrate the sacraments. The R.E. Teachers, Principal and Deputy Principal constitute a pastoral team to oversee the promotion of the Faith in our school.

**CURRICULUM AND RESOURCES**

Each class within the school has 2 periods of Religious Education. At junior level the school is now offering the Junior Certificate Exam, while at senior level we follow the examination syllabus but the students do not take R.E. as a Leaving Certificate exam subject in Transition Year. We offer a new course in Religious Education under the title “Contemporary Art and Spirituality”. This will be offered to our students in conjunction with the Art department.

**STAFF SUPPORT AND DEVELOPMENT**

Religious education is seen as central to school life. All school staff support this central role and participate fully in all R.E. events. Support services from outside of the school are always most welcome and these include: An Tobar, Concern and St. Vincent de Paul.

**OUTREACH PROGRAMMES**

R.E. helps our students to become social human beings, who try to make a difference in the lives of other people lives especially those who are less fortunate than ourselves. With this in mind the school makes connections with groups such as: v Trocaire v Concern v Street children of Calcutta v Bothar v Burren Chernobyl Project

The different liturgical seasons are celebrated by images and symbols in the prayer room, as well as in the RE teaching room. Classes also celebrate different feasts and seasons with prayer services in our prayer room. At different times of the year the whole school community gathers to celebrate para-liturgies together. Our Leaving Cert Classes celebrate the end of the year with a liturgical ceremony.

The R.E. Department lead the Whole School Community in an Annual Retreat Day to celebrate our Faith and our vision for Deerpark.

At a time when many of our students do not have any contact with the institutional church, we provide our students with connections to our faith.