

**EVALUATING THE  
DISTINCTIVE NATURE  
OF A  
CATHOLIC SCHOOL**

**FIFTH EDITION: 2007**

**NATIONAL BOARD OF  
RELIGIOUS INSPECTORS AND ADVISERS**

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## **A guide to the use of this publication**

### **The process of evaluation**

Change and renewal are part of human life and are the process by which everyone grows towards God. The Catholic school or college will reflect this process in its self-evaluation. This will enable it to cherish its achievements, to identify areas of weakness, and to improve the quality of its life and work by setting appropriate directions and targets for the future.

Change and development in the Catholic school or college must be a planned process, structured to achieve improvement against criteria developed both from the values and principles of its own mission statement, aims and objectives and from good educational practice. External inspection and support will contribute to the process of improvement<sup>1</sup>, but ongoing self-evaluation is essential if the educational community is to live up to its mission.

### **The working papers**

All aspects of the school or college need evaluation, but a specific focus may be selected as a result of external inspection, as an element of the school development plan, or in response to the need to review a particular element of policy or practice. Each of the working papers provides a specific focus for evaluation, offers a brief commentary, and gives a set of initial questions as the starting point for review.

The papers are arranged in five main sections. According to the needs of the school or college, the papers can be selected and used independently, or with others from the same section or from different sections. Each paper should always be read in the context of the general introduction (Part 1). The questions given are general, and should be adapted where necessary to suit particular circumstances.

### **Planning evaluations**

The following questions may assist the planning of evaluation.

- What is the specific focus of this evaluation?
- Why is it being undertaken?
- Who will be involved, and what will be the nature of their involvement?
- How will other members of the school or college community be informed?
- What is the intended outcome?
- What is the timescale?
- Who will be responsible for ensuring appropriate follow-up action?

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<sup>1</sup> School Improvement through Inspection, CES 1998

## **Staff development**

The papers may be used as a resource for staff development. General questions for planning are offered here as a checklist.

- What are the objectives for this staff development session?
- What is the target group?
- How long is the session?
- How will prayer and reflection be integrated with the session?
- Which papers will be relevant?
- What other resources will be required?
- What methods of delivery and activities will be most appropriate?
- What equipment will be needed?
- How will the session be evaluated?
- Who will be responsible for planning and implementing subsequent action?

## Part 1: General introduction

### The Christian vision of education

*I look up at your heavens, shaped by your fingers,  
at the moon and stars you set firm –  
what are human beings that you spare a thought for them,  
or the child of Adam that you care for him?*

*Yet you have made him little less than a god,  
you have crowned him with glory and beauty,  
made him lord of the works of your hands,  
put all things under his feet, (ps.8:3-6)*

Within creation, the sign and object of God's love, God chose to create human beings in God's own image and likeness. We are in relationship, in a dialogue of love, with God. We believe that creation speaks of God, that human relationships are redeemed by Christ's saving death and resurrection, and that true human advancement and achievement witness to the Holy Spirit at work in humanity, enabling everyone to grow and develop. God is at work in the world, and can be discovered in our daily living, drawing us in love. We are invited to enter more deeply into relationship with God as the perfect fulfilment of our lives. Despite our sinfulness and weakness, every person's life is charged with God's presence, and every human experience presents us with the opportunity to deepen our knowledge and love of God.

It is in God's plan that we grow through our exploration and enquiry. The people of God have always looked to Christ as teacher, and teaching forms an integral part of God's redemptive work in Christ. Therefore the process of education is holy, and since the world in which we live belongs to God, all teaching and learning are related to God in some way. 'Catholic education is based on the belief that the human and the divine are inseparable.'<sup>1</sup> Everything connected with human living, and the means by which we understand and come to terms with it, is part of the process of God's self-revelation to humanity, whether those engaged in it are conscious of it or not.

### The mission of Catholic schools and colleges

Catholic schools and colleges are established to support parents and carers in their responsibility for their children's education, and to contribute to the fulfilment of the Church's mission to educate. They provide the communities within which teaching and learning are planned and take place in a structured way and in accordance with the teachings of the Catholic Church. Within the vision and mission of their diocese, schools and colleges share with families and with parishes the collaborative ministry of education. Their primary purpose is to educate. At the same time, the school or college should recognise the responsibility to encourage growth in faith, with respect for individual circumstances. As each person engages in the educational process with religious education at its heart, evangelisation may take place and opportunities for catechesis be developed according to the individual's readiness to receive them. 'The religious freedom and the personal conscience of individual students and their families must be respected, and this freedom is explicitly recognised by the Church. On the other hand, a Catholic school cannot relinquish its own freedom to proclaim the gospel and to offer a formation based on the values to be found in a Christian education; this is its right and its duty.'<sup>22</sup>

### Faith and culture

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<sup>1</sup> Principles, Practices and Concerns, CES 1996:3

<sup>2</sup> The Religious Dimension of Education in a Catholic School, para, 6

Catholic schools and colleges in England and Wales are at the interface of many different understandings of life, of society, and education. Perhaps the most challenging of these is the contrast between the Christian approach to education which is based on the understanding of all life as God's gift, and a general approach to education which does not openly acknowledge any religious values. This can make it more difficult for headteachers or principals and their staff to ensure that their mission informs every aspect of the life of their school or college. Also, because of the fundamental nature of the teaching and the values which inform Catholic education, general initiatives in education may need to be approached with some discernment if they are to bear fruit in Catholic schools and colleges.

Differences in cultural background and faith, both within the school and in the wider community, may provide a rich source of learning material, and should be appreciated and celebrated. Where a school has developed an admissions policy which welcomes pupils from outside the Catholic Church, it takes on responsibility for their spiritual and faith development, and must ensure that it is able to meet this. All schools should be able to articulate their understanding of their position in terms of the balance between providing a Catholic education for Catholic children, and responding to Christ's call to proclaim the gospel to all.

### **The curriculum as a whole**

Against this background, it is often unhelpful to make distinctions between the 'religious' and the 'secular' curriculum in Catholic schools and colleges. The curriculum as a whole, and every part of it, is religious, since everything ultimately comes from and relates to God. All aspects of the curriculum and its delivery must reflect the fact that Christ is the foundation of the educational enterprise in a Catholic school. The religious character of the curriculum is ensured in the respect shown by teachers and students for the truths appropriate to each curriculum area. It is not part of the Catholic vision of education to introduce religious truths into curriculum areas where they do not naturally or appropriately belong.<sup>3</sup> As well as the subjects of the curriculum, students learn from the values and principles which underpin it, from other activities offered by the school, and from the quality of relationships which they experience. The overall purpose of the school is 'to prepare young people for their life as Christians in the community', and to enable them 'to serve as witnesses to moral and spiritual values in the wider world'.<sup>4</sup>

### **The uniqueness and value of the individual**

Christ's example of love and service should characterise the life and work of the Catholic educational community, both in itself and in its relationships with wider society. Mutual respect and support should clearly witness to belief in the uniqueness and dignity of the individual, made in God's image and loved by God; and the education offered should challenge and enable all to develop their talents to the full, and to fulfil their unique role in creation.

In particular, Catholic schools and colleges 'have a duty to care for the poor and to educate those who are socially, academically, physically or emotionally disadvantaged'.<sup>5</sup> This care will be evident both in day-to-day relationships, and in school or college policies and practices.

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<sup>3</sup> The Religious Dimension of Education in a Catholic School, para. 53

<sup>4</sup> Principles, Practices and Concerns, CES 1996:3

<sup>5</sup> Principles, Practices and Concerns, CES 1996:3

## **Leadership**

The responsibility for enabling the Catholic school or college to be faithful to its mission is shared, in different ways, by every member of the community. Governors have a legal responsibility to ensure that the school or college, in all its aspects, is managed and organised in the light of Christian values and the teachings of the Church. Educational theory stresses the importance of 'vision', and the role of the leader in developing and implementing it. In a Catholic school or college, the headteacher or principal is challenged to follow the example of Christ in providing direction and leadership for a community of faith which is part of the mission of the diocese, and in encouraging members of that community to share in leadership as appropriate, and to contribute their own gifts and insights.

## **Part 2: The mission of the Catholic school**

### **A. THE MISSION OF THE SCHOOL**

Every human life is filled with God's presence and, despite the existence of sin, the world belongs to God. Christ is the light and life of us all, "a light which darkness could not overpower."<sup>1</sup> Christ's Incarnation has changed our world. Because God became man in Christ, the human and the divine are inseparable; God is revealed to us through Incarnation, and thereby through Creation.

Because of this, all aspects of the Catholic school or college, the curriculum, the relationships, the priorities, the aims and objectives, the pastoral care and discipline, have the potential to speak of God's loving care for each person involved in the school's life. God is at the centre of the learning process and is the ultimate purpose of schooling, as of all aspects of life. Christ's love should permeate all that occurs in the school. The Instrument of Government and Trust Deed relating to the school are legal documents which place the educational process in this Catholic setting.

A school's mission and character do not develop by themselves; they are formed through daily action, not by discussion alone, and every member of the school or college community can contribute to their development and enrichment. They are expressed in the mission statement. For a Catholic school or college, this will always be centred on Christ, reflect a Christian understanding of the purpose of education, and make explicit the Christian values and principles by which the school operates. The review and development of the mission statement provide the opportunity to focus on the distinctive identity and character of the school as a Catholic educational community.

The mission statement provides the foundation for all school and college policies and practices, and its principles should inform planning and target-setting. It should be a point of reference for all aspects of evaluation. It is in the daily life and work of the school or college that essential indicators for the achievement of its mission may be identified.

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<sup>1</sup> Jn 1:5

## Questions

1. Where will a pupil, member of staff, governor or parent find the mission statement?
2. Is Christ at the centre of the mission statement? If not, why not?
3. How has the mission statement informed the aims and objectives of the school or college?
4. How frequently, and by whom, are the mission statement and aims and objectives discussed and reviewed?
  - Should staff, governors, parents and pupils all be involved in reviews? Why?
5. What evidence is used to evaluate the distinctive ethos of the school or college?
  - How are data such as inspections findings, performance indicators and league tables used to contribute to evaluations of the school's effectiveness in achieving its mission?
6. What prevents the distinctive character of the school or college being further developed?
  - What steps could be taken to overcome these obstacles?
7. For what reasons is the school or college valued by those within it?
  - Why do parents choose to send their children to this school?
8. How effective do those outside the school judge it to be?
  - In what ways do they consider it to be effective?
9. What procedures are in place to ensure that the development plan and all policies stem from the mission statement?
10. What procedures have been agreed for target-setting?
  - How have governors ensured that target-setting reflects the educational priorities of the school or college, including religious education where appropriate?
  - How is the effectiveness of target-setting evaluated?
  - How are the results of the evaluation used?
11. What procedures are used to monitor and evaluate the implementation of action plans following inspections, and the achievement of targets, against the aims and objectives and mission statement of the school or college?

## **B. LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE**

Headteachers and principals of Catholic schools and colleges are called to follow the example of the leadership of Christ. They should try to use all opportunities to deepen their community's understanding of the Christian principles which underpin the daily life and work of the school. As leaders of communities of faith within the diocese, they give witness by their example to the central importance of prayer and reflection. Their exercise of leadership should demonstrate qualities of love and forgiveness, of service, of respect for the uniqueness of the individual and of care for the disadvantaged.

Different styles of leadership are appropriate for different situations, but head teachers and principals should, as far as possible, work collaboratively with their colleagues. They will encourage leadership potential in their staff by offering them appropriate opportunities to take responsibility, and by providing support for their professional development. They appreciate that the fostering of future leaders, at all levels, is not an option but a major aspect of their role. They will recognise their own accountability to governors, parents, and the wider Church community, and be open and honest in their leadership and management of the school.

Headteachers and principals will value opportunities to collaborate with other schools and providers of community services, as a means of expressing their commitment to the common good. In doing this, they will ensure that the school's own core values are maintained. Headteachers and principals will carefully monitor and evaluate the improvement of the school or college, and will plan for development in the light of the mission statement.

The governing body is responsible for recruitment of staff who are practising Catholics or in sympathy with Catholic values. It also has particular responsibilities for admissions policy, for the protection of children and for children with special needs. When discharging its responsibilities in these areas, the governing body will reflect the Church's Teaching and its preferential option for the poor. Governing bodies, together with headteachers, play a central role in the nurturing of future leaders, not only for their own schools but for the whole Catholic community.

Leaders at all levels should ensure that the mission statement is implemented in all aspects of the life of the school or college.

## Questions for leaders

1. Do members of your school or college community see you as a person of prayer?
2. How often do you pray with staff? How often do you pray with pupils?
- 2a. Do you help staff and pupils learn how to pray?
3. What do you see as the most important qualities of the leader of a Catholic school or college? Where do you have strengths in relation to these, and what would you wish to develop?
4. In what ways do you serve your school community?
5. What professional development have you arranged for yourself during the last twelve months? What did you learn from it?
6. What lines of communication are established in the school?
7. How do you use the mission statement when planning for development?
8. What evaluation of aspects of school or college life have you initiated during the last twelve months?
9. How do you encourage the development of leadership skills among staff?
  - What is the most recent major initiative you have entrusted to a member of your staff?
  - How do you involve staff in school development?
  - How many of your staff are candidates for the National Professional Qualification for Headship or other qualifications for leadership at different levels?
10. What training have the governors received in the last year? Who was the provider?
11. In implementing the school's admission and recruitment policies, how does the governing body reflect the Church's option for the poor?
12. In what ways does the school collaborate with other institutions in provision for its pupils and others?

## C. ADMISSIONS POLICY

The governing body of a Catholic school or college should frame its policy and criteria for pupil admissions in the light of the Christian principles expressed in school's mission statement, and in line with Trust Deeds and diocesan policy. The admissions policy will reflect an appropriate emphasis on the mandate to provide Catholic education for Catholic children, while also showing awareness of Christ's command of love and responsibility for all. Justice and equity will require full attention to be given to consultation with all interested parties, and consideration of the effects which the policy will have, not only on the school or college itself, but on other local schools. The emphasis in the Church's teaching placed on the poor, the disadvantaged and those in need of love will particularly inform the priority to be given to, for example, those pupils with special educational needs, looked-after children, those from travelling families and from families suffering hurt, and the economically deprived. It is essential that, in over-subscribed schools, decisions on admission can be justified by reference to the agreed criteria. Such criteria should be clear, fair and objective so that parents can readily understand for themselves in which category their applications will be placed. Care must be taken to ensure that no criterion is unlawfully discriminatory, either directly or indirectly, and that it conforms to the School Admissions Code, 2007 and any later legal requirements.

Many Catholic schools and colleges are receiving an increasing number of applications for admission from members of other Christian denominations and faith traditions. It must be recognised that the presence of pupils of other faith traditions will have an impact on the development and ethos of the school community. While this impact may bring positive enrichment, it will also bring new demands. The needs of pupils of other denominations and faith will in some respects be different from those of the Catholic community and, in admitting such pupils, the school or college has a moral and legal responsibility to ensure that their needs are addressed. In considering these issues, it would be helpful to consult Church documents such as the Decree on Ecumenism, the Decree on Religious Liberty, Decree on Non-Christian Religions<sup>1</sup> and Catholic Schools and Other Faiths<sup>2</sup>. Governors should always have regard to the Catholic character of the school or college, and should ensure that their admissions policy works to enhance this.

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<sup>1</sup> Documents of Vatican II: *Unitatis Redintegratio*; *Dignitatis Humanae*; *Nostra Aetate*

<sup>2</sup> Bishops' Conference of England and Wales, 1997

## Questions

1. How does the current admissions policy reflect the principles of the mission statement?
2. Who is involved in the annual review of the admissions policy?
3. How does the policy safeguard the Catholic character of the school or college?
  - How does the policy ensure priority for the poor, the disadvantaged and those in need?
  - Have the governors given consideration to seeking a formal agreement<sup>1</sup> with a view to the maintenance of the school's Catholic character?
4. Does the school admit all Catholics who live in the parishes identified in its admissions policy? If not, why not?
5. Does the school or college intake reflect the social and cultural mix of the local parish(es)? If not, why not?
6. What effect does the admissions policy have on neighbouring schools, Catholic and others?
7. How is the procedure for appeals agreed by the governing body and made known to parents whose child is refused a place in the school?
9. If the admissions criteria welcome those of other faith traditions, how does the school or college understand its mission in these circumstances?

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<sup>1</sup> School Standards and Framework Act 1998, Section 91

## **The prospectus**

The prospectus is a key document designed to inform and help parents and pupils as full partners in the educative process. For some parents, it is the first introduction to the school or college. In its preparation, consideration must be given to the requirements of the Trust Deed and Instrument of Government, and to current legislation. The Catholic nature of the school or college must be made clear.

The prospectus should include:

- the mission statement and the Catholic aims and values that underpin and influence the education of the pupils;
- its aims and objectives for the curriculum, including pupils' spiritual, moral, social, cultural and academic development;
- its principles for the relationships between staff (teaching and support), pupils, parents or carers, parish(es) and the wider community;
- information about the school or college and its achievements, including that required by current legislation;
- information about the admissions policy and process, including the criteria, the number intended to admit, the number of applicants for the previous academic year and the number admitted, including successful appeals. Mention should be made of the Local Authority's role as co-ordinator of the Admissions process, but in such a way as to assure applicants that it is the Governing Body of the school or college that is the Admitting Authority.
- information about future development.

## **Questions**

1. How was the prospectus developed and agreed?
2. How does it express the distinctive character of this Catholic school or college in its particular situation?
3. Does it identify realistic objectives? Does it indicate any priorities for the school among the objectives?
4. Does it meet all legal requirements?
5. How are governors, staff, parents and pupils involved in the review of the prospectus?
6. If substantive changes are made to the prospectus, how are these made known to all members of the school community?
7. How is the prospectus used to promote the school or college and to stimulate discussion on its affairs in the local parishes?
8. What other means are there for influencing perceptions about the school?

## D. THE SCHOOL AS A WORSHIPPING COMMUNITY

Since Catholic schools and colleges set out to guide and encourage people to explore God's creation, and so to discover something of the Creator, worship, an essential element in religious experience, should be offered as an integral part of school or college life.

Prayer, reflection, worship and liturgical celebration are central to the Catholic tradition. It is of prime importance, however, that sound educational and pastoral principles determine the ways in which these are experienced in the school community. It is not sufficient to provide opportunities for such experiences; it is the task of the school or college, while always acknowledging the freedom of the individual pupil, to promote and develop within its overall curriculum an appreciation of and an active participation in prayer, worship and liturgy. This should be a gradual process which takes account of the ages and stages of personal, social, spiritual and religious development of pupils. Particular sensitivity should be exercised with pupils post-16, who should be encouraged to participate actively in the liturgical life of the school, while their right to withdraw is respected. It is necessary, in schools and colleges where some pupils are from other Christian traditions, or of other faiths, to be sensitive to their perspectives, respectful of their gifts and attentive to their needs. The Bishops' Conference document Catholic Schools and Other Faiths (p.27) gives further helpful advice in this area.

The worshipping nature of the school or college should be expressed in a variety of ways. Pupils should be assisted in exploring a range of methods of private, individual prayer, as well as group prayer in both formal and informal styles and settings. The celebration of the Eucharist is the centre of worship for the Catholic community. There are also other forms of liturgical experience, both sacramental and non-sacramental, which have an educative value in themselves and help individuals to deepen their understanding of worship. All liturgical celebrations will aim to encourage the active participation of all concerned. This affords the opportunity for the development of lay ministries among pupils and staff, as well as ordained ministry.

A further important experience for the school community should be the daily act of worship, which should be organised in groupings, times and places by each school to suit its needs. In many schools or colleges, assemblies may be used in order to give information to the school community, to reward or admonish. It may be that some form of worship precedes or follows such 'business'. A clear distinction needs to be made between these different parts of an assembly. It is also important that the primary purpose of such assemblies be clear in the minds both of those who organise them, and of those who participate in them, with due sensitivity to the nature of worship and its setting, and to what is appropriate for a range of ages and stages of development.

Schools and colleges are made up of a rich variety of cultures, traditions and backgrounds. Those organising prayer, liturgies and assemblies should encourage the pupils (and parents, as would seem appropriate to the school) to contribute their skills and gifts, while being sensitive to personal, social and religious needs and abilities.

While classroom religious education will inform and provide the vocabulary for worship, the school must ensure that the time required for the delivery of the religious education curriculum is not reduced by allocating it to worship. For prayer, worship and liturgy to be real educational experiences, pupils should participate fully in their preparation, action and evaluation. This may contribute to the development in faith of each individual in the community.

## Questions

1. What place does prayer have in the day?
  - What forms does this prayer take?
  - Who leads it?
2. When do staff pray together?
3. What opportunities are there for staff and pupils to pray together?
  - What help is given to staff to pray with children in varying and appropriate ways?
4. Is there a chapel, prayer-room or quiet area in the school or college?
  - How central is it to school life?
  - How accessible is it to the entire community?
  - Are funds allocated for its appropriate furnishing and maintenance?
5. What opportunities are there for renewal and retreat experiences for all members of the community including governors?
  - What budget allocation is made for these, and who organises them?
  - Do parishes or deaneries give assistance?
6. How is collective worship organised?
  - Who co-ordinates it?
  - In what ways are pupils involved?
7. What sacramental and non-sacramental liturgies are celebrated in the school or college?
  - Who plans them?
  - What are the educational and religious criteria for having them?
  - Is attendance voluntary or compulsory? Why?
  - What active part is played by those who attend and how is this achieved?
8. How does the approach to liturgical celebration include the needs of all pupils?
  - How and when are parents involved?
9. How does the school or college explore, develop and evaluate the principles and process of liturgical celebration?
10. What strategies are used to evaluate the range of provision for worship and its contribution to the whole curriculum of the school or college?
- 10a Do activities associated with prayer and worship help pupils to develop their skills of reflection and contemplation as enunciated in 'Attainment Levels for Religious Education in Catholic schools and colleges'.

## E. CHAPLAINCY

One characteristic and specific feature of a Catholic school or college should be its chaplaincy provision. Its purpose is to serve the personal and spiritual needs of both staff and pupils within the school community. It is the responsibility of the Church at local or diocesan level to ensure that there is an overall strategy for appropriate chaplaincy provision at all levels of education. This provision should be monitored and reviewed regularly in the light of the needs of schools, colleges, the Church and the wider community.

Those who are part of this provision, although not necessarily members of the school's permanent community, must have a sense of the educational task of the school or college and a realistic appreciation of the possibilities which it offers for religious and spiritual development. It is not assumed that provision must depend upon a single individual; the task may be shared between a number of people, especially in secondary schools and sixth form colleges. Neither are assumptions made that all the personnel be priests, although some aspects of chaplaincy work will necessarily require the involvement of a priest.

The role played by those working within the chaplaincy needs to be carefully specified and the links with other aspects of school life defined. Reference should be made to "Chaplaincy – the Change and the Challenge"<sup>1</sup> (update this reference) including the guidelines for policy and contracts in this and subsequent documents. Links with the pastoral care system and the teaching of religious education should be highlighted. Chaplaincy personnel will be expected to play a full part in the worshipping life of the school.

Those working in chaplaincy must be seen to be available, and cultivate a trust and openness with members of the community by spending time with and listening to individuals and groups of pupils and staff on a regular basis. In this way, chaplains will be aware of individuals in trouble or crisis, especially at times of bereavement or sickness.

Those involved in chaplaincy will also wish to foster, encourage and co-ordinate the development of ministries in the school or college. Their work may include appropriate catechesis through prayer, voluntary groups of various kinds, retreats and away-days, and Christian action. They must also be attentive to the spiritual needs of pupils of other denominations and faiths.

The church community and the school or college must make a commitment to the financing of chaplaincy provision. Suitable resources and accommodation for the variety of types of chaplaincy assistance will need to be provided and maintained. This will include appropriate training and ongoing support for chaplains, and evaluation of their contribution.

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<sup>1</sup> CES 1996

## Questions

1. What links does the school or college have with the diocesan co-ordinator for chaplaincy?
2. What kind of chaplaincy is provided in the school or college?
3. How are chaplains appointed?
  - Is the role of chaplaincy clearly defined?
  - How is it monitored, and by whom?
  - How is it resourced?
  - What training and ongoing support are provided for chaplains?
  - What is the process of evaluation of chaplains' work?
4. How are staff, governors and local clergy involved in aspects of chaplaincy work?
5. How is a policy of collaboration with the local priest(s) and other parish representatives and leaders developed?
6. How is the work of chaplaincy assisted by others?
  - Who are they?
  - What do they do?

## F. HOME, SCHOOL AND PARISH

Education is a collaborative responsibility shared by home, school and parish. Effective interaction between these partners will encourage the development of the whole person.

The Church has always taught that parents are the first teachers of their children.<sup>1</sup> The family is the primary provider of a child's needs. This underlines the role and responsibility of parents within the home as the place where faith is formed and nurtured.

All children and their families matter in our Catholic schools. The school's primary task is to ensure that children: enjoy and achieve, are healthy and safe, make a positive contribution and enjoy economic wellbeing. All these should lead pupils to deepen their appreciation and understanding of their identity and purpose. The curriculum provided, including religious education, must be directed to this primary task. The parish builds upon and extends the work of both home and school in the development of faith.

It is, therefore, important that common aims be established and implemented in a climate of mutual trust and openness. This can only be achieved when links, both formal and informal, are developed and extended. Home, school and parish together provide the opportunities for catechesis and faith development. They must also provide preparation for the pupil's entry into the wider community, and work together for the building up of God's kingdom on the foundations of the gospel.

Both school and home should be aware of changes in diocesan and parish structures, the emergence of parish teams and the growth of lay involvement in parish life. The school must also be realistic in dealing with the variety of home backgrounds from which its pupils come, including those pupils and families who are not part of the wider Catholic community. Extended schools can respond, when identified and appropriate, to pupils' and parents' need for support in all areas of the curriculum, as well as parenting, family and health guidance. This vision of extended support may also lead school and parish to share facilities and expertise with the local community, strengthening the links between them.

For some pupils, school may be their only experience of Church. Others may participate in the life of the school from the context of commitment to another Christian denomination or to another faith. Appropriate strategies should be established for the recognition and appreciation of the role and contribution of each person to the life of the school.

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<sup>1</sup> Rite of Baptism and Gravissimum Educationis, para. 3

## Questions

1. How does the school or college express its commitment to partnership with home and parish in documentation and in practice?
2. What strategies are in place to ensure effective development and communication?
3. What formal and informal links does the school have with parents?
  - In what ways are parents welcomed into the school?
  - How does the school recognise and support the role of parents within the home-school-parish partnership?
  - How do parents recognise and support the role of the school?
4. What formal and informal links does the school have with the parish(es) and who maintains these links?
  - What links does the school have with the worshipping communities of the pupils who are fellow Christians, or of other faiths?
  - How does the school recognise and support the role of the parishes within the home-school-parish partnership?
  - How do the parishes recognise and support the role of the school?
5. What formal and informal links does the school have with the priest and other parish leaders?
  - How does the school recognise and support the role of the priest?
  - How do the priests recognise and support the role of the school?
6. What formal and informal links does the school or college have with other schools? In what ways does it foster these relationships?
7. What formal and informal links does the school or college have with the wider community?
  - In what ways does it foster relationships?
  - How does the school or college recognise and support various aspects of life in the wider community?
8. In relation to each of the above:
  - what difficulties are there?
  - what steps could the school or college take to overcome these difficulties?
  - what changes have been made in the past 12 months?
  - what might this suggest for ways forward?

## **G. THE MEDIA**

Just as effective communication within the school or college is central to its development as a Catholic community, so good communication with those outside the school is an important aspect of the school's mission. In addition to the established partnerships with parents and local parishes, schools will wish to develop and maintain positive links with local press, radio and television. This attention to good public relations enables the publication of good news about academic and other achievements, and also makes it possible for the school to witness to the values by which it lives. In collaboration with the LA and the diocese, schools also need to develop a policy for dealing with critical incidents. When challenging situations arise, availability and appropriate openness on the part of the school will encourage editors to present negative information in a more positive light.

Staff who act as spokespersons or as media liaison officers for the school or college should be given appropriate and relevant training. Schools also need to be aware of the role of diocesan press officers, and work with them, particularly when dealing with sensitive issues.

Electronic means of communication offer exciting opportunities to promote the life and work of the school, as well as enriching the curriculum. Schools should establish policies to ensure that pupils and staff are protected from misuse of new technologies.

### **Questions**

1. Does the school or college have a public relations policy which includes advice on how to deal with critical incidents?
2. Who is responsible for public relations?
3. Who is the first point of contact for the media? What training in local and national media has that person received?
4. Who responds to 'difficult' queries from reporters?
5. Over the past year, what news about the school has featured in local media?
6. What values does the school convey through its relationships with those in the media?
7. How does the school protect its staff and pupils from electronic misuse?

## H. FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT AND THE USE OF RESOURCES

The financial management of a Catholic school or college must be based on principles which take account of its mission and purpose, as well as drawing on best financial practice. While fulfilling the responsibility to use funding to maintain and develop its own work, it should also keep in mind the need to contribute to the common good. In a situation where schools and colleges are frequently offered the opportunity to bid for funds for particular purposes, a Catholic school should be attentive to both its Trust Deed and diocesan policy and will use its mission statement to support the discernment of its needs.

An appropriate openness about financial issues contributes to the building up of community responsibility and commitment. It is particularly important that staff in leadership positions should be involved in financial planning, both to gain from their insights and to enable them to develop their own understanding of financial issues.

Principles of equity and justice should inform the allocation of rooms and specialist facilities, with due attention being paid to the needs of the most and least able. The importance of curriculum religious education will be reflected in the curriculum time, resources, accommodation and budget allocation it receives. Where possible, the school or college will make its specialist resources available to schools which lack these facilities, and where appropriate, will also offer them to the wider community. The school will ensure that pupils have access to resources outside lesson times, providing supervision as necessary.

### Questions

1. How well does governors' financial planning match the priorities expressed in the mission statement and aims and objectives?
2. Is the management of finances, accommodation and resources informed by the principles expressed in the mission statement?
3. What principles govern plans for buildings and repairs?
4. To what extent are staff in leadership positions involved in, or informed about, financial planning?
5. How is the importance of curriculum religious education as a core subject in the school reflected in the allocation of time, resources and accommodation?
6. What are the criteria for the allocation of rooms and of specialist facilities?
  - How are the needs of the most and least able taken into account?
7. Are specialist facilities shared with less favoured schools?
  - Is the wider community able to use specialist facilities?
8. What access do pupils have to resources in the school outside lessons?

## I. THE ENVIRONMENT

*“God saw that it was very good” (Gen. 1: 31)*

The environment in which the school or college community lives and works makes statements about the ethos of the school, its values and priorities. These are evidenced by such things as the atmosphere of welcome, the visible care, concern and respect for people, the care with which buildings, furniture and play areas are treated and maintained, the quality of display work, religious symbols and respect for property. The ethos of the school is often clearly indicated in the management of the environment which it provides for teaching and learning, and the way in which pupils, parents and staff show respect for this environment.

The school or college has a responsibility to promote an awareness of issues related to the conservation and protection of the environment, both within the taught curriculum, and by practical example. This is best demonstrated in the care and consideration given to the repair and maintenance of premises, both internal and external, to the planning for future improvements, to the good stewardship of resources and to the recycling of materials where possible. The involvement of pupils and others in the care of plants and gardens, where available, helps to develop a respect and interest in the natural environment. Attractive external surroundings may be the visitor's first positive impression of the school. Where the school's situation does not allow for this, its interior may provide a 'haven' for members and visitors.

The safety and security of the school community are of paramount importance. While local knowledge will determine the level and type of security required, simple but effective procedures, such as control of access to premises and the use of name badges, can offer safeguards against unauthorised visitors to the school. The awareness of all members of the school community of the procedures in place is a necessary element in maintaining a safe school.

The thoughtful employment of such measures will ensure that the school or college remains a friendly, welcoming community that is open and receptive to what is good in the wider community of which it is a part.

## Questions

1. In what ways does the school or college create a welcoming environment?
  - What is the governors' policy for maintaining the environment?
  - In what ways does the environment both reflect and enable care and concern for the well-being and dignity of all and encourage the development of good relationships at all levels?
2. For what purpose is work displayed?
  - What criteria are used in selecting work for display?
  - What say do pupils have in the selection?
  - How regularly are displays changed?
  - Who is responsible for display work?
3. How does the school or college promote the care, maintenance and aesthetic appeal of the environment?
  - How does it deal with obstacles to the above, such as litter, graffiti, vandalism?
  - By what criteria are the care, maintenance and aesthetic appeal of the environment evaluated?
  - How and by whom is evaluation carried out?
4. To what extent is the school or college community involved in issues of sustainability?
5. Where in the curriculum are issues of stewardship addressed?
6. How is concern for the well-being and security of all members of the community reflected in the implementation of the Equal Opportunity (including access for the disabled), Health and Safety and Child Protection policies?
7. What procedures are in place to ensure that all within the school or college are aware of the need both to ensure safety, and to offer welcome to visitors?
- 7a. In what way does the environment evidence the school/college as a worshipping community?

## J. EQUALITY FOR ALL

*"There is no difference between Jews and Gentiles, between slaves and free men, between men and women; you are all one in union with Christ Jesus." (Galatians 3:28)*

"Undoubtedly not all people are alike as regards physical capacity and intellectual and moral powers. But forms of social or cultural discrimination in basic personal rights on the grounds of sex, race, colour, social conditions, language or religion, must be curbed and eradicated as incompatible with God's design."<sup>1</sup>

It is the responsibility of the Catholic school and college to prepare children for life in a pluralist society. Positive attitudes and values concerning those of different race, faith, gender, age or ability are significant in the development of mature human beings in the likeness of Christ.

Since, in our vision of education, we believe that God reveals himself through his creation, we strive to ensure that, as far as possible, our teachers share this vision as committed Catholics, and that our pupils are supported in this vision by practising Catholic families. Members of our school communities, teachers or pupils, who are not Catholics should be encouraged to play as full a part as possible in realising this vision.

The Catholic school must ensure that the curriculum is shaped and taught to meet the needs of each individual pupil.

### Questions

1. How often is the equal opportunities policy reviewed?
2. How is the policy made known to all staff and implemented by them? How is it monitored?
3. In what ways are the policy and criteria for admissions to the school or college, and its policy on staff recruitment, justifiable in the light of the policy for equal opportunities?
4. In what ways do the content of the curriculum, access to it, and option choices reflect the policy?
5. How do the school's organisation and practices reflect the policy?
6. How are pupils and staff led to value persons for who they are, whatever their age or ability?
7. How does the equal opportunities policy support the preparations of pupils for life in:
  - a multi-cultural society?
  - a multi-ethnic society?
  - a multi-faith society?
8. How does the school encourage pupils' capacity to relate to others of either gender?
9. How are the individual needs of pupils and staff addressed in a way that takes into account the richness and diversity of background, ability, gender and culture?

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<sup>1</sup> Documents of Vatican II: Gaudium et Spes, para. 29

### **Part 3: The curriculum**

#### **K. CURRICULUM POLICY**

Governors of Catholic schools and colleges are required by law to ensure the delivery of the curriculum in accordance with the Trust Deed. "The curriculum, in all its aspects, must reflect the fact that Christ is the foundation of the whole educational enterprise in a Catholic school"<sup>1</sup>. It is often unhelpful to distinguish the 'religious' curriculum from the 'secular' curriculum in the Catholic school or college. The curriculum as a whole, and every part of it, is religious, since everything ultimately relates to God.

The curriculum should be concerned with the provision of opportunities in a wide range of areas of learning. The Catholic school or college should ensure that all pupils, including those with special educational needs, have full access to a broad and balanced curriculum. At times demands on the curriculum made by a range of different initiatives may tend towards 'overload' and fragmentation so the Catholic school and college "must be committed to the development of a programme which will overcome the problems of a fragmented and insufficient curriculum. Teachers .... all have the opportunity to present a complete picture of the human person, including the religious dimension."<sup>2</sup>

The curriculum must promote recognition of the uniqueness of the individual and the liberty of God's people, and must provide opportunities for individuals to develop as independent and responsible members of society. This presupposes the need for clear policies on education for personal relationships and on matters of citizenship and justice, such as political, multi-cultural and equal opportunities issues.

The curriculum includes both structured learning programmes and the unplanned experiences which are drawn into the learning process. There will be a variety of intellectual and practical activities provided by the school, college or other training facilities. Underlying the whole educational enterprise are the attitudes and values which the school seeks to convey. The curriculum should enable pupils to appropriate into their own lives that which is of value to their development. This will be achieved primarily through the expertise, commitment and positive influence of teachers.

Catholic schools and colleges should seek to offer education for life, including life beyond death. If the aim of the curriculum of the Catholic school, its content and its delivery work towards achieving this, they will provide a context for the revelation of truth about God, human nature, and the created world. "The search for excellence is an integral part of the spiritual quest. Christians are called to seek perfection in all aspects of their lives. In Catholic education, pupils and students are, therefore, given every opportunity to develop their talents to the full".<sup>3</sup>

Those responsible for the curriculum should ensure that it has been designed to meet the needs of the whole school or college and of individual pupils, and that provision is realistic in the light of the school's present position and resources. Schools and colleges will wish to ensure that policies and schemes of work in individual curriculum areas flow from and support the school's mission statement. Due regard should be paid to DCSF, Welsh Assembly and LA directives and policy documents, without compromising the distinctiveness of the curriculum designed to meet the needs of the school's pupils. The curriculum policy should include reference to appropriate consultation, for example with parents, and procedures for curriculum monitoring, evaluation, and development. Schools must be clear about what they are offering and be able to articulate it clearly to all concerned.

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<sup>1</sup> The Catholic School, para. 33

<sup>2</sup> The Religious Dimension of Education in a Catholic School, para. 53

<sup>3</sup> Principles, Practices and Concerns, CES 1996:3

## Questions

1. How does the curriculum policy statement of the school or college reflect the attitudes and values expressed in the mission statement and the aims of the school?
2. Who contributed to the formulation of the curriculum policy?
  - How does the governing body take ownership of it?
  - How does the governing body monitor the effectiveness of its policy?
3. When LA curriculum policy and guidelines have been used, how have they been integrated with the school's values and curriculum aims?
4. In what way have the insights available from other agencies, including diocesan agencies, been taken into account?
5. How does the curriculum policy ensure that provision is made for all pupils, including those with special gifts and needs?
6. How do individual curriculum area policies and schemes of work demonstrate a shared understanding of the mission statement?
7. What is the policy for curriculum review in the school or college?
8. How are decisions reached about curriculum development? Who is consulted?
9. Once a desirable curriculum change is agreed, what steps are taken to secure the provision of the facilities, resources and staffing necessary to achieve it?

## **L. CURRICULUM CONTENT AND DELIVERY**

In planning the curriculum, the primary concern of Catholic schools and colleges should be the full development of individual pupils with their particular potential, needs and background. This will demand that the curriculum has breadth, balance, relevance, differentiation, progression and continuity, and that it is informed in all its aspects by the recognition of the spiritual dimension. Due regard will be given to areas of learning and experience which encourage spiritual, moral, social, cultural, intellectual, aesthetic and physical development. A curriculum which contains these characteristics should provide opportunities for all pupils to experience achievement and success.

It is important that the attitudes and values which underpin curriculum content and teaching and assessment methods are consistent with the Catholic vision of individuals, of relationships and of society. There needs to be a proper balance between the acquisition of knowledge and the development of those skills, attitudes and values which will enable pupils to grow as free and responsible members of the community. Good teaching will employ a variety of stimuli and techniques, including information and communication technology, consistent with the aim of drawing the best out of each pupil. The overall aim of sound education is to enable each pupil to become an independent and adventurous learner. Particular care regarding progression and continuity needs to be given at significant times of transition such as between key stages, or at transfer between schools.

Throughout the curriculum, topics occur which raise specific moral and religious issues for which an adequate response will need to be planned in the light of the teaching of the Church. The response should ideally be given within the context of the particular curriculum area. In addition to the general professional development necessary for all teachers, those in Catholic schools and colleges should recognise their need for ongoing support in deepening their understanding of the Church's teaching. This development serves three important purposes: the enrichment of the teacher, the increased ability to deal with those moral and religious issues when they occur in curriculum areas other than RE, and provision of a model for pupils to use in becoming lifelong and autonomous learners. Schools and colleges should include provision for this within development planning.

## Questions

1. Who produces the curriculum plan of the school or college?
2. How does the curriculum plan implement the curriculum policy document approved by the Governors?
3. How does the school or college ensure that the network of curriculum experiences is sufficiently broad, balanced, differentiated and relevant to the present and future needs of pupils?
4. How does the school or college plan for curriculum continuity at the various stages of transition and transfer?
5. How do curriculum content and classroom practice provide for the gifts and needs of each individual pupil?
  - How is this monitored and reviewed?
  - What is the impact of information and communication technology on pupils' development as free and responsible members of the community?
6. In what ways do classroom practice and organisation reflect and contribute to the policy on pastoral care?
  - How is this monitored?
7. How do Catholic attitudes and values permeate each individual area of experience and learning?
  - What processes are used to facilitate this?
8. How does the curriculum reflect the diverse society in which we live?
  - How does it demonstrate the values and attitudes of the school or college in relation to multi-cultural society?
9. How are schemes of work informed by the mission statement and curriculum aims and objectives?
10. What provision is made in development planning for staff to receive ongoing support in developing their understanding of the Church's teaching?

## M. ASSESSMENT, TARGET SETTING AND REPORTING

In accordance with the Catholic belief in upholding the dignity and value of each individual, any method used to assess the performance of pupils must respect and promote individual dignity. The primary purpose of assessment should be formative, to help the individual by identifying areas of achievement, recognising where development is necessary and providing guidance on how to move forward. Methods of assessment should help pupils to grow to a realistic awareness of their potential and to identify strategies which will enable them to develop it. Such forms of assessment make a significant contribution to the spiritual and moral development of pupils.

In the Catholic school and college, only the individual's performance should be judged against the criteria which are applied at various stages of formal education, not his or her personal worth. Schools will wish to ensure consistency in the assessment and monitoring of pupils' progress and in the setting of targets according to pupils' ability. A fuller picture of pupils' achievements might find its place in a portfolio of achievement. Pupils should be encouraged to evaluate their own performance.

While recognising the need constantly to motivate, encourage and support pupils in achieving excellence, the school should be aware of a number of issues. Imagination and sensitivity must be brought to bear in helping pupils deal with their relative successes and failures in areas of the curriculum. Schools and colleges will seek to encourage sensitivity in handling information on individual pupils' achievement, amongst their peer groups as well as amongst teachers. This sensitivity should also inform the processes by which examination and other results are made public. Any assessment procedure must have due regard to the inherent human right not to be degraded or undermined, especially when results are made known.

Given the importance of parents in the process of education and their responsibilities as the first educators of their children, the school or college will wish to involve them by reporting the results of assessment of their children as fully as possible and not simply in compliance with statutory requirements.

While recognising the legal requirement to publish information on pupils' performance, schools will have particular regard to the potential impact of this on their own pupils, staff and parents and on neighbouring schools or colleges. "The pursuit of excellence is intrinsically good when it is seen as an integral part of the spiritual quest and not simply as a matter of competitive league tables. Competition is, of itself, neither good nor evil, but when it is used to brand children or schools in a way which limits their freedom or potential, it is damaging to human flourishing. It also carries the danger of communicating to children and young people – and, indeed, to the wider community – that a person's value is measured solely in terms of academic, sporting or financial success ... when a school encourages its pupils and staff to perform to the best of their ability for their own sake, its aim is to enable them to fulfil their God-given potential. If competition sets one school against another, if success in one institution is achieved deliberately at the expense of another, it is morally unacceptable."<sup>1</sup> Schools and colleges will make appropriate use of aspects of performance data to identify areas for improvement in provision for their pupils.

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<sup>1</sup> Common Good in Education, CES 1997:13

## Questions

1. What methods of assessment are used in the school or college?
2. Are methods of assessment consistent across all subjects of the curriculum?
3. How is the distinctive Catholic nature of the school or college reflected in its assessment, recording and reporting procedures?
  - What is the place of classroom religious education in these procedures?
  - How was this decided?
4. How do assessment procedures relate to the policy on pastoral care?
5. How do pupils and parents contribute to the process of assessment?
6. How are the results of assessment recorded?
  - To whom are they made public? Why these? How?
7. How does the school or college report to parents on their children's progress and achievement in all aspects of life?
8. When references and reports are given, how is this done?
  - By whom?
  - What criteria are used?
  - Are the pupils involved?
9. How are targets identified?
  - Are staff involved in the process of target-setting?
  - What criteria are used?
  - Are targets cautious or over-ambitious?
10. How is the effectiveness of the assessment and reporting procedures evaluated?
11. How does the school or college respond to media requests for comment on examination results and/or league table positions?

## N. SPECIAL NEEDS AND THE CURRICULUM

Those with special needs also have gifts. "There is a variety of gifts but always the same Spirit; there are all sorts of service to be done but always to the same Lord; working in all sorts of ways in different people, it is the same God who is working in all of them. The particular way in which the Spirit is given to each person is for a good purpose."<sup>1</sup>

In addition to general provisions within legislation, the teaching of the Church gives Catholic schools and colleges particular responsibilities for providing for children with special needs and their parents.

Commitment to Christ's ministry and to respect for the uniqueness of each individual leaves Catholic schools and colleges ideally placed to respond with imagination and sensitivity to those with special needs. Essential to that task will be a proper respect for the gifts and needs of each person, a flexibility of approach and a commitment to press for the provision of appropriate resources by the relevant authorities. This relates not only to the small proportion who have severe or complex learning difficulties which require the provision of extra resources, but also to the much bigger proportion of the population with special needs which can and should be met within the school. Schools and colleges should also provide for the particular needs of gifted and talented pupils.

There are pupils in our schools who lack consistent family support and who therefore have difficulty in responding appropriately to a variety of legitimate challenges. There are also those who, whether permanently or temporarily, are in local authority care or who are preparing for adoption. The needs manifest in the lives of such pupils must be addressed in order that the curriculum they experience is adapted to their capacity to learn and make progress. In order to achieve this, the school will need to work with a range of other agencies which will have the well-being of children and young people as its primary concern, ensuring that such pupils never lose sight of God's love for and value of them in themselves.

The Catholic school or college should plan a curriculum which embraces the needs of pupils of all abilities. The curriculum should be inclusive and differentiated, and provide a framework in which all pupils have the opportunity to develop their potential within all areas of experience, including the spiritual. The full curriculum should be accessible to as wide a range of pupils as possible, with sufficient resources allocated to those with special needs.

The pastoral system will also have a significant part to play in identifying and ensuring a positive response to those with special needs and their parents, as will those responsible for the school or college environment.

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<sup>1</sup> 1 Corinthians 12:4-7

## Questions

1. How are the unique gifts of all pupils, including those with special needs, reflected in the admissions policy, the mission statement and the aims of the school or college?
2. How does the school or college identify the God-given potential of each child and ensure it is developed?
3. How does the special needs policy reflect the distinctive Catholic nature of the school or college?
4. In what ways does the identification of the special needs of individual pupils inform the process of curriculum planning?
5. In the construction of the budget what priority is given to special needs provision?
  - Are the designated funds for special needs used exclusively for this purpose?
6. How is the effectiveness of the provision monitored and evaluated?
  - What part do parents play in such monitoring and evaluation? What impact do TA's make to the learning of those with special needs at either end of the spectrum?
7. How is any non-application or modification of the National Curriculum reviewed?
  - By whom?
  - What provision is made in religious education for these pupils?
8. Are training and support available to the special needs co-ordinator, the nominated governor and class teachers to enable them appropriately to recognise and provide for the needs of all pupils?
9. Are all parts of the school or college accessible to everyone?
10. How do the pastoral system and the social life of the school or college promote and ensure inclusion for all pupils, including those with special needs?
11. What support does the school or college offer to the parents of pupils with special needs?
12. To what extent does the school or college consider the long term future of those pupils with special needs?
  - Are there pyramid or cluster meetings of special educational needs co-ordinators?
13. How does the school work with other agencies to support pupils with special needs?

## O. RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

### Classroom teaching of religious education

In a Catholic school or college, religious education must be according to the rites and practices of the Catholic Church; this position is safeguarded in the School Standards and Framework Act.<sup>1</sup> The Bishops' Conference of England and Wales requires that 10% of curriculum time be devoted to Religious Education. The Catechism of the Universal Church and the Bishops' Conference Religious Education Curriculum Directory for Catholic Schools give schools strong guidance on which to base their religious education curriculum. Schools should seek diocesan advice and support in applying this guidance to the development of their own schemes of work for religious education. Such schemes of work are essential; they should be appropriate to the pupil's age and ability and should mark out attainable objectives at each stage of pupils' progress. They should recognise that each pupil may be at any stage of understanding, and should be developmental in the sense that they provide challenges to move onward in understanding and in attitudes with regard to God, self, other people and the world. As the General Directory for Catechesis emphasises, religious education must be seen as an academic discipline with comparable demands and rigour to other disciplines. "It must present the Christian message and the Christian event with the same seriousness and the same depth with which other disciplines present their knowledge."<sup>2</sup>

Within any school or college intake, pupils come from a wide range of experiences and backgrounds. Every pupil's religious needs must be taken into account, although not all may be met in the formal religious education lessons. Such lessons will complement and build upon the experiences the pupil has in the home, school, parish and the wider community. Those involved in religious education should "strive to respect not only the requirements of religious education as a serious academic discipline, but also the problems and uncertainties which the young people, their families and teachers encounter in their personal faith"<sup>3</sup> so that all may have the freedom to grow towards full religious maturity.

### Whole school religious education

Religious growth and development, which must be the aim of religious education, are not confined simply to time-tabled religious education lessons. The whole curriculum should encourage spiritual and moral development, along with academic and social progress. Within this overall aim, religious education has a special part to play: "... it is regarded as the heart of the curriculum, enriching and informing all areas of learning with the light of the Gospel, teaching students to seek the truth which is of God, in the whole of creation, in themselves and in others."<sup>4</sup>

Religious education is concerned with the spiritual and moral development of pupils, improving their literacy thereof, and providing them with the vocabulary related to these aspects. However, the assumption should not be made that these are the exclusive responsibility of religious education; they should also be supported through other curriculum areas. Pupils' spiritual and moral development may be fostered both by learning about the Church's teaching on moral questions; and by literature, history, geography, science, technology, physical education and environmental studies. They will also be influenced by methods of teaching, learning and assessing and by the way pupils, staff and others behave towards each other, their property and their environment.<sup>1</sup> Equally, religious education has a place in pupils' social and cultural development, especially within the context of the Church's social teaching, and of its cultural breadth and universality. The development of pupils in these aspects is the shared responsibility of those involved in all areas of the curriculum, and in the whole conduct of school

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<sup>1</sup> School Standards and Framework Act, section 69 and schedule 19

<sup>2</sup> General Directory for Catechesis, para. 73

<sup>3</sup> Religious Education Curriculum Directory for Catholic Schools, CES 1996:9

<sup>4</sup> Religious Education Curriculum Directory for Catholic Schools, CES 1996:8.

<sup>1</sup> Spiritual and Moral Development across the Curriculum, CES 1995

life.

## Questions

1. How is the importance of religious education reflected in the school or college development plan?
2. What proportion of curriculum time is allocated to religious education?
3. How is the importance of religious education recognised in teachers' additional scale points or status?
4. How many teachers teach religious education?
  - What are their qualifications?
  - What are the criteria for choosing those who teach religious education?
  - Are the above comparable to other core areas of the curriculum?
5. Is the budget provision for religious education comparable with that of other major departments or curriculum areas?
  - In what ways are the specialist needs of the subject being answered by allocation of accommodation, storage, equipment and other resources?
6. Is the policy statement for religious education in place?
  - In what ways is religious education assessed?
  - What targets have been set for religious education?
  - Is religious education included in the governors' target setting process?
7. How does the teaching of religious education relate to other curriculum areas especially on moral issues, education in personal relationships and sex education?
8. In what ways does the religious education curriculum contribute to the moral and spiritual development of pupils directly, through supporting other curriculum areas, through links with worship, and through links with chaplaincy?
- 8a. What opportunities are there for other subjects to contribute to pupils' spiritual and moral development?
9. What opportunities are taken to offer staff professional development in religious education?
10. How do the governors fulfil their responsibility for religious education?
11. How has the action plan following the diocesan inspection been implemented?
12. How does the school use diocesan support for the teaching of religious education?

## **P. CITIZENSHIP, THE WORLD OF WORK AND CAREERS EDUCATION AND GUIDANCE**

The Catholic school or college has a responsibility to enable pupils to understand the need to contribute to society, the importance of commitment to the common good and the building of community. In the areas of education for citizenship, the world of work, and careers, the exploration of the expectations of society in the light of gospel values is particularly challenging. As well as confronting this challenge through the taught curriculum, the school should be a community which is 'an experience of and witness to Christ's presence in today's society'.<sup>1</sup>

The basis for the school's response to this demand is an understanding of the purpose of education. "Education is, primarily, about 'human flourishing'. It is concerned with the development of the whole person. It is essential that children learn basic skills in school. This is not primarily because employers require them, but rather because they are crucial to the development of the individual made in God's image".<sup>2</sup>

### **Citizenship**

Education for citizenship in the Catholic school or college will relate the general values and attitudes of citizenship to the primary gospel values which are the foundation for the school's mission. The social teaching of the Church calls for active commitment: "The Church's social teaching can be summed up as the obligation of every individual to contribute to the good of society, in the interests of justice and in pursuit of the "option for the poor".<sup>3</sup>

Pupils should be offered the opportunity to learn the principles of the social teaching of the Church, to enable them to develop an informed conscience and begin to live out a commitment to the common good.

Public service is a particular type of contribution to society, one which is strongly supported by the Church: "There is a strong tradition of public service in all the major British parties which we wish to applaud, and we particularly wish to declare our respect and gratitude towards all those who undertake the responsibilities of political life, whatever party they belong to. We are especially grateful to Catholic citizens who join and play an active part in the political party of their choice, provided they take their Catholic principles ... with them."<sup>4</sup>

### **Questions**

1. How are pupils helped to see the connection between the general values of citizenship and gospel values?
2. What place is given in the curriculum to the education of pupils in the social teaching of the Church?
3. How does the teaching of citizenship prepare pupils for their responsibilities in the family and in society?
4. To what extent is the school or college a model Christian society?
5. How are pupils encouraged to take part in the running of the school or college?
  - What opportunities are there for pupils to join a student council?
6. What contact do pupils have with people active in public life, for example school governors, magistrates, local councillors, and Members of Parliament?

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<sup>1</sup> The Common Good in Education, CES 1997:5

<sup>2</sup> The Common Good in Education, CES 1997:7

<sup>3</sup> The Common Good, para. 73

<sup>4</sup> The Common Good, para. 57

## The world of work

The Catholic school or college should give pupils the opportunity to experience and consider the world of work as a whole within the understanding of work as a share in God's creative activity. "Work is more than a way of making a living: it is a vocation, a participation in God's creative activity. Work increases the common good. The creation of wealth by productive action is blessed by God and praised by the Church, as both a right and a duty. When properly organised and respectful of the humanity of the worker, it is also a source of fulfilment and satisfaction."<sup>1</sup> When reflecting on work as a vocation, pupils should take time to consider the specifically religious sense of vocation: a calling to ordination and the religious life. They should also be encouraged to recognise that everyone is called to a vocation whether it be in their employment, their family life or in service to others.

There is likelihood that many pupils will do several jobs in the course of their working lives. Our pupils will need to develop skills that are transferable to different working environments and see themselves as life-long learners with a flexible approach and a thirst for knowledge.

Our schools and colleges will work with careers advisers and other outside agencies to support pupils in their work placements. It is important that these agencies are helped to recognise, have sympathy with or at least respect the ethos of a Catholic School. In particular the pastoral needs of our students in the work place need to be met.

Pupils should also be encouraged to recognise the rights and responsibilities involved in employment. "Workers have rights which Catholic teaching has consistently maintained are superior to the rights of capital. These include the right to decent work, to just wages, to security of employment, to adequate rest and holidays, to limitation of hours of work, to health and safety protection, to non-discrimination, to form and join trade unions, and, as a last resort, to go on strike. The Catholic Church has always deplored the treatment of employment as nothing more than a form of commercial contract. This leads to a sense of alienation between a worker and his or her labour. Instead, forms of employment should stress the integration of work and worker, and encourage the application of creative skills."<sup>2</sup>

Within its own operation, management and relationships, the Catholic school or college should offer practical examples of these teachings. "The governing bodies of Catholic schools are the employers of both teaching and support staff. As Christians, they have the duty to ensure that their employees have all the rights to which they are entitled. More than that, they have the responsibility to encourage in all staff the sense of participation in God's creative activity, of their unique value as human beings made in God's image and of their vocation to serve the young in education."<sup>3</sup> "All those employed in Catholic schools and colleges, both teaching and support staff, have duties towards their employers as well as rights as employees. They have a duty to work together for the common good of the school or college community by their wholehearted commitment to the individual good of all pupils and students."<sup>4</sup>

When discussing the world of work, pupils must also have the opportunity to explore the reality and problems of unemployment. The approach taken should enable pupils to recognise that the lack of paid work does not diminish the worth and value of the individual person.

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<sup>1</sup> The Common Good, para. 90

<sup>2</sup> The Common Good, para. 91

<sup>3</sup> The Common Good in Education, CES 1997:18

<sup>4</sup> The Common Good in Education, CES 1997:19

## Questions

1. How are pupils prepared for their Christian mission in the world of work as a whole?
2. What is the quality of example offered by the school or college in the area of the rights and responsibilities of employer and employee?
3. What contact do pupils have with employers and trade unionists?
4. How does the school prepare pupils for the possibility of a sequence of different forms of employment? How are issues of unemployment addressed?
5. How are teachers assisted in their professional development for this area of Christian formation?

## Careers education and guidance

The Catholic school or college should give adequate recognition to the importance of careers education and guidance in the development of the whole person. "Education ... prepares young people for the whole of adult life which, for the majority, includes paid employment. They must be equipped for this. This does not simply mean acquiring the necessary skills. Whether working in industry, business or public service, people are working in communities where individuals interact. That is why employers look for personal qualities such as the ability to co-operate, to build effective relationships, integrity, commitment, dependability and respect for others in those they employ, as much as technical skills, which are often highly specific and best learnt in the workplace itself. The education of the whole person not only enhances the dignity for the individual, in the long term it promotes the common good in society and in the world-wide human community."<sup>1</sup> Since many workers are now self-employed, pupils also need to be given the opportunity to develop entrepreneurial skills through enterprise activities offered in the school. Work-related learning and career pathways must be seen in the context of the Catholic perspective of the school or college.

### Questions

1. In relation to the provision made for careers education and guidance,
  - who has responsibility for organising the careers programme?
  - how is the programme supported through the time-tabled curriculum?
  - how is the programme resourced?
  - how does the programme cater for the individual needs of pupils?
  - how does the programme relate to the mission statement and its aims?
  - how does the programme emphasise the importance of vocation, service and individual dignity in the context of career aspirations, successes and failures?
  - how does the programme address issues of changing patterns of employment and the implications of unemployment?
2. What attempts are made to establish appropriate cross curricular links including the school's religious education programme?
3. What opportunities are provided for pupils to consider vocations to the priesthood, religious life and other ways of contributing to the Church's mission?
4. Are pupils given an opportunity to consider positively a vocation in teaching and in Catholic education and formation?
5. What criteria are used to ensure that work experience for pupils is:
  - appropriate to their needs?
  - consistent with the Catholic character of the school?
6. What is the process for evaluation of the provision for careers education and guidance?

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<sup>1</sup> The Common Good in Education, CES 1997:7

## **Q EDUCATION IN PERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS, SEX EDUCATION AND HEALTH EDUCATION**

*"I have come so that they may have life,  
and have it to the full" (Jn 10:10)*

Education is about the growth and development of the whole person. It should aim to integrate pupils' intellectual, spiritual, moral, emotional, psychological, social and physical development.

We are created in the image of God, whose own life is relationship: Father, Son and Spirit. We are called to share in that relationship and to reflect it in our relationships with others. The Catholic school provides the context for forming and conducting relationships in this pattern, and in accordance with Christ's law of love. Throughout pupils' time in school and college they experience a network of relationships which should, in themselves, be part of the educative process.

### **Relationships**

Pupils come to school already involved in a number of relationships. While parents have the primary responsibility for their children's growth in understanding relationships, the school or college provides:

- a setting in which pupils can reflect on their relationships as appropriate;
- an opportunity for people of the same age to share common experiences and learn from each other;
- a range of insights which may expand and enrich those acquired from the pupils' own homes and families.

The pupils' experiences of relationships within the school or college have a formative and significant influence on their understanding of relationships. There is a need for teachers and pupils to reflect explicitly on the nature of relationships and to develop skills and strategies for handling them. It must also be acknowledged that some children experience damaging relationships. Reflecting upon and learning how to develop relationships are an essential part of the religious formation which the school or college offers and should extend to its whole life, since every person's life is charged with God's presence, and every human experience presents us with the opportunity to deepen our knowledge and love of God.

### **Education in personal relationships**

There is a need to ensure that education in personal relationships is conducted in an integrated and systematic way throughout each pupil's school career. In a Catholic school or college the elements of this education, including those required by legislation, are provided through a variety of curriculum areas (e.g. religious education, science, technology, education for personal relationships programmes, literature, history). It is important to ensure that the information conveyed is always set in the context of the Catholic understanding of relationships. Religious education has a significant role at this point. Through considering all aspects of its provision and how all elements relate, the school or college will enable its pupils to understand the nature of relationships, to reflect upon the way in which relationships grow, and to acquire the skills necessary for developing their present and future relationships.

In many schools, programmes of education in personal relationships grew out of the need to assist parents in their responsibilities for sex education<sup>2</sup>; but there is a growing understanding that this area of the curriculum is not confined to a single issue. The Church's concern for

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<sup>2</sup> Educational Guidance in Human Love, paras. 54-55

justice and peace, for example, demands that pupils are helped to view all relationships in the light of the Christian message.

"This is the new being which God, its Creator, is constantly renewing in his own image, in order to bring you to a full knowledge of himself. As a result, there is no longer any distinction between Gentiles and Jews, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarians, savages, slaves and free people, but Christ is all, Christ is in all."<sup>3</sup> Relationships between peoples of different races and cultures, genders and ages are issues on which the gospel casts a particular light; they are a necessary part of an education in personal relationships programme.

Pupils need help to identify and use creatively their own emotions, desires and affections. This is central to all Christian education in personal relationships, since unity and love between people is dependent upon a correct love and acceptance of self. "You must love your neighbour as yourself"<sup>4</sup>. Education in personal relationships will deal with matters related to trust, fidelity, responsibility, personal dignity and the correct use of the body, mind and spirit. It will consider issues such as child abuse, sexuality, anger, failure and success.

A Christ-centred education in personal relationships programme is based on his reconciling mission. In his Passion, Death and Resurrection, Christ reconciles the human race to God, heals the individual and draws people into unity with one another. This is the context for education in personal relationships in a Catholic school or college.

## Questions

1. How often is the policy for education in personal relationships reviewed?
2. With reference to the programme for education in personal relationships,
  - what role did the governors and parents play in drawing up and approving the programme?
  - who is the co-ordinator of the programme?
  - how is it resourced?
  - what staff development provision has been made?
  - how do staff see their responsibilities in relation to the programme?
3. How do different curriculum areas contribute to the education in personal relationships programme, and how are these contributions set within the context of the Catholic understanding of relationships?
4. What skills does the school or college seek to develop in the programme?
  - How does the programme help pupils to identify and use creatively their emotions, desires and affections?
5. What opportunities does the programme allow for pupils to reflect on the nature of their relationships, past, present and future, and to develop skills and strategies for handling them?
  - How does the pastoral care system contribute to this?
6. How are the pupils helped to recognise that all human relationships have the potential to reveal the face of God in the other(s)?
7. Is expert help sought from outside the school or college?
  - Does specialist support reinforce the Church's moral teaching?

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<sup>3</sup> Col. 3:10-11

<sup>4</sup> Mt. 22:39

## Sex and Relationship education

“Sexuality is a fundamental component of personality, one of its modes of being, of manifestation, of communicating with others, of feeling, of expressing and of living human love. Therefore it is an integral part of the development of the personality and of the educative process.”<sup>1</sup>

An awareness of sexuality as part of the uniqueness of persons created and loved by God, and an understanding of its integration in the life of the whole person, provide the essential foundation for education about the emotional, social, physical and biological aspects of sex. Parents and teachers should ensure that their own knowledge is accurate, and that they are sufficiently familiar with the moral teaching of the Church to be able to explain its positive vision of sexual relationships. Publications such as the CES discussion paper, ‘Education for Love’, may be helpful.

Sex education programmes should be planned so that they are appropriate to the different stages of young people’s development, and support their growth towards full human maturity.

### Questions

1. How often is the governors' policy on sex education reviewed? If there is a diocesan policy, how is it integrated into the governors' policy?
2. If there is a programme for sex education, how did the governing body fulfil its responsibility in consulting parents and in approving the programme and ensuring that it is appropriate for all pupils?
3. What assistance is given to parents, such as printed guidelines and ongoing support, so that they may effectively exercise their rights and fulfil their responsibilities in this area?
4. With reference to the programme for sex education,
  - how does the school or college ensure that sex education, including the requirements of the National Curriculum, is set in the context of the teaching of the Church?
  - what account is taken of the information pupils will have received already and the stages of development they will have reached?
  - what steps are taken to ensure that various learning experiences are integrated so that they are clearly seen to be part of the education of the whole person?
  - how does the school or college ensure that there is a match between the content of the programme and pupils' existing knowledge and understanding?
  - how is the programme resourced?
5. How does the school or college educate pupils to evaluate and be aware of the consequences of views and ways of behaving current in society today (styles of relationships, abuse, contraception, "safe" sex, homosexuality)?
6. How do staff contribute to a whole school or college approach?
  - What are the links with pastoral care, chaplaincy and the school's Child Protection Policy?
7. How are pupils helped to grow in awareness of the consequences of their own attitudes and behaviour?
  - Is there provision for individual counselling?
8. How are staff helped to be confident in providing responses to pupils' questions?

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<sup>1</sup> Educational Guidance in Human Love, para. 4

## Health education

The whole of creation is God's gift to us and through the Incarnation it takes on the characteristics of the sacred. It is our duty to respect creation and develop and use it properly. It follows that any programme of health education in a Catholic school must grow out of the Christian understanding of creation. "Life and physical health are precious gifts entrusted to us by God. We must take reasonable care of them, taking into account the needs of others and the common good"<sup>1</sup>. Health education must positively stress the goodness of all created things and especially of our own bodies. ("Temples of the Holy Spirit etc..") It must also take account of the dangers of abuse, which result in the impairment and destruction of God's gifts. Drugs education is a particularly important aspect of health education.

A comprehensive health education programme should include an emphasis on healthy eating and regular exercise. It will also give guidance on achieving a balance between sensible care for one's body and preoccupation with physical appearance.

Within the context of the development of each young person as an integrated, sexually healthy person, accurate information about HIV/AIDS should be provided. Pupils need to know the ways in which sexually transmitted diseases and HIV/AIDS can and cannot be contracted, and their personal and physiological consequences. They also need to know "how to treat people living with HIV and the illnesses which can follow from it with the respect and care due to all sick people...To speak as if HIV/AIDS were God's punishment for promiscuity is untrue and grossly offensive. Such thinking travesties the nature of God and of true human compassion as revealed in Jesus"<sup>2</sup>.

The health education programme should be developed and taught in consultation with parents. All aspects of the programme must be grounded in the Church's teaching.

## Questions

1. How often is the health education policy reviewed?
2. With reference to the health education programme:
  - who is responsible for its co-ordination?
  - what matters are considered?
  - which departments contribute?
  - is the programme part of the overall education in personal relationships programme?
  - how have parents and governors been consulted and informed?
3. How does the school or college ensure that the health education programme is set within a Catholic context?
4. In what ways are agencies, including diocesan agencies, involved?
  - What forms does this involvement take?
5. How far does canteen and tuck shop provision reflect the policy on health education?
6. How does the school or college ensure provision of drugs education appropriate to the age range of pupils?
7. With reference to HIV/AIDS education:
  - what advice did the governors seek in making decisions on HIV/AIDS education?

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<sup>1</sup> Catechism of the Catholic Church, para. 2228

<sup>2</sup> Education for Love, CES, 1998:38

- how were parents consulted and informed?
  - what is the provision for HIV/AIDS education?
  - which staff are involved?
  - what staff development did they receive, and from whom?
  - what ongoing support is offered?
8. In what ways are moral issues related to health education addressed, and how are they set in a Catholic context?

## **Part 4: Pastoral Care of Pupils**

### **R. THE PASTORAL CARE OF PUPILS**

Within every Catholic school and college the presence of Christ should be evident to all. The school or college should seek actively to work with him, so that his ministry is reflected in all aspects of the school's life. It is his ministry of love, compassion and justice that should be most apparent in the approach to pastoral care. Pastoral care is concerned with the individual needs of unique persons. Its purpose is to foster self respect and personal responsibility, to help those who are at a vulnerable stage in their development and to provide support for those in need of healing. Effective pastoral care in a Catholic school depends on the recognition of Christ in each individual, and on co-operation with Christ in his loving care for all people. This loving care will show itself in concern for every member of the community, whether pupil, parent, member of staff or governor.

Pastoral care will include a behaviour policy within which rewards and sanctions will reflect the forgiveness and justice emanating from commitment to Christ and his teaching. It will also require the promotion and practice of positive behaviour by all members of the school or college community. Pastoral care may often be enhanced by working with other providers of external support. Nonetheless the school must assume the prime responsibility for the care of its pupils.

#### **Questions**

1. Who has overall responsibility for pastoral care?
2. How is pastoral care organised?
- 2a. Impact of this care on the well-being of pupils and staff?
3. How do parish priests and chaplains contribute to pastoral care?
4. In what ways do the pastoral care policy and its implementation help in identifying the gifts and needs of each person in the community?
5. How is the pastoral care policy integrated with curriculum aims and objectives?
6. In what ways does the school or college provide praise and encouragement for every person in the community?
7. What is the attitude towards success and failure?
8. How does the pastoral care system support parents in their responsibility towards their children?
9. How is the pastoral care system evaluated?
10. How does the school or college ensure the promotion and practice of positive behaviour for learners coming into the school and for its own pupils in outside learning environments?
11. How does the school ensure that all adults coming into contact with pupils behave in a manner consistent with the school's pastoral expectations?

## Healing and reconciliation

In a Catholic school or college, Christ's mission to heal and reconcile must be clearly manifested in the response to those who experience a sense of personal failure, whether temporary or more long-term. This may be in the realm of learning or academic achievement; it might be social, religious, disciplinary or in the area of personal relationships.

The exercise of sanctions must always be carried out in awareness of the importance of healing and reconciliation. Response to incidents of bullying and breakdown of relationships, for example, should always ensure support for the victim and concern for the perpetrator. Every opportunity should be taken to allow for the Sacrament of Reconciliation, where appropriate, to bring God's loving goodness to bear on the community and the individual.

Because of its identity as a faith community, a Catholic school or college will take particular care to limit its use of the sanction of exclusion, and will ensure that all staff understand the process by which pupils are supported after a short-term exclusion. In situations where permanent exclusion is the only possible course of action, the school will do everything it can to work with other schools and agencies, as well as the local Catholic community, to help the pupil to move forward.

## Questions

1. How are healing and reconciliation demonstrated in the life of the school or college?
  - How does the school or college identify and counteract obstacles to healing and reconciliation?
  - How are families involved in the process?
  - Who else might be involved? How?
2. What opportunities are made available for pupils and parents to express their views?
  - How are criticisms received?
3. How does the school or college demonstrate its support for freedom of conscience?
4. How does the anti-bullying policy reflect the healing and reconciliation of both parties?
5. How often does the governing body review its behaviour policy and how is it made aware of its effectiveness?
6. What disciplinary sanctions are used?
  - How are they informed by the recognition of Christ's mission to heal and reconcile?
7. For what reasons does the school or college exclude?
  - How is the process of reintegration organised where appropriate?
  - How is continuing support for pupils, staff and parents ensured in all cases?

## **S. SUPPORT AGENCIES**

Catholic schools and colleges are part of a wider Catholic community, containing diverse expertise and resources. These need to be deployed for the better development of the individual pupil and member of staff and the school or college as a whole. At certain times, the resources required might well be the spiritual support of the parish and deanery community.

Schools and colleges also need to build links with a range of agencies to ensure that a full programme of support is available for all pupils. This may mean working directly with agencies or working within a local extended schools context. However, the school has a lead role in establishing and directing these links to ensure that not only symptoms are addressed but also the causes of problems.

The Catholic community is, itself, part of an even wider local community which could be accessed appropriately for the benefit of all.

### **Questions**

1. In what ways does the pastoral care system make use of the external support offered by the parish, diocese, national Catholic agencies, local authority, social services, police and others?
2. How does the school or college ensure appropriate induction for support staff and visiting staff?
3. How does the school or college ensure that its pastoral system complies with the requirements of the Children Act and ethos of the school/college?

## T. CHILD PROTECTION

“The Church believes unconditionally in the dignity of children, and reasserts her unambiguous condemnation of child abuse. It is the pastoral duty of the Church as a whole to meet the spiritual and emotional needs of all involved.”<sup>1</sup>

The school or college will have established a policy and procedures for child protection, known by all, which reflect both concern for the dignity of the individual and the need to take prompt action in situations where abuse may be occurring. There should be a designated senior member of staff and a responsible governor who should lead in the implementation of the school policy, which will have been developed in conjunction with the diocese and the LA.

“Each one of us needs to ask how we can play a part in the struggle for truth, justice and dignified human relationships. To overcome evil requires the promotion of virtue and responsibility in the broadest personal and social dimensions.”<sup>2</sup>

### Questions

1. What part has the governing body played in the drawing up and implementation of the child protection policy?
2. How often do the governors review their child protection policy to ensure that it:
  - reflects the guidance given by the Bishops' Conference?
  - meets all legal requirements?
  - is in the context of Catholic pastoral care?
3. How does the governing body ensure that all adults working in the school or college are aware of the policy and understand their responsibilities in this area?
4. What happens if an allegation is made about:
  - the headteacher?
  - a governor?
5. How does the school or college provide non-judgemental support for the person against whom the allegation is made?
6. What system is in place for the monitoring of visitors?
  - How is this made known?

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<sup>1</sup> Child abuse: Pastoral and Procedural Guidelines: 11 (1994 BCEW)

<sup>2</sup> Child abuse: Pastoral and Procedural Guidelines: 21(1994 BCEW)

## U. TRANSITION AND TRANSFER

The process of growing to full human maturity in Christ is a life-long development of which schooling is an early stage. Throughout school and college, pupils experience situations which will prepare them for the changes they will face in life and work. Many pupils look forward to change, new opportunities and new relationships. For others, admission to a new and strange environment, leaving a familiar atmosphere, passing between phases of learning such as primary to secondary can cause anxiety and insecurity. It is important that support be given to pupils facing such transition in their lives so that they are adequately prepared, personally as well as academically, for their next stage of experience. Links should be established between years and groups to strengthen the sense of a single living community in the school and between teachers within schools and across phases. A major responsibility for Catholic secondary schools, in particular, is to ensure that there is effective partnership with other institutions and that there is continuity of support and guidance for all pupils who are taught on different sites by other schools, colleges and work-place providers. Catholic schools and colleges should seek to provide a continuity of experience throughout a pupil's school life.

### Questions

1. What induction and transfer procedures are there for:
  - children starting school for the first time?
  - pupils transferring to a new school?
  - pupils arriving during the school year?
  - students leaving school or transferring to further or higher education or other forms of training?
  - students educated for part of the week on a different site?
  - students from other institutions for part of the week at the school/college
2. What other stages of transition need to be considered?
3. What procedures are there to ease these transitions?
4. In what ways are local Church communities involved in the above?

## V. CONTRIBUTING TO COMMUNITY BUILDING

Many schools and colleges are made up of and influenced by a rich variety of cultures, traditions and backgrounds. The diversity of cultural and racial backgrounds in our society provides positive resources upon which to draw in terms of attitudes and experiences. Our Catholic provision is ethnically and socially very diverse, frequently containing many pupils from beyond the Catholic community. It is particularly responsive to the needs of immigrants. Our standards are high, often adding the most value for the neediest pupils and our schools and colleges are frequently in the vanguard of good work to promote community relations. Despite these strengths, specific measures are required to develop community, tolerance, respect and understanding between all the cultures and traditions represented not only in the school or college or its immediate environment, but in society as a whole. Schools should refer to CES guidance in this field, supporting self-evaluation and exemplifying good practice.

### Questions

1. What steps are taken to prepare pupils for living in a multi-cultural society?
2. What action is taken to promote tolerance, respect and understanding of other cultures and traditions?
3. How is the life of the school or college enriched by the cultural diversity of its members?
4. How does it help to develop in its members a sense of responsibility for each other and for the wider community?
5. What strategies does the school or college use to counter instances of prejudice or racism, including those which may occur at admission of pupils and recruitment of staff?
6. What links does the school have with the wider community?

## **Part 5: Staff**

### **W. STAFF**

The effective running of the school or college depends on the commitment of every person who works within it. In a Catholic school where the governing body is the employer, every member of staff, both teaching and support, will be regarded as an integral part of the community and able to affect its life and ethos<sup>1</sup>. It is important, therefore, that care be taken over every appointment and that support is available to all members of the community.

In a Catholic school the management of staff should be set in the context of Christian values and the process should be underpinned by principles of justice and equity. In all aspects of staff management the governing body will also want to draw upon the best professional practice; they may look for advice, where appropriate, to the Catholic Education Service, the Diocesan Schools' Commission, the Diocesan RE Centre and the personnel department of the Local Authority.

#### **Equal Opportunity**

As good employers, the governors of a Catholic school or college will fulfil all the requirements of employment law. In accordance with the Church's teaching, they will want to base their employment practices on the concept of equality of opportunity. The law allows governors to assure themselves that their employees have a clear understanding and commitment to the teaching of the Church. It is therefore recommended that employment practices are consolidated into a single statement of equality of opportunity reflecting both Catholic values and legislative provision.

#### **Questions**

1. Does the school have a policy statement on equality of opportunity in employment?
  - Who was responsible for drawing it up?
2. How are any exclusions and restrictions in it justifiable?
3. How is the policy reviewed and its effects monitored?
4. How are those involved in the interviewing and selection of staff made aware of the policy?
  - Who ensures that they act in accordance with it?
5. How does the governing body ensure that all staff whom they employ are made aware of and enjoy the rights to which they are entitled?

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<sup>1</sup> The Common Good in Education, CES, 1997

## Recruitment and Selection

The selection of staff constitutes one of the most important tasks undertaken by the governing body in determining the framework for the conduct of the school or college. The establishment of clear procedures dealing with all stages of the process, from identification of the vacancy to the issuing of contracts, will lead to greater effectiveness in the appointment of staff.

In setting the criteria for each appointment, the governing body will want to consider the contribution which the new member will be expected to make to the implementation of the school or college mission statement. The use of CES documentation is strongly recommended. Useful guidance will also be found in the personnel handbooks of a number of dioceses. In the case of teaching staff, the governors will wish to follow the principles set out in the Bishops' Conference Memorandum on the Appointment of Teachers (date or footnote?). They will also need to take account of the ways in which national standards for teachers and headteachers may be interpreted in the light of the needs of their Catholic school or college.

### Questions

1. What procedures does the governing body have for dealing with all aspects of recruitment and selection of staff?
2. If CES documentation is not used, how do the governors ensure that employees are aware of their responsibilities in a Catholic school or college?
3. Who is involved in each appointment – teaching and support staff?
  - If governors are not directly involved in the appointment, how do they ensure that their responsibilities are fulfilled?
  - Do current staff contribute to the appointment process?
4. What guidelines do the governors give to candidates about the Catholic character of the school or college and their proposed responsibilities and role within its development?
  - At what stage are these guidelines given?
5. Which posts have been reserved for Catholics only and are the criteria clearly defined?
  - How is this communicated to potential applicants?
6. What arrangements do governors make to ascertain or assess ways in which national standards for teachers and headteachers may be interpreted in the light of the needs of their school?
7. In relation to advertising, job descriptions, applications and contracts:
  - who draws up the advertisement, job description and person specification?
  - what information is sent out to candidates, and how is it differentiated for different types of posts?
  - in what ways do the job descriptions and information to candidates emphasise the Catholic nature of the school or college as indicated in the School Standards and Framework Act, and the implications of accepting a post?
  - in the event of the school not using CES documentation, in what ways do its application forms and requests for references seek to discover:
    - in the case of Catholic candidates, their personal conviction and commitment to the faith?
    - in the case of other applicants, their sympathy with and respect for the aims and objectives of a Catholic school?
  - at what point in the procedures will the CES contract be discussed?
8. In relation to shortlisting:

- who does the shortlisting?
- how is it done and whose advice is sought?
- how is the information received in references evaluated, and at what stage?
- how are the criteria in the job description and person specification used in drawing up a shortlist?
- what priority is given to:
  - Catholicity of the school or college?
  - balance of the staff team?
  - for teaching staff, the needs of the curriculum?

9. In relation to interview:

- in what ways does the interview procedure accord with the nature of the post (e.g. small panels, whole governing body, presence of advisers)?
- for which posts are representatives of the diocese invited to interviews?
- for which posts are representatives of the LA invited to interviews?
- what steps are taken to ensure that, in the case of internal appointments, the procedures are equally fair and just compared with the appointment of external candidates?
- at the end of the interview, what procedures are adopted to inform all candidates of the outcome?
- for successful candidates:
  - who is responsible for debriefing?
  - who is responsible for issuing the necessary legal documentation?
  - who is responsible for informing the diocese and the LA (where appropriate)?
  - what strategies are used to ensure that the candidate is prepared for taking up the post?
  - how is the new member of staff introduced to colleagues?
  - what opportunities are made available for the new member of staff to visit the school prior to taking up the appointment?
  - what support is offered when relocation is necessary?
- for unsuccessful candidates:
  - who is responsible for debriefing?
  - how is it ensured that information about the outcome of the interview is handled sensitively?

## **X. STAFF DEVELOPMENT**

In order to enable its members to play a full part in its life, a Catholic school or college will wish to establish policies and practices for staff development which have regard to:

- the needs of individuals;
- the needs of the school or college itself;
- the needs of the wider Catholic community.

The school or college will also wish to ensure that it looks to wider educational and professional practice, including national standards and qualifications, in the development of staff, and monitors its impact on the Catholic nature of the community.

### **Induction**

The smooth induction of staff into the educational community is vital. Newly qualified teachers and other new members of staff should be welcomed and affirmed. The induction procedure should begin or continue the development of a deeper understanding of the nature of Catholic education and should help to identify the unique contribution which each member of staff can make to the life of the school or college. It should clarify how staff should implement the mission statement in their day-to-day activity. Reference may be made to the CES materials on induction.

### **Questions**

1. How are induction procedures organised?
2. How are induction procedures appropriate for:
  - teachers coming into a Catholic school for the first time?
  - teachers returning to or promoted within Catholic education?
  - support staff?
3. How do induction procedures allow staff to see their role in the light of the school's mission statement?
4. What strategies are used to enable staff to identify their unique contribution to the life of the school or college?
5. How is their contribution negotiated, supported and evaluated?
6. Does the induction procedure address the particular needs of those staff who are not Catholics?
7. How is the induction procedure monitored, impact evaluated and followed up?

## Continuing professional development

Professional development in a Catholic school or college encompasses the whole staff. A managed programme that derives from agreed policies will help to ensure that the needs, including the spiritual needs, of the individual and of the community are addressed through a range of opportunities, extending from induction throughout his or her career.

In drawing up a policy, particular attention should be devoted to the specific needs of the school or college in relation to its mission statement. The professional development strategy will therefore reflect the priorities in the school development plan. It will be informed by activities such as self-evaluation, training needs analysis, curriculum review, performance management, and action planning following inspection. It is important that planning and policy-making involve the active participation of appropriate individuals. It is equally important that all staff, teaching and support, are fully informed.

It is incumbent on each school to promote the importance of leadership training and to nurture leadership potential. Each governing body should provide professional development support for leadership training

Policies and programmes should be subject to evaluation in terms of principles such as equality of opportunity, in respect of their contribution to the life of the school or college and in the extent to which they contribute to the improvement of the quality of education, including raising standards of achievement.

As well as school funding, every opportunity should be taken to use the funding available for professional development programmes through government grants and the LA. A planned and prioritised programme should make best use of the resources available from diocesan, LA and national providers, and from the joint diocesan management training groups.

## Questions

1. How do the professional development policy and programme provide for the needs of all staff?
  - How are priorities established with due regard to the different sources of available funding?
2. What mechanisms are there to consider the needs of the individual in the light of the needs of the school or college and the wider community? How does the school or college develop the leadership potential of its staff, in order that they might gain both internal promotion and promotion to other Catholic schools?
3. In what ways do professional development activities:
  - help staff participate in the creation of whole school policies?
  - allow members of staff to reflect on key values and principles?
  - enable members of staff as individuals and as members of groups to consider ways in which the mission statement is lived out in daily experience?
4. In what ways does the school or college take advantage of and contribute to support for Catholic schools provided by Catholic agencies?
5. When the analysis of needs identifies a difficulty or weakness, what help and support are offered to the relevant member of staff?
6. How is professional development provision evaluated in terms of:
  - range of opportunities offered?
  - access to opportunities for individuals and groups of staff?
  - contribution of outside agencies?
  - impact on the priorities of the development plan?

- cost effectiveness?
- enhancing the quality of teaching and learning?

## **Performance Management**

The process of performance management must be seen as integral both to the professional (which includes the spiritual) development of the individual and to school improvement, in addition to meeting legal requirements. It should be informed by the values expressed in the school's mission statement. The object of the process is to affirm success, to motivate teachers to fulfil their potential, and thereby to enhance educational provision for pupils.

As employers, the governors have a legal duty to ensure that the school has a policy for performance management and that appropriate performance management processes are in place and carried out effectively. In addition to national requirements, the contribution of all staff to the implementation of the mission statement should be evaluated. As well as any financial benefits that may result from performance management, other ways should be found to show that staff are valued.

Reference may be made to publications on performance management from the Catholic Education Service, dioceses and government agencies.

## **Questions**

1. In what ways do the governing body and the headteacher monitor the effectiveness of performance management?
2. How does the mission and purpose of the Catholic school or college inform performance management in order to produce a fuller picture of staff performance than that provided by tests and examination results?
3. What is the relationship between performance management and the provision for professional development of staff?

## Y. PASTORAL CARE OF STAFF

Within every Catholic school and college the presence of Christ should be evident to all. It is his ministry of love, compassion and justice that should be most apparent in the pastoral care of staff. The staff of the school or college is its most important resource. It is essential that the community supports and values its staff members. Effective pastoral care in a Catholic school depends on the recognition of Christ in each individual, and on co-operation with Christ in his loving care for all people. The healing and reconciling ministry of Christ should be evident in the ways in which the community responds to those members of staff who experience conflict, disappointment, loss or failure. The encouragement of Christ should be clear in the community's affirmation of the achievement of individual members of staff, as well as of the school as a whole.

### Questions

1. How is the pastoral care of all staff supported by the mission statement?
  - How is such care organised so as to complement professional development?
2. What formal and informal support is provided, such as opportunities for prayer, worship, reflection, renewal, counselling, social gatherings?
3. How and by whom are staff helped in times of personal crisis and illness?
4. What rooms and facilities are provided for staff? Are these adequate?
5. What opportunities are made available for staff to express their views?
6. Outside formal performance management processes, how are opportunities created to provide praise, encouragement and support:
  - for the headteacher and senior management team?
  - for all staff?
7. In what ways does the school or college accept and seek to resolve the tensions that can arise from a conflict of loyalties?
8. What procedures are adopted in dealing with a member of staff who fails to maintain acceptable personal or moral standards?
9. When disciplinary procedures against a member of staff are undertaken, how does the school or college ensure that there is ongoing support for the person involved?
  - With reference to Child Protection procedures, how does the school or college ensure non-judgemental support for the accused and the accuser?
10. What support is offered to staff affected by the process of redundancy, or after failure and disappointment?
11. How are staff informed about relevant outside agencies when need arises (e.g. diocesan and LA advisers, professional unions, parish priests)?
12. In what ways are means of communication regularly reviewed?

## **Z. VOCATION AND MISSION**

Within the Catholic Church, teaching is a vocation. The principal and model teacher is Christ himself, who shares his vocation with all who teach and who invites all to appreciate their relationship with him in this mission. The more fully they respond to his invitation the richer their teaching will become and the more opportunities will be provided for pupils to develop as full human beings. In this ministry of service, teachers share in the work of the Church. In the Catholic context, teachers collaborate in the ministry of the bishop as first teacher in the diocese.

The primary focus for this activity will be Catholic schools and colleges, but no school community is isolated; it forms part of networks of communities and should recognise its place within and contribution to each. The first community of which the school or college is a part is the Church and each school needs to be alert and responsive to the needs of the Church in terms of teachers. Particularly, it has a responsibility for helping to ensure a constant supply of informed teachers for Catholic schools and colleges. The example of dedicated teachers, including headteachers, who enjoy their vocation and their work with pupils, is the best encouragement for subsequent generations to respond to the call and command to teach. Schools and colleges should support those coming into the teaching profession by offering opportunities for initial teacher education as appropriate, and suitable support for new entrants. Senior staff and governors should recognise their responsibility for encouraging and developing those with potential for leadership in Catholic schools and colleges, even when this may mean their moving on to other institutions.

There are other important ministries without which schools and colleges cannot function. Governors and senior staff should recognise their own ministry and encourage all who are working in the school to appreciate theirs. The training offered to support staff, who contribute to the well-being and development of pupils, must also foster this appreciation.

### **Questions**

1. How are members of staff encouraged to develop an understanding of their work as a vocation and ministry?
2. What quality of witness to teaching as a vocation and profession does the school or college provide for its pupils?
3. How does the school or college support students in initial teacher education?
4. How are teachers encouraged to develop leadership skills?
5. How are all members of staff motivated to recognise the needs of all partners in education, both within the Church and in the wider educational community?

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