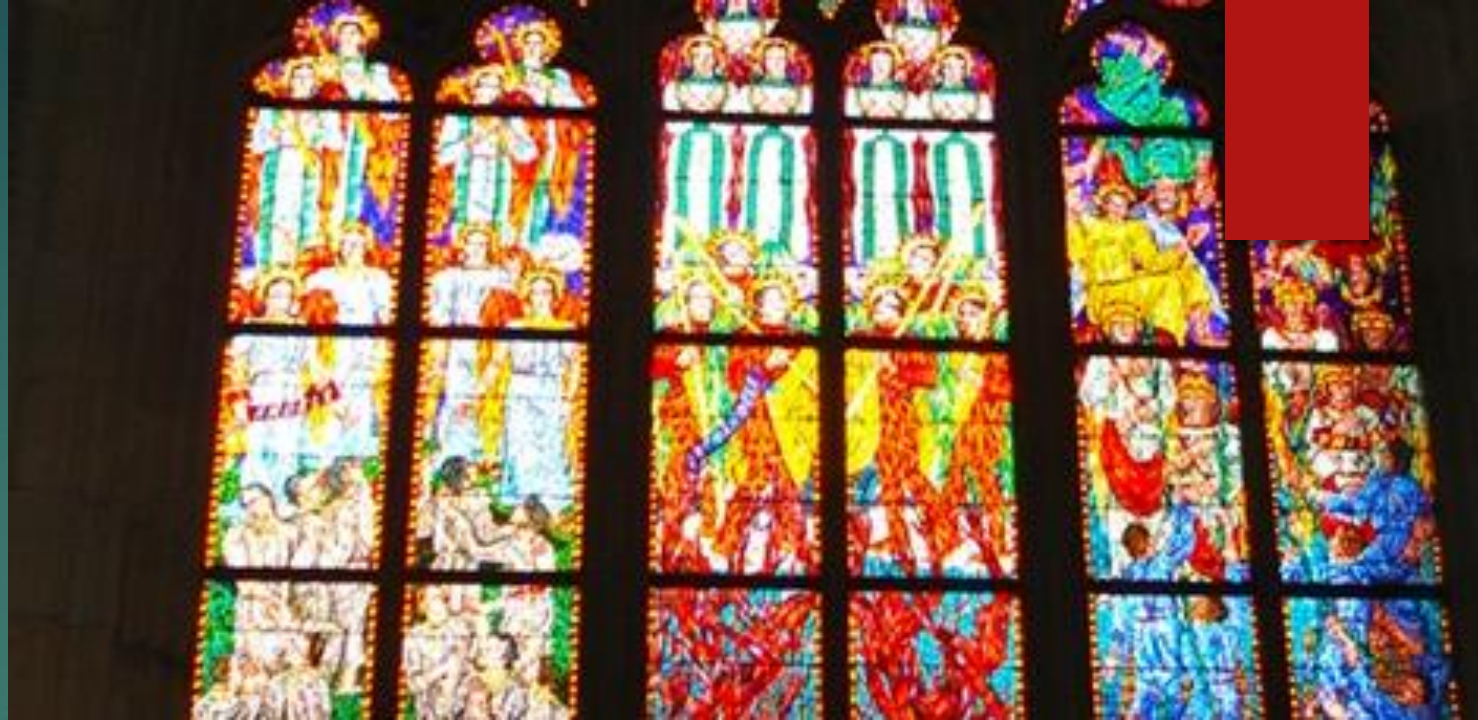


Board of Management Training:

Living the Catholic Ethos

1st December 2021



Association of Patrons and
Trustees of Catholic Schools

Reflection - Advent

- ▶ During this season of Advent, which is one of hope as we look forward to the birth of Christ, may we learn to place our trust in God who never leaves us or abandons us.
- ▶ May we be open to learning from our experiences and come to understand that God speaks to us through all the events of our lives, be they good or bad. In this way we can face the future with confidence knowing that God will give us what we need for each day.



- ▶ ***Lord, may our faith and trust in you become deeper this Advent.***
- ▶ ***Lord, teach us to recognize the many blessings we have and to say thanks.***
- ▶ ***Amen***

Agenda

- ▶ Welcome and opening reflection
- ▶ Our understanding of a Catholic school
- ▶ How do we “live” the ethos of the school?
- ▶ Communication with our Patrons/Trustees – formal and informal
- ▶ Board responsibilities



Catholic Schools Partnership

**CATHOLIC EDUCATION AT SECOND-LEVEL
IN THE REPUBLIC OF IRELAND**

LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

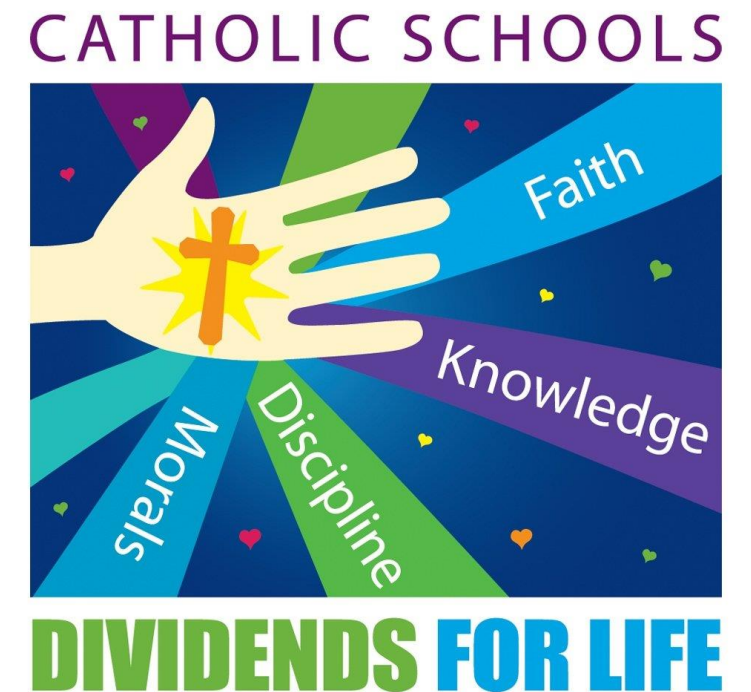
Catholic Schools:-

- ▶ Continue the work of Jesus the teacher
- ▶ Are part of a living tradition
- ▶ Respect faith and reason
- ▶ Integrate Religious Education in the curriculum
- ▶ Give expression to the teachings of the Second Vatican Council
- ▶ Educate to intercultural dialogue

CSP 2015 Veritas

What is a Catholic School?

- ▶ Why do you think that Catholic Schools are valued across the world?
- ▶ ...You're invited to comment in the Chat function...



What is a Catholic School?

Archbishop Dermot Farrell 10th Nov 2021

1. What Catholic education brings to the young people entrusted to our care is the horizon of faith. It opens up possibilities to explore the mysteries of life ...

2. Catholic schools are valued across the world. Why? Because of, and not despite, their Catholic ethos, Catholic schools embrace a variety of young people of various cultural identities and nationalities, and the plurality of their religious and other belief systems...

3. A Catholic school provides academically excellent education; it provides faith-based formation that allows each student to develop a moral foundation on which to stand for the rest of their lives.

► Catholic schools express their vision through the characteristic spirit and charism of their founders

CATHOLIC SCHOOLS



DIVIDENDS FOR LIFE

Characteristic Spirit Statements in Admissions Policies

- ▶ X schools seek to provide an education that affirms the innate dignity of every human being created in God's image and fosters the full and harmonious development of each student, encompassing the intellectual, physical, cultural, moral and spiritual aspects in an environment of justice, freedom, sincerity, truth and joy.
- ▶ The purpose of our school is to provide an education that acknowledges and affirms the dignity and uniqueness of every human being as a child of God – “The glory of God is humanity fully alive” (St Irenaeus).
- ▶ Our school seeks to build a learning community that welcomes, and witnesses to, the Gospel values of Jesus Christ, expressed through the lens of the Trust Charter. The school draws on the richness of the religious and cultural heritage of the past and the charism of the founder.
- ▶ It is a xx school which aims to be a community of growth, service and faith, in which young people are able to develop the full range of their talents and abilities in a balanced and integrated way.





1. How does the characteristic spirit of our school impact on our work as a Board?

YOU'RE INVITED TO COMMENT IN THE CHAT FUNCTION

How does our characteristic spirit impact on our work as a Board?

- ▶ How we act.... At our meetings, in our decision-making (opening prayer / reflection)
- ▶ Being aware of your core values.... (kindness, thoughtfulness, humanity)
- ▶ Reference in policies
- ▶ Attendance at relevant events
- ▶ Employment of staff – career breaks / job sharing / special leave policies?
- ▶ Allocating financial support to staff for courses to fulfil their potential as members of the school community
- ▶ School calendar – celebrating the liturgical year



How do you, as a Board, know that the students are being well cared for and respected?

You're invited to comment in the Chat function

How do you, as a Board, know that the students are being well cared for and respected?

- ▶ Do we listen to the student voice?
- ▶ Does the Board meet the students?
- ▶ What role do students have in shaping policy?
- ▶ How do we respond to the emerging well being needs of students?
- ▶ How do we cater for students with additional learning needs?
- ▶ Do we look critically at the curriculum we offer?
- ▶ When dealing with a student discipline issue, do we critically analyse the situation from our ethos perspective?

Scenario

- ▶ The Principal brings the following letter to the Board

Dear Mrs. Green,

My son Eoin, currently in 1st year, has informed me that he wishes to leave the Religious Education Class. Himself and his friend Liam, don't believe in Religion and feel the class is a waste of time. Eoin has always been a very well behaved child and has worked hard in his primary school. He has a great ambition to be a scientist and promises to work on his own during RE classes. I fully support him in this ambition and know that he can be trusted to work on his own.

In fact, I think there is too much emphasis on religion in the school, prayers in the morning over the intercom and at assemblies, an opening of the school year Mass and Ashes on Ash Wednesday – these are not for everybody and I feel that the school should be focussing its attention on the academic and sporting aspects of education. I would be happy to meet with you to discuss these issues. My other son is in 5th year and is very happy in the school.

We think this is a great school and want both of our sons to remain there and achieve to the best of their abilities.

Your sincerely....

Joe Bloggs

Points to Raise

- ▶ Is the school's Catholic identity clearly set out in the Admissions Policy?
- ▶ Is information available to parents about what this means?
- ▶ RE is central to the curriculum in a Catholic school
- ▶ The NCCA subject specification is designed to suit students of all faiths or no faith
- ▶ Constitutional right to absent from religious instruction
- ▶ Discussions in RE class help students to find their moral compass
- ▶ The Education Act includes spiritual development
- ▶ The overall ethos of the school is determined by the Patron – the Board is accountable to the Patron for upholding this ethos

Education Act 1998

15.—(1) It shall be the duty of a board to manage the school on behalf of the patron and for the benefit of the students and their parents

15(2(b)) A board shall uphold, and be accountable to the patron for so upholding, the characteristic spirit of the school as determined by the cultural, educational, moral, religious, social, linguistic and spiritual values and traditions which inform and are characteristic of the objectives and conduct of the school...

(c) consult with and keep the patron informed of decisions and proposals of the board,



Guiding Documents

Education Act

Articles of
Management

JMB Manual for
Boards of
Management
(2021)

Characteristic
spirit statement in
your Admissions
Policy

School Mission
Statement

Vision statement /
heritage statement /
statement of religious
and educational
philosophy from your
founders

Your Charter and
other resources
from your Patron /
Trust Body

How well do you know your role?

- ▶ Q.1. In the interest of student wellbeing, the Board of Management is considering creating a walk way around the 'old' convent. Do you need Trustee permission?
▶ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unsure ☐
- ▶ Q.2. The school building needs to be repainted, does the Board need Trustee permission?
▶ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unsure ☐
- ▶ Q.3. Is it usual to have an End-of-Year Report for Trustees from the Board of Management?
▶ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unsure ☐
- ▶ Q.4 The Deputy Principal is retiring. Should the Board notify the Trustees?
▶ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unsure ☐
- ▶ Q.5. End of year accounts and a forward budget are always sent to the Trustees?
▶ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unsure ☐

How well do you know your role?

- ▶ Q.6. The Admissions Policy should be sent to the Trustees for approval?
Yes ☐ No ☐ Unsure ☐
- ▶ Q.7 The Trustees indemnify the members of the Board of Management in the event of legal action against any of its actions provided the terms of the insurance policy are observed?
Yes ☐ No ☐ Unsure ☐
- ▶ Q.8 The Department of Education may alter the status of a school without the permission of the Trustees?
Yes ☐ No ☐ Unsure ☐
- ▶ Q.9 The Trustees will meet any deficit in school expenses?
Yes ☐ No ☐ Unsure ☐
- ▶ Q.10 The Trustees are the final arbiters in disputes arising over appointments of staff?
Yes ☐ No ☐ Unsure ☐

Reserved Powers of Trustees/Patron

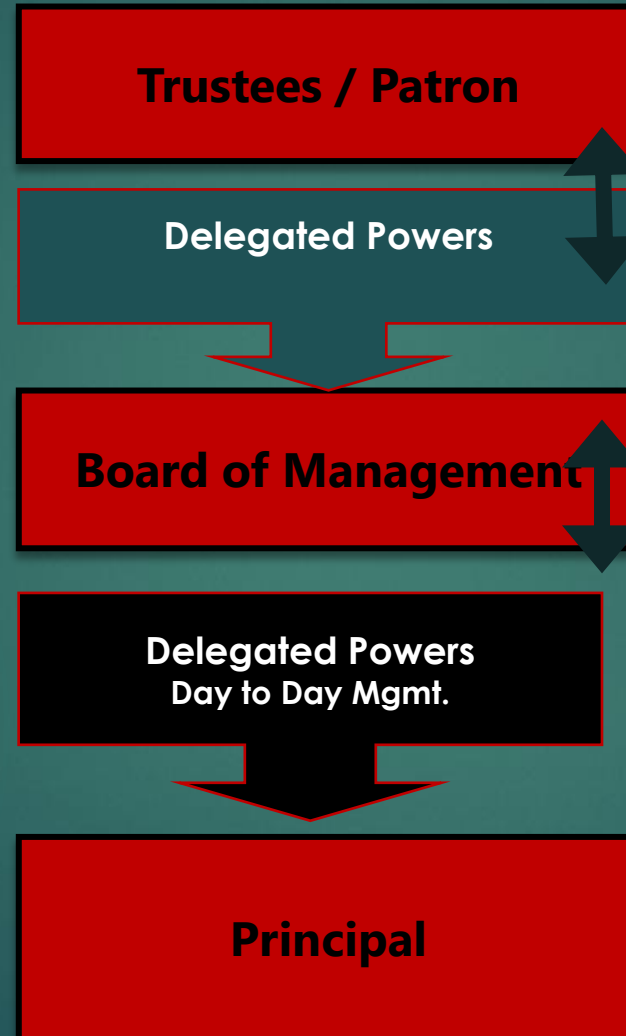
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1. Appoint the Board
2. Articulate the characteristic spirit
3. License the Board for the education enterprise
4. Approve changes to property in advance
5. Have ultimate responsibility for the property and finance
6. The Trustees agree publication of Admissions Policy

Devolved Authority & Responsibility

19

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Board Accountability

20

To the Trustees

S. 15 (2)(c) - consult with and keep the patron informed of decisions and proposals

- ▶ Ethos/Characteristic Spirit
- ▶ Buildings
- ▶ Finance
- ▶ Admission Policy

Trustees two schedules to the Board

21

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First Schedule

Defines what the school is – map of the school property – what has to be managed on behalf of the trustees

Second Schedule

How it is to be managed -
Religious and/or Educational Philosophy

Summary - reminders



Keep in touch with your Patron/Trustees - small problems are easier to solve than big ones!



All board members are appointed by the Patron/Trustees



As long as you act within the guidelines you're indemnified ...



Act as a corporate body.... Always for the good of the school



Continue to operate from the core values of your characteristic spirit, mission and vision statements