

STEPS IN THE PROCESS

Following the eight steps below will enable your school to participate fully in the process of understanding and living the ethos in a Catholic primary school.

1. Invitation from the Patron

The patron invites the school to undertake the process of understanding and living the ethos in a Catholic primary school. This process is best understood as a shared responsibility between the patron and the school community. Patron support includes the establishment of the diocesan liaison team which will provide a point of contact between the patron and the school, including the attendance of a patron representative from the diocesan liaison team at some meetings in the school.

2. Board of Management Initiates the Process in the School

The process begins in the school with the board of management completing the 'Ethos Reflection' resource. This could occur as part of the ordinary agenda at a scheduled meeting or as part of a special meeting specifically set aside for a discussion about the school's ethos. It is important that the board of management devotes sufficient time to this process.

3. Identification of a Facilitation Model

The board of management completes the 'Ethos Reflection' resource and then selects one of three suggested facilitation models to best promote this process in your school.

4. Ethos Reflection


Once the board of management has chosen the facilitation model that best suits the particular school, the facilitators/leaders of the process (those individuals outlined in the facilitation model) complete the Ethos Reflection resource.

5. Identification of a Characteristic

The facilitators/leaders consider the outcome of their engagement with the Ethos Reflection resource in conjunction with that of the board of management. Following this review, the facilitators/leaders recommend one of the five characteristics for the school community to work on over the coming year and seek board of management approval.

6. Engage the School Community

Following the board of management's approval of the selected characteristic for the coming year, the facilitators/leaders engage with: a) staff, b) parents, and c) fifth/sixth class pupils on the chosen characteristic by asking each group to complete the section of the Ethos Reflection resource that pertains to the chosen characteristic.



It is important to emphasise that this process adopts a whole-school approach. It intends to draw students, parents, staff, management and patrons into conversation.

7. Identify a Target

The facilitators/leaders review the input of the various groups to the Ethos Reflection resource and recommend a target from within the chosen characteristic for the school community to focus on for the coming year. The board of management approves the target and the school community groups listed above engage with the target with the assistance of the appropriate suggestions listed in the process manual under 'Concrete Suggestions for Targets'. These are only suggestions; schools are free to work on their chosen target in their own unique and creative way.



Other helpful resources that may be of interest to those undertaking this process can be found via:

www.catholicschools.ie

Resources such as:
Catholic Schools Week Lesson Plans
FAQs about Catholic Schools
Research on the Future of Catholic Primary Schools

8. End of Year Report

At the final meeting of the school year, the board of management considers a report from the facilitators/leaders on their school's progress in using the process. The board of management completes the report form provided in the process manual and files this report in the schools records. The board of management should also provide the patron with a copy of the report and communicate any progress made in the process 'Understanding and Living the Ethos in a Catholic Primary School' to the whole school community (i.e. newsletters, parent teacher meetings, etc.)



Important Note for Schools

This process adopts a whole-school approach. As such, the CSP invites schools to use this process within the context of Catholic Special Schools as well as in Special Units within Catholic Primary Schools. Each of the lesson plans provided has flash cards for non-verbal students. Furthermore, each of the lesson plans is explicitly linked with specific aims and objectives of Level Four of the Preschool and Primary Religious Education Curriculum for Ireland (2015) as well as the Special Education Curriculum Guidelines. Conscious of the fact that our Catholic Special Schools are diverse communities, we suggest that where applicable students could engage with the resources provided for adults as part of this process (i.e. Ethos Reflection).