

Diocesan Advisory Team Visits 2014

The schools visits by the Diocesan Advisory team took place between April and June 2014. With over 80 schools visited at this stage we would like to express our thanks to the Principals and staffs of all the schools for their very warm welcome and hospitality. The focus of this year's visit was

- To introduce the new Diocesan Advisory Team
- To inform schools about the new religious education programme
- To affirm and support teachers in their role as religious educators and to share good practice
- To receive feedback on what's working well in RE, what could be better and on how the Diocesan Advisory Team might best support teachers in their role as religious educators.

Again we would like to thank all for the warm welcome and to express our appreciation for the way in which teachers engaged with the three areas of the questionnaire. We appreciate the honest dialogue that took place around the three areas of our questionnaire and the feedback we received. Many issues arose during the visits and we hope to be able to address some of these as the team grows in experience.

New Programme

Veritas, Ireland's leading Religious Education publisher, is delighted to announce a

New Religious Education Series

for Catholic primary schools!

VERITAS

EXPECTED PUBLICATION DATES:

- Junior & Senior Infants: September 2015
- 1st & 2nd Classes: September 2016
- 3rd & 4th Classes: September 2017
- 5th & 6th Classes: September 2018

KEY FEATURES:

- Thematically-based content
- Bright and colourful child-friendly illustrations and design
- Easy-to-use teacher's materials
- A fully interactive technology platform:
Teacher's site:
 - Digital version of pupil books
 - Activities for children
 - Interactive Prayer Space
 - Video clips linked with lesson content
 - Weblinks for further learning**Family Site:**
 - Activities to further explore lesson themes at home
 - Videos and Podcasts for parents
 - Weblinks for further learning

There was a broad welcome for the new programme and teachers liked the Thematic Approach with an emphasis on the Child's Experience, Scripture/The Bible, Prayer and the support offered by the fully interactive technology platform.

We would like to sincerely thank the schools that volunteered for piloting the programme at Senior Infants level in the Ossory Diocese:

Mooncoin, Ferrybank, Burnchurch, Windgap and the Presentation Primary, Kilkenny in the first phase and Lisdowney, Johnstown, Killanure,

Errill, St. John's Junior and St. Canice's Co-ed who will pilot in phase two starting in September. The feedback from the teachers in those schools is invaluable to the catechetical team developing the programme.

Resources on the Ossory website



One of the main issues that was brought to our attention was the lack of support material for the various liturgical events, feasts and celebrations of the Catholic Church. Over the next couple of months we will focus on addressing this issue by updating the resources for teachers on www.ossory.ie

In the next school year we will contact all the schools of the Diocese to inform them of the updates to this website. We will ask teachers to subscribe to the website so that they will get personal reminders when resources are updated on the website.

We look forward with hope and confidence to working with all the teachers of the Diocese over the coming years.

Plans for the Coming Year

- Resume visitation of schools
- Develop website
- Introduce Catholic Schools Partnership Process



Catholic Schools Partnership

The Catholic Schools Partnership (CSP) is an association established by the Irish Bishops' Conference and the Conference of Religious of Ireland. It was formally launched in 2010. Its aims are to

- foster coherence in Catholic Education at a national level.
- provide a unified voice for Catholic Education in the public forum and with educational bodies and the Government.
- support Catholic Educators in the core activities of learning and teaching in order to foster high quality life long learning and faith development for all learners.
- support the roles of Governance, Trusteeship and Management.



The Partnership has set up a process for understanding, supporting and taking ownership of the characteristic spirit of a Catholic school. The process is based on Five Key Characteristics of the Catholic School

We are called to be followers of Christ



- We have a Catholic understanding of education
- The school is a Christian community
- The school is an agent of personal growth and social transformation
- Religious Education is an integral part of the life of the school
- The process invites the school community to articulate its own identity in the light of the vision of the Catholic School as expressed by the CSP. Staff, pupils, parents, members of Board of Managements and the broader parish community are included in the process.
- We are looking into the possibility of introducing the process into a number of schools in the coming year.

For further information see www.catholicschools.ie/ a process for understanding