

## **Chaplaincy Policy**

### **The Role of the Chaplain:**

The role of the school Chaplain in Coláiste Cholmcille is a supportive and caring presence in the school community, available to all students, staff and the wider community. She accompanies members of the school community on their journey through life. She responds to the spiritual and religious needs of the students and the whole school community respecting the denominational, religious and personal convictions of all.

The Chaplain is the chairperson of the Student Support Team who meet weekly. She also works in close co-operation with the Principal, Guidance Counsellors, R.E. Department, Music Department, teachers and students, families and the Local parishes.

### **The work of the chaplain includes:**

- ✓ Ministry to the students.
- ✓ Ministry to the students' families.
- ✓ Ministry to the school staff.
- ✓ Liaising with the Religious and Student Support team.
- ✓ Developing links with local parishes.

### **The Aim of the Chaplain:**

The aim of the Chaplain in Coláiste Cholmcille is to acknowledge the healing and liberating Spirit of Christ in the many areas of activity within the School Community. Her primary responsibility is to provide the spiritual support to staff and students in the school. She works in conjunction with the staff, which can extend to the wider parish community. This role has a variety of active components which include the teaching of Religious Education, the organising of prayer services and Masses, the organising of School Retreats and/or guest speakers, the meeting of students on an individual basis through use of the appointments card system and working closely with the other members of the Student Support Team in the school.

**The Objective of the Chaplain:**

The Chaplain's objective is to be of service to the students, teachers, staff, parents and management of the school through the following services:

- One-to-one sessions (available to students, staff and parents).
- Personal contact with individual students in the safe and secure environment of the Chaplain's office. Confidentiality is always observed except in cases where a person or persons are at risk. A single meeting or a series of meetings may be offered depending on the situation where a listening ear is offered. Referrals are carried out if this is deemed necessary.
- Active listening.
- Accompaniment.
- The chaplain believes in getting to know the students better through extra-curricular activities. She is involved through School Choir and Musical, Mentoring system for first Years and Leaving Certs (These activities may vary from year to year)
- Intercessory prayer.
- Organisation and/or facilitation of Prayer Services and other liturgical events throughout the year.
- Restorative Justice practitioner/facilitator.
- Notice Board with thoughts and reflections.
- Organisation of Retreat and/or guest speakers throughout the year.
- Giving talks at various events attended by staff and students and making any information available.
- Visits primary schools to present school profile to 6<sup>th</sup> class students
- Students are encouraged to get involved in community and charity work. The school has developed strong links with local groups such as the day care centre, and charitable organisations such as SVP, Shoe Box Appeal, Trocaire.
- Representing the school in local church liturgies and active participation in Parish Ministries are also encouraged in various ways such as through the Pope John Paul II Awards as well active participation at diocesan level.

**The Chaplain will support students by...**

- Being a Faith presence
- Availability
- Building relationships
- Trust
- Confidential listener (with the exception of cases that pose danger)
- Meeting Students Individually
- Pastoral Counselling
- Crisis Intervention
- Trauma & Grief Counselling
- Bereavement Support
- Making Referrals When Necessary
- Prayer Experiences/Retreats
- Liturgies
- Teaching of Religious Education and Music.

**The Chaplain will support staff by...**

- Being a Support for R.E. Staff
- Support for Pastoral Care Structures
- Post Pastoral Care 'In/ Out' list weekly in the staffroom
- Availability
- Confidential Listener
- Liturgical Celebrations
- Liaison with Specialist teachers
- Co-operation with Guidance Counsellors
- Co-operation with Learning Support teachers
- Resource & Support for All Staff

**The Chaplain will support Parents/Guardians/community by...**

- Being Available to Parents in School or at Home (As situation arises)
- Offering Support in Times of Trauma i.e. times of Bereavement
- Co-operation with Youth & Community Workers. NYP
- Links with local Parishes and Diocese

- Liaison with Social Services
- Liaison with other Caring agencies
- Fundraising for Charitable Groups. Shoe Box Appeal, Trocaire, Local SVP

## **Chaplain's Year Plan**

### **September-Christmas**

- Attendance with Prayer Reflection at all Staff Meetings.
- Attendance at all RE Department Meetings.
- Attendance at all Student Support Team Meetings.
- Attendance at personal counselling.
- Meet with 1<sup>st</sup> year students in groups during induction week.
- Assist with the mentoring system in the school.
- Survey All First Year students and Parents in September on the Transition from primary to Post Primary school. Highlight students struggling early and provide intervention for them and parents
- Meet with all 1<sup>st</sup> year students individually throughout the year.
- One-to-one meetings on a continuous basis.
- Chaplain's notice board.
- Thought and reflections on notice board.
- Opening of school year Mass.
- Liaising with local parishes.
- Retreat for 1<sup>st</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> Year students.
- November we remember prayer services/ Mass.
- November We Remember resources for RE Team.
- Reflection space in Assembly area
- The Musical.
- Monthly attendance at Cluster group meetings in Galilee House, Boyle, Co. Roscommon
- Annual attendance at the Chaplain's Conference, if possible.
- Advent reflections.
- Advent resources to RE Team
- Decoration of the Advent Wreath.
- Displaying the Crib and tree in Assembly area.

- Preparation for Reconciliation
- Sacrament of Reconciliation made available to all students.
- Christmas Carol Service.

### **January - Easter**

- Attendance at all Staff Meetings.
- Attendance at all RE department meetings.
- Attendance at all Student Support Team Meetings.
- Attendance at personal counselling.
- One-to-one meetings on a continuous basis.
- Thought for the week.
- Chaplain's notice board.
- Recognition of a new year.
- Committee member for Open day/ night
- Speak at Open Night.
- Intercom reflection for St. Brigid's Day.
- Celebration of World Day for the Sick.
- Resources for St. Patrick's Day
- Distribution of Prayer card for Leaving Cert and Junior Cert Students.
- Blessing of the throats on the feast of St. Blaise.
- Celebration of St. Valentine if not during Mid-term.
- Distribution of Ashes.
- Lenten reflections for class.
- Intercom Lenten Reflections
- Lenten Display in Assembly area.
- Meditations.
- Easter reflections.
- Preparation for Reconciliation.
- Sacrament of Reconciliation made available to all students.
- Initial Preparations for Graduation Service.

### **Easter - Summer**

- Attendance at all Staff Meetings.

- Attendance at all RE Department Meetings.
- Attendance at all Student Support Team Meetings.
- Attendance at all Year Head Meetings.
- Attendance at personal counselling.
- Assist with induction for in-coming 1<sup>st</sup> years.
- One-to-one meetings on a continuous basis.
- Leaving Cert mentoring. Staff and retired staff volunteer.
- Relaxation exercises with exam classes.
- Chaplain's notice board.
- Leaving Cert Graduation Liturgy.
- First Year Review of the year.

On-going Activities throughout the year which may arise:

- Regular meetings with students on both one to one and in class groups.
- Regular meeting with parents e.g. at PTMs, Parents Nights, Enrolment etc
- Regular meetings with Principal and Student Support Team
- Liaising with outside agencies e.g. Social Workers, GPs, Psychologists, Family Care Workers, agencies etc, where appropriate.
- Liaising with local parish council members and Parish priest.
- Support and facilitation of extra-curricular activities.
- Mental Health and Wellbeing Team
- Retreats / talks
- Mark significant days during the year: Church feast days, (Ramadan, Jewish Feasts) Mission Sunday, Advent, Christmas, Lent, Easter etc.
- Speaking at parent's nights etc.
- Organisation of Social and Personal Awareness.
- Prayer at Staff Meetings where relevant.
- Mental Health and Wellbeing Awareness.
- Encouragement of Fundraising e.g. The Shoebox Appeal.
- Awareness of social Issues e.g. poverty, family breakdowns etc.
- Bereavement Support.
- Sympathy Cards posted to every student/staff member who are bereaved.
- Funeral Attendance.
- The Chaplain keeps a record of visits made to her throughout the year, whether by a student, parent or staff member.

- When a student wishes to see the chaplain, they must first make an appointment, unless urgent. An appointment card is filled out and signed by the chaplain. The student then gives it to the teacher involved and the student is allowed out at the discretion of the teacher. The chaplain takes care, where a student is attending appointments on an on-going basis, to distribute the appointments as fairly as possible, endeavouring to take the student out of various different classes. Students are not taken out of class if there is a test.
- The chaplain's office is easily accessible and visible. There is a window looking out onto the assembly area with a glass effect to allow observation in such a way as not to prohibit confidentiality.
- Within the office students/ staff are made aware that, "What is said here is confidential as long as it does not hurt myself or anyone else." It is always made clear that confidentiality cannot be guaranteed in such cases.
- The chaplain, where appropriate or required, will confer with the school principal, deputy principal, guidance counsellors, learning support co-ordinator or year head.
- In the case of a child protection concern, the chaplain liaises with the designated child protection person within the school i.e., the Principal.