

DUNDALK GRAMMAR SCHOOL: STATEMENT OF ETHOS

Dundalk Grammar School is a co-educational, boarding and day school founded in 1739, with an historic and valued association with the Church of Ireland.

As a Limited, not for profit, Company, the school is a registered charity controlled by a Board of Governors/Directors which is representative of the main Protestant denominations. As one of four schools associated with the Incorporated Society for Promoting Protestant Schools in Ireland, its primary objective is to provide a boarding or day school education for Protestant children at an affordable cost. While this objective remains in place, over the years the school has widened its intake to include a substantial complement of day students of other Christian denominations and other faiths as both boarders and day students who have been accepted into our school on the basis that they will respect our values and share our ethos. One of the great strengths of the present school is the harmonious way in which its students of all religious denominations and backgrounds work together in a cohesive, happy community.

Characteristic Spirit

The Protestant characteristic spirit of the school can be seen in many ways:

- by the respect for and observance of Sunday as a holy day when it clashes with school activities and by the avoidance of school involvement with events that involve gambling or substance abuse of any kind;
- dedication of all teachers to the welfare of all students and their commitment to carry out extra duties associated with these students;
- Special services are conducted under the auspices of the Church of Ireland Rector of Dundalk and/or the Church of Ireland school Chaplain. These may include services at the beginning and end of the school year and during Advent, Christmas, Lent, Easter, Confirmation, Harvest, times of bereavement as appropriate;
- daily compulsory assembly for all students combining acts of worship and hymn singing. Resources used include the Book of Common Prayer 2004 and CH 5, the hymnal of the Church of Ireland;
- provision of an honorary chaplaincy and pastoral care by a member of the Church of Ireland;
- classes in Religious Education are provided for all students and attendance at these is compulsory;
- Church of Ireland confirmation classes are provided: ten classes per year. Attendance at these is obligatory for confirmands. They are conducted by the Rector of Dundalk and the school Chaplain.

All members of the school community, whether resident in the school or otherwise, are required to recognise and support the importance of the boarding tradition within the school. All staff are expected to make a significant additional commitment to the welfare and supervision of students, over and above that required in non-boarding schools. In practice this means that all teaching staff undertake additional supervisory duties, both afternoon and evening, as decided by the Headmaster. Teaching staff are also required to involve themselves in extra-curricular activities and to recognise the significance attached to such involvement in a Boarding School, and its importance for the welfare of the students therein.

Dundalk Grammar School sees education as an all-embracing process concerned with the development of the whole person. The aim is to provide a wide education which will enable students to identify and to build on their strengths and talents. By recognising the intrinsic value and needs of each child the school aims to enable all students to achieve their potential by:

- developing intellectual skills, which will enable them to experience the satisfaction to be gained from feeling challenged while learning, drawing on the culture of the past and recognising the needs of the twenty-first century;
- acquiring social and interpersonal skills, which will enable them to relate easily and co-operatively with confidence and thoughtfulness;
- recognising the importance of a healthy life-style and the value of participating enthusiastically in physical and sporting activities;
- experiencing opportunities for creative and artistic expression;
- receiving recognition for their achievements in accordance with their abilities and strengths;
- having access to personal and career guidance and to a supportive structure of pastoral care.

It is expected that all students and their parents/guardians, together with school staff will at all times be supportive of the above Statement of Ethos.

Approved by the Board of Governors on 11th November 2007 (Amended: 30th June 2010).