

“Fully Alive”



Education in  
Assumption Schools

# *Thy Kingdom Come*

“*Fully Alive*”

*“The glory of God is man fully alive and the life of such a person consists in the vision of God.”* St Irenaeus

*Notre Mere  
Mother M Gertrude de Henningsen*



*Grahamstown Convent Cloister*

## *Assumption Education...*

Mother Gertrude de Henningsen, foundress of the Missionary Sisters of the Assumption, opened the first Assumption school in Grahamstown, in the Eastern Cape of South Africa in 1849.

At the heart of Assumption education is Jesus Christ who is its meaning and purpose. The school is a community of faith where all are encouraged to know and live by the values that Jesus came to teach us. It offers a holistic education in which the growth of each student as a person “fully alive” is the central aim.

The Assumption tradition in education is shaped by the belief that living out the gospel has the power to transform society, that each one has a mission on earth, a mission to “bring everything together under Christ as Head.” (Eph 1:10)

This vision inspired Mother Gertrude’s establishment of the first Assumption schools in Grahamstown, South Africa, and the congregation’s later foundation of other Assumption schools.

Founded in 1933 by Mother Baptist McKenny, Assumption Grammar School is the only Assumption school in Ireland.

## *Aims*

To challenge, guide and lead each pupil to develop her full potential

To give our pupils an understanding and appreciation of our Catholic Faith which will assist them to live out the Christian calling in their daily lives. We also aim at encouraging understanding, respect and appreciation of the religious beliefs of others.

To stimulate in pupils a creative and appreciative response to the arts.

To provide each pupil with the necessary framework for a suitable career path.

To develop in our pupils the skills necessary to function as independent adults.

To stimulate the growth of pupils into caring, competent and responsible citizens.



Through a Christian Education

To develop an awareness of one's responsibility for the environment.

To provide pupils with activities from which they can develop self-discipline and a healthy life-style.

To nurture a sense of self-worth, dignity and confidence in each individual.

An Assumption School offers Catholic education, an education centred on Jesus Christ and the values which He taught and lived.

*“I came that they may have life and have it to the full”*

John 10:10

So pupils are guided and challenged to develop all their gifts and so reach their full potential.

Each one is set the goal of becoming “fully alive” so that she may make a meaningful contribution to the world and transform it in responsible service.

True happiness is found in a loving relationship with God and our brothers and sisters.

Acceptance of one’s own uniqueness and respect for and acceptance of others is the basis of education for a happy and fulfilled life.

## *The school is a community...*

The Assumption School strives to be a community where staff, pupils and parents share with one another the vision of life which Christ gave us.

At the core of the school community is the staff. The dedication, contribution and interest of each member to a large extent makes the school what it is.

Teachers should be aware of the influence of their values and behaviour on their pupils and of their responsibility to identify with the school and uphold its values - that is, the values taught by Jesus Christ - in the situations of everyday life.

Parents are the prime educators of their children and it is in collaboration with them that the Catholic school helps the child to grow into human wholeness in Christ.

The co-operation of all members of the school community is essential for the development of the spirit which characterises our school.

## *A community where all are respected...*

Each pupil is valued and respected as a unique human being. Pupils are taught to see good in others, to be generous in praise, to practise forgiveness and reconciliation and to help one another.

Pupils are encouraged to be aware of the needs of the world, to form a realistic idea of conditions there, how human beings are affected, and to see what is called for from them to make it a better and happier place for others.

The school community is involved in works of charity, in practical concern for the rights of individuals and families and in issues of national and international peace and justice, so that pupils leave the school inspired with a zeal to live and spread the values of Christ.

Past pupils form part of the wider school community and the staff tries to keep in touch in order to support them in their efforts to live out the values they learnt in school.



## *A community where God is known and loved...*

The foundation of the Gospel and frequent encounter with Christ, risen and present among us, gives Catholic education its purpose.

It is a relationship with Him that creates in the school community an atmosphere permeated with the Gospel spirit of freedom and love.

Pupils are led to a reverent and prayerful familiarity with Scripture in which God lovingly meets them and speaks with them.

The liturgical and sacramental life of the school, combined with Religious Education, deepens the pupils' response of faith and helps them grow in the knowledge and love of God.

Yearly retreat days, Lenten, Easter and Christmas services and school assemblies contribute to the spiritual formation of the pupils.

Faith and life have to be integrated. For this it is vital that the moral conscience of pupils be developed.

Pupils are helped to understand contemporary ethical problems and to make their own those Gospel values which alone give meaning to human life. In the light of these, pupils will learn to see life in the context of God's loving plan.

## *A community where I accept myself...*

Through all its activities the Assumption School strives to lead its pupils to a strong relationship with Christ, with a well formed conscience and the ability and willingness to choose freely in their lives what is right and good, and to take responsibility for their decisions and actions. They are helped to grow in acceptance of themselves and others, as created and loved by God, and to share generously their gifts and abilities.

Pupils are encouraged to use their leisure time in creative activities such as sport, music and art. Works of literature, art and drama can help pupils reflect on the deeper realities of life and inspire them to work towards a more human society.

The impact of the media and technology on our lives necessitates the training of pupils in the critical evaluation and selective use of these.

Genuine warmth and compassion characterise the school's Pastoral Care, which supports pupils throughout their lives in school, especially when they experience problems and difficulties.

Teachers work in collaboration with others so as to ensure a holistic approach to the pupils as persons and to the learning process.

Catholic education aims to help pupils discover their own abilities and grow in acceptance of their true selves.

*In conclusion...*

The Assumption School is committed to the development of the whole person, since in Christ, the perfect human being, all human values find their fulfilment and unity.

Mary's Assumption into heaven assures us that all our human endeavour to guide those whom we educate to fullness of life will be transformed by God into his glory.



*Titiano, L'Assunta Basilica del Frari - Venezia*

## The Assumption Badge and Motto...



### *Symbols:*

#### *The Cross:*

Symbol of the love of God, which is above everything, in everything, and holding everything together.

#### *The Anchor:*

Symbol of steadfastness, of hope and security.

#### *The Southern Cross (the five stars):*

Symbol of God's guidance and direction in our lives.

### *Motto:*

Ex sola virtute honor.

From virtue alone comes honour.

The Latin word 'virtus' stood for one of the prized qualities of the good Roman; it included the qualities of strength, loyalty and self-discipline.

Today we would say it means caring:

caring about the realities of the spirit,

caring about other people,

caring about the meaning of human life, about the earth and all that is on it, and above all,

caring about its Creator.

This is the only kind of 'honour' in which the Assumption school is really interested: that which is based on Christian principles and values and will last long after academic knowledge has faded.

“*May Thy Kingdom come in  
the hearts of young people  
as they move from our  
schools into a wider world;  
May their lives be blessed  
with the vision of God.*”



Assumption Grammar School, Belfast Road, Ballynahinch