



Lasallian Identity Framework

A Self-Assessment Tool



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District of Ireland, Great Britain, & Malta

Foreword

Welcome to the third edition of the *Lasallian Identity Framework*, designed to inspire and guide you, our Lasallian schools and educators, in reflecting on, and developing, your commitment to living the Lasallian Charism with authenticity and vitality. This publication is a vital tool for assessing how well we embody the nine *Key Features of a Lasallian Education*, whether as individual educators, departments, year groups, as a whole school, or in any other Lasallian centre.

The District of Ireland, Great Britain, and Malta uses three different tools to support efforts to ensure creative fidelity to the Lasallian mission of human and Christian education of the young, especially those most vulnerable. These tools are:

- the three *Lasallian Identity Pillars*: Faith, Service, and Community
- the five *Core Principles of a Lasallian School*: Faith in the Presence of God; Concern for the Poor and Social and Ecological Justice; Respect for All Persons; Inclusive Community; and Quality Education;
- and the nine *Key Features of a Lasallian Education* outlined in this document.

Each of these reference texts provides varying degrees of detail of the same lived experience of Lasallian Education since they are intended for different audiences and serve different purposes.

The *Lasallian Identity Framework* is primarily targeted at supporting the identification of areas of strength and areas for growth for both the Lasallian school and its educators. As such, it is particularly useful for those responsible for governance, leadership, and strategic growth.

At the same time, these *Key Features* provide a comprehensive framework for fostering an environment where students can thrive academically, spiritually, and socially, ensuring that our Lasallian educational efforts are holistic, inclusive, and transformative.

This publication invites you to engage in a reflective process, examining the extent to which these interconnected *Key Features* are implemented in your school community. Through honest self-assessment, and a commitment to continuous improvement, we can ensure that our schools remain true to the Lasallian mission, providing an education that is leaven for a more fraternal and just world as it contributes to the transformation of lives and communities.

We encourage you to engage positively with this self-evaluation process. Reflect honestly on your practices and identify areas for growth. In this way, we exercise our collective responsibility as a network for upholding and developing our Lasallian mission.

Together, we are called to be effective stewards of the educational and spiritual legacy of Saint John Baptist de La Salle. May this Framework guide and inspire you to continue this vital work with renewed passion and dedication.

Joseph C. Gilson
Director of Mission

Brother Ben Hanlon, fsc
Brother Visitor

Introduction

The Lasallian Identity Framework is guided by the vision and traditions of St John Baptist de La Salle, founder of the De La Salle Brothers and patron saint of all educators of youth. Lasallian Catholic schools are characterised by Key Features that give them a unique and distinct Lasallian identity. Their educational policies are centred on young people, designed to prepare them to take their place in society, and focused on enabling students to “live life to the full” (Jn. 10:10) through a quality human and Christian education.

Lasallian schools are transparently Christian. “Their Christian identity involves more than courses of religious instruction and pastoral programmes. The Christian dimension permeates and shapes every aspect of school life: tone, atmosphere, spirit, signs, symbols, relationships, curriculum, requirements, policies, regulations. As Christian schools, they are called to propose, but in no way to impose, Jesus Christ, accepting with love and respect all the young people entrusted to their care, whatever their religious beliefs... An institution can legitimately call itself Lasallian only if it is unambiguously Catholic.”¹

We appreciate that Lasallian schools also have many students and members of staff of other faiths who must be accorded respect and sensitivity to their religious beliefs and traditions. Consequently, in Lasallian schools, “one can meet Brothers, other Christians, members of other religions, and persons of goodwill whose point of reference is the human and spiritual values recognized and pursued by all Lasallians - such as meditation, service of the poor, the family, the rights of children. Let it be stated clearly and unambiguously that calling oneself Lasallian is not relegated only to those of the Christian faith. Many faith-filled people professing other creeds participate daily in the Lasallian educational mission. They are a valued part of this community.”²

An unambiguously Catholic school is inclusive of people of other faiths while being explicit about its own faith tradition. Consequently, in Lasallian schools, “when pupils of other faiths are present... the task must be to promote their human growth in such a way that they can integrate their particular faith with every aspect of their lives. This principle determines the care, status and responsibility accorded to such pupils in our schools.”³

¹ Johnston, J. (1998) Lasallian Mission Today and Tomorrow. *AXIS: Journal of Lasallian Higher Education*. 3(2).

² Rodríguez Echeverría, A. (2010) *Circular 46r: Associated for the Lasallian Mission ... an act of HOPE*. Rome: Brothers of the Christian Schools

³ CES (2008). Catholic Schools, Children of Other Faiths and Community Cohesion: Cherishing Education for Human Growth.

Purpose

The Lasallian Identity Framework incorporates a vision of the Lasallian Catholic character of the school within an assessment process, primarily based on reflection and self-assessment, designed to identify strengths and target areas for growth. The focus of the assessment process is to build on the strengths within the school. It aims at , affirming and encouraging efforts to live out the Lasallian Catholic character in all aspects of the life of the school as it attempts to deliver an education of excellence to all students. The Lasallian Identity Framework has been created to fulfil several important purposes:

- To indicate the essential characteristics of a Lasallian school.
- To indicate the expectations of those who work in a Lasallian school.
- To serve as a source of encouragement and positive reinforcement for the good practices already in place within the school.
- To provide an internal review and self-assessment of the school's ethos, as well as its external, objective assessment.
- To identify critical needs and issues and assist the school in creating and implementing a multi-year growth plan that addresses these critical needs and issues.

Vision

Nine Key Features outlined in the document give expression and focus to the Lasallian Catholic character of the school. These Key Features are interrelated and reflect essential aspects of the vision and heritage of St John Baptist de La Salle and the Lasallian Educational Mission. These Key Features serve as a reference point for each Lasallian educator and each ministry – be it a school, pastoral centre, project or programme - enabling it to assess how the vision and values of St John Baptist de La Salle are embedded in the everyday life and work of the school.

Copy of the painting by Cesare Mariani, 1888, at the Vatican. John Baptist DE LA SALLE teaching in class, a painting of amusing and lively realism. The contrast in facial expression and attitudes portrays the lively world of the young, known and loved by educators.

Photo and Text courtesy of:
Lasallian Resource Center
www.lasallianresources.org



Key Features of a Lasallian Education

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| Key Feature | Lasallian schools are committed to living their Lasallian heritage |
| 1 | An education based on the Lasallian history, spirituality, and pedagogical approaches of St. John Baptist de La Salle. |
| Key Feature | Conscious awareness of the presence of God in the educational setting |
| 2 | An education motivated by a conscious awareness of the presence of God in every aspect and person within the educational community. |
| Key Feature | Teaching motivated by vocation |
| 3 | An education that enables educators to understand their work as a response to a personal call. |
| Key Feature | Inspired by Gospel values |
| 4 | An education inspired by the Gospel values of Faith, Hope, and Love. |
| Key Feature | Commitment to the educational service of the poor |
| 5 | An education sensitive to the human needs of young people, especially the poor. |
| Key Feature | A human and spiritual education |
| 6 | An education that enables students to reach their full potential through a holistic approach that addresses their spiritual, academic, and social needs. |
| Key Feature | Responsive to the learning needs of each student |
| 7 | An education that recognises the dignity of every person as being unique, unrepeatable, and educable; and is attentive to the needs of each student. |
| Key Feature | Quality relationships |
| 8 | An education based on quality relationships. Lasallian educators are mindful of their responsibility to promote healthy relations with staff and students alike. |
| Key Feature | Promotes inclusive, collaborative educational communities |
| 9 | An education that creates an inclusive community that welcomes and celebrates diversity. Service of others is done in a spirit of collaboration. |

Each Key Feature is presented under two headings. First, there are criteria for the Lasallian School, followed by criteria for the Lasallian educator. This enables the Framework to be useful to both Lasallian Schools and Lasallian educators. Due to the inter-relatedness of the Key Features, many of the criteria listed could, in fact, be linked to more than one Key Feature. However, for purposes of clarity and presentation these are listed only once.

Glossary and Comments

While this document speaks directly to Lasallian Schools, it is not intended to be exclusive. We believe that the Key Features apply to any Lasallian Centre or Project, as well as to individual Lasallian educators. This document has its inspiration in a number of international Lasallian documents published in recent years which have attempted to identify key characteristics of Lasallian education.

For this reason, any reference to schools in the document is also intended to embrace Pastoral Centres, Lasallian Communities, Lasallian Projects etc.

Also, the following phrases and words will be used interchangeably and should be seen to be at all times referring to the beneficiaries of the Lasallian Educational Mission regardless of age: young people, students (primary, secondary, & post-secondary), children, young adults, retreatants

At the bottom of the pages dedicated to Key Feature 1 and Key Feature 2, there are questions which can facilitate broad reflection on the vibrancy of the Lasallian Charism within the school, centre, community or project.



Painting by Giovanni Gagliardi, 1901. The first school of the Brothers in Paris was that of the Rue Princesse in the parish of Saint Sulpice.

| Key Feature 1 | A commitment to live the Lasallian heritage |
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| Summary: | An education based on the Lasallian history, spirituality, and pedagogical approaches of St. John Baptist de La Salle. |
| Criteria for the Lasallian School: | <p>As a Lasallian School, how do we:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. make visible our affiliation with the Lasallian heritage throughout the school? 2. promote a common, known, mission and vision, rooted in the heritage of St John Baptist de La Salle according to the ministry given by the Church? 3. ensure induction, orientation, and welcome programmes to support students and staff new to the Lasallian Ethos? 4. promote the Lasallian heritage within curricular and professional development programmes? 5. arrange an annual celebration of St. John Baptist de La Salle, our Founder? 6. collaborate with other centres (in the District, Region, and Institute) to share vibrant expressions of Lasallian heritage, enhance opportunities for professional development, and benefit from the international dimension of the Lasallian Mission? |
| Criteria for the Lasallian Educator: | <p>As a Lasallian educator, how do I:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. understand the Lasallian heritage? 2. know and support the mission and vision of my school? 3. respond to opportunities to learn more about the Lasallian heritage? 4. share my knowledge about the Lasallian heritage regularly with my students? 5. engage with colleagues from other centres to deepen my appreciation of the Lasallian heritage and its international mission? |

Notes

How do our Lasallian Story, spirituality and pedagogy challenge us to engage with education, the Church and the world at large?

| Key Feature 2 | Conscious awareness of the presence of God |
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| Summary: | An education motivated by a conscious awareness of the presence of God in every aspect and person within the educational community. |
| Criteria for the Lasallian School: | <p>As a Lasallian School, how do we:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. foster a sense of the presence of God in all aspects of school life? 2. promote the importance of seeing the presence of God in all members of our community – treating each with respect and dignity at all times, mindful of the invitation to adore that presence and to touch hearts? 3. engage in collective daily prayer and reflection? 4. organise retreat experiences for staff and students? 5. express care for the environment and practice solidarity as a way of protecting our God-given Common Home |
| Criteria for the Lasallian Educator: | <p>As a Lasallian educator, how do I:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. recognise the presence of God in all aspects of school life? 2. recognise the presence of God in all members of my community – treating each with respect and dignity, and by being mindful of the opportunity to adore that presence and to touch hearts? 3. participate in daily collective prayer and reflection? 4. participate and promote retreat experiences for staff and students? 5. promote ecological awareness and solidarity with my students? |

Notes

What difference will it make if we sincerely recognised that God is present in every young person entrusted to our care, all of our colleagues, and in ourselves?

| Key Feature 3 | Teaching – motivated by Vocation |
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| Summary: | An education that enables educators to understand their work as a response to a personal call. |
| Criteria for the Lasallian School: | <p>As a Lasallian School, how do we:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. ensure that at interview we seek those who see teaching as a vocation? 2. provide a comprehensive induction programme to new staff that supports their appreciation of teaching as a lifelong vocation? 3. encourage staff to think beyond delivering their curricular expertise and to value the importance of caring for learners? |
| Criteria for the Lasallian Educator: | <p>As a Lasallian educator, how do I:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. demonstrate my commitment and zeal towards my work and for those for whom I have care? 2. view my work as an educator as a vocation rather than as a job / profession? 3. nourish my own faith/spirituality regularly? 4. seek to develop relationships characterised by mutual respect, cooperation, generosity, patience, humour, and gentleness? 5. seek to treat all my students, in De La Salle's words, as if they were younger brothers and sisters? 6. develop caring relationships, especially with students who have particular academic, social, economic, or spiritual needs? 7. create a joyful, welcoming, safe, and caring learning environment? |

Painting by Aurelio Mariani, 1906: The Founder blessing the Drolin Brothers, Gabriel and Gerard, before their departure for Rome in 1702. (Only Gabriel was to stay.) This early presence of the new Institute in Rome was a sign of loyalty to the Pope and the first expansion beyond France.



| Key Feature 4 | Inspired by Gospel values |
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| Summary: | An education inspired by the Gospel values of Faith, Hope, and Love. |
| Criteria for the Lasallian School: | <p>As a Lasallian School, how do we:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. witness the Good News in our school beyond the RE curriculum? 2. demonstrate Gospel values in day-to-day learning experiences across the curriculum? 3. ground all our policy, practice, and activity in the basic tenets of the Catholic Faith? 4. actively promote equal opportunity through our Faith, Hope, and Love to the disadvantaged within our learning community? 5. offer opportunities and experiences for students to embrace their own faith life and spiritual development? |
| Criteria for the Lasallian Educator: | <p>As a Lasallian educator, how do I:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. embrace diversity and difference and make no judgements based upon, for example, faith, socio-economic status, sexual orientation, race, or ethnicity? 2. embed Gospel values in my teaching and relationships, endeavouring to express Faith, Hope, and Love to all with whom I am daily in contact? 3. uphold equal opportunity for all my students? |

John Baptist DE LA SALLE meets Adrien Nyel at the convent of the Sisters of the Child Jesus, Rue du Barbâtre, Reims (before March 15, 1679). Painting from Gerlier's engraving in Gaveau's 1886 Life of the Founder. Of little artistic merit, it is nevertheless the only representation of the event which was to change the course of the life of Canon de La Salle.



| Key Feature 5 | Commitment to the educational service of the poor |
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| Summary: | An education sensitive to the human needs of young people, especially the poor. |
| Criteria for the Lasallian School: | <p>As a Lasallian School, how do we:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. attempt, wherever possible, to be accessible to the economically poor and marginalised within our community especially through our sensitive, responsive, and fair admissions policy? 2. provide prompt and effective support to students demonstrating academic, social, economic, or spiritual needs? 3. actively promote justice, peace, equality, solidarity and social responsibility as an expression of the school's commitment to ecological and social justice? |
| Criteria for the Lasallian Educator: | <p>As a Lasallian educator, how do I:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. welcome all into my learning environment irrespective of background? 2. engage with, and contribute towards, the delivery of programmes with students and their families that respond to present day societal needs? 3. actively promote peace, equality, solidarity and social responsibility with my students by modelling these values daily as an expressions of ecological and social justice? 4. address issues of discrimination and inclusion in my teaching? |

Painting by Giovanni Gagliardi, 1901: John Baptist DE LA SALLE distributing bread to the poor of Reims during the terrible winter of 1684-85. This classical painting of very careful composition highlights in the center the gesture of giving, underlined by the movement of the hands.



| Key Feature 6 | A human and spiritual education |
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| Summary: | An education that enables students to reach their full potential through a holistic approach that addresses their spiritual, academic, and social needs. |
| Criteria for the Lasallian School: | <p>As a Lasallian School, how do we:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. recognise the uniqueness and value of each person loved unconditionally by God? 2. ensure that policies respect and celebrate the diversity of faith backgrounds of all students? 3. ensure that policies and practices with regard to pastoral care, rewards, and sanctions are fair and promote a quality educational experience for all? 4. offer programmes across the curriculum which address issues of social justice and promote dialogue and critical-thinking? 5. develop programmes that promote Lasallian student leadership and faith formation at different levels of school life? |
| Criteria for the Lasallian Educator: | <p>As a Lasallian educator, how do I:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. endeavour to treat every student with respect and dignity? 2. recognise and celebrate the cultural, social, and religious diversity of the school? 3. integrate new students into the Lasallian community? 4. treat the students entrusted to my care with gentleness particularly with regard to correction, rewards and sanctions, and pastoral support? 5. assist students to develop their leadership skills by offering them opportunities and responsibilities? |

| Key Feature 7 | Responsive to the learning needs of every student |
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| Summary: | An education that recognises the dignity of every person as being unique, unrepeatable, and educable; and is attentive to the needs of each student. |
| Criteria for the Lasallian School: | <p>As a Lasallian School, how do we:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. use effective assessment tools to monitor and improve outcomes? 2. offer structured Continuing Professional Development for staff with regard to differentiation and learning expectations? 3. collaborate across the curriculum and departments to ensure greater effectiveness of addressing the learning needs of each student? 4. offer extra-curricular activities such as service opportunities and cultural activities to enhance students' educational experiences ? 5. use systems to invite and acknowledge student voice and responsibility in school life? 6. celebrate all aspects of student achievement in school or in the wider community? |
| Criteria for the Lasallian Educator: | <p>As a Lasallian educator, how do I:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. actively seek professional development experiences, locally and internationally, to develop my competence and expertise to meet the ongoing learning needs of my students? 2. work actively with colleagues across the curriculum to ensure greater effectiveness in our work and to provide wider learning opportunities for students? 3. cooperate with school systems/procedures that identify and support students' needs, empower their voice, and celebrate their achievements? |

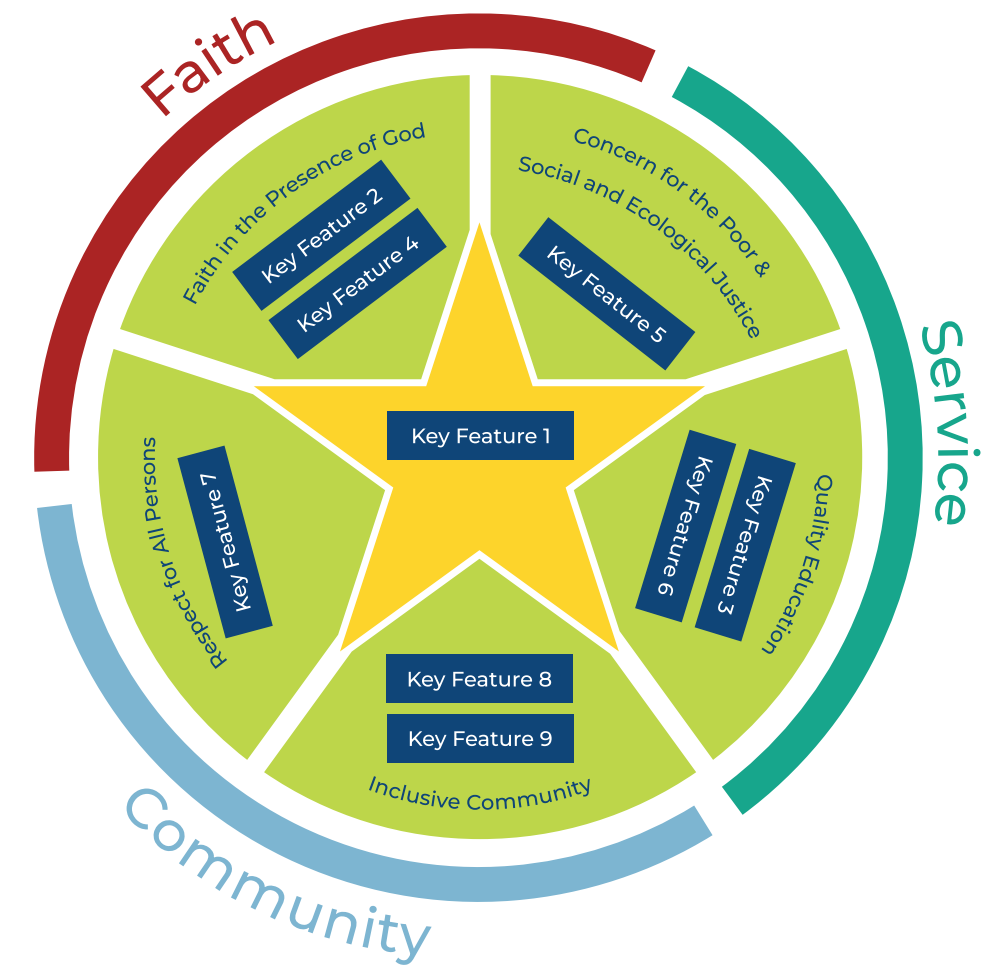
| Key Feature 8 | Quality relationships |
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| Summary: | An education based on quality relationships. Lasallian educators are mindful of their responsibility to promote healthy relations with staff and students alike. |
| Criteria for the Lasallian School: | <p>As a Lasallian School, how do we:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. promote high quality interactions between staff and between staff and students? 2. ensure routines and practices enhance relationship building? 3. express solidarity with others? 4. co-operate with families, local parishes, and faith communities to promote the education of their students? |
| Criteria for the Lasallian Educator: | <p>As a Lasallian educator, how do I:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. aim to know each of my students as unique individuals and endeavour to support them, especially in times of difficulty? 2. use tutor time and extra-curricular activities to know my students better? 3. build relationships with families of my students and the communities to which they belong so that I can better appreciate my students' needs? 4. show interest in the hopes and well-being of my colleagues? 5. model a genuine ecological awareness with my students? |

Painting by Giovanni Gagliardi, 1901: In June 1686 at Reims, John Baptist DE LA SALLE and twelve Brothers make for the first time the vow of obedience for one year. The following day they went to renew this at the shrine of Our Lady of Liesse near the town of Laon.



| Key Feature 9 | Promotes inclusive, collaborative educational communities |
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| Summary: | An education that creates an inclusive community that welcomes and celebrates diversity. Service of others is done in a spirit of collaboration. |
| Criteria for the Lasallian School: | <p>As a Lasallian School, how do we:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. promote a sense of teamwork and collaboration within the educational community? 2. enable students to participate in relevant decision-making in school life? 3. ensure inclusive admission policies and appointment practices? 4. encourage solidarity with Lasallians in need locally, nationally, and internationally? 5. share good practice with others in the network? 6. participate in initiatives sponsored by the Lasallian network e.g., International Lasallian Days for Peace, Lasallian Camp, and Lasallian School Leaders' Conference? 7. promote collaboration with international outreach programmes, the Lasallian Developing World Projects (LDWP) and exchange programmes for students and staff? 8. encourage participation in parish, diocesan, national and international programmes? 9. organise activities for parents and students to build a sense of community? |
| Criteria for the Lasallian Educator: | <p>As a Lasallian educator, how do I:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. positively participate in building a spirit of collaboration and community in the school? 2. welcome and celebrate the diversity found in my School and across the Lasallian network? 3. encourage my students to be aware of, and respond to, local and international needs? 4. participate in activities of the Lasallian network or related bodies? 5. willingly share good practice with colleagues in the Lasallian network and elsewhere? |

9 Key Features of Lasallian Education



3 Pillars of Lasallian Identity



5 Lasallian Core Principles



**Brothers of
the Christian
Schools**

District of Ireland, Great Britain, & Malta