



Our Lady's Secondary School

A chara,

Choosing the correct second level school for your son / daughter is very important and I hope that we can help you in making that choice. I hope that this brochure will give you an insight into life in Our Lady's and all that we have to offer.

Our Lady's Secondary School is a Voluntary Secondary School under the trusteeship of CEIST and following the Mercy tradition. As a school we aim to provide a holistic education for all our students that will allow them to reach their full potential. Our Lady's is a place of growth that strives for excellence in teaching and learning by providing a rich and diverse curriculum catering for the needs of each individual student. We do this by offering a broad and balanced range of curricular and extracurricular activities delivered by a committed, hard working and enthusiastic staff.



Through our Student Support Team we strive to ensure that each child in our care is happy, safe, valued and known. We place great emphasis on the dignity of the individual and on respect. We want to work together with all members of our school community to ensure

and on respect. We want to work together with all members of our school community to ensure that our students grow and develop so as to reach their full potential.

As a school we constantly ask ourselves what we want for our students and more importantly what do our students want from us. Like you, as parents, we want the very best for our students and we believe THAT OUR STUDENTS AND YOUR CHILDREN DESERVE NOTHING LESS.

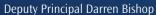
We want our students to be ambitious and to set high standards for themselves. We want them to do the very best they can in State Exams which will give them options and opportunities for the future.

We want our students to take part in as many of our varied range of extracurricular activities as possible. We believe that every student has something positive to contribute to school life both inside and outside the classroom. We want them to be an important part of school life and we want school to be an important part of their lives.

Most of all we want our students to be happy here in Our Lady's. We want them to make many new friends and to benefit from the many opportunities and experiences that we can offer them. We want them to leave with happy and positive memories of their time here. We know that happy students will work harder and achieve more.

Mr. Eddie Kelly Principal







Deputy Principal Jane Treanor

Mission Statement

Our Lady's Secondary School is a Voluntary Catholic Secondary School operating under the trusteeship of CEIST according to the traditions of the Sisters of Mercy, We, the staff and students, enjoy working together to realise our full potential in a healthy, safe, stimulating and friendly environment where the atmosphere is one of mutual respect, cooperation and challenge. We take a holistic approach focusing on the wellbeing and development of each individual socially, culturally and academically. Within our school community, each student is treated equally. All are considered uniquely talented, with effort valued as much as excellence. On a day-to-day basis, the Christian message inspires everyone in the school to be charitable, inclusive and understanding.

TÁ AN GHAEILGE BEO I SCOIL MHUIRE

Déantar gach iarracht i Scoil Mhuire Gaeilge a chur chun cinn. Tá sémar aidhmag an scoil úsáid na Gaeilge a spreagadh agus cuirtear béim ar an nGaeilge labhartha sna ranganna Gaeilge chun féinmhuinín na ndaltaí a chothú i labhairt na dteanga. Chomhmaith le sin bíonn ciorcal cainte ar siúl ag amlóin dhá uair in aghaidh na seachtaine chunmeas agus spéis na ndaltaí don teanga a neartú agus deis a thabhairt dóibh í a chleachtadh lasmuigh den rang. Eagraítear sraith d' imeachtaí spraiúla do gach bliain i rith sheachtain na Gaeilge Ullmhaítear daltaí don bhéaltriail don Teastas Shóisearach agus gach bliain bronnann Coiste na dtuismitheoirí scolaireachtaí Gaeltachta. Is mian linn atmaisféar cairdiúil, co-oibritheach a chruthú agus a bhuanú sa scoil agus tá an Ghaeilgemar chuid den atmaisféar sin.

A STUDENT'S PERSPECTIVE

INDUCTION OF NEW PUPILS

Every possible care is taken to ensure that the transition from primary to secondary school is as smooth as possible. Our Open Night provides an opportunity for pupils and their parents to visit the school, to view our facilities and to discuss with teachers the variety of subjects and activities on offer. A teacher will then visit the Primary School to discuss the individual needs of each student enrolling in Our Lady's. Students who have enrolled in Our Lady's will then spend a full day in our school in mid March where they will sample some subjects, meet the teachers and support staff and become familiar with the structure of the day and the layout of our school.

In late August / early September First Year students will have a week of induction activities. During this week they will meet with their class Tutor, Year Head and various subject teachers. They will receive their timetables and have the opportunity to familiarise themselves once again with the layout of our school and engage in a variety of team building activities.

The School Chaplain and Guidance Counsellors will be available to meet with all First Year students during their first few weeks at school to discuss the transition from primary to secondary and to address any concerns or worries that they may have. A group of Sixth Year Student Leaders are assigned as mentors to First Year students. They meet with the First Year students in small groups during tutor class to help them settle into school. The senior students act as positive role models and provide encouragement and support for new students. These students help organise lunchtime activities for first year students as well as assisting with the lunchtime leagues for boys and girls.

All First Year Students will get to sample their option subjects for six weeks at the beginning of September. This allows students to become familiar with each of the subjects before deciding which two option subjects to choose at the end of September. The Guidance Counsellor will meet each First Year student individually to discuss their subject choice. An Information Evening for First Year Parents will be held in early October before students choose their optional subjects.

QUOTES FROM FIRST YEAR STUDENTS

What I enjoy most about Our Lady's is how friendly and supportive both the teachers and students are.

Moving between different classes each day makes school feel exciting and engaging. **)

"I love getting the chance to try lots of different subjects and meet new teachers.

I've made so many new friends and the older students are always really helpful."

From my very first day, everyone was so welcoming. It's a great place to make new friends and to feel part of a community.

*I really like moving to different classrooms and spending lunchtime in the Food Village, where there are so many choices. I also enjoy all the sports and activities on offer here.

One of the best things about Our Lady's is how approachable everyone is. Even if you get a little lost, there's always someone willing to help — and we always have great fun together."

We love that everyone is included here. There are so many clubs and activities to choose from, which makes it easy to find something you enjoy and be part of.



'EXCELLENCE IN TEACHING AND LEARNING' **RESULTS IN STATE EXAMINATIONS ARE CONSISTENTLY ABOVE** THE NATIONAL AVERAGES IN ALL SUBJECTS

Junior Cycle Curriculum

We offer a rich, broad and varied curriculum which provides our pupils with a range of subjects that meet the learning needs of all. The subjects are:

English	French	
Irish	German	
Maths	Business	
History	Graphics	
Geography	Wood Technology	
Music	Religious Education	
Home Economics	Art, Craft & Design	
Physical Education	Applied	
Social, Personal	Technology	
& Health Education	Civic, Social &	
Science	Political Education	

Senior Cycle Curriculum

Students prepare for the Leaving Certificate by studying a wide range of subjects at Higher and Ordinary Level. At Our Lady's we pride ourselves on the wide range of subject choice that we can offer our students. We are one of very few schools who offer all our students the choice of studying the three science subjects and three business subjects for the Leaving Certificate.

English	Business Studies
Irish	Accountancy
Maths	German
History	French
Geography	Biology
Music	Chemistry
Home Economics	Physics
Physical Education	Religious Education
Economics	Art, Craft & Design
Construction Studies	DCG
Agricultural Science	Applied Maths
Politics & Society	Leaving Certificate PE
Technology	

Transition Year

Transition Year is a one year compulsory programme taken directly after the Junior Cert to provide a bridge to enable students to make the transition from Junior to Senior Cycle. Pupils can participate in a comprehensive Transition Year Programme which incorporates an academic and practical curriculum and promotes personal and social development. Studies have shown that students who complete TY are more confident and self reliant. They achieve 40 – 50 more CAO points and appear to find the transition from second level to third level easier. Here in Our Lady's we offer a first class balanced programme which we evaluate regularly and as we see necessary As well as continuing with their academic subjects which is great preparation for the Leaving Certificate students also enjoy two weeks work experience during the year and also complete a number of enjoyable modules. Recent modules in Transition Year include:

work experience during the year and also complete a number of enjoyable modules. Recent modules in mansition real include.				
Mini Company	Young Social	Fitness 4 Life	Drama	
Keep Fit	Innovators	Technology	Sign Language	
Sport & Leisure	Coding	Community Care	Wellbeing	
Young Scientist	Debating	& Sustainability	First Aid	
GAA Future Leaders	Cookery Microsoft Office	Musical Theatre	Dance	
Digital Media		Technology &	Self Defence	
Junk Kouture	Active Schools	Design	Horticulture	

Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme

LCVP is a senior cycle programme that students can take along with the Leaving Certificate. The programme focuses on preparation for the world of work with a focus on self directed learning, enterprise, work and the community. It is a two year programme which is certified and may be used for points purposes for entry to third level colleges. Pupils are also given the opportunity to participate in work experience modules.

Leaving Certificate **Applied**

The Leaving Certificate Applied Programme is a two year alternative Leaving Cert Programme available to students who wish to follow a practical programme with a strong vocational emphasis. It is aimed at preparing students for adult and working life. The educational experience is active, practical and student centred. Students who successfully complete this programme have the option of progressing to programmes at Colleges of Further Education.

Junior Certificate Schools Programme

The Junior Certificate Schools Programme is based on the concept that all young people are capable of real achievement in school and that they can have a positive experience of school and enjoy the experience of improvement and success. The Programme provides a curriculum framework which will assist schools and individual teachers in adopting a student-centred approach to the Junior Certificate. It is not an alternative to the Junior Certificate but a support framework to it. It aims to ensure that all participating students sit the same Junior Certificate examination as their peers in as many subjects as they can succeed in. Students in the Special classes may access this programme.

Level 1 & Level 2 Learning Programme

The Level 1 & 2 Learning Programmes(L2LPs) guidelines covers learning, teaching and assessment for students with general learning disabilities in the low mild to low moderate range of abilities in first, second and third years of post primary school. These students will benefit from a student led programme focusing on development and learning in such areas as literacy and numeracy, language and communication, mobility and leisure skills, motor coordination and social and personal development.

School Facilities

Our Lady's Secondary School prides itself on the facilities available to its students. These facilities enhance both the curricular and extracurricular educational experience of our students. In September 2023 the school opened a new extension consisting of 10 general classrooms, 2 Science labs & preparation areas, a Technology room and a preparation area and an Art room. The school has a range of facilities such as:

- · Chemistry Laboratory
- Physics Laboratory
- Biology Laboratory
- Three Computer Suites
- Interactive Whiteboards
- **Textile Room**

- Two Home Economics Kitchens
- Two Woodwork Rooms
- Technical Graphics Room
- Music Room
- Art Room

- Demonstration Room
- Guidance Office
- Chaplaincy Room
- Learning Support Suite
- Prayer Room
- · School Gym

- Concert Hall
- Floodlit Astro Turf Pitch
- Canteen & Shop
- General Purpose Area
- Locker Facilities
- Fitness Suite



Academic

academic excellence. We expect students to work to the are especially pleased that each year students from our best of their ability and to strive to reach their full potential. It is not unusual for 100% of our Leaving which include Trinity College, NUI Maynooth, University Certificate Class to go to third level education. This is a College Dublin and Dublin City University. reflection of the dedication to their studies of our

In Our Lady's we place a great deal of emphasis on students and of the commitment of our teachers. We school receive scholarships to their chosen universities



















- 2024 Marino Institute Sports Scholarship: Edel Murphy
- 2024 UCD Entrance Scholarship: Leila Daly
- 2024 UCD Ad Astra Scholarship: Max McGinnity
- 2023 DCU Entrance Scholarship: Sarah Carragher
- 2023 Trinity College Scholarship: Aoife Wynne
- 2023 Tax Institute Scholarship: Adam Mc Bride
- 2023: UCD Entrance Scholarship: Jesse Hendry
- 2023: UCD Entrance Scholarship: Kealan Mc Mahon
- 2023: UCD Entrance Scholarship: Rachel Keenan
- 2022 Naughton Scholarship: Kaitlin Brereton
- 2022 T.U Shannon Scholarship: Anzelika Bukovska
- 2022University of Ulster Athlete Scheme: PaudieHeavin
- 2022 DCU Entrance Scholarship: Emer Ruddin
- 2022 UCD Entrance Scholarship: Cian Mc Kenna
- 2022 UCD Entrance Scholarship: Kevin Yatagampitiya
- 2022 Trinity College Scholarship: Niamh Mullin

- 2021 DCU Entrance Scholarship: Emils Zeps
- 2021DCU Entrance Scholarship: Cormac Mc Cusker
- 2021 DCU Entrance Scholarship: Katie Ward
- 2021 UCD Entrance Scholarship: Jodie Mc Quillan
- 2021 UCD Entrance Scholarship: Emma Hanratty
- 2021 UCD Entrance Scholarship: Tara Quinn
- 2021 UCD Entrance Scholarship: Mia Mackie
- 2021 UCD Entrance Scholarship: Phaedra Clarke Casey
- 2021 UCD Entrance Scholarship: Vincent Chen
- 2021 Maynooth Entrance Scholarship: Laura Christie
- 2021 Maynooth Entrance Scholarship: Dylan Gleeson
- 2021 Maynooth Entrance Scholarship: Michaela McGeough
- 2021Maynooth Entrance Scholarship: Louise Murphy
- 2021 Institute of Technology Carlow Entrance Scholarship: Jordyn Callan

ANNUAL **AWARDS**

In Our Lady's we recognise the importance of acknowledging the achievements of our pupils. This is done regularly during the year at year group assemblies, on the electronic notice board or by announcements over the intercom. At the end of the year students in Junior Cycle will have their individual Awards Ceremonies while the Transition Years have their own separate Awards Night. One of the main highlights of the school year is the Annual Awards Night in May when we reward and acknowledge student participation in all areas of school life. This night not only celebrates academic achievement but also participation and success across a wide area of school life including sport, drama, music, art, literature and enterprise. The ultimate accolade presented on the night is the Gerald F. Gillanders Student of the Year Award.

















































SPORT IN OUR LADY'S

The excellent facilities we have at Our Lady's Secondary School allow us to offer our students a wide range of indoor and outdoor activities. At Our Lady's Secondary School we participate in a wide range of sports at local, provincial and national level. In recent years the school has enhanced its sporting reputation with several successes particularly in the area of Gaelic Games and Basketball.

- 2025: U/16 Girls GAA Ulster A Shield Winners
- 2025: U/14 Girls GAA Ulster A Shield Winners
- 2025: Dervla Cawley & Katie Mc Adam Ulster **Ladies All Stars**
- 2025: U/19 Girls Basketball Regional A Winners
- 2025: Aine Smith, Maeve Smith, Odhran Smith & Judy Hughes Ulster Track & Field Winners
- 2024: U/14 Girls GAA Ulster Plate Winners
- 2024: U/20 Senior Girls GAA Ulster & **All Ireland Winners**
- 2024: Dalton Competition Shield Winners
- 2024: Jamie Mooney, Max Mc Ginnity & **Bobby Mc Caul Ulster Schools All Stars**
- 2024: Hazel Hughes, Laura Grimes, Niamh Flanagan & Tara Renaghan Ulster Ladies All Stars
- 2024: U/19 Girls All Ireland A Basketball Finalists
- 2024: First Year Girls Basketball Regional A Winners and All Ireland Playoffs
- 2024: Aine Smith, Maeve Smith, Odhran Smith & Hazel Hughes Ulster Athletics Finalist

- 2024: Maebh Clerkin Queen's University Rugby **Future Stars Scholarship**
- 2023: UUJ Senior Boys GAA 7's Shield Winners
- 2023: Rannafast Shield Winners
- 2023: Macy Treanor Ulster Interprovincial Soccer Squad
- 2023: Oisin Mc Grath Cup finalists
- 2023: DCU 7's Ladies Winners
- 2023: UUJ 7's Shield Winners
- 2023: U/14 Girls GAA Winners
- 2023: Jamie Mooney Ulster Schools All Star
- 2023: Hazel Hughes, Laura Grimes, Niamh Flanagan & Hannah Haughey Ulster **Ladies All Stars**
- 2023: U/15 Girls Regional Soccer Winners
- 2023: U/17 Boys Regional Soccer Winners
- 2023: U/15 Boys Basketball All Ireland semi finalists
- 2023: Lucy Carey, Emma Mc Guigan, Rebecca Keenan & Annie Carroll North East Regional Basketball Squad

In addition to the above sports students will also have the opportunity to experience and participate in other sports such as:

Gaelic Games	Badminton	Hurling	Camogie
Basketball	Rugby	Hockey	Bowling
Soccer	Volleyball	Athletics / Trialathon	Equestrian



Musical and Drama

The Biannual musical for Transition years and Fifth Years has proved to be very popular and provides the students with life long memories. Students benefit greatly from the experience of acting, singing dancing, and back stage experience on set, props, lighting, sound, make up and costumes and programme making all pointing to a rewarding experience. Recent productions have included:

2024	Back to the 80
2022	Rock of Ages
2019	Loserville
2017	Bring it On
2015	The Wedding
	Singer
2013	The Wiz

ck to the 80's 2011 All Shook Up 2009 Burn Baby Burn 2007 High School Musical 2005 Godspell 2003 Grease



Our school choir under the direction of Ms. Murray perform at all school functions and events. The choir have also experienced success in several prestigious competitions in recent years:

- National Showchoir Best Vocal Group 2023
- National Showchoir Runners Up 2019
- Lllangollen International Music Festival 2019
- · Navan Choral Festival Winners
- Sligo Choral Festival Winners 2019
- National Showchoir Winners 2018 Navan Choral Festival Winners
- Sligo Choral Festival Winners 2018
- National Showchoir Winners 2018









Student Support

Our Lady's Secondary School. We aim to provide a safe, happy and caring school that will allow development. A Student Support Team is in place which is made up of staff members who have a specific pastoral role. The Student Support Team meet on a weekly basis and deal with individual student issues as well as wider issues that may affect a group of students or the wider school community. The types of supports we offer include:

Training for Peer

Programmes

Programmes

outside agencies

Induction

Mentoring

Referral to

Mentoring Group

- Individual Counselling
- Guidance Counsellor
- School Chaplain
- Home School **Liaison Support**

Guidance

Supporting all our students is part of the ethos of Students in Our Lady's have access to appropriate guidance to assist them in third level educational needs and career choices and in their academic, social and personal for academic, social, spiritual and emotional development. We put in place a range of learning experiences, which are designed to assist students to make choices about their lives and to enable each student to get maximum benefit from their education. Guidance in Our Lady's is a continuous developmental process which begins prior to the students' entry to this school and ends on completion of their education here. The school has two full time Guidance Counsellors who play an integral role in the personal, vocational and academic development of students at both Junior and Senior Cycle.





Chaplain

Students in Our Lady's also have access to a School Chaplain. The Chaplain is available to talk to and listen to students and to support them in various ways. The Chaplain supports the academic, pastoral, personal and social developments of students in our school as we strive to provide an environment where all our students are both known and valued.

Student Leaders

Student Leaders are 6th Year students who provide help, support and assistance to Junior Cycle students. They are selected towards the end of Fifth Year and receive training for their role. They help with organising the First Year Induction Day and each Student Leader is assigned a First Year class group. Student Leaders are excellent role models for younger students and are extremely welcoming, supportive and helpful to these year groups. Student Leaders are given the opportunity to participate in a number of key events that help develop their leadership skills, sense of responsibility and self-esteem. These events include First Year Induction Day, Open Night, Fundraising activities and several outside school activities.

Student Council

The Student Council is a democratically elected group of 24 students with 4 representatives from each year group in the school. This group evokes within the students an interest in the school itself by taking on board their suggestions and involving them in decisions made in the school by management. Students learn to co-operate with the Student Council Liaison Teachers, Principal & Deputy Principals, staff, Parents Association and Board of Management as fellow stake-holders who all share the same aim and vision which is to make the school a better place for all members of the school community.

The students meet every week at lunch-time and have been involved in everything from discussing new school policies to fund-raising for a worthwhile cause, to organising the Debs, helping out at school functions or making tea at Parent Teacher Meetings. It is an important role in the school as they voice the issues and needs of the entire student body. The work they do is interesting, challenging and very worthwhile!

Zambia Immersion Project

Our Lady's First Zambia Immersion Project: A Journey of Connection, Compassion, and Growth In 2024, a group of students and staff from Our Lady's undertook our first-ever Zambia Immersion Project, an extraordinary journey that will remain with them for life.

The group travelled to Sables Nua Primary School and Orphanage in Zambia, where they engaged in hands-on projects and community events designed to foster friendship, cultural exchange, and mutual understanding. Students took part in daily school life, visited local families in their homes, and experienced first-hand the challenges and resilience of communities living in the compounds. They also joined in joyful celebrations, including a graduation ceremony, and visited a local HIV hospice, gaining a deep appreciation of both the struggles and the spirit of hope that define Sables Nua. The immersion experience was made possible through the generosity of our school and wider community, whose fundraising efforts directly supported Sables Nua. For our students, the trip was truly transformative, a chance to broaden horizons, develop empathy, and build lifelong memories. The lessons learned extend far beyond the classroom, shaping them as young people ready to contribute positively to society. Looking ahead, Our Lady's is committed to building on this connection. Future immersion projects and fundraising initiatives are being planned, ensuring that the bonds formed with Sables Nua will continue to grow stronger. The Zambia Immersion Project was more than a journey abroad, it was an experience that reminded our entire school community of the power of empathy, the importance of global citizenship, and the joy that comes from reaching out to others.







Board of Management

Our Lady's is a Voluntary Secondary School under the trusteeship of CEIST and is funded by the Department of Education and Skills. The Board of Management oversees the administration of the school and comprises of nominees of parents, teachers and trustees. The daily management of the school is the responsibility of the Principal, who is also the secretary to the Board of Management.

Parents Association

The role of the Parents Association is central to the further development of Our Lady's Secondary School. Our Parents Association is a vibrant and progressive group who contributes greatly to the ongoing and future needs of the school. In recent years the Parents Association have organised fund raising activities, sponsored Gaeltacht scholarships and contributed to Microsoft Office in Transition Year.





Contact Details

Principal: Mr. Eddie Kelly

Deputy Principals: Ms. Jane Treanor, Mr. Darren Bishop

Address: Our Lady's Secondary School, Castleblayney, Co. Monaghan

Telephone: (042) 97 40351 Fax: (042) 97 49197 Email: office@olss.ie Website: www.olss.ie



