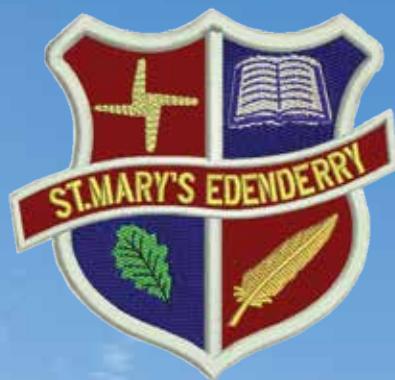


“Ag mealladh agus ag  
moladh, ag cabhrú  
lena chéile.”



# St. Mary's Secondary School

**Edenderry**



# FÁILTE

It is with great pleasure that we introduce you to St Mary's Secondary School. Your choice of secondary school is a very important decision for you and for your child. This prospectus aims to answer some of your questions and ease many of your concerns. You are always welcome to contact us for more information or visit our website.

St Mary's Secondary School is a large co-educational, voluntary secondary school of approximately 800 students. It serves the communities in and around Edenderry. We offer a comprehensive range of courses including Junior Cert, Transition Year, Leaving Cert and Leaving Cert Applied. In St Mary's we seek to pursue excellence in everything we do. We encourage all of our students to set high expectations and to bring a positive approach to their learning. We provide a warm and welcoming place to learn and to develop. There is a wonderful atmosphere in our school that sustains a supportive, caring environment.



**Rob Halford**

Principal

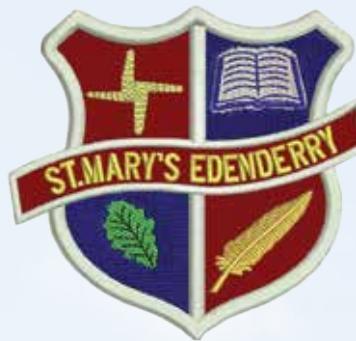


**Margaret O'Kelly**

Deputy Principal

## Significance of our School Crest

The school crest of St Mary's Secondary School Edenderry is symbolic of our core values and beliefs. Each symbol within the crest has a specific meaning reflecting the overall ethos of our school.



The right quadrants contain a book and a quill. These symbolise teaching and learning in our school. We constantly strive for excellence, valuing both tradition and innovation in education.

The left quadrants refer to the student as an individual. The oak leaf represents the history of our locality. Eadan Doire means "brow or hill-top of the oaks". The single leaf represents each student as an important member of our school community. The cross of the patron saint of our Diocese, St Brigid, indicates that we are a Catholic school held in trust by the Diocese of Kildare and Leighlin.

As a single image, our school crest proudly displays our combined educational, spiritual and moral core values and beliefs.





## School Ethos

St. Mary's Secondary School Edenderry is a Catholic School held in trust by the Kildare and Leighlin Diocesan Trust and under the patronage of the Bishop of Kildare and Leighlin. The purpose of the school as a center of post-primary education is to help the students to take their place in society as educated, mature and committed Christians with a philosophy of life which is spiritually enriching and which will enable them to contribute positively to the society in which they live. We also welcome students of all faiths. We believe that education is a life long journey that nourishes resilience, tolerance and civic duty.

## History of St Mary's Secondary School

The seeds that were to become St Mary's Secondary School were sown in 1939 with the establishment of the Girls' Secondary Top on the initiative of Sr Laserian Hasset of the Order of St John of God. Boys' secondary education began in 1960 and the two schools amalgamated in 1982 to form St Mary's Secondary School under the patronage of the Bishop of Kildare and Leighlin. Since then the school has grown from strength to strength. We have seen an expansion in the number of students and teachers as well as a series of extensions of the school building. St Mary's is now a large, vibrant campus characterised by a great sense of community and ambition.





“Students enjoy the feeling of belonging to St Mary’s. They exhibit a mutual respect for their peers, their teachers and non-teaching staff.”





## Transition to Secondary School

The transition of students from primary to post-primary school is an important milestone in the development and education of your son /daughter. St Mary's endeavours to make this transition a positive experience. We welcome parents, primary school personnel and students to engage with us during this transition process. Our doors are always open to help and reassure parents and students throughout this exciting time in their lives. We follow an induction programme in the opening weeks of term to assist and reassure new students as they adapt to the new environment.

## Special Educational Needs

Our mainstream teachers hold responsibility for the teaching and learning of all of our students. St Mary's also provides additional support for students who may have special or additional educational needs. Parents are welcome to discuss the needs of their child prior to transitioning to secondary school. This dialogue continues throughout their time in St Mary's. In addition, St Mary's provides special classes to cater for the needs of students who have a recommendation for a special class placement. Please contact the school for more information.

## High Standards of Behaviour and Achievement

We have developed a strong code of behaviour that focuses on promoting a positive learning environment. Adhering to our code of behaviour is vital in order to ensure effective teaching and learning. We set our expectations high and encourage honest endeavour. This helps to create excellent relationships among students and between students and teachers.

The grades that the majority of our students attain in the state exams well exceed the national average and put St Mary's among the most successful schools in the country. Approximately 85% of our students progress to Third Level. This reflects the great work and dedication of our teachers. It is testament to the diligence of students and the support provided by their parents.

Our former students excel in a wide range of careers. Many are in high profile positions in education, business, medicine, engineering, science, the humanities and the arts.

We are proud of the achievements of our former students and we continue to develop the links between them, the school and the wider community.





## Pastoral Care

We care for each of our students in St Mary's. Students are supported by Subject Teachers, Class Tutors, Prefects, Year Heads, the School Counsellor, the Principal and Deputy Principal. A team of special educational needs teachers provides additional support where required. We also have in place an active anti-bullying team that supports the school's robust anti-bullying policy.

The emphasis is always on the student taking responsibility for their own behaviour, learning and wellbeing. However, as teenagers, they always require additional supports and special guidance. We are delighted to support them in any way we can.

## Our Curriculum

St Mary's offers a broad range of course options for our students. As well as the Junior Certificate and Leaving Certificate Course, students may choose to follow the Transition Year option or the Leaving Certificate Applied or Leaving Certificate Vocational Programmes. When selecting a second level school, it is vital that parents are aware of the subject choices individual schools offer. At St Mary's we offer a full range of Leaving Certificate subjects. This variety of subject choice ensures students can avail of a wide assortment of Third Level options. Enclosed with this prospectus are information sheets outlining the variety of courses and subjects offered to students in Saint Mary's.

## Assessment for Learning

In St Mary's we use a range of assessment modes to monitor the progress of each student. In addition to traditional class assignments, homework and written tests, we challenge the students to self evaluate their own learning. This approach helps to determine each student's progress. Information about what a student already knows, understands and is able to do, is used by both the teacher and the learner to determine how to achieve learning goals. Assessment for Learning forms a key part of active learning whereby knowledge is constructed piece by piece rather than just acquired.

## Guidance and Counselling Service

St. Mary's offers a comprehensive Guidance and Counselling service. The role of the Guidance Counsellor is a varied one. The focus is child centred. It provides a service to inform, develop, and support the students in the school. The aim of the guidance service is to positively impact on the overall well-being of the students. In addition, the Guidance Counsellor provides information to help students make informed choices about subjects and careers.



“Students are encouraged to develop their creative and sporting interests.”





"We provide students with a sense of freedom and opportunity to explore their individual talents and interests."





## Our links with parents

We regularly communicate with parents through our website, twitter, school app and regular parent-teacher meetings. Parents are always welcome to make appointments with any member of staff to discuss matters of concern.

Our Parents' Association provides a link with parents, pupils and teachers. The Association promotes the best interests of the school and provides a variety of supports. It also makes a positive contribution to the development of school policies.

## Student Leadership

St Mary's promotes the development of students' leadership skills. Our Student Council is an active and vibrant element of our school community. The Student Council enables students to participate in and contribute to the decision-making process of our school. Each year group elects Student Council representatives who work with teachers and management in a variety of ways. The whole school community values their participation in the development of relevant school policies. Students also organise events to inform students about contemporary issues and to promote worthy causes.

In addition to our Student Council sixth year students are selected to act as Prefects. These students provide a key support to first year students. Prefects also promote awareness of a range of contemporary issues.

Members of the Student Council and Prefects hold positions of responsibility within the school. Their duties and responsibilities form a valuable part of their personal development.

St Mary's, like all schools, is evaluated by inspectors from the Department of Education and Skills. Recent inspection reports are available for viewing on our website. Each report is highly complementary of the:

- Teaching and learning environment in St Mary's
- Excellent quality of care that students receive
- Outstanding and improving grades in Junior and Leaving Certificate examinations
- Positive relationships evident amongst management, staff and students



## Extra-curricular

St Mary's offers a varied and ever increasing range of extra-curricular activities. We are renowned for our excellence in Gaelic football. In this sport, our teams have won both Leinster and All-Ireland titles. Of equal prominence are our musicals and talent shows. These shows provide opportunities for students to perform and to entertain. Our award winning school choir enriches many of our school events throughout the year.

Students also benefit from participation in:

- A variety of other sports
- Artistic, literary, maths & science competitions
- Cumann na Gaeilge
- School quizzes and debates

In all of our extra-curricular activities, our students have both competed at and won at provincial or national levels.

Classroom learning is further supported by out-of-school trips. Guest speakers are invited to provide specialist workshops in a variety of subject areas.

## Awards

We aim to promote excellence and endeavour in the classroom, the exam hall, on the sports field or on the stage. The school celebrates its successes and it encourages students to compete and to challenge themselves. A formal awards structure recognises outstanding successes. This encourages everyone to compete to the best of their ability.

## Evening Study

All students are encouraged to participate in a supervised after-school study programme. This facility enables students to complete their homework and exam revision in a quiet space. A night time study option is also available.

## Facilities

St Mary's provides excellent facilities for its students and teachers. A series of extensions now form a campus for students to grow and learn. This is complemented by a fantastic Sports Hall and an excellent canteen facility. The canteen provides hot and cold menu options for breakfast, lunchtime and after school. The canteen menu is based on our Healthy Eating Policy. The canteen facility means that students do not go downtown at any point during the day.

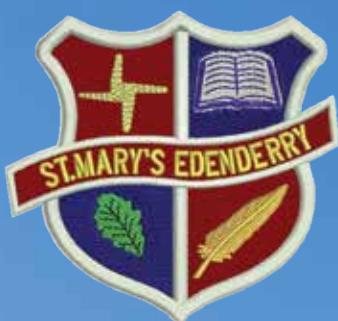
Each extension to the school provides additional social space and specialist classrooms that widen the learning opportunities.

## Communications and IT

St Mary's continuously adds to its stock of computers and other IT equipment. We believe that technology can enhance excellent teaching. Every classroom is equipped with a networked computer, an overhead data projector, a projection screen and an audio amplifier and speakers.

We also use technology to keep students and parents informed of events and of achievements. As well as an intranet for staff we use our school website, Twitter account, App and texting service to ensure the sharing of information.





# St. Mary's Secondary School

Edenderry, Co. Offaly.

 046 9731457

 [www.stmarysedenderry.ie](http://www.stmarysedenderry.ie)

 Twitter: @SMESecondary

 School App: St Mary's Edenderry

