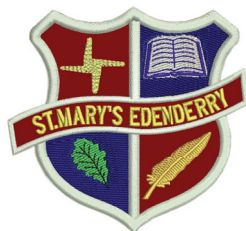




“Be the best that you can be”



**St. Mary's
Secondary School**

EDENDERRY, CO. OFFALY



SECTION 1

Introduction to St. Mary's Strategic Plan



Message from Our Chairperson

The Board of Management of St. Mary's Secondary School is pleased to present Vision 2025.

The launch of Vision 2025 marks another important stage in the continuous development of St. Mary's; it does not signal a change of direction but is a re-statement of our values and the principles by which we live.

The process of developing Vision 2025 has given us the opportunity to assess our heritage and to imagine what our future could be. Building on our heritage and achievements, we're taking another step forward in our mission to be the best we can be.

Vision 2025 provides a blueprint for the future of the school; it re-affirms our founding intention, our focus on developing the whole person, on realising the full potential of all learners in our

school community and of treating each other with respect. It was developed over a period of 18 months in collaboration with our many partners in education. Vision 2025 expresses our cohesive vision, charts a direction for the school, defines a strategic roadmap and sets aspirational but achievable goals for ongoing improvement.

St. Mary's will use Vision 2025 to confidently face the exciting challenges and opportunities ahead, including embracing educational and creative initiatives, extending school facilities, supporting and inspiring all members of our school community. Most importantly, it continues our tradition of having the holistic development, care, academic success, creativity and happiness of our students at its heart.

I look forward to seeing this plan translated into a sustained programme of actions. On behalf of the Board of Management, sincere thanks to all who collaborated in the preparation of this vision, which we believe will benefit the whole school community over the coming years. We invite you to join us on this journey.

25 UNIVERSITY SCHOLARSHIPS (2000 TO 2019)

ENTERING ANNUAL SCI-FEST COMPETITION SINCE **2002**

NEW EXTENSION COMMENCING IN **2020**

1ST

RANKED HIGHEST CO-EDUCATIONAL SECOND LEVEL SCHOOL IN OFFALY BY SUNDAY TIMES

34

PLAYERS WHO WENT ON TO PLAY FOR THEIR COUNTY

87% OF OUR STUDENTS GO ON TO 3RD LEVEL EACH YEAR

2 DEDICATED SPECIAL CLASSES (MILD GENERAL LEARNING & MODERATE GENERAL)

5 TIMES ALL-IRELAND COLLEGES CHAMPIONS (2003, 2007, 2009, 2012 & 2016)

191 PUPILS ENROLLED IN FIRST YEAR 2019/20

20 FEEDER SCHOOLS FROM 4 COUNTIES

12 SCHOOL MUSICALS SINCE 1986

INTRODUCTION OF SPECIAL CLASSES IN **1996**

NATIONAL TITLE WINS IN CONCERN DEBATES, FRENCH DEBATES, PHYSICAL EDUCATION, BLACKBOARD JUNGLE

- How best can we sustain St. Mary's tradition of providing a balanced, comprehensive and well-rounded education, fit for today and tomorrow?
- How can we inspire our students to be the best that they can be?
- What values are needed by our current and future students to lead fulfilling lives?
- How can we ensure that the core human qualities are supported and developed: **being kind, fair, resilient and responsible**?
- What skills must our students develop to pursue their ideals?
- How can we help staff to support this vision?

2025 might seem a long time away and yet, the first year students commencing their second level education at St. Mary's, Edenderry in September 2019 may only be graduating as Leaving Certs in six years time. So Vision 2025 is, in every way, a living document.

It speaks to the present, with a keen eye on the traditions and customs of the past while offering indicative pointers of where it wishes to position itself into the future.

As patron of St. Mary's, Edenderry I am very conscious that St. Mary's is built on huge shoulders of the past, since the amalgamation of the boys' and girls' schools in 1982. The vision then in seeing the school as a diocesan school very much is due to the foresight of Msgr. Martin Brenan (PP Edenderry: 1956-1981).

He, the priests and the Sisters of St John of God, who worked alongside him then, recognised the importance of education as a gateway to the future for our young people. St. Mary's, Edenderry continues to attain those ideals almost four decades later. I welcome this strategic plan and I also recognise a plan, even as fine

as this one, remains a paper exercise if it is not lived out in the life experience of students, staff and the wider community that make up St. Mary's, Edenderry today.

I am delighted that Vision 2025 places such great emphasis on the renewal of the expression of St. Mary's Catholic, caring and inclusive ethos and culture. The big challenge is to unpack what we understand by ethos in a twenty-first century context. I emphasise the important faith dimension that is expressed in the ethos of St. Mary's. I welcome the recent introduction of Diocesan programmes such as Meitheal and Pope John Paul II Awards into the school. The characteristics of a diocesan school must always be rooted in Gospel values.

As well as being



SECTION 2

Looking Back Before We Look Forward

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.

As a Voluntary Catholic School, we are guided by our Christian values to fulfil each student's unique potential. As such, we bring a strong tradition of welcome and inclusion.

"St. Mary's is welcoming and caring and I am happy here."

- STUDENT



"Our school is a very friendly place with people who care."

- STUDENT

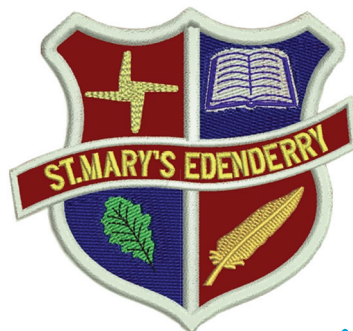


The Significance of Our School Crest

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.

The Left Quadrants

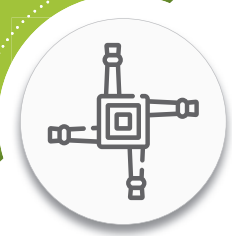
refer to the student as an individual. The oak leaf represents the history of our locality. The single leaf represents each student as an important member of our school community.



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.

*Éadan Doire means
'brow or hill-top of the oaks'*



SECTION 3

Building on a Heritage of Caring & Excellence

St. Mary's Secondary School, Edenderry is a voluntary catholic diocesan secondary school under the patronage of the Bishop of Kildare and Leighlin. Our three sister schools are Holy Family Secondary School in Newbridge, St. Paul's in Monasterevin and Knockbeg College in Carlow.

St. Mary's has a strong heritage of serving the needs of students from four counties for over 70 years. As such, we provide a major education hub for the midlands region. As well as having a sustained track record of excellence in state examinations, all our students are exposed to a broad range of artistic, cultural and sporting opportunities. We are guided by our christian values to fulfil each student's unique potential in an inclusive learning community, committed to empowering all our learners to fully realise their potential.

Our ethos informs the values and traditions that are part of the lived reality in our school; we are open and welcoming, respecting each young person and their family's traditions and world view. Wellbeing is understood in terms of the whole human person. The development of the whole person and helping students to be at their best is at the heart of the school's ethos. This is realised through the commitment to curricular, co-curricular, creative and extra-curricular activities, the Pastoral Care System and the Student Support Teams. Our purpose for our school community is to be inspired to be the best that they can be by;

- *Promoting the holistic development of each member of the school community*
- *Creating a caring school community that celebrates its diversity and keeps partnership and inclusion at the centre of all it does*
- *Serving our communities*
- *Striving to excel in teaching and learning both inside and outside the classroom*
- *Encouraging effective leadership at all levels*
- *Nurturing a faith community in the traditions of our diocese*

Recognising the changes in education, in work, and the opportunities and challenges facing our young people, it is timely for St. Mary's to reflect on how we can build on all that is good and look to the future with strengthened purpose and direction so that we are inspired to be the best that we can be.

Building on our heritage and achievements, we are taking another step forward in our mission. In developing our strategic plan, we have an ideal opportunity to assess our heritage and to imagine what our future could be. Our strategic plan outlines our vision for the future of St. Mary's and the steps we will need to take in order to make it a reality. We invite you to join us on this journey.



Be Kind



Be Fair



Be Resilient



Be Responsible

“For some students, the school gives them confidence and stability that they cannot find elsewhere.”

– SR. ANNE



Understanding our School

A Community of Learners

As we set out on our Vision 2025, the St. Mary's community includes 880 students, 65 teachers and 10 support staff. Our school community is centred around student development and is organised as follows:

Students

Students are grouped per year and per class. The student voice is promoted by a range of representative teams including Prefects (6th years), Student Council (all years); Meitheal Group (5th/6th years); JPll Team (TY's); Green Schools Committee (all years).

Parents/Guardians

Parents/Guardians remain the primary educators and provide essential support to students' learning and to the work of the school. The Parents' Association provides invaluable support to the school.

Teachers

The essential element of an effective learning environment, teachers support students' learning across a wide and varied curriculum. Teachers are also a key support for students' wellbeing.

Tutors

Each junior class group has an assigned teacher who provides daily support, basic welfare and development growth.

Special Educational Needs Team

A team of teachers, special needs assistants and management plan and deliver a wide range of supports for all students with additional educational needs.

Year Heads

Year Heads take charge of a full year group, protecting the welfare of all students and supporting teachers and students in their day-to-day to day learning.

Guidance Counsellor

The Guidance Counselling Team provide interlinked supports for all students in areas of Personal and Social Development and Educational and Career Guidance.

Patron

The Bishop of Kildare and Leighlin is the patron of the school and has responsibility to appoint the Board of Management and to safeguard the ethos of the school.

Leadership Team

The school principal is supported by two deputies who manage all day-to-day matters to promote teaching and learning and to ensure regulatory compliance.

Management Teams

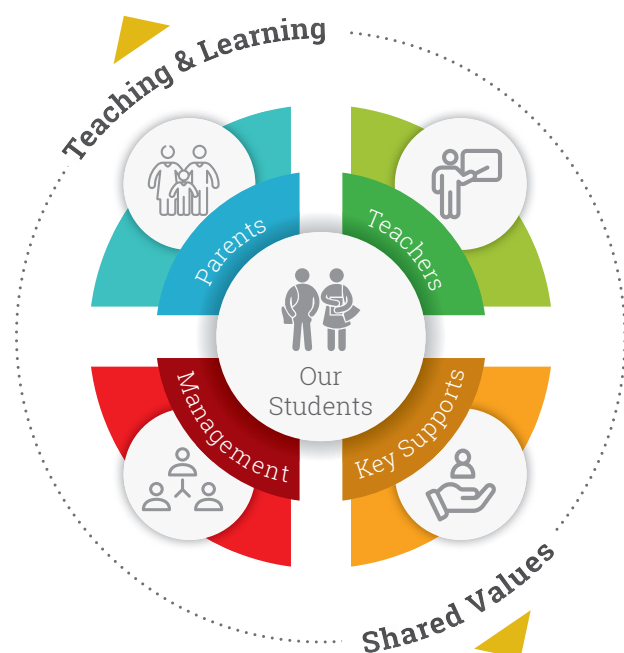
Assistant Principals work with the leadership team and the teachers to ensure quality teaching and learning and suitable supports for students.

Board of Management

Statutory responsibility for overall governance of the school on behalf of the patron and for the benefit of staff, students and their parents.

Ancillary Staff

A number of non-teaching personnel provide critical support such as administrative, financial and facilities management.



"In St. Mary's, we are a community of learners."

– STUDENT

Developing Vision 2015 Our Strategic Plan



The brief set for the strategic planning process was clear; the Board of Management wanted to build on St. Mary's many strengths and to engage in consultation and involvement with its key stakeholders to inform the development of the new strategic plan.

The Board consulted with a wide variety of stakeholders over a period of 18 months. This has been a time of listening and reflection for the school community and has informed Vision 2025.

Strategic Plan

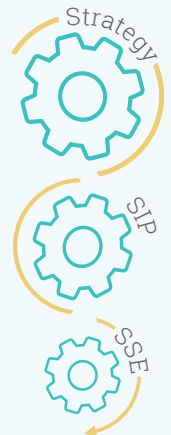
Details medium and long term targets and actions to ensure continuous and structured development.

School Improvement Plan

Sets medium term objectives and actions.

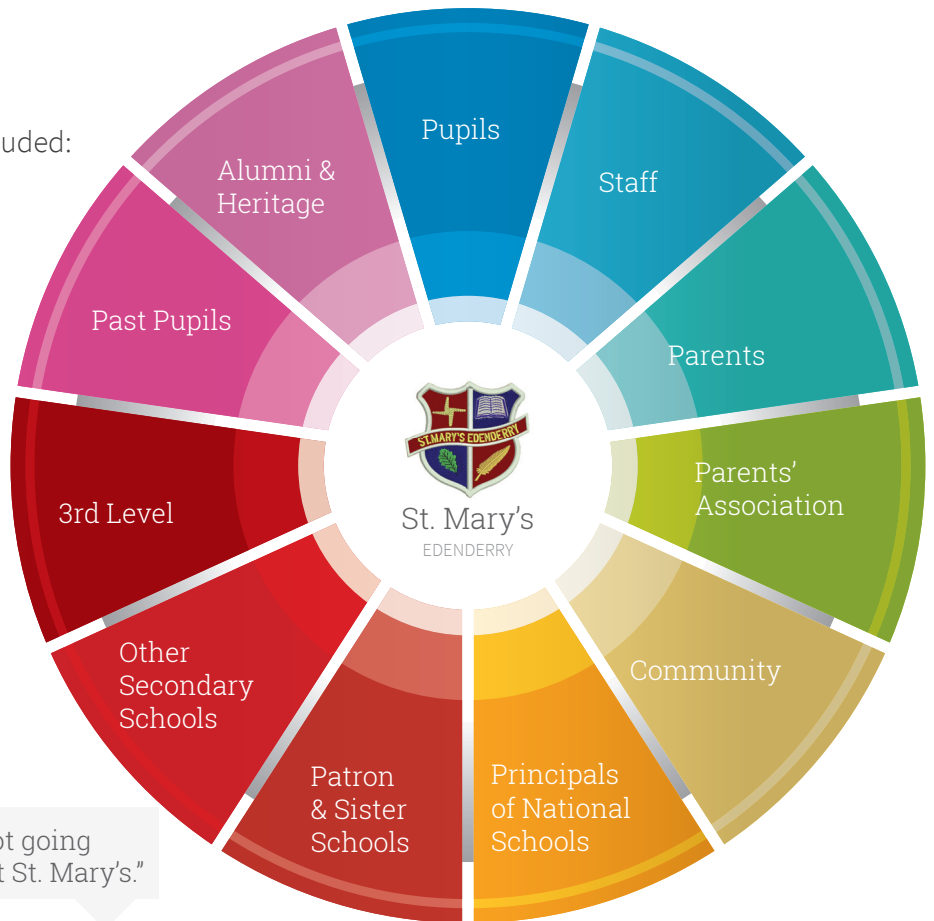
School Self Evaluation

A process of review and evidence based target setting for immediate term.



Stakeholder Engagement Process

Key messages from these groups included:



"The transition to secondary school is critical – especially the first six-months."

"Nurture and care of students - wellbeing and self-esteem is most important."

"The student and their needs must continue to be at the heart of St. Mary's."

"Teachers are committed."

"There is a lot going well today at St. Mary's."

"Manners and a culture of respect still matter."

"There are a lot of challenges facing young people today."

"Help every student to realise their potential."

"Extra-curricular options are good but continue to expand options."

"Manage the impact of social media on students."

"Help children and parents to navigate safely the world of social media."

The 8 Pillars of Our Plan

Reflecting on all inputs received, eight themes emerged which underpin Vision 2025.

1. Culture & Ethos

Encouraging faith, tolerance and understanding in a modern multicultural Ireland. Living, growing and developing the essential traditions of our school in the spirit of our founders, the St. John of God Sisters

3. Leadership

Facilitating effective leadership at all levels. Promoting innovation and resilience and delegating responsibility to support effective growth in every aspect of life.



2. Wellbeing

Guiding and nurturing everyone's wellbeing to encourage reflection, kindness, resilience and a strong sense of self-worth. Strengthening mind and body to encourage education as a holistic experience.

4. Learning & Teaching

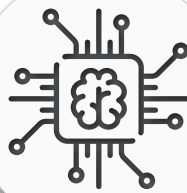
Becoming lifelong learners. As a community, pursuing the joy of learning, of discovery and of the appreciation of nature, knowledge, culture, sports and the arts.

5. Connecting with Community

Developing partnerships with parents, sister schools and the local community so that we all grow and learn together. Respecting diversity and promoting inclusion and interconnectedness so that everyone reaches his/her potential.

7. Facilities & Environment

Maintaining and developing current and future facilities and resources that best promote learning, teaching, wellbeing and a sustainable environment for all members of our school community



6. Digital School

Adopting technology positively and creatively to promote all aspects of our development as a learner, as an active citizen and a member of the community. Responding positively and innovatively to an ever-changing world.

8. Governance & Funding

Protecting and guiding our school community through the challenges of education and the shared pursuit of being the best that we can be. Leading the school in its strategic goals.



Our Strategic Roadmap **Culture & Ethos**

Our Aim

“To renew the expression and experience of St. Mary’s catholic, caring and inclusive ethos and culture with the aim of encouraging the development of young people who are knowledgeable and innovative and who can adapt to many different roles and realities in the future.”

In 2025,

We Will be Able to Say

“We have renewed and embedded the founding expression of St. Mary’s’ as a catholic school with a caring ethos and inclusive culture.”

“Inclusion, in all its facets, is at the centre of school life in St. Mary’s.”

“Our school is a place where teaching and learning fosters the development of all our students as kind, fair, resilient and responsible individuals who can confidently take their place in a diverse society.”

“Our Code of Behaviour and student supports reflect these core principles.”

Strategic Plan

To Deliver our Aim

- Develop a programme to refresh and embed St. Mary’s ethos in the context of 21st Century challenges
- Refresh and embed the mission and core values of St. Mary’s
- Strengthen and embed diversity and inclusion in every aspect of the school
- Refresh the Code of Behaviour to meet the needs of our current and future students.

Action

Outcome Sought

Embed vision and mission across St. Mary's

- » Refreshed vision and mission statements
- » Visibility and lived reality of the mission and vision across school policies, practices, and facilities

**Explain and live the St. Mary's Ethos
"Be the best that you can be"**

- » Clarity about the catholic ethos of St. Mary's and how this translates into characteristics such as;





Our Strategic Roadmap **Wellbeing**

Our Aim

“To sustain a culture of positive wellbeing for every member of the St. Mary’s community through respectful, interpersonal relationships.”

In 2025, We Will be Able to Say

“We support, enable and encourage wellbeing across our entire school community in how we interact with each other, how we behave and learn, in our facilities, in our guidance and support services and in our focus on physical and mental health.”

“We are a school where the development and protection of the whole person is at the heart of all that we do.”

Strategic Plan To Deliver our Aim

- Embrace and embed the six indicators of wellbeing; Active, Aware, Resilient, Responsible, Respected and Connected
- Enhance student and staff supports and guidance
- Support active lifestyles and healthy eating options for all.



Action	Outcome Sought
<p>Promote and integrate wellbeing across the curriculum, school policies and practices</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Whole school integrated approach to wellbeing » Strong cross-curricular links » Highly effective support teams
<p>Renew and implement a Whole School Guidance Action Plan</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Whole School guidance is embedded in the culture of the school for students of all abilities, interests and ambitions » Enhanced guidance capabilities and capacity to reflect the changing needs and diversity of our community of students and staff » Enhanced Continuum of Support model with guidance for all, some and few » Strong system of chaplaincy, counselling and enhanced Whole School Guidance Team
<p>Develop and sustain the wellbeing and self-esteem of self and of others</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » All elements of the school’s wellbeing programme are prioritised, embedded and visible throughout the school » Teachers staff and students actively sustain their wellbeing
<p>Promote healthy and active lifestyles in St. Mary’s</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » St. Mary’s actively encourages, supports and celebrates activities, practices and facilities that positively impact physical and mental health » Develop and nurture an interest in a wider range of activities that support a healthy, active lifestyle » Participation by students of all abilities in range of physical, artistic, creative, spiritual and reflective activities
<p>Support and expand extra-curricular opportunities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » St. Mary’s encourages participation in a wide range of extra-curricular and co-curricular activities that builds resilience, promotes teamwork, rewards endeavour and participation. Creative and artistic efforts are supported and encouraged
<p>Sustain a culture of inclusiveness, tolerance and understanding</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Every member of the school community is valued and respected » All students and staff regardless of gender, age, intellect, ability, sexual orientation or ethnicity are equally welcomed and embraced within the school community
<p>Promote creativity and critical thinking among students and staff</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » We value the arts in its widest sense as a medium to personal growth-music, art, design, literature, dance, drama and performance
<p>Responsible and positive use of social media</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Members of the school community are encouraged to develop all their gifts to the maximum of their ability and, in this way, make their unique contribution to the common good
<p>Promote and educate all stakeholders regarding the risks of substance misuse</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Strong visible programme of education, awareness and vigilance regarding the risks of substance misuse » Active regular engagement with students, staff, parents as well as with regulatory and advisory groups



SECTION 7.3

Our Strategic Roadmap **Leadership**

Our Aim

“To develop and expand leadership capacity throughout the school.”

In 2025, **We Will be Able to Say**

“We are a school where students and staff have many opportunities to develop their own leadership skills.”

“A wide range of responsibilities are delegated to members of the school community.”

“The student voice is listened to and acted upon.”

Strategic Plan **To Deliver our Aim**

- Develop and empower sustainable, resilient leadership at all levels
- Strengthen and deepen the student voice within the management of the school
- Provide a range of opportunities for all staff and students to develop their leadership skills.



Action Plan for
Leadership

Action	Outcome Sought
<p>Promote an expanded student voice, participation and leadership across St. Mary's</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Student leadership in St. Mary's is integrated, active, strong, diverse and inclusive; enhancing the experience for all students in the school and providing leadership opportunities across the student population » St. Mary's is a school community where real responsibility is distributed and encouraged
<p>Strengthen the parent voice and its influence on school policy and practice</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » A true spirit of partnership between parents and the school » The parent voice is heard and respected » The parent fully supports all school policies and is empowered to influence each
<p>Encourage a culture of professional and collaborative leadership</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Staff enjoy opportunities to develop their own leadership capacities, illustrative of distributed leadership » The school advocates team building activities for all staff, espousing a culture of collegiality, cooperation and camaraderie » The school maximises the opportunities to develop teachers' capacity and competence to improve teaching, learning and leading throughout the school
<p>Strengthen and secure Christian leadership in its widest sense</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Christian leadership, at all levels encourages, cares for and supports all students, staff and stakeholders through respectful interpersonal relationships » The school fosters the student's holistic development as an individual and as a member of the community
<p>Critique leadership and management practices</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » The range of management teams routinely review own performance and that of others. This leads to a cycle of continuous improvement
<p>Support professional learning for all staff</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » The school principal, deputy principals, ancillary team and management team model and sustain a culture of respect, trust and teamwork » Collaborative, supportive and distributed leadership is demonstrated consistently by the leadership and management teams





Our Strategic Roadmap

Learning & Teaching

Our Aim

“As a community of learners, we foster the highest standards of learning and teaching in our school, by supporting and challenging all our learners to be at their very best, encouraging them to develop reflective habits that will make them life-long learners.”

In 2025, We Will be Able to Say

“We have re-imagined learning and teaching in our school, to maintain our record of academic excellence and to empower all our students to achieve their individual potential and to thrive in the 21st century. We lead by example in this.”

“We have incorporated new assessment modes, learning strategies and student support structures to engage all our learners.”

“Students enjoy their learning and are motivated to learn.”



Strategic Plan To Deliver our Aim

- Promote excellence in learning and teaching in every classroom, in every student, in every programme, regardless of ability
- Enrich/Broaden the curriculum in a targeted and purposeful way
- Promote and support strong foundations in literacy and numeracy
- Adapt the learning and teaching environment to meet the needs of all our learners
- Broaden the range of assessment modes that support learning
- Encourage and facilitate professional learning and professional development
- Students experience opportunities to develop the skills and attitude necessary for life-long learning
- Students reflect on their progress as learners and develop a sense of ownership of and responsibility for their learning.

Action	Outcome Sought
<p>Promote excellence in learning and teaching in every classroom for every student.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Teachers prepare for the differentiation of learning intentions and learning outcomes so that all students are challenged » The unique qualities that each member of the school community possesses are acknowledged and celebrated » Members of our school community are encouraged to develop to the maximum of their ability » Support professional collaborative teaching and learning with the aim of sharing best practice » Use of assessment tracking programmes to continuously track students' academic progress » Investment in new technologies to promote teaching and learning and all teachers trained in use of same
<p>Participate fully in national curricular development</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » St. Mary's embraces all available and suitable curricular options
<p>Continue to encourage and support CPD for staff. Establish culture of collaboration, reflective practice and professional teamwork</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » CPD and life-long learning is encouraged, modelled and supported » Learning is shared with colleagues » Insights gained are used to inform school practice and policies where applicable » Teachers' sharing of resources, methodologies and reflective practices is supported and encouraged » Digital technology embedded in all teaching practice
<p>Encourage students to be curious and appreciate knowledge, creativity, science, culture and the Arts.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Increased awareness of Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, Maths (STEAM) for future careers and world of work » Increased take up of all science subjects at senior level » Encourage and educate students and parents about the opportunities available in Art and Design, DCG and Technology » Continue the strong tradition of the appreciation and education of art, music and creative endeavours » Students reflect on their progress as learners and develop a sense of ownership of and responsibility for their learning
<p>Promote excellence in provision of education and supports for students with special educational needs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » The school follows best practice with regard to its care of all students with special or additional education needs
<p>Promote and support strong foundations in Literacy and Numeracy</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Teachers include literacy and numeracy in the fabric of each lesson » School Self Evaluation (SSE) process is used to gather and analyse data to identify current strengths and areas for improvement » Performance reviewed against agreed targets



Our Aim

“As St. Mary’s serves a wide and diverse community, our school will continue to promote partnership and student involvement, social justice and active citizenship with our wider communities across 4 counties and circa 20 feeder schools.”

In 2025, We Will be Able to Say

“We have renewed and strengthened our links within our school community, local community and wider community.”

“Members of our school community are encouraged to engage in activities on behalf of the whole school community and to support the school community in reaching its potential in all areas of engagement.”

“We promote respectful communication through meaningful conversation forums with all our stakeholders on an ongoing basis for the benefit of all.”

“We continue to actively contribute with pride to all our communities.”

“We respect diversity and promote inclusion and interconnectedness.”

Strategic Plan To Deliver our Aim

- Develop and support opportunities for the student voice
- Encourage active citizenship and connect with our wider communities
- Recognise and acknowledge effort and contribution, personally and consistently
- Develop multi-channel communications with key stakeholders within and outside of our school
- Promote open and respectful communications and discussion for all in our school community.

Connecting with Community

Action	Outcome Sought
Encourage and promote active citizenship among students in their own community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Students will take an active role in each of their own communities through involvement with local groups and charities
Strengthen and build formal links with our local communities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » The school is open and welcoming to all its communities » A Behavioural Support (post-holder) works closely with a focused group of students, families and the school to provide and support students' behaviour and learning » Our Work Experience programme establishes strong links with local business
The school community takes great pride in ensuring that the school environment creates a sense of care and welcome for all its members, past and present, and those who visit.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » All efforts and contributions made to the school are recognised and acknowledged » Student achievements are displayed on a monitor in GP area and communicated as appropriate » Celebrate 40 years of service to local communities in 2022
Enhance partnership with parents and promote the work of the Parents' Association	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » The importance of parents/guardians as the primary educators of their children is emphasised and supported. Parents are encouraged to acknowledge this responsibility in partnership with the management and staff of the school to ensure the best possible educational experience for their children
Continue to utilise social media for effective school communication and promotion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Maintain current level of media exposure » Social media is used widely, appropriately and consistently to celebrate school involvement in a wide range of activities and events
Acknowledge, recognise and celebrate St. Mary's many diverse communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Promote and acknowledge diverse communities inside and outside the school





Our Strategic Roadmap **Digital School**

Our Aim

“To explore and implement the best use of technology to support St. Mary’s Digital Plan and Teaching, Learning and Assessment strategies.”

“Respond positively and innovatively to an ever-changing digital world.”

In 2025, We Will be Able to Say

“We have in place a modern digital infrastructure and supporting software that enables the highest level of teaching and learning throughout our school.”

“We have established a culture of professional training and awareness among all of our staff that supports the effective use of digital technologies inside and outside of the classroom.”

“Our students and staff are aware of the appropriate range of digital security that protects their wellbeing and the wellbeing of others.”

“Our school administration is supported by a proficient, modern digital network.”

Strategic Plan To Deliver our Aim

- Confident use of digital technologies to support teaching and learning and assessment practices
- Embed digital learning and skills such as creativity, problem solving and adaptability in St. Mary’s
- Ensure technology policies are updated to reflect changing digital environment
- Ongoing education and review of the impact of, and response to, social media
- Where possible, provide updated curriculum options in technology-related/ enabled subjects
- Upgrade and enforce advanced digital security and awareness.

Action	Outcome Sought
<p>Develop and implement a digital strategy for learning in St. Mary's</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Use of digital technology to enhance teaching and learning for students of all abilities is embedded in St. Mary's – developed using resources such as the Digital Learning Framework and Digital Learning Planning Resource
<p>Secure available Digital Strategy for Schools funding from DES</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Acquisition of DES digital grants available in addition to national scheme
<p>Ongoing promotion and education on the safe use of technologies</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Secure, modern firewalls and additional security » All staff and students have full awareness and exercise vigilance with relation to digital security » Educating students and supporting parents about on-line security and vigilance to prevent unsafe use of technology » Sustained vigilance and high awareness of the risks and effects of cyber bullying
<p>Research and adapt best practice regarding BYO devices and similar digital innovations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Staged, measurable use of BYO devices in those circumstances that ensure enhanced learning and personal security
<p>Informed expansion of digital software and platforms that enhance teaching and learning, tracking, monitoring and assessment practices</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Routine, detailed and focussed planning and oversight of curriculum development, teaching and learning that matches best modern practice
<p>Expansion and upgrading of digital technologies to support productive, efficient school administration and financial management</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Optimum use of modern digital technologies that support the highest standards of school administration and financial controls
<p>Compliance with GDPR and Child Protection procedures</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Child Protection Procedures, Health and Safety Legislation and GDPR are complied with



Environment and Facilities

Our Aim

Continuously improve our facilities and environment to enhance the experience of all our community at St. Mary's in a sustainable manner.

In 2025,

We Will be Able to Say

“We have developed new facilities to enable a broader curriculum and have upgraded existing facilities to provide a physical environment where our students and staff can be at their best”

“It is evident that St. Mary's promotes a green and sustainable environment through our practices and policies”

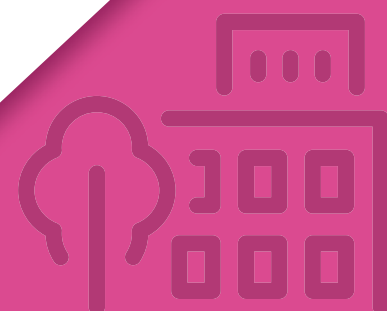
“St. Mary's physical environment is welcoming to all and reflects the school's ethos and spirit

Strategic Plan To Deliver our Aim

- Design and deliver a new Building Extension to provide additional learning and circulation spaces, new and extended subject capabilities, modern social, counselling and pastoral facilities
- Develop and progress the next phases and priorities for school development.
- Develop new playing fields and training facilities
- Promote a sustainable and green school environment by developing a sustainability plan for St. Mary's.
- Continue to set high standards of cleanliness, tidiness and maintenance across all school areas.

Environment and Facilities

Action	Outcome Sought
Develop new extension	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » New Extension commissioned with additional 1450m² of space – in two phases (2019 – 2021 and 2020-2022) » We take every opportunity to develop and enhance new and existing facilities to support the whole curriculum
Maintain and upgrade current facilities to enhance student and staff wellbeing and to facilitate teaching and learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Safe, comfortable learning environments and work places that support the safety, health and wellbeing of all student and staff and all users of the school » Teaching aids and equipment for teaching and learning are maintained to a high standard
Enhance school green spaces through development of playing fields and outdoor areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Students, staff and local community enjoy safe, durable outdoor playing facilities that sustain wellbeing and healthy lifestyle
Continue to apply for 'summer works' and other schemes to enable ongoing upgrade of facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Maintenance of highest quality school physical infrastructure that supports teaching and learning, health and safety and wellbeing of all and a sustainable environment
Develop St. Mary's sustainability strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Wide use of energy efficient technologies » Active awareness of healthy lifestyle options and best practice environment habits » Awareness of and evidence of good environmental practice
Develop and enhance our facilities across the curriculum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Maximise creative use of our green space to foster an appreciation of nature





Our Strategic Roadmap

Governance and Funding

Our Aim

“Continuously improve school governance, leadership, compliance and financial management to successfully meet the needs of a changing environment.”

In 2025, We Will be Able to Say

“We continue to have strong leadership levels of oversight and control in relation to school financial management.”

“Management are fully aware of their statutory obligations and ensure compliance with legislative and policy requirements.”

“We have a Board of Management which is representative of the school community and which works well with all key stakeholders to achieve our agreed aims and objectives.”

“We have successfully achieved the goals of our strategic plan.”

Strategic Plan To Deliver our Aim

- Continue to enhance financial planning, management, control and reporting processes and capabilities
- Optimise funding opportunities to enable ongoing school development and provision of facilities and options for all the school community
- Continue to respond to changing regulatory and educational requirements by ensuring that policies and procedures are reviewed, understood and implemented across all our school community
- Ensure that appropriate and effective management and Board oversight structures are in place
- The Board will support, advocate and monitor the delivery of the strategic plan.

Action Plan for
Governance and Funding

Action	Outcome Sought
New Board of Management appointed	» New Board elected in 2019 and 2022 for a three-year term comprising trustee, parent and teacher nominees
Identify and review the key risks facing the school	» Develop appropriate measures to mitigate/minimise risk
Support and empower the school leadership team to manage change effectively	» The Board enables the principal and his/her team to effectively manage the school's response to changing need
Review and update policies and procedures	» Policies and procedures are updated on a rolling basis to ensure the safety and well-being of students and staff » Policies are communicated to all stakeholders, including on school web site » The Board supports the principal in maintaining a learning organisation that delivers high quality learning and care for all
Build a sustainable financial operating model	» Ensure that finances are managed prudently and that we continue to be compliant with all legal and regulatory issues
Enhance financial reporting and operational budgeting	» Timely financial reporting and review and challenge of operational budgets to ensure we are getting full value for money in each area
Optimise development and fund-raising opportunities	» Optimise sponsorship, grant-aid and other fund-raising opportunities to help our school deliver on agreed priorities

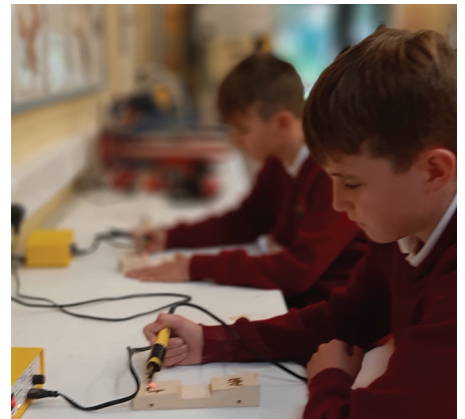


SECTION 8

Our Strategic Roadmap Monitoring Our Plan

St. Mary's Strategic Plan 2019 – 2025 sets out our school's shared vision and the actions intended to realise that vision. Over the period of the Strategic Plan, progress will be monitored in the following ways:

- » The principal will lead a steering committee who will maintain a record on the progress of actions identified in the plan. An annual report will be prepared for the Board of Management. Cross checks will be made to ensure that the targets and actions stated in the plan are not contradicted by new legislation or Department of Education directives.
- » The principal will update staff and parents annually on the plan's progress.
- » The plan will be reviewed in its entirety mid-way through the cycle. In Sept 2022 the Board of Management will lead a full review of the plan's progress and on its impact with reference to each of the eight pillars. The mid-way review will be presented to staff, parents and to the school's Patron by March 2023.
- » A full appraisal of the strategy involving all stakeholders will be undertaken within the final 6 months of the planning period. This will inform the Board on the direction and substance of any subsequent strategic plan.





Our Strategic Roadmap Conclusion

Vision 2025 sets out ambitious, though achievable targets for our school community. It is a blueprint of what our school can become. The Strategic Plan reflects very positively on the excellent spirit within St. Mary's Secondary School and on the essential elements of our school's moral purpose.

Of equal importance to the plan itself is the journey that we have travelled in its development. Consultations with all stakeholders through a variety of meetings and discussions ensure that the vision is comprehensive, relevant and reflective of St. Mary's, past and future.

A large number of people deserve thanks not least the core steering committee: Marian Corcoran (Chairperson), Rob Halford (Principal), Allison Lawton, Brendan Holton and Martin Tyrrell (all

Board members). We thank also the other members of the Board who contributed to the reflection and discussions: Breda Kelly, Fr P.J. McEvoy, Chris Hanley and David Allen.

We are indebted also to the full engagement of staff, the contributions from former staff and the insights and perspectives as expressed by the Parents' Association, representatives of our students and a sample of principals from neighbouring primary schools. Thanks too to Frank O'Meara and Kate Quane who facilitated earlier reflective sessions and Dr Mark Fennell for his valuable review.

We look forward to working with all of our partners in education in ensuring our school continues to be student centred and to improve, develop and grow so that we all can be the best that we can be.



APPENDIX

Our Strategic Roadmap Milestones

1. Culture & Ethos

Embed vision and mission across St. Mary's

- » Wide consultation 2019/2020
- » Draft Programme for consideration by Board Q2 2020
- » Operation of Programme Q3 2020
- » Agreed key messages/visuals displayed in every classroom. Q3 2020

Explain and Live the St. Mary's Ethos: 'Be the best that you can be'

- » Working Group assembled – Q1 2020
- » Key statements incorporated into introduction/design of school journal. Q2 2020
- » Audit of all school policies, forms, practices – to reflect the school ethos as set out in the Strategy Plan - Q4 2020
- » Multifaceted promotion of the – Strategy Plan - visually in the school, on web etc.; materially in policies and practices – Q4 2020
- » Engage with parents through Parent's talks annually, to include members of the Parents' Association and guest speakers – Q4 2020

Develop and embed the Diversity and Inclusion policy and practices

- » Define scope and approach – Q2 2020
- » Recommendations to BOM – Q3 2020
- » Ratify policies- Q4 2020
- » Programme to embed revised practices – Q1 2021

Refresh and Embed the Code of Behaviour

- » Broad consultation with key stakeholders (including Students, parents, teachers, WSE findings etc.) – Q4 2019
- » Code of Behaviour launch – Q1 2020
- » On-going programme to support the implementation and share learnings with regard to the Code of Behaviour
- » Review Code of Behaviour in Q4 2022
- » Information and awareness programme relating to revised AUP Policy and Social Media Policy - Q1 2020.

2. Wellbeing

Promote and integrate wellbeing across the curriculum , school policies and practices

- » Carry out a full audit of all policies and practices to support a consistent and whole school approach to wellbeing Q3 2020

Renew and Implement a Whole School Guidance Action Plan

- » Ratify the revised Guidance Plan Q3 2019
- » Implement appropriate policies and practices reflective of the Plan providing a continuum of support for all Q2 2020

Develop and sustain the wellbeing and self-esteem of self and of others

- » Finalise and ratify an updated policy on Wellbeing Q3 2020
- » Sustain a range of wellbeing initiatives such as Healthy Heads (2019 -2025)
- » Establish a 'Students' Charter' setting out rights and responsibilities for all our students Q1 2021
- » Whole school Guidance Plan ratified - Q4 2019

Promote healthy and active lifestyles in St. Mary's

- » Carry out a school wide review of our Healthy Eating Policy Q1 2020
- » Complete tendering process for new Catering Contract Q3 2020
- » Develop cycle/walk to school programmes Q3 2020 and develop appropriate facilities
- » Leaving Certificate PE curriculum- strong commitment to physical and mental health -on-going
- » Establish option for PE Senior Cycle subject Q3 2020

Support and expand extra-curricular opportunities

- » Expand system for JCPA reporting (on-going)
- » Student Lead audit of extra-curricular participation in the school Q2 2021
- » Expansion of activities based on the above audit and available resources Q3 2021

Sustain a culture of inclusiveness, tolerance and understanding

- » Audit of all school policies to ensure they reflect inclusion and tolerance
- » Celebrate Diversity and inclusion in the school calendar and in other celebrations and events

Promote creativity and critical thinking among students and staff

- » Exercise vigilance and best practice to address issues arising from bullying including cyber bullying
- » Develop educational, awareness and prevention programmes with relation to bullying and exclusion - Q1 2021
- » Biennial revision of Anti-Bully policies as part of the Code of Behaviour Review
- » Working in partnership with parents to protect all members of the school community

Promote and educate all stakeholders regarding the risks of substance misuse; responsible and positive use of social media

- » Annual presentations by advisory groups such as AA, Gamblers Anonymous etc.
- » Visits to detention/ rehabilitation centres or similar to educate students on the long-term effects of substance misuse
- » Information and awareness programme relating to revised AUP Policy and Social Media Policy - Q2 2020.

3. Leadership

Promote an expanded student voice, participation and leadership across St. Mary's

- » Continued support for all student leadership teams in the school – on going
- » A review of the efficacy of each leadership team and a review of the diversity and inclusion within each group - Q1 2020

Strengthen the parent voice and its influence on school policy and practice

- » Wide consultation with parents on the development of a Parents' Charter - Q2 2021
- » Expansion of cooperation and dialogue with Parents' Association in formulation of school policies - Q1 2020
- » Communicate a summary of SSE, including specific reference to how parents can help – annually from Q3 2020

Encourage a breadth of staff leadership opportunities

- » Enhance Tutor/Year Head system Q3 2019
- » Sports events, team building workshops, staff extra-curricular events and other initiatives (on-going)
- » Staff lead teams in the school, both curricular and extra-curricular.
- » Staff consultative teams deepen their influence on school policy - Q2 2020
- » Facilitate training for our team of Year Heads Q3 2019 and tutors Q3 2020
- » Encourage a culture of professional and collaborative leadership

Strengthen and secure Christian leadership in its widest sense

- » The characteristic spirit of the school and the values of the founding John of Gods Sisters are upheld in actions, policies and practices throughout the school (on-going)

Critique leadership and management practices

- » The leadership and management teams model best behaviour
- » Encourage a dialogue of continuous improvement
- » Encourage a culture of self review, peer review and management review of those in leadership and management teams (on-going)
- » Annual review of post holders work
- » Annual review of the work of the leadership team
- » Commence a Board effectiveness review Q1 2021

Support professional learning for all staff

- » Promote and support leadership training (on-going)
- » Engage in PDST and CSL supports for leadership team – such as Tánaiste, Misneach
- » Continued promotion and support of all relevant staff CPD.
- » Facilitate active involvement in coaching and mentoring
- » Seek out and sustain professional networks with other school leadership teams including those of 'sister' diocesan schools

4. Learning & Teaching

Promote excellence in Learning and Teaching in every classroom for every student

- » Teachers plan collaboratively and share their expertise
- » Continued emphasis on the quality of the learning by each student supported by excellent teaching – on going
- » Every teacher is asked to reflect formally on their practice and on how it can best adapt to meet the emerging needs of students – on-going
- » Explore the option of One Hour classes Q1 2020
- » Teachers combine assessment of learning and assessment for learning

Participate fully in national curricular development

- » Complete Roll-out of final phase of new Junior Cycle -Sept 2020
- » Introduction of Junior Cert Technology Subject – Q 3 2021
- » Senior Cycle (Leaving Cert) Physical Education - Q3 2020
- » Consider introduction of additional Leaving Cert Subjects including Economics, Politics and Society and Computer Studies - Ongoing
- » Review of TY, LCA and LCVP programmes – Q2 2021

Continue to encourage and support CPD for staff. Establish culture of collaboration, reflective practice and professional teamwork

- » Recognise and confirm continuous professional development - ongoing
- » Majority of Staff meetings will include input by teachers reflecting recent CPD
- » Establish a template for reporting back to the school on key aspects of CPD attended

Encourage students to be curious and appreciate knowledge, creativity, science, culture and the Arts.

- » Develop strategies to encourage uptake in STEAM subjects – Q 2 2020
- » Engagement with Scifest, and similar– on- going
- » Continue Creative Schools, Design Team and other curricular initiatives- on-going
- » Launch new Technology Subject for Junior Cycle – Q3 2021
- » Annual Career Fair - Q 3 biennially

Promote excellence in provision of education and supports for students with special educational needs

- » The SEN plan is revised and updated on a yearly basis.
- » Teachers receive the best training and supports to ensure that current best practice is followed in every aspect of SEN provision
- » Review of Language options based on uptake of Spanish for LC – Q1 2021
- » Participate in national Senior Cycle Reform debate

Promote and support strong foundations in Literacy and Numeracy

- » Literacy and numeracy strategies included in every subject department plan – Q4 2019
- » Introduce Level 2 Learning Programme (L2LP) – new Junior Cert level for SEN – 2019
- » Specific literacy and numeracy actions in the School Self-Evaluation Process

5. Connecting with the Community

Encourage and promote active citizenship among students in their own community.

- » Expand involvement in active citizenship and social justice programmes – on-going
- » Celebrate all individual and collective contributions to their local communities.
- » Celebrate St. Mary's 40th Anniversary with the whole community 2022

Strengthen and build formal links with our local communities.

- » Refresh and maintain communication between the school and local community groups via website, app and social media reaffirming existing links and inviting new ones Q2 2020
- » Review the Work Experience Programme for TY, LCA and LCVP Q3 2021

The school community takes great pride in ensuring that the school environment creates a sense of care and welcome for all its members, past and present, and those who visit.

- » Design and establish a recognition programme for student participation and achievement, Q3 2020
- » Develop a data-base of alumni and benefactors as part of our 40th anniversary school celebrations in 2022 – Q1 2022

Enhance partnership with parents and promote the work of the Parents' Association

- » Establish a Parents' Charter setting out rights and expectations of parents
- » A Parents' Association noticeboard will be placed prominently stating current members, set meeting time and encouraging participation of all parents – Q1 2020
- » Attract/target new parents to become involved in the school at Open night, 1st year Enrolment, TY Graduation Evening, school concert evenings as well as through social media and school app
- » Invite the Chair from each of our feeder Primary schools' Parents' Association for a meeting with our Parents' Association with the aim of welcoming their involvement in St. Mary's and of assisting the transition of new students into the St. Mary's School Community - Q2 2020

Continue to utilise social media for effective school communication and promotion

- » Annual review of efficacy of social media platforms (website, social media, school app, texting, local newspapers)
- » Full redesign of school's Website Q1 2021

Acknowledge, recognise and celebrate St. Mary's many diverse communities

- » Develop and sustain Gaisce Awards, JP2 and work experience programmes that encourage involvement in the wider communities (on-going)
- » Include in the annual Awards evening or the end of year Assemblies recognition of those students who have made notable contributions to the quality of life within their own communities - Q3 2020

6. Digital School

Develop and implement a digital strategy for learning in St. Mary's

- » Completion of Digital Plan Q1 2020

Secure available Digital Strategy for Schools funding from Department of Education and Science

- » Pursue all avenues for existing and emerging funding (public and private) that supports the targets of the Digital Plan

Ongoing promotion and education on the safe use of technologies

- » Revised Acceptable Use Policy (Q4 2019). Annual review of same to ensure up-to-date readiness and alertness

Research and adapt best practice regarding BYO devices and similar digital innovations

- » Consultation with stakeholders and the wider educational community on use of Mobile Phones Q3 2020
- » Smart phone usage and BYO (bring your own) device policies that reflect best pedagogic practice and appropriate digital security Q1 2021

Informed expansion of digital software and platforms that enhance teaching and learning, tracking, monitoring and assessment practices

- » Full introduction of 'Schoolwise' platform supporting curriculum planning, tracking, monitoring and assessment -for 1st year cohort 2019/2020 and subsequent roll-out

Expansion and upgrading of digital technologies to support productive, efficient school administration and financial management

- » Working group trial digital notebooks in the classroom and extend the classroom digital experience via virtual learning environment Q4 2019
- » Renew contract with VSware or similar Q4 2023
- » Renew, upgrade or replace best available print management solution Q2 2023

Compliance with GDPR and Child Protection procedures

- » GDPR audit of school practices Q3 2019
- » Application of GDPR recommendations Q4 2019
- » Training of all staff on GDPR practices Q3 2019
- » CPD on broad use of VSware recording procedures and related policies
- » Vigilance regarding online safety and related digital technologies (on-going)
- » Annual review of Child Safeguarding Statement (mandatory) and compliance with GDPR
- » Biennial review of other safety related policies

7. Environment & Facilities

Develop new extension

- » Department sanctioning – secured 2018
- » Phase 1 Planning Permission secured– 2019 Q3
- » Tendering Process complete Q 1 2020
- » Construction to commence – Q2 2020
- » Building fully commissioned Q4 2021
- » Phase 2 Dept. Sanctioning – Q2 2019
- » Planning Permission secured – Q4 2020
- » Tendering Process complete Q 1 2021
- » Construction to commence – Q3 2021
- » Building fully commissioned Q4 2022
- » Official opening Q 1 2023

Maintain and upgrade current facilities to enhance student and staff wellbeing and to facilitate teaching and learning

- » Regular planned maintenance and refurbishment and redevelopment of current facilities – on-going
- » Scheduled sequencing of painting and repairs to ensure high standards of accommodation – on-going
- » Regular fire drills
- » Review of cleaning and maintenance management within the school Q3 2021 (or upon completion of extension works)
- » Periodic Health and Safety Audit and subsequent actions Q1 2021, Q1 2023
- » Periodic first aid training for all staff – on-going

Enhance school green spaces through development of playing fields and outdoor areas

- » Secure Sports Capital Programme Grant (natural playing surface) 2019 Q1
- » Develop detailed plan for 'School Field' 2019 Q4
- » Planning Permission secured Q2 2020
- » Completion of Competitive tendering Q2 2020
- » Fundraising campaign - 2019 -2021
- » Phase 1 (playing field and perimeter security) complete by Q4 2020
- » Phase 2 Ancillary sporting facilities (e.g. wellness track) complete by Q4 2022
- » Phase 3 Parking and Changing Facilities Q3 2023

Continue to apply for 'summer works' and other schemes to enable ongoing upgrade of facilities

- » Application for Summer Works 2020 – 2025 (such as windows replacement (2020), green energy options, fire alarms, security alarm, replacement boiler, new roof, mechanical and electrical restoration – sequence dependent on strands available (determined by DES) and current needs

Develop St. Mary's sustainability strategy

- » Install water fountains for student and staff use Q 4 2019
- » Revision of St. Mary's Healthy Eating Policy Q1 2020
- » Green Schools committee promote range of school wide practices that promote awareness of environment protection issues – on-going

Develop and enhance our facilities across the curriculum

- » Negotiate with Building Unit of DES for replacement Art and Music rooms as part of Phase 2 of New extension Q1 2020
- » Upgrade existing facilities that support sciences, arts, humanities, creativity, wellbeing and reflection Q1 2023
- » Enhance staff facilities that promote learning and teaching or support staff wellbeing (on-going)
- » Enhance counselling, office, administration and maintenance support spaces (on-going)

8. Governance and Funding

New Board of Management appointed which is representative of the school community

- » Formation of new Board - Q4 2019
- » Review Board meetings, structures to ensure maximum efficiency and effect Q4 2019
- » Formation of new Board – Q4 2022

Identify and review the key risks facing the school

- » Key Risk Indicators (KRI) template developed and in use Q3 2021

Support and empower the school leadership team to manage change effectively

- » The Board supplies regular and appropriate advice and guidance to the school leadership by way of resources, training and other supports - ongoing

Review and update policies and procedures re best practice financial management

- » On-going updates of policies and practices

Optimise development and fund-raising opportunities

- » New school extension 2020-2022
- » New playing field & facilities 2019-2023 (See Facilities)

Build a sustainable financial operating model

- » Maintain annual operating surplus – on-going
- » Continue to meet FSSU annual reporting deadlines and requirements – on-going

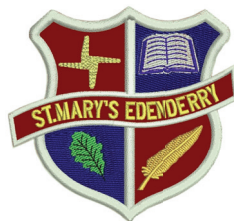
Enhance financial reporting and operational budgeting

- » Meet reporting deadlines as set by FSSU and Patron.
- » Department Budgets defined and agreed – Q4 2020

The actions and milestones may be reset to accommodate unforeseen or new regulatory requirements



2025



**St. Mary's
Secondary School**

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