

# St. Vincent's Secondary School School Plan

2016 – 2019



## STATISTICS

**Intake:**  
We take our students from 32 different primary schools.

**Enrollment:**  
377 boys.

**Status:**  
We are a DEIS school.

## Introduction

The origins of St Vincent's school began as an orphanage founded by the Society for St Vincent de Paul in 1844. It was set up to help the orphan boys of Dublin. The Christian brothers took ownership of the orphanage in 1863 which had moved to the Finglas road. It continued as an orphanage till 1970. The present building was erected in 1965 with an extension added in 1989. In summer 2016 a new extension will begin which comprises of a new art room, woodwork room, and library and staff room. Since 2008 St Vincent's has been under the governance of the Edmund Rice School Trust (E.R.S.T).

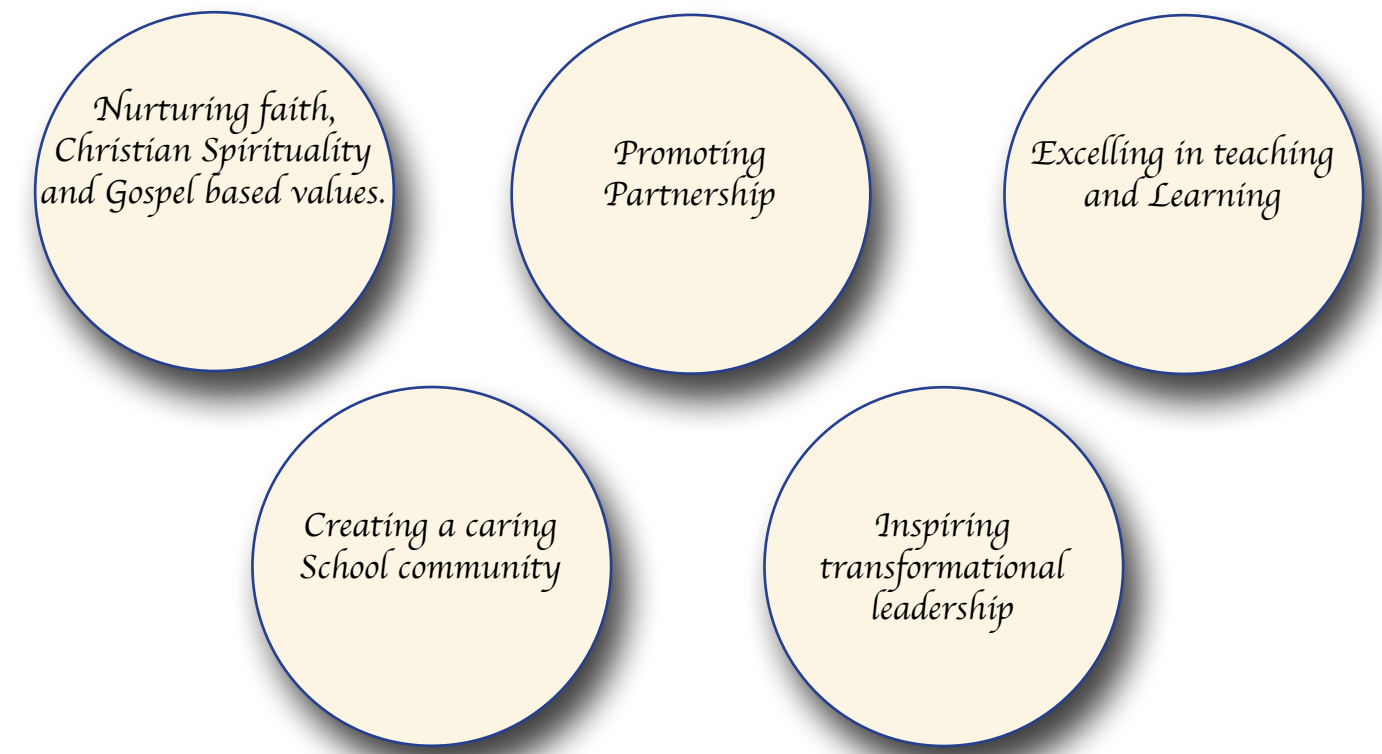
## Mission Statement

St Vincent's School aims to provide a quality Catholic education for all, in the tradition of Edmund Rice, which promotes leadership, fosters community and respects diversity.

## The Edmund Rice Schools Trust

Our school believes, embodies and celebrates the five key elements that underpin the ERST charter. They are:

As the Charter impacts on all operations of the school each section of the school plan will reference one aspect of the charter.





## School Plan

We in St. Vincent's are very proud of our ERST tradition. In the living out of our mission statement we promote and celebrate our Catholic faith. The values of the Gospel are the values of St. Vincent's. We deliver a quality Catholic education that welcomes diversity and fosters community.

### ● Nurturing faith, Christian spirituality and gospel based values.

This key element is something that should be cross curricular, embraced by all subject areas and not be the sole responsibility of the Religion Department. It should be part of every subject plan.

At St. Vincent's Secondary School we adopt a holistic approach to religious education. We do not do either junior certificate or leaving certificate exams in these areas. The allocation at junior cycle as stands is two class periods per week. We follow the department curriculum set out by the DES. The allocation at senior cycle is three class periods per week. We have developed our own senior cycle curriculum that meets the holistic needs of our students in RE, RSE and SPHE.

## Liturgical Celebrations

Each year we have an outlined liturgical calendar for our school. This is set out from the beginning of the school year and is delivered by our RE team. These celebrations include the following:

Opening School Mass	Catholic Schools Week
November Remembrance	Lent
Services	Emmanuel Concert
Advent	Easter
December 8th Mass	Graduation Celebration

## Retreats

Every student is given the opportunity to attend a retreat each year. We vary our retreat venues to give variety and to cater for an age appropriate experience for all our students.

We visit Glendalough, The Edmund Rice heritage centre in Waterford, the Ruah centre Drumcondra and Emmaus in Swords.

## What we do

We do a huge variety of holistic activities throughout the school and throughout the school year. We use the school audio visuals and intercom for a variety of different events to run concurrently with Advent, Catholic Schools Week, Edmund Rice Day and Lent. We use our oratory for prayer services and for meditation and mindfulness. This is done with different class groups throughout the year. A variety of different guest speakers come in to speak to different year groups. These can often be cross curricular. They carry the message of our ethos.

Students are offered the opportunity to take part in the Archdiocese of Dublin liturgical music concert Emmanuel.

A range of extra-curricular activities are offered to combine the school's ethos and offer our students a holistic, well rounded education. These are; Gaisce, Cycle Against Suicide and The Edmund Rice Award.

To increase awareness and understanding of the variety of faiths within our community.

To identify a charity that we as a school can contribute to. Make Religious Education an exam subject as of September 2016 to improve the status of the subject in the school. This section was prepared in consultation with Religion Department Una Whelan, Patricia Gilsenan and Aidan Whyte along with staff and Management.

Actions  
going  
forward:

## ● Promoting Partnership

In St Vincent's we value the contribution from all stake holders. We as a school community are empowered by the shared ownership of the vision for the school.

### Parents

A good work relationship with parents is essential. To this end we try to maintain good communication with home. We use VSWARE which allows parents to monitor their son's attendance, punctuality and behaviour. Formal parent teacher meetings take place for each year group and parents receive notification of this in the school calendar, through letters home and text message. We operate an open door policy which encourages parents to come in throughout the year if they feel a visit is necessary. Parents are invited to the school mass as well as 6th year, TY and JCSP graduations. A new letter is sent home at Christmas and summer. This along with the website keeps parents informed about the goings on in the school. It is hoped to reform the parent's council.

### Students

The student council is a valued contributor to the life of the school. The council is invited to contribute to policy development, vsware and the mission statement. It is hoped to have members address the Board of Management.

### Teacher

All staff are encouraged to see themselves as partners in creating the vision for the school's future. To promote that staff are encouraged to participate in committees within the school such as SSE, Care Team and DEIS. Our Home School Liaison Officer promotes partnership by building links with parents, the community and the school.



## Trustees

The Board of Management is appointed for a three year basis by the Trustees. The Trustees arrange an annual audit of the financial accounts to be carried out. They receive a copy of the minutes from every Board of Management meeting. Directors from the Trustees are invited to meet with the Board of Management.

## Links with Community

In the spirit of partnership we continue to build on the strong sense of community that exists within the school. Our annual Mass takes place in St Columbas Iona Rd. This mass further cements our commitment to our Catholic ethos but also increases our ties to the local parish. Linkage with local GAA and Basketball clubs is made stronger as they use our facilities regularly. The Business in the Community Initiative allows us to work with businesses such as WorkDay and have access to their services for students and financial support to the school. We have very strong ties with DCU particularly through their access programme. We have recently signed up to be part of a new phase of the access programme.

It is hoped to re-establish a Parents Council and continue to strengthen our relationship with Workday.

Students Council to address the Board of Management.

This section was completed by the DEIS committee Frank Kieran, Neil McCann along with staff and Management.

## ● Creating a Caring School Community

A strong feature of the characteristic spirit of St Vincent's is our commitment to establishing and maintaining a caring school community. We believe all key players are made to feel safe and welcome in our school. We all have a responsibility to ensure this nurturing environment is maintained for the benefit of all who walk through our doors.

## The Care Team

The care team consists of Principal, Deputy Principal, Guidance Counsellor, Home School Liaison Officer and Attendance Officer. This team meets weekly to identify students at risk and to discuss strategies and supports that can be put in place. The care team members discuss how best to address issues with the resources we have internally and also when we feel it is necessary to involve outside agencies. We discuss emerging themes or issues that are affecting the student body as a whole and seek to put in place measures to address them. Minutes are written up by the Home School Liaison Officer.

Actions  
going  
forward:

# Anti-Bullying Coordinator

Any issues regarding bullying are investigated by our anti bullying coordinator who holds a Post for this role. The coordinator meets with students and if sanctions are required reports it to a member of the management team. A report is presented to the Board of Management regularly.

# Tutor System

Each class is assigned a tutor who meets with their class on four mornings a week during a specific tutor time. This is to maximise tutor access to their students. The tutor is a very important person in the life of the student and is a point of contact with home.

# Junior Cycle – Programmes

Personal	Educational	Vocational
Induction Programme	Tracking	JCSP Career Guidance Statement
SPHE	Study Skills in house	
Friends for Life	Homework club	
Alert Programme	Review of Numeracy and Literacy results	
Mentoring	Tracking	
Individual sessions	Homework club	
Referrals if necessary	Group consultation around senior cycle options	
Why try Programme	Study skills guest speaker.	
CSPE		

# Senior Cycle – Programmes

Personal	Educational	Vocational
Religion	Study Skills	Work experience Programme
Class Tours	Supervised Study	College awareness week
Individual Sessions	Review of Literacy and Numeracy scores	Student Shadowing
Referrals if necessary	Review of Mock exams	DCU Access Service
		Guest Speakers
		D.I.T's and PLC's
		Trade Union
		Interview Preparatin



## Induction Programme

This programme supports students in their movement from primary to post primary. We are aware that this time can be a very anxious time for both students and parents and every effort is made to ensure as smooth a transition as possible. Our school builds strong links with our feeder schools through visits and our open night. We welcome parents to meet teachers and look around the school in the September before they begin and we hold a parent night in June where parents can ask questions. Robust student profiles are created so that we are prepared to cater for the needs of our incoming student. Upon their arrival students are met by their form tutors and they are given every support while they find their feet over the next few weeks. A peer mentoring system operates where TY students help the first year read timetables, organise books etc.

## Code of Behaviour

Respect for one self, others and the environment are the principles that make up the code of discipline. We promote positive behaviour with the introduction of VSWARE points. All staff members promote the code of behaviour by consistently enforcing it.

## Admissions policy

In our ethos we state that we respect diversity. In living out our ethos we welcome all students regardless of ability, ethnic background, and religion or social economic status as long as they fulfil the criteria set out in our admissions Policy.

## Social Awareness

We believe in the holistic development of the student who is mindful of his position as a student in the school, his role in the community and his duty as a citizen. Our commitment to creating a caring community goes beyond our school gates. Through SPHE, CSPE and Religious Education we seek to deliver a broad education. Programmes such as Greens School, Gaisce and Cycle against Suicide, along with speakers from Friends of the Elderly and St Vincent's De Paul help to deepen our awareness.

## Child Protection

We are fully committed to Child Protection Procedures. The Board of Management reviews the Child Protection Policy annually. The Principal presents a report on Child Protection to the BOM at each meeting and the staff engage in Child Protection training regularly.

An acting in and acting board shall be created in the staff room to inform teachers who we are working with.

Better communication systems shall be put in place to increase awareness of the work of the Care Team and increase staff awareness of NBSS initiatives

Care Team members to address staff at meetings when necessary.

This section was completed with input from the Care Team, staff and Management.

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## ● Inspiring Transformational Leadership

It is the vision of an Edmund Rice school to create opportunities for leadership. The charter encourages all members of the school to make the most of themselves and their unique skills and abilities. This ethos is reflected in the day to day life of the school, in its programmes, its teams and its committees.

## Principal and Deputy Principal

As an ERST school we follow the Charter established by the Trustees. The Trustees delegate governance to the Board of Management who in turn entrust the Principal and Deputy Principal with the day to day management and leadership of the school.

The Management ensure that the five elements of the charter are brought to life. Their role is to motivate and cultivate those in the school community to embrace a shared vision for the school.

## Teachers

All teachers are encouraged to take on management rolls within the school regarding the managing of programmes and other organisational areas. C.P.D is encouraged for all staff and financial support is provided by the Board of Management.

## Students

In St Vincent's there exists a very active Student Council whose members are elected every year by their peers. The council serves as the voice of the students. Members are encouraged to take on leadership and organisational rolls within the school. The Council is consulted on many aspects of school life such as VSWARE and the school mission statement. Training is provided for all members.

## Anti-Bullying

Students are encouraged to assert themselves in the prevention of bullying. Students are educated on how to identify bullying behaviour through our SPHE programme and how to report such instances should they occur.



# Extra-curricular

We offer a wide range of extracurricular activities for the school community lead by our teachers. This is hoped to develop leadership on and off the pitch and to build character.

## Some of our activities

- Hurling
  - Football
  - Green Flag
  - Chess
  - Soccer
  - Basketball
- Young Scientist
  - Board Games
  - Athletics
  - Debating
  - Rugby

It is hoped to increase representation on the Student Council.  
To promote greater involvement in the Gaisce Awards and continue to strive to achieve bronze silver and gold awards.  
To develop a paired reading group in Transition Year to support literacy in 1st Year.

This section was completed by the staff and Manage-ment

Actions  
going  
forward:

# ● Excelling in Teaching and Learning

At the core of any school is the commitment to creating a quality learning environment that supports the academic development of our students. Our aim is to encourage our students to achieve as well as possible and to promote progression on to further education.

## State examinations

Are aim is to encourage the students to work hard and to build on their natural ability. We predict their Junior Certificate based on their entrance tests (CAT4). We use this as a barometer to monitor the educational progression of students. We encourage students to push themselves over to me meet or beat their target.

## Curriculum

With the planned extension taking place we can now expand our subject choice to include construction studies.

Junior Cert.	Leaving Cert
English	English
Irish	Irish
Maths	Maths
Religious Education	Religious Education
Physical Education	Physical Education
French	French
Business	Business
Science	Biology
History	Physics
Geography	Chemistry
C.S.P.E	History
S.P.H.E	Geography
Art	Art
Construction Studies	
I.T	

## School Self Evaluation

The evaluation process involves three strands Literacy, Numeracy and one chosen by the school. In St Vincent's our third strand is E-Learning. Our commitment to self-evaluation has seen the development of a literacy and numeracy week embraced by the whole school. All students are tested in both areas every year and the test are reviewed annually. It is planned that we move to on line testing as this is quicker to implement. Our commitment to e-learning has seen is move to the introduction of VSWARE and also the development of a very active twitter account @StVincentSD11.

## Annual Review

The Principal meets with each teacher throughout the year to discuss challenges and opportunities. Subject department are invited to make annual submissions which will be considered when creating the timetable.

## Class make up

In 2014 we committed to introducing mixed ability class groups to encourage integration. We continue to develop mixed ability teaching strategies and differentiation to maximise the learning outcomes for our students. Streaming will occur in some subjects at students approach their Junior Certificate and it is in place for the Leaving Certificate classes

## Continuous Professional Development.

The school is committed to offering CPD to all staff in all aspects of teaching and learning. The Board of Management continues to offer financial support for those who wish to engage in CPD.

## ICT in Education

Our commitment to using ICT is robust. All classrooms have whiteboards. We have two fully functioning computer rooms. We continue to upskill staff through CPD. We use our school website to support the learning in the classroom. Notes, PowerPoints and resources are accessible to students through this medium. Subject departments are encouraged to share resources through Teacher Storage. Our Twitter account is extremely active and a great way to celebrate success and achievement. Are hope is to develop new ways to develop ICT in the school

## The school Library

Building is due to commence shortly for our extension. This includes a new library. This is an exciting addition to the school premises and one we hope to utilise to its fullest extent.

## School Time Table

In early spring a curriculum audit is carried out. This along with subject submissions and staff annual review will feed into the creation of the school timetable. This timetable will be delivered to staff ahead of the commencement of the next school year.



## Actions going forward:

Continue with implementation of E-Leaning phase of SSE

To continue CPD on IT.

To develop an excellent working Library

To move from paper to online testing for Numeracy and Literacy

To create a curriculum development committee.

To carry out a review of Transition Year and its impact.

This section was completed by the staff and Management.