

History and Ethos

The first St. Louis Sisters came to Ireland in 1859, when Sr. Genevieve Beale with two sisters arrived in Monaghan at a time when there was a total lack of educational facilities for girls. In 1888 three St. Louis Sisters came to Carrickmacross at the request of Dean Birmingham, and opened a small primary school. Gradually they introduced a secondary curriculum to older pupils and in 1899 a boarding school was built. In the 1970's the boarding aspect was phased out.

Today, the school is a Voluntary Secondary School for girls, run by a Board of Management under the trusteeship of the Le Chéile Schools Trust.

Our school is a Christian community where all members grow to value their own worth as persons, their loving relationship with God, their links with their family and the interdependence of all people. As such the school strives to be a welcoming place to all irrespective of social, cultural or religious background. Following the legacy of the founding father, Abbé Bautain we aim to be inclusive, to provide for the education of the whole person in the fullest sense, to be especially mindful of the disadvantaged and those with special needs.

Book Schemes

A book grant scheme and a loan scheme are available for people who need financial help.

The School Canteen

The school canteen is run by a fully qualified chef helped by a dedicated team of workers. It opens at 8.15 a.m. providing breakfast to pupils who may not have had time in the morning because of the need to catch an early bus. Pupils may also pre-order lunch. At break-time, 11.40 – 11.55, pupils may purchase scones, tea, drinks, etc. At lunch-time, 13.15 – 13.55, pupils can get a substantial lunch or a range of snack food.

Information for Enrolled Students

There will be assessment tests toward the end of February. All enrolled students will be notified of the exact date closer to the time. They will begin at 9.15 and conclude at 12.30. There is no need for students to do any particular preparation for these tests. One of their main purposes is to identify students who may require additional support in core subjects.

Once a student is enrolled, the school will communicate with home regarding all relevant information such as booklists, book schemes, uniform, calendar and so forth. Parents should feel free to contact the school office if they have any queries.

Pastoral Care and Student Supports

Each class has a Class Teacher who has a special responsibility for all the girls in that class. Each year has a Year Head who has overall responsibility for all the pupils in a year group. In addition there is a school counsellor. Pupils are free to see the counsellor discreetly and by appointment. In keeping with our Mission Statement, we wish to maintain a happy, friendly atmosphere in the school as we believe strongly that pupils will succeed best in that type of environment.

School Chaplain

We have a School Chaplain who spends two days per week in the school. She works with class groups, small groups and individuals. She provides support for pupils and families in times of difficulty and spiritual guidance for those who seek it.

Students' Council

There is a Students' Council that promotes the interests of the school and the involvement of pupils in the affairs of the school, in co-operation with the Board of Management, parents and teachers. Elected members of the Council are drawn from all year groups.

Parents' Association

There is an active Parents' Association in the school. Membership is open to all parents of pupils currently attending the school. In the First Term parents meet to elect the Parents' Council which promotes the interests of the pupils in the school in co-operation with the Board of Management, Principal, teachers and pupils.

The Quality of Teaching and Learning

In St. Louis we pride ourselves on having a warm, friendly and caring ethos. We have very few discipline problems so that teachers can focus all their energies on the quality of teaching and learning in the classroom. Our mixed-ability system combined with a high degree of setting allows students to achieve their full potential in all subjects and therefore gain the best possible results in their Junior and Leaving Certificates. We expect very high standards from our students and we have a long and proven track record in achieving

those standards of excellence. Our high achieving students regularly obtain the very high points required for the top university courses such as pharmacy, dentistry and medicine. On the other hand, students with learning difficulties receive a high degree of support and inevitably gain a successful Leaving Certificate.

Curriculum: Organisation and Structure

When a student enters the school she is assigned to a mixed ability class group. Depending on enrolment, the size of the class could vary from 20 pupils up to 27. While the student's home class will remain a mixed ability class, gradually the students are grouped on an ability basis for various subjects. This begins with Maths and then Irish and by the time a student reaches Fourth Year English, Irish and Maths are 'set' so that students can advance at an appropriate pace. This system recognises that a student's strengths may vary from subject to subject. For example, a student who is very good at English would be in a top, fast track honours class with students of similar ability while if she found Irish difficult, she would be in an Irish class that proceeded at a slower pace. This system of setting allows for normally four but sometimes five different classes in a subject all occurring at the same time. It is widely recognised that this method affords students the opportunity to maximise results in Certificate Examinations.

Junior Cycle in St. Louis Secondary School

The Junior Cycle in St. Louis fully subscribes to and reflects the principles of junior cycle education through the following:

- our programme meets the requirements of the twenty-four statements of learning;
- and emphasises the development of the eight key skills;
- we facilitate the process by which evidence of learning is generated, gathered, assessed and reported throughout the cycle to students and shared regularly with their parents/guardians;
- our assessments include classroom-based assessments, assessment tasks and state-certified examinations for subjects;
- assessment supports and documents student learning in a balanced range of knowledge, skills and competences;
- we support continuity with primary education and progression to senior cycle education;
- we provide students at the end of the three years with a Junior Cycle Profile of Achievement (JCPA) which will report their achievement in subjects in the examinations and assessment tasks marked by the SEC

in each subject and report on their progress and achievement in the classroom-based assessments of subjects, in short courses, or PLUs where relevant. We report on students' achievement in other areas of learning, including Wellbeing

During junior cycle, a student will learn through:

- ❖ A number of subjects or a combination of subjects.
- ❖ An area of learning called Wellbeing.
- ❖ Other learning experiences.
- ❖ Our programme will be evaluated by St. Louis secondary School through its ongoing process of self-evaluation and improvement.

In St. Louis you will find that we place the needs of students at the core of teaching and learning.

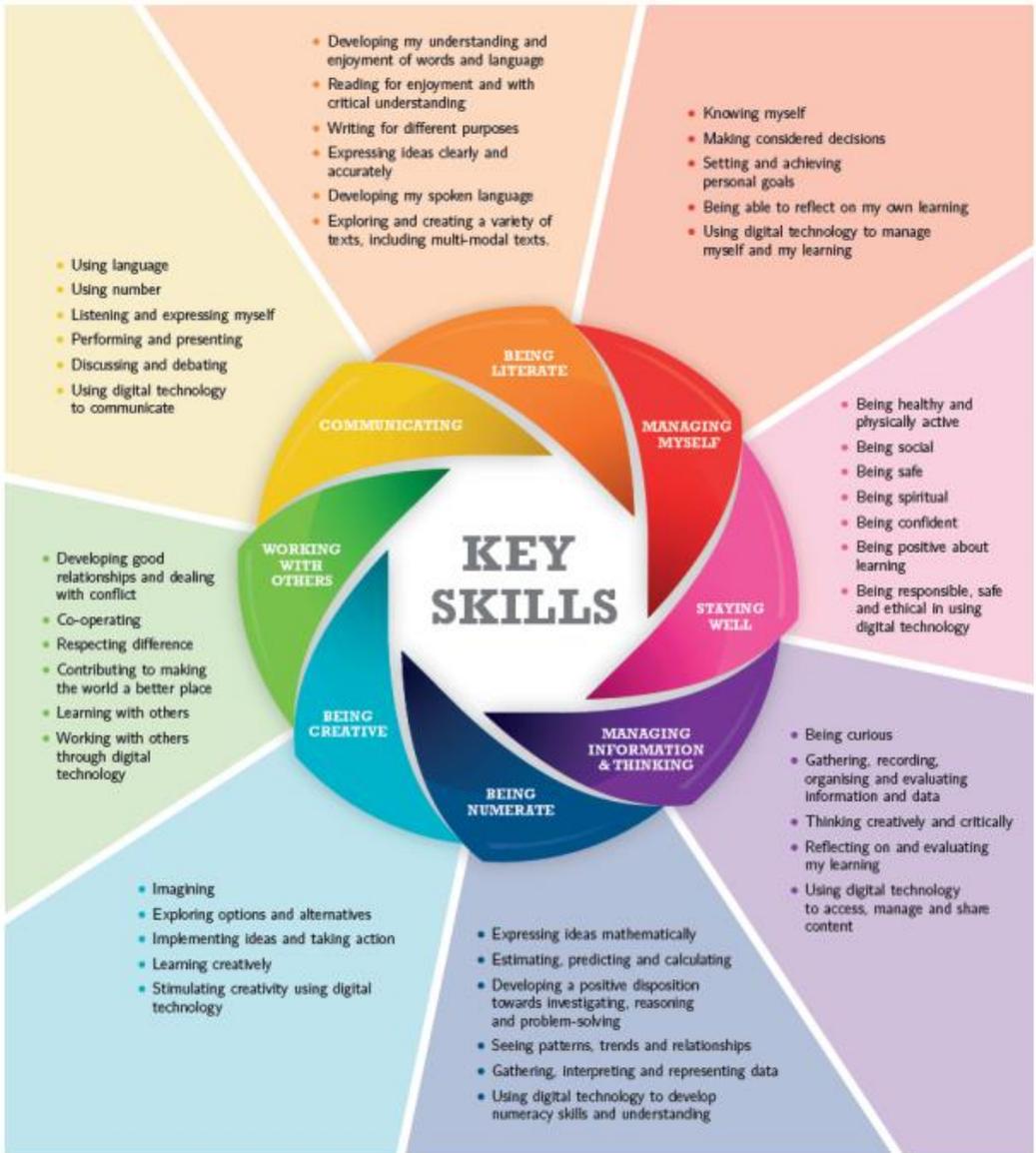
Subjects

Subjects continue to play an important role as part of the new junior cycle programme. Students will study a maximum of ten subjects for assessment by the State Examinations Commission (SEC).

Students who commence post primary school in 2018-2019 will follow the Junior Cycle examination in the following subjects: English, Irish, Math, History, Geography, French, Science, Home Economics, Business Studies, Music and Visual Art. Religion will be the only subject examined under the Junior Certificate Programme and will be introduced as a Junior Cycle subject in 2019-2020.

Key Skills

The Junior Cycle focuses on 8 key skills. Key skills help learners develop the knowledge, skills and attitudes to face the many challenges in today's world. They also support students in learning how to learn and to take responsibility for their own learning.



Wellbeing

The Junior Cycle also provides for a new area of learning called Wellbeing. Wellbeing will cross the three years of junior cycle and build on substantial work already taking place in our school in support of students' wellbeing. It includes learning opportunities to enhance the physical, mental, emotional and social wellbeing of students. It will enable students to build life skills and develop a strong sense of connectedness to their school and to their community.

For this reason, the school places a strong emphasis on the role that Civic, Social and Political Education (CSPE), physical education (PE), Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE), Relationship and Sexuality Education (RSE) and Guidance can play in supporting learning about wellbeing and learning for wellbeing.

Other Learning Experiences

Students will have the opportunity to engage with a range of other learning experiences in their junior cycle programme. These will play a critical role in ensuring that students are provided with a broad and balanced educational experience. Learning experiences could include activities relating to guidance, pastoral care and student support; co-curricular activities that complement the taught curriculum for example, students engaging in a science fair; students participating in a musical performance; students participating in a debating competition; students participating in a dance performance etc.

Transition Year

The Transition Year Programme comes between Junior Certificate and Leaving Certificate. It has as its central aim the broadening of students' horizons so as to promote maturity. As well as making them self-directed learners, it develops communication skills, self-confidence and a sense of responsibility. It develops key skills for the 21st century including the three T's – thinking, teamwork and technology. Half of the time available is devoted to the academic subjects that the student will take for her Leaving Certificate. The other half comprises a modular programme including the following: Drama, Chinese Culture, Dance, P.E., Cultural Studies, Cake Artistry, Mini-

Company, I.T. (Microsoft Prodigy Learning), Development Education, Junk Kouture, Young Social Innovator, Self-Defence, Digital Media, Job Seeking Skills, Cookery, Ceramics and Outdoor Pursuits. A major musical production is a key feature of the year. This year's musical production is 'Beauty and the Beast'.

In addition to the modular and academic components of Transition Year, there are many other events that run throughout the course of the year. These include the Peer Youth Education Programmes on substance abuse and oral health, participation in the Stay Connected programme run by Monaghan Integrated Development, in The President's Award, in our school bank and in the European Youth Parliament Annual Conference. Students are also given the opportunity to undertake work experience for two individual weeks and to undertake a variety of projects throughout the course of the year.

Debates

St. Louis Secondary School has recently introduced a debating internal league to compliment its other extracurricular activities. The Internal Debating League has been a major success so far and the format, which pits Transition Years against 5th Years, has been well received by staff and students alike. In addition, the School is a yearly participant in the Concern Debates Competition, the premier second level debating competition in the country. Debating is an excellent way for young people to develop self confidence and the ability to think objectively about difficult and complex issues. The ability to stand up in front of a crowd and give a speech is a skill which the girls of St. Louis will no doubt have for the rest of their lives.

School Sporting Initiatives

In addition to timetabled PE classes, students have the opportunity of engaging in any or all of the following extracurricular sporting activities: U14, U16 and U20 Ladies Gaelic Football, Soccer, Basketball, Camogie, and Athletics.

Transition year students also complete the TY Coaching Award facilitated by Monaghan GAA. They help co-ordinate 1st year training sessions in conjunction with their teacher and run an internal lunchtime league. They will also be working in collaboration with Monaghan County Board and assist coaching in local primary schools.

We also run the Girls in Action programme in collaboration with Monaghan Sports Partnership. Girls in Action aims to develop an activity programme to

increase physical activity among teenage girls in post primary schools. The programme will be delivered by instructors contracted through the Sports Partnership to provide activity sessions that are suitable to this target group i.e. dance classes, aerobics, yoga, martial arts, Pilates etc. thereby encouraging those not currently participating in organised sports to increase their levels of activity

Website

It is important for parents/guardians, students and the wider school community to keep in touch with our newly refurbished school website. The website provides information on all areas of school life such as our history and ethos, school policies, pastoral care and student support, guidance procedures, enrolment of students, extracurricular activities, the school calendar, recent news, photo images and a student page where students work is uploaded.

Senior Cycle

At Senior Cycle, for examination purposes, students take Irish, English and Mathematics. In addition they usually study four optional subjects from the following list: Accounting, Art, Biology, Business, Chemistry, Geography, History, Home Economics, Music and Physics.

Students may opt to take the **Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme** to complement the Leaving Certificate. This provides a vocational component that is delivered through two Link Modules, Preparation for the World of Work and Enterprise Education. All Senior Cycle students receive timetabled Career Guidance. Fifth Year students may apply to participate in peer ministry with First Year R.E. classes.

Some students take the **Leaving Certificate Applied Programme**. This is a distinct, self-contained two-year programme aimed at preparing students for adult and working life. It puts an emphasis on forms of achievement which the established Leaving Certificate has not acknowledged in the past. It was introduced to recognise the talents of all students by providing an innovative approach to the way students learn and how their achievements are assessed.