

*Living Faith,
Inspiring Learning,
Shaping Futures.*



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PROSPECTUS 2020



St Mary's School believes in...

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Inspiring Learning,
Shaping Futures.**

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Welcome to St Mary's

In St Mary's we understand that choosing the right school for your child is an important decision. We are a school at the heart of our community since 1959 and believe in working in partnership with you to give your child the best possible education.

Children learn best when parents, carers and staff work together. All staff in St Mary's are committed to ensuring every child is provided with high quality, stimulating and challenging learning experiences which will help them to achieve high standards, develop skills for life and leave our school as young adults who value both themselves and others.

We view parents as partners in the educational process and appreciate your support in all aspects of school life. As you read through our prospectus you will get a flavour of the excellent academic and vocational curriculum we offer, allowing students to achieve excellent GCSE and A Level results.

In addition, St Mary's provides a wide range of extra-curricular opportunities for every child including Sports, Drama, Music, Debating and Public Speaking. During their time at St Mary's, students also have the opportunity to participate in educational trips – recent destinations have included: Poland, Rome, our annual skiing in Italy, theatrical events in London and a trip to the Harry Potter studios.

I look forward to meeting you at our Open Day on Saturday 18th January 2020.

Mrs Rita Moore





By completing the John Paul II Award, I can see the many opportunities for young people to get involved with their church and community. Often, young people may feel disconnected from their church or community; however this does not have to be the case. It can be difficult at first to know how to help or who to ask but if you just put yourself out there, I have learned that the community is very welcoming and appreciates the younger generation getting involved. I have also learned that the simplest of tasks can have an impact on the community. Taking part during mass can also improve your confidence and make you a more well-rounded and spiritual person. It also makes you feel connected to the parish and useful. I think this is important as many young people normally do not feel that they are necessarily needed in the Church. Young people can do a lot for their Church and community and it is important for us to do so as we are the next generation entrusted to keep the Catholic faith and Church alive.



Emma Mackle

In modern society, sometimes being involved with your local parish may not always be viewed as being the most 'popular' thing to do; however this experience has helped me to disregard such societal opinions and expectations. The feeling of fulfilment and happiness I felt having completed my hours for the Pope John Paul II Award was far greater than following what society thinks is popular. It also helped me understand how important my stance is in the Church and that I am important to the Church; that I am not just another member, but an important part of God's family and his message.

Cathan O'Connor



*"Catholic education is the responsibility of the entire Church community and is delivered initially through the influence of three key partners ,namely the **home**, the **school** and the **parish** community"*

'Life to the Full: A vision for Catholic Education'
CCMS

To achieve this aim , St. Mary's works closely with our parents and our parish communities to provide an excellent education for the young people entrusted to us.



St. Mary's, like all Catholic school communities, needs to be rooted in Jesus Christ. The school acknowledges the role of parents as the first teachers in the ways of faith and supports them by giving their children a safe place to pray and play and learn.

To develop the spiritual life of each person in the school, community prayer, liturgy and charity all feature in the daily life of the school.

Living Faith Our School Ethos reflects everything we do

In St Mary's we promote an environment of care and concern for others that is rooted in Catholic social teaching. We seek to form students who will unselfishly use their gifts for the common good and become responsible and caring members of society.

Students in St. Mary's spend time as a school community in reflection, prayer, ritual and celebrating the Eucharist and other sacraments at key times in our school year.



School Prayer

Lord, we thank you for the chance to grow together today. We ask that you bless us in our work and in our play. May we grow together in wisdom, knowledge and love of you. May we always treat each other with respect, as we would like to be treated ourselves, and may we give freely of our time and effort, for the good of all.

Lord, we are a family in St. Mary's and we ask you to bless all those in our family at home and at school. This day is special and will never come again. May we make the most of today as we grow in your image. Amen

Diocesan Ambassadors

In September 2018, we were approached by Mr Mullan and asked to act as Diocesan Ambassadors for the School, being commissioned into these roles on the 24th of January 2019 in a ceremony as part of the Diocesan Mass celebrating Catholic Schools' Week. Our initial meeting with Bishop McKeown took place the following month at a meeting where we met with, and got to know, the 40 ambassadors from other schools in the diocese.

In this meeting we also started to discuss matters in the church and our place within it; namely how to make it a more accessible place for young people. Our deliberations had a clear focus on recognising the issues and devising solutions to them and it quickly became apparent that we wanted to play a more active part in connecting the church to the issues that impact on the lives of young people. One initiative that emerged from our discussions led to us taking part in a 'Sleep Out' appeal in the cathedral grounds in March 2019 to raise money for four local homeless charities; our school alone raised £500 towards the total amount.

As part of the programme we have also discussed our role models, creating a video talking about how they inspire us. In our first meeting of the 2019/2020 academic year, we have focused on the environmental crisis - an issue that all young people feel strongly about - as well as other more local social and religious issues. We have developed action plans to improve the involvement of young people in the life of the church in both our schools and local parishes. Serving as Diocesan Ambassadors has allowed both of us to forge some great friendships and over our time has given us some great experiences.

Nuala Cooke and Charlie Doherty 14A





On behalf of the students of St Mary's, Limavady we would like to take this opportunity to welcome you to our school.

Jack Douglas
Nuala Cooke

Head Boy

Head Girl

In St Mary's our focus is on 'Positive Behaviour for Learning' which is based on supporting and rewarding good behaviour and in raising the self-esteem of students, so that each student can achieve their full potential. Article 28 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child states that: "Discipline in schools must reflect children's human dignity." Article 29 goes on

to stress that, "Education must develop every child's personality, talents and abilities to the full..."

Our Behaviour for Learning framework exists to achieve and maintain the highest standards of learning and behaviour within St Mary's. The 'Positive Behaviour for Learning' policy supports the school aim that all students have access to high quality Teaching and Learning,

in a calm, purposeful and caring environment. We foster mutual respect and support the development of self-management skills necessary for adult life. We are proud of the atmosphere in our school where mutual respect exists between student and teacher, between the students themselves and towards other individuals who are part of the school community.

To benefit from school, students should:

- Come to school each day on time
- Bring all they need to school, including completed homework
- Know, understand and obey the school rules
- Work hard in class
- Respect the right of other students to learn and the teacher's duty to teach
- Behave safely at breaktime and lunchtime
- Treat other students with respect and do not bully
- Respect school property





Pastoral Care Structure

During your time in St Mary's, you will have the support of numerous people who have a special role in helping you deal with any difficult problems which may arise.

Form Teacher

You will have the same Form Teacher during your time in St Mary's. The Form Teacher will mark your register every day and you also have a Form lesson where you can discuss any problems you might have.

Head of Year

Each Year group has a Head of Year with special responsibility for all students in the Year. They will have a supportive role, providing you with important information about life in school.

The Vice Principal

The Vice Principal has overall responsibility for ensuring that all teachers that come into contact with you have a special understanding of you and your needs during your time in St Mary's.

Counselling Service

A School Counsellor is available for all students who need a 'listening ear'. This is a confidential service provided by Family Works Independent Counselling Service.

The school's policies relating to Pastoral Care, including:

- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Administration of Medicines
- Drug Awareness
- Health and Safety
- Relationships and Sexuality Education
- Intimate Care
- Use of Mobile Phones/Cameras
- E-Safety

are all available via the school.





Years 8 -10

At Key Stage 3 all children follow the Northern Ireland curriculum studying a wide range of subjects. Key Stage 3 students will also experience the new Northern Ireland curriculum encompassing Cross-Curricular Skills and Personal Capabilities with ICT incorporated into all subjects.

Students attend a range of Careers activities throughout the year and other events relating to their Personal Development and Social and Emotional well-being.



Inspiring Learning Foundations for success are established in Key Stage 3



Key Stage 3 Subjects

| | |
|--------------|----------------------------|
| RE | Irish |
| English | History |
| Maths | Home Economics |
| Science | Music |
| Art & Design | Technology & Design |
| Drama | Physical Education |
| French | Learning for Life and Work |
| Geography | |





At St Mary's we offer a broad curriculum at Key Stage 4 to ensure that all of our students have access to courses that suit their strengths and

abilities. The curriculum is comprised of both academic and more vocationally-based courses across a wide range of subject areas.

| GCSE Subjects | | |
|----------------------------------|----------------------------|---|
| English | History | Statistics |
| Maths | Home Economics | Drama |
| Science (S/Award) | Science (D/Award) | ICT |
| Religious Education | Irish | Moving Image |
| Art & Design | Bench Joinery | Computer-Aided Design |
| Business | Leisure & Tourism | Digital Imaging |
| Business & Communication Systems | Music | Office Applications |
| Child Development | Physical Education | Contemporary Cuisine |
| French | Technology & Design | Personal Development & Employability Skills |
| Geography | Preparation for Adult Life | |
| | English Literature | |



Shaping Futures Our Key Stage 4 curriculum caters for all



All students in Key Stage 4 take PE and Careers and take part in a range of Enrichment activities.



I find St Mary's a big change from primary school because there are a lot more children and there is more stuff to do. I also find our school very supportive and helpful. I feel very safe in this school and I also think that I have settled well.

*Lucy Dallas
Roe Valley Integrated PS*



I found it really exciting coming to St Mary's as I was the only person coming from my primary school. I really love all my classes. I have got lots of work done already and the teachers make it easy to learn. I feel really good about my choice of school. I am loving it a lot and I hope that you P7s make a good choice too!

*Darragh Cassidy
St John's, Dernaflaw*



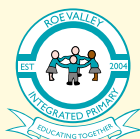
If you decide to come to St Mary's be ready for things like using the Bunsen Burner in Science and revision for your exams. Yes, it might be daunting coming to St Mary's but you will be fine. I was pretty nervous on my first day about making new friends, but trust me you will love it. So take it from someone who stresses a lot – you will love the new subjects in store.

*Shan McLaughlin
Termoncanice PS*



St Mary's, a big change from primary school. The first day seemed scary, but to be honest, I don't know why I bothered to worry. If I was to give advice to any P7, it would be "Don't worry yourself!"

*Orla O'Hara
Termoncanice PS*



St Mary's Pupils and Parents



When I first came to this ginormous school called St Mary's, I thought to myself, "How am I going to get around this place?" when I saw we had nine periods every day. But then I noticed that we had Technology and started to love the school. I am happy that I am in the class that I'm in. I love all of my teachers and classes. I feel way more comfortable in the school now.

*Eoin Cooke
Termoncanice PS*



Moving to a new school was a big change for me. My primary school was quite small, so it was hard to get used to such a big school, but all the teachers and staff have made me feel comfortable in my new school. My favourite subjects are Art, Music and English. I now feel part of the school community and I hope that all the new pupils will feel the same as me whenever they come here.

*Aine O'Neill
Faughanvale PS*



At first I felt so small in the sea of green uniforms, but before long I didn't feel so tiny. This school is hands-down amazing! There are so many new things to do it is crazy. All the teachers are marvellous and understanding.

*Shannon Canning
Ballykelly PS*



Hello there P7s! last year, I was sitting right where you are now! You must be feeling scared, eh? Well, no need! St Mary's is an amazing school. The mentors are really helpful. My favourite subjects are English, Science and History. I think you will all fit in perfectly!

*Simon Nicholl
Faughanvale PS*

Links to our Primary Schools partners



Linking Learning Programme

The Linking Learning programme is an innovative approach to ensure a smoother transition to St. Mary's for Primary 7 students. Not only does it form part of our overall Induction Process but it offers a curricular-based learning experience between St. Mary's and our partner primary schools, created to address the issue of how St. Mary's can best ensure the continuity of learning as students move from Key Stage 2 to Key Stage 3. The programme supports primary schools and provides opportunities to develop students' capabilities in ICT, Art, Literacy and Technology and Design.

Curriculum Challenge

Each year Primary 6 students visit for a 'taster day' of life in St. Mary's. They follow a timetable as any of our pupils would and take part in lessons taught by St. Mary's teachers. The day concludes with Sports activities led by the PE Department where Primary 6 skills are put to the test!

Induction Day

Our induction day, held in June, each year allows those pupils transferring to St. Mary's the chance to experience the school as it runs on an 'average day'. Students follow timetabled classes, use the canteen, meet their teachers and prepare themselves for September.





St Mary's is an 11-19 school that has substantially improved provision in recent years for Post-16 students. We presently offer a wide choice at A Level and pupils can access other subjects through the Roe Valley Learning Community. In addition to the 2 year A Level courses available, we also offer a range of courses for 1 year which allows students to build on their achievement at GCSE prior to further study.



| A Level Subjects | | |
|-------------------------------|----------------------|---------------------|
| Applied Science | French | Moving Image Arts |
| Art & Design | Geography | Physics |
| Biology | Health & Social Care | Performing Arts |
| Business Administration | History | Politics |
| Chemistry | ICT | Physical Education |
| Construction | Irish | Religious Education |
| Child Development | Travel & Tourism | Sports Studies |
| Engineering | Mathematics | Technology & Design |
| English Literature | | |
| National Certificate Subjects | | |
| Business | Health & Social Care | |

Students in year 13 also participate in an Enrichment programme that covers a wide range of areas: religious, social, career and community-based activities. Many students also take part in the John Paul II Award scheme, the Limavady Youth Council, Interact and other community-based and voluntary initiatives.



St Mary's - giving pupils a choice from 11-19



I joined St Mary's in 2003, moving from a primary school with 27 pupils to a Form Class of 30! Whilst initially a slightly intimidating experience, I soon felt that St Mary's was going to be the perfect environment to grow and develop. Over the following 7 years this proved to be the case as St Mary's provided me not only a fantastic education, but also instilled a strong work ethic and the confidence to embrace the challenges to come.

I availed of all the opportunities that St Mary's has to offer - from being part of the Gaelic and Football teams to even getting involved in the school play! Such varied opportunities allowed me to challenge myself as well as meeting new friends and certainly helped me enjoy my time in St Mary's.

For A-Level I studied Maths, Business Studies and IT, initially with the aim of studying accountancy. However, following a Year 13 Scottish Universities presentation, my focus shifted to Actuarial Science.

In 2010, having achieved AAB grades in my A Levels, I embarked on my undergraduate studies at Heriot Watt University, Edinburgh; graduating in 2014. Since then

I have been employed consulting in some of the UK's largest life insurance companies as I complete my professional qualifications in Actuarial Science.

The teachers in St Mary's provided me with a fantastic education that I still reap the benefits of today. St Mary's provided me with the building blocks for my career and I will be forever grateful for the time I spent there. The patience and empathy shown by my teachers throughout my years provided the perfect environment in which to thrive and not only helped me achieve the grades required, but also gave me the confidence to pursue what is a demanding and challenging career path. St Mary's school provides every opportunity for students to succeed – no matter what area they wish to pursue. The support I had was second to none and I cannot recommend St Mary's and its staff highly enough.

Anthony Harbinson





Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance (CEIAG) in St Mary's aims to facilitate the following:

- Development of a St Mary's careers information hub in conjunction with the expertise of outside agencies
- Development of students' self-awareness, career exploration and career management skills
- Development of opportunities for work-related learning and employability skills
- Students' ability to avail of Careers Advisors provided by Dfe (Careers Service NI) for guidance and advice
- Development of up-to-date careers resources for students' use, with particular focus on STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art and Maths) and LMI (Labour Market Information)

As a result of these measures we aim to enable our students to develop their skills and qualities to make informed decisions about their education, training and employment options.

To facilitate this we timetable a Careers Week, where the focus across the school is on how particular subjects relate to different careers pathways and informing students about the rapidly-changing employment market.

Year 8 students participate in the 'Your School Your Business' Programme run by Young Enterprise. They also do Employability for one third of the year. Careers guidance begins in Year 8 as students are introduced to Personal Career Plans and are interviewed by Form Teachers. In Year 10 students select their subjects for GCSE/Level 2. The careers teacher, parents, subject and form teachers and Senior Leadership Team are all involved in assisting the students make realistic, informed choices.

I left St Mary's in 2011, having achieved the grades I needed to begin my adventure at Heriot-Watt University in Edinburgh where I studied Mathematical, Statistical and Actuarial Sciences. At St Mary's, History had always been my strongest subject, followed by Business Studies and Religious Education so I thought it would be a fairly straightforward decision for me when it came to choosing A-level subjects. However, some of my teachers urged me to consider A-Level Maths which they felt would complement my academic strengths - challenge accepted!*

Maths is an incredibly complex subject (at least it was for me!) and I am the first to admit that I struggled with my confidence whilst studying it. In spite of my attempts to drop the subject on several occasions, the teachers at St Mary's thought differently and instilled me with some much-needed self-belief! They must have seen something in me that I wasn't aware of, as I eventually finished university with First Class Honours.

Living in Edinburgh, armed with a Maths-focused degree, meant that I had a wide variety of job opportunities available to me. Initially I joined a contract agency specialising in training others in the use statistical software programs. Soon afterwards, gained employment in Tesco Bank which is very interesting and also challenging. Similarly to the ethos and culture of St Mary's, my current workplace is empowering, collaborative and nurturing – both environments have enabled me to reach my true potential.

My time at St Mary's helped me build my confidence through the wide and varied opportunities made available to every student. Just some that spring to mind are: being elected to the School Council; completing the Pope John Paul II award and volunteering for the St Vincent de Paul Society. If it hadn't been for the teachers at St Mary's and the culture they promote, I would never have had developed the confidence to pursue the degree and career pathway I am on now.

Kathleen Morgan

**Observant readers may see a similarity to the experience of Anthony on page 15 – they are now, in fact, married. Another St Mary's success story!*



Careers

Giving guidance for the future



At KS3 students get the opportunity to speak to a range of employers during our Career Networking event. They receive information about the curriculum pathways they will follow at KS4. Decisions about the most appropriate curricular pathway for students are informed by robust data tracking which is ongoing throughout KS3.

At KS4 most students have timetabled careers classes one period every week. They are introduced to the concepts of entrepreneurship, labour market information, STEM and work-related learning to enhance their Personal Career Plans. A careers officer from Dfe (Careers Service NI) is available to offer impartial career guidance.



KS5 students receive self-help guides and can access Careers guidance each week. Careers staff are available for individual consultations. Students can access career websites and University and Further Education websites. A range of guest speakers including employers, FE and HE personnel and former students are scheduled to assist them access meaningful information. Students are encouraged to avail of work experience and industrial visits are facilitated wherever possible.



St Mary's plays an integral part in the Roe Valley Learning Community (RVLC). St. Mary's ensures joint delivery and sharing of best practice through shared curriculum choices, shared careers guidance, shared development in the use of ICT and shared enrichment activities to underpin and nurture friendships across all schools.

The developed collaborative partnerships with other schools in the Roe Valley denotes St. Mary's and its partner schools as innovators in collaborative education in Northern Ireland.

Shared links between St. Mary's and Limavady High School continue to strategically develop under Shared Education in the Roe Valley (SERV). These links include: shared curriculum choices from Year 8 to 14, joint staff development, shared improvement focuses and shared capital builds. In 2014 both schools



were successful in moving forward in the OFMDFM Shared Campuses Programme.

St. Mary's will enjoy a purpose built Sixth Form Centre and Careers and Employability hub, whilst Limavady High School will enjoy a STEM centre – both of which will enrich the opportunities afforded to all students in the Roe Valley area.



Sharing Education Bringing Educational Communities Together





St Mary's offers students a wide range of extracurricular experiences to develop our pupils' skills, talents and capabilities in other ways. The school has the reputation for producing shows of the highest quality – most recently, 'We Will Rock You' and 'Blame it on the Boogie'. Our latest production, just before the recent Christmas holidays, was 'Pop Idol'; based around songs from the 90s, that once again showcased the acting and singing talents of our students. The audiences, who attended over three packed nights had an unforgettable experience. There are so many other events taking place in school that it would be impossible to list them all, but some of the many activities pupils participated in last year included:

- Pope John Paul II Award
- St Vincent DePaul (School conference)
- INTERACT
- Rotary Young Leadership competition
- Public Speaking competitions
- World Book Day doors
- 'The Crocus Project
- The History Club
- Seagate Real World Science Conference
- The Open STEM Event
- Pheasant Cookery Masterclass
- Study Skills Week



Extracurricular Opportunities

Developing the talents within our pupils



- Ask the Expert
- Mock Interviews
- World Book Day doors
- Springboard Young Chef Competition
- Ready Steady Cook (with university of Ulster)
- Culturetech Big Video Challenge
- BBC School News Report
- Irish Language competitions
- School Show
- School Choir/SERV Choir
- Foyle Hospice Coffee Morning
- Annual Talent Contest
- Rotary Technology tournament
- 'Scratch' programming club

- Year 8 Pantomime
- Annual Ski Trip (January 2019)
- RE Department Trip to Krakow (March 2019)
- English Department London Theatre Trip (October 2019)
- A Level History Youth Seminar to Germany (November 2019)
- The Celtic Trip
- Educational and sporting trips
- First Aid
- Zoolab Workshop
- UU Geographical Information Systems Project
- A wide range of sporting activities and competitions





St Mary's is justly proud of its sporting traditions, having achieved many honours over the years in a wide variety of sports. We offer a varied range of sports, both during timetabled lessons and in after-school provision. Pupils can avail of the opportunity to take part in soccer, Gaelic football, camogie, rugby, netball and athletics. Our school teams encompass every year group from Year 8 to Year 14. As part of the 60th Anniversary celebrations the Key Stage 3 pupils are taking part in a 60k running Challenge during PE classes, with winners in each year group receiving prizes.

This year's Senior boys Gaelic team (U20) have qualified for the quarter finals of the Ward Cup, which takes place in January. The new year also sees Years 8,9 and 11 compete in their respective Ulster competitions.

The Gleann na Ro initiative comprises students from St Marys, Limavady, Gael Colaiste Doire and St Patricks, Dungiven, competing in football and camogie. As we go to press this year the Senior girls Gleann na Ro team have reached the Division D final having beaten St Aidan's, Cootehill (Cavan).

On an individual level, St Mary's students continue to excel in a wide range of sports. Travis Baur represented N Ireland in the World Youth Darts Masters tournament. As well as this two of our Year 11 students, David Monteith and Louis Woods, competed in the World Kick-boxing championships in Germany in October, eventually meeting each other in the Under 61 kg category final, with



David winning gold and Louis winning silver. Finally, Year 12 student, Sophie McIntyre, has been selected to represent Ireland at Bowls in a high-performance training camp in Spain.

The PE Department are also involved in number of cross-community sporting activities such as the Causeway Coast and Glens 'Stick and Ball' and 'New friends, New Sport - Ladies Gaelic Football for All' initiative run by St Canice's Ladies GFC.





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