

School Plan St. Peter's College, Wexford 2009 -2010



St. Peter's College is a community working together to promote and develop a learning environment where students can reach their full potential by participating in a person centred, holistic and Christian education, that will equip them to serve society as good citizens

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Part (I)

Mission Statement and Aims

St. Peter's College is a community working together to promote and develop a learning environment where students can reach their full potential by participating in a person centred, holistic and Christian education, that will equip them to serve society as good citizens.

School Ethos

St. Peter's College is a Diocesan Secondary School dedicated to the education of boys. It is central to the purpose of St. Peter's College to promote Christian values. It provides a catholic education where truth, honesty and justice are promoted among the school community. The pursuit of academic excellence is integrated with the personal, social, emotional, physical and spiritual development of the child. The school works in close liaison with parents in providing a well-balanced integrated person-centred education.

Parents subscribe to the Christian/Catholic philosophy of the school when they freely choose to send their children to the college. In St. Peter's College there is a genuine attempt on the part of all to create a school community, of equality, fairness and care which is the hallmark of the true follower of Christ.

Profile/History of St. Peter's College

The college was founded by Bishop Patrick Ryan in 1811. It has progressed from a humble Roman Catholic Seminary in Michael Street to the present magnificent buildings in Summerhill. In 1818 the large house was purchased and Bishop Ryan blessed the foundation stone of an extension to be built at the rear of the house. In the Autumn of 1819 Dr. James Keating opened the new college and the President, staff and student body of the Michael Street Seminary took up residence at Summerhill and 'St. Peter's College' came into being. A substantial building programme between 1829 and 1832 saw the erection of an impressive façade with its high tower –a distinctive feature of the college.

Fr. John Sinnott was responsible for the building of the College Chapel which was designed by Augustus Welby Pugin and completed and blessed in 1840. St. Peter's College was solemnly consecrated to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, just a few months before the death of Bishop Thomas Furlong. During 1878/9, a large study hall with bedrooms overhead was built. St. Aidan's and the new hall were used for the first time when the new Intermediate Examinations began on June 14th 1879. From then on the student population increased. In 1891 there were 42 resident students and 84 day pupils, with the figures steadily rising by the turn of the century.

In the 1930's a growing increase in Ecclesiastical students made extra accommodation necessary and the 'New Wing' was completed in 1938, incorporating a concert hall. During the academic year 1969/70 the Sesquicentenary of St. Peter's was celebrated and St. Ibar's Wing was officially opened. The 1970's saw further development and through the efforts of the Past Pupils' Union the Sports Complex was completed in 1982. 'Power Park' the all-weather playing pitch commemorates the name of Ned Power, a former Vice – Principal of the Secondary School and a man who worked tirelessly to promote drama and games in the school and in the county. In 1997 the boarding facility ceased and in 1998 the Seminary also closed its doors. As a result quite a number of rooms became vacant and Bishop Comiskey as trustee allocated a portion of these to the secondary school. Substantial refurbishment of these buildings and the construction of the new extension were made possible through funding by the Department of Education and Science. Refurbishment of the Sports Complex was made possible through funding by the Department of Tourism, Sport and Recreation. The New Extension, Refurbishments of St. Ibar's and the Sports Complex were officially opened on Monday November 26th 2001. A further extension is planned which will link the 'New Extension' with the remainder of the school.

Structures and Resources

Management:

The school is managed by a Board of Management. There are eight members on the Board;

Four nominees of the Patron – one of whom acts as chairperson

Two nominees of the Parents

Two nominees of the Teaching Staff.

The Principal acts as Secretary to the Board.

The Board is elected for a three year term and meets on a regular basis during the school year.

Teaching Resources:

Teachers are allocated to the school in accordance with DES regulations. The number of teachers serving depends on DES Teacher-Pupil ratios. There are over forty teachers currently working in the school.

Curriculum Provision:

St. Peter's College endeavours to offer as broad a range of subjects and programmes as is possible within staff and timetable constraints. The school will also endeavour as much as is possible to provide the opportunity for students to take examinations at the level which is suited to their needs. The school sees its role here as being supportive to students and parents in enabling the student to develop their particular talents in subjects and at levels that are suitable to the student. However, this ambition is dependent on adequate resources being available to the school.

The following subjects are offered, depending on resources

Junior Cycle

Irish, English, Maths., History, Geography, French/German, Science, Business, Computers, Religion, Physical Education, Civic Social and Political Education and Social, Personal and Health Education

Choice Subjects: Technical Graphics, Materials Technology, Art, Music and Classical Studies.

Senior Cycle

At present the school offers a two or three year senior cycle to students. Students sitting a three year cycle will do a year in transition year followed by fifth year (LC1) and sixth year (LC2). Students opting for a two year cycle will progress directly from Junior cycle to fifth year (LC1) and then on to (LC2)

Students select four electives from the Optional Subjects. We wish to advise parents that whilst every effort will be made to allocate students to their preferred optional subjects, it may not be possible to accommodate the first choice of every student

TRANSITION YEAR

Transition Year offers students an opportunity to develop a broad range of social, personal and academic skills. It gives them an opportunity to reach a greater maturity

to face the Leaving Certificate and make decisions for the future. It gives them time and space to mature, develop and grow in confidence. It extends the learning experience outside the classroom, by giving them experience of the world of work.

Work experience is a very important element of the year. Students go on three -one-week - Work Experience blocks, which they choose themselves. This experience provides them with a natural and realistic base on which to make informed choices for the future. Students are assessed on all aspects of their work and receive Christmas and Summer School Reports.

As well as the academic programme, other activities are included on the curriculum to broaden the students' perspective on education and life. The following are some examples of activities engaged in by the T.Y class in the past.

1. Three - four days Outdoor Pursuits Activity
2. Two-Day Residential Retreat.
3. Workshops on Art, Interior Design, Gardening, Public Speaking, Music and Media Studies.
4. Production of "Spectrum", the School Magazine.
5. One-week experience of the Tourism Industry, by working in Kelly's Hotel as part of the tourism programme awarded by C.E.R.T.
6. All students enter the Bronze section of the President's Gaisce Awards.
7. Workshop on Law, conducted by a member of the Law Library.
8. I.T. course, leading to E.C.D.L certification.
9. Visiting guest speakers are invited to speak on a wide range of issues.

At the end of the year, students are presented with a certificate from the school. External validated certificates are presented to students who have reached the required standard.

LC1 & LC2

The following are the subjects currently on offer:

Common Subjects:

Irish, English, Maths, Religion, Physical Education and Information Technology.

Optional Subjects: Physics, Chemistry, Biology, Agricultural Science, Accounting, Business, Economics, French, German, History, Geography, Music, Art, Technical Drawing and Construction Studies.

L.C.V.P

LCVP was introduced as an enhanced Leaving Certificate to address the interests of today's students and the needs of the changing workplace. LCVP is an option in the full Leaving Certificate, not an alternative type Leaving Cert. The student studies his full Leaving Cert. subjects plus two Leaving Certificate Modules.

Preparation for the World of Work:

This Module is designed to develop students' general understanding of the World of Work, introduce them to career research and provide them with the knowledge and skills to find employment.

Enterprise Education:

This Module aims to develop creativity, resourcefulness, self-confidence and initiative. Students are encouraged to interview enterprising people. Investigate local enterprises and to set up their own enterprise projects as vehicles of learning.

The LCVP exam is in two parts:

1. A Portfolio where all activities and experiences are recorded and presented.
(60%)
2. A written exam on a case study based on what he has learned over the two years duration (40%)

The subject is certified on the students' Leaving Certificate and is awarded points by both the Universities and the Institutes of Technology.

Learning Support

There is a Learning Support Service available in the school. The role of the Learning Support Teacher is to help students make progress in St. Peter's and to enjoy success at the achievement level that best suits the students' strengths and talents. The Subject Teacher teaches the curriculum in his/her own area of expertise, while the Learning Support Teacher cultivates and develop strategies that help to adapt the curriculum to suit the students' individual strengths and needs.

Support may be in the form of occasional words of encouragement, short-term small group sessions or long-term one-to-one tuition. The Learning Support Teacher may also be a core subject teacher to a particular class

Early identification of First Years who would benefit from Learning Support is crucial. Parents can assist in this by advising the Learning Support Teacher of:

1. Any remedial help received in Primary School.
2. Any educational/psychological assessments carried out by the Health Board or privately.
3. Any diagnosis of specific learning difficulties - (including English not being the student's native tongue).
4. Any sight or hearing impairment.
5. Any emotional upset or behavioural problem that could hinder your son's progress.

Any information received will be used strictly to facilitate the student's transition from Primary to Secondary school and to ensure that there is early intervention to prevent problems developing that may be avoided.

Curriculum Planning and Co-ordination

The school has a formal system of subject departments. Each subject area meets a number of times each year

Extra-Curricular activities

Sport is an integral part of life in St. Peter's College. Our main sports are Gaelic Football and Hurling, but we also take part competitively in Handball, Basketball, Badminton, Athletics and Equestrian sports. We have also competed in Swimming, Tennis, Table Tennis and Golf. A large team of teachers devote their time to these extra-curricular activities, by coaching/training teams after school, by running Lunchtime Leagues and by taking students to games. In St. Peter's we feel that sport and other extra curricular activity is very beneficial in the education, social and emotional development of our students.

Our extra-curricular activities, however, are not just confined to sport. The school has a long and proud tradition of competing in the Young Scientist Exhibition, Art Competitions and Debating and Public Speaking competitions

Each year students in T.Y. help to produce the School Magazine "Spectrum" in conjunction with the Past Pupils' Union.

Senior & Middle Management

While the overall running of the school is the remit of the Board of Management, the day- to – day running of the school is the responsibility of senior management, which consists of the Principal and Deputy Principal. However, there is also a cohort of teachers who assist in this matter. These teachers are posts of responsibility holders and are in one of two categories – Assistant Principals and Special Duties. These posts of responsibility are based on the needs of the school and accordingly need to be reviewed on a regular basis.

Pastoral Care

The Pastoral Care of students is of great importance in St. Peter's. The personal development of students in a holistic manner is promoted by helping each student reach his full potential. Each student's physical and academic abilities are nurtured and their social skills are developed so that they are aware of their responsibilities as good citizens. Central to this pastoral programme is the role of each teacher, Class Tutor, Year Head and our Chaplains.

Class Tutors

Each class group is assigned a teacher who acts as a Class Tutor to the group. He/she will meet the group on a regular basis. The Tutor will also be teaching the group wherever possible, which will afford him/her the opportunity to get to know the class well. The Tutor will endeavour to create a positive atmosphere of co-operation and participation in the class, encouraging and motivating students to reach their full potential in all aspects of school life. The Tutor will promote good behaviour and a positive attitude to and understanding of the school rules. He/she will have particular responsibilities for monitoring absenteeism and the School Journal and will liaise regularly with the Year Head and School Authorities.

Year Head

The Year Head oversees the welfare of a particular year group. He/she acts as a support for the Class Teacher and Class Tutor. The Year Head in collaboration with the Class Teacher and the Class Tutor will help students to mature, develop an awareness of their talents and reach their full potential.

The Year Head will have particular responsibilities in the areas of

Attendance

Punctuality

Discipline

Parent/Teacher meetings

Bullying

Special Needs.

Chaplain:

St. Peter's has had the services of two chaplains on a part-time basis. In addition to offering spiritual advice and guidance, the Chaplain also offers support, advice and guidance on a myriad of personal, social and health problems that confront modern young people.

A student or parent/guardian may contact the Chaplain for an appointment, either through the school or on an individual basis.

The Class Tutor, Year Head, Deputy Principal or Principal may refer a student to the Chaplain for consultation and advice.

Meitheal Programme:

The Meitheal programme is a mentoring programme, whereby a number of senior students are trained to help and assist first year students in their transition from Primary to Secondary school. The programme is supervised and monitored by staff members.

Guidance Counsellor(s)

The Guidance Counsellor(s) play(s) an integral role in the life of students in St. Peter's College. The following is a brief list of the counsellor(s) role:

- To provide information, guidance and support to individual students in making educational choices.
- To provide an assessment of individual interests and aptitudes towards career search.
- Guidance counsellor meets Leaving Cert 2 students once a week to disseminate and discuss information on careers, study programmes etc.
- To provide a framework in a classroom context and informally for the exploration of opportunities in further education, training and world of work
- To provide one to one guidance in goal setting and career path planning
- To provide a support for parents in making educational decisions
- To assist in the delivery of school programmes such as LCVP and T.Y.
- To provide a programme to assist students to select subjects for Leaving Cert cycle
- To assist in the assessment of incoming students

- The Career Guidance Counsellor is also a member of the Advisory Board of studies
- The Career Guidance Counsellor meets with LC2 students on a rota basis and thereafter by appointment
- Career Guidance counsellor is available to meet parents by appointment

Students' Council

The role of the Students' Council as set out in The Education Act is "To promote the interest of the school and the involvement of students in the affairs of the school, in co-operation with the Board, Parents and teachers.

Each year the Students' Council will identify its own objectives and activities.

Generally however their role would include

- Enhancing communication between students and the school management and staff
- Promoting an environment conducive to education and personal development
- Promoting friendship and respect among students
- Supporting the school management and staff in the development of the school
- Representing the views of students and their concerns to management and staff.

Appointment of Seniors (students in LC2 who represent their peers and the school) and selection of Students Council takes place early in September. The staff and students select a number of students who would be suitable to act as Senior and Sub-Senior. A list is presented to the LC2 students who then vote. The student with the highest vote is normally appointed Senior and the runner-up is normally appointed Sub-Senior. Both Senior and Sub-Senior are ex officio on the Students' Council.

In the same way a list of students, with the approval of the Principal and year Heads is presents to LC2, LC1 T.Y and 3rd. Year students. They different year groups elect a number of students to represent them on the Council.

At its first meeting the Students' Council will elect a Chairperson and Secretary.

The Council will meet at least once per term.

The school appoints a teacher to liaise with the Council and guide and advise it in its activities. The teacher will normally attend all Council meetings.

The School Management reserves the right to veto any students nomination to the Students' Council.

Parents' Council

St. Peter's College has an active Parents' Council which works to involve Parents in the School Community.

Established Policies

The School has established and ratified the following policies:

- Code of Behaviour
- Health and Safety
- Smoke – Free Workplace
- Acceptable User – Internet Access
- Admissions
- Pastoral Care
- Anti –Bullying
- Substance Misuse
- Critical Incidents

Review and Evaluation

The process of establishing policies is ongoing and further work is needed in this area. Likewise, established policies will need to be reviewed and up-dated as needs arise. Review and evaluation is currently undertaken in the first instance by the School Planning Steering Committee and recommendations are brought to the Staff and other stakeholders. The Board of Management has ultimate responsibility for ratification.

St. Peter's College Development Priorities

- As of January 2008 a further extension to the school was sanctioned. Extra Classrooms along with specialist rooms and administration area will be included. The building will link the “New School” to the “Old School”.
- The School website went live in January 2008 and it is hoped that this will provide a valuable link between the school and the wider community.
- The School's needs have changed significantly in the recent past and therefore the whole area of middle management needs to be reviewed.
- Outstanding Policies are to be developed in conjunction with the School Development Planning Committee.

Set of Action Plans in Relation to Priorities

- The building of the “New Extension” will require flexibility among the School Community. The Board of Management along with the Principal will put in place a plan to ensure the least possible disruption to the day-day operations of the school.
- The computer teacher will ensure the update of the website and communication via the website to the school will be directed to the secretarial staff.
- A committee has been put in place to review and evaluate “Posts of Responsibility”. It will also accept submissions for consultation.
- The School Development Plan Committee will initiate the development of outstanding policies and bring outline drafts to the staff and Board of Management and other interested stakeholders.

Policies to be Established/In Transition

- Careers and Counselling
- Learning Resources

Appendices/Booklets/Handbooks

- Code of Behaviour
- Health and Safety Policy
- Smoke – Free Workplace Policy
- Acceptable User Policy (Internet Access)
- Admissions Policy
- Pastoral Care Policy
- Anti –Bullying Policy
- Substance Misuse Policy
- Critical Incident
- Sexual Harassment
- Special Education Needs
- Homework Policy

All of the above are available to view on the School's website;

www.stpetercollege.ie