



St Mary's College, Dundalk

School Profile

*A co-educational Catholic secondary school under the patronage of the
Marist Fathers*



St Mary's College is a co-educational Catholic secondary school under the patronage of the Marist Fathers and Marist Education Authority Schools (MEAS). We currently have an enrolment of 911 students and a teaching staff allocation of 67. We provide a broad and inclusive range of educational programmes at Junior Cycle and Senior Cycle, including the Leaving Certificate, Leaving Certificate Applied (LCA) and Life, Community and Work (LCW). We also offer a balanced Transition Year programme, which balances the academic with a range of experiential activities and modules. While Transition Year is optional, most students (95%) opt to participate in the programme. In September 2026, we further developed our provision for students with additional educational needs through the opening of our first Special Class for Autism, catering for six students.

Our History and Development

Our school has a long and proud tradition of education in Dundalk, dating back to its foundation in 1861 as an all-boys school. For many years, St Mary's (or the Marist, as we are more commonly known) also operated as a boarding school, a tradition which continued until the early 1980s. The College became co-educational in 1990, marking an important new chapter in our history.

A further significant milestone came in 2016 when we moved into our current purpose-built, fully equipped school building. Designed to accommodate 900 students, the building provides modern specialist facilities and has enabled us to significantly broaden our curriculum. This has allowed us to introduce a greater range of subjects and learning experiences and to provide our students with a curriculum that reflects differing interests, talents, abilities and future pathways.

The Whole School Evaluation (WSE) conducted in the mid-2010s provided an important impetus for the commencement of our School Improvement Programme (SIP) and the further development of our School Plan. Since then, school planning and improvement have continued to reflect the changing needs of our students, developments in Irish education, the opportunities provided by our modern facilities and the professional expertise of our staff. At the heart of this work remains the educational philosophy and distinctive ethos of the Marist Fathers.

Our Marist Ethos

Our Catholic and Marist identity is central to who we are as a school. The core values of our Marist ethos are reflected throughout the life of the College and are visibly represented within our school building. Our connection with the history of the Marist tradition can also be seen in the names of our school corridors, which commemorate locations in southern France associated with the foundation and development of the Marist Order.

We also maintain strong connections with the wider Marist community in Europe, particularly through our relationships with Marist partner schools in France and Germany. Regular engagement between principals, teachers and schools helps us to maintain the international dimension of our Marist identity and reminds our students that they are part of a much wider educational and faith community.

Our Marist ethos is perhaps most clearly expressed in the way we seek to care for the individual. With the resources available to us, we strive to provide the best possible educational environment for every student.

We have a particular concern for those who may experience disadvantage or require additional support, and we work to ensure that the uniqueness, dignity and potential of every young person are recognised and respected. Our pastoral care structures are central to this commitment.

Our Curriculum

We are proud of the breadth and balance of the curriculum available to our students. At Junior Cycle, students experience a broad programme encompassing languages, sciences, humanities, practical and creative subjects, alongside a strong emphasis on wellbeing and personal development.

Current Junior Cycle Subjects

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| ■ Gaelige | ■ Business Studies | ■ Home Economics |
| ■ English | ■ Art | ■ Music |
| ■ Mathematics | ■ French | ■ Wellbeing (CSPE, SPHE) |
| ■ Religious Education | ■ German | ■ Physical Education |
| ■ History | ■ Technology | |
| ■ Geography | ■ Wood Technology | |
| ■ Science | ■ Graphics | |

At Senior Cycle, our students have access to an exceptionally broad range of subjects, allowing them to build programmes suited to their individual strengths, interests and intended progression beyond school.

Current Leaving Certificate Subjects and Programmes

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| ■ Gaelige | ■ Economics | ■ Home Economics |
| ■ English | ■ French | ■ Biology |
| ■ Mathematics | ■ German | ■ Chemistry |
| ■ Religious Education | ■ Technology | ■ Physics |
| ■ History | ■ Construction Studies | ■ Agricultural Science |
| ■ Geography | ■ Design and Communication Graphics (DCG) | ■ Computer Science |
| ■ Accounting | ■ Politics and Society | |
| ■ Business | ■ Guidance | |
| ■ Art | | |
| ■ Music | | |
| ■ Physical Education / Leaving Certificate Physical Education (LCPE) | | |
| ■ Life, Community and Work Programme (LCW) | | |

Education Beyond the Classroom

We believe that education extends far beyond the formal curriculum. For this reason, we provide a rich and diverse range of co-curricular and extracurricular opportunities which play a central role in the holistic development of our students.

Through sport, science, languages, social outreach, the arts and many other activities, our students are encouraged to discover and develop their talents, pursue new interests and make an active contribution to

school life. Participation provides opportunities to build friendships, confidence, resilience, teamwork and leadership skills, as well as promoting wellbeing and a sense of belonging within our Marist community.

Our School Community

A strong sense of community has always been a defining feature of St Mary's College. We value the partnership that exists between our Board of Management, staff, students, parents and guardians, and we recognise that the success of our school depends on our working together with a shared sense of purpose.

Our Parents' Council and Student Council play important roles within school life, providing meaningful opportunities for both parent and student voice and ensuring that these perspectives contribute to the continuing development of our College. The support of the Lay Marist organisation further contributes to the preservation and promotion of our distinctive Marist tradition and ethos.

Ultimately, our purpose is to provide an educational environment in which every student is known, valued and encouraged to reach their potential. Working together as a Marist community, we seek to enable our young people to develop intellectually, physically, morally, socially and spiritually, equipping them not only for examinations and further study, but also to become thoughtful, responsible and compassionate people who are prepared to make a positive contribution to society.