

Information Booklet

St. Dominic's College,
Ballyfermot, Dublin 10



A Leading Teaching and Learning School

Tel: 01 6266493





St. Dominic's College was established in 1956, by the Dominican Sisters.

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The Dominican Ethos fosters and creates a caring teaching and learning environment supported by Staff, Students, Parents, Board of Management, and many Local Community and Business Organisations

We became a member of the Le Chéile Schools Trust in 2006.

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Le Chéile Schools Trust is a Catholic Schools Trust and as a Dominican School we are a member of this Trust which has the mission to promote the vision of Catholic Education.

Principal's Welcome



Ba mhaith liom fáilte a chur romhaibh go dtí Meánscoil San Dominic.

Welcome to our information Booklet where we can assure you that we continue to provide a holistic education in a friendly, happy and dynamic learning environment, where all students are challenged to achieving their personal best.

As you can see from our information booklet, we strive to offer a varied range of subjects, courses, co-curricular, extracurricular activities and support to meet individual needs of our students. Our dedicated, enthusiastic staff work collaboratively to provide the highest quality teaching and learning opportunities for all our students.

Finally, I hope that you will consider St. Dominic's as the Post Primary School for your daughter.

Le gach deá ghuí,

Mary Daly,
Principal



Mol an Óige – Encourage Youth

An innovative programme designed to make the transition from primary school to secondary school an enjoyable and positive experience for all our students by encouraging a 'sense of belonging' in our caring school community.

We continue to provide all Department of Education Programmes

Junior Certificate (JC)

Junior Certificate Schools Programme (JCSP)

Transition Year

Modules include

Mindfulness & the Social Imagination / Outdoor Pursuits / Leadership /
Photography / Film / Chinese / Philosophy

Restorative Practice / Dominican Spirituality / Digital Media

Work Experience

Students can choose from one of the following Programmes:

Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme (LCVP)

Leaving Certificate (LC)

Leaving Certificate Applied (LCA)

We Provide

Easter & Mid Term Revision Classes • Afterschool and Weekend classes for Junior Certificate and Leaving Certificate students • Study Hub for ALL Year Groups • Homework Club for 1st and 2nd years

Extra-Curricular Activities offered

Music Classes

Piano • Guitar • Voice Training • Violin

Sport

Basketball • Soccer • Running Club • Gaelic Football •
Camogie • Tag Rugby

Plus

Debating • Public Speaking Glee Club • School Choir • Science Club • Art Club
Cool Dudes Cookery Club • Reading Club • Drama

We have the following Student Leadership Roles & Teams

Head Girl • Head Prefect • Head Mentor and Assistants Student Council •
Mentors / Prefects • Peer Mediators • Learning Mentors • Class Captains and
Vice Captains • Positive Mental Health Mentors • Anti Bullying Ambassadors





We encourage Student, Staff and Parent Representatives on Policy Committees

At present we have the following Committees

Literacy • Green Schools • Health Promoting Schools
Leaving Certificate Applied • Transition Year • JCSP
Parents Council • Career Guidance • Healthy Living Week • Guidance

Some of our many highlights

Excellent Junior Cert and Leaving Cert Results
High Level of Progression to 3rd Level Education
Healthy Living Week • Green Schools Week
Positive Mental Health Days
Cycle Against Suicide Ambassador School
Allianz Mentoring and Language Programme for 5th & 6th years
DPS Engineering Mentoring Programme • Students attend Comhairle na nÓg
Teachers from other European countries visit School TY Learning
Past Students rewarded with Laptops for their Achievements

School Summer Activities

3rd Level • UCD New Era Access • Trinity Access Programme
IT Tallaght • NCAD

3rd Level Education Supports

In School Irish Language Summer Course & Trip to Galway
Students attend Gaeltacht in Galway / Mayo / Donegal
Dominican Liturgical Camp in Knockadoon, Cork
SCP Summer Camp and Family Fun day

Media Coverage

RTE—Breakfast, Lunch and Study Support for Junior & Leaving Certificate students • Leaving Certificate results - Pat Kenny Show
Healthy Living Week — The Echo • The Irish Times
Progression to 3rd Level Education

Core Subjects



Irish, English, Maths, History, Geography, RE, CSPE (JC only), either French or Spanish are compulsory for all students. (Students may be exempted from Irish / French or Spanish if they have an exemption certificate from the DES) **All of these subjects are offered at all Levels to meet the educational needs of our students.**

Irish Our aim is to improve your daughter's ability to communicate through Irish. The course focuses on **four key areas**; *speaking skills, writing, listening, and reading*. We use IT, games, teamwork and debates to teach Irish to the highest standard. *We also finically support students to visit the Summer Gaeltacht course through sponsorship.*

English *"The more that you read, the more things you will know. The more that you learn, the more places you'll go."* **Dr. Seuss, I Can Read With My Eyes Shut!** We encourage students to explore and value their own writing, to facilitate the expression of who they are and what they wish to be. Our aims are for our students to develop confidence in who they are and in how they communicate in the outside world.



Project Maths Project Maths involves the introduction of revised syllabuses for both Junior and Leaving Certificate. It involves changes to what students learn in mathematics, how they learn it and how they will be assessed. Project Maths aims to provide for an enhanced student learning experience and greater levels of achievement for all. Much greater emphasis will be placed on student understanding of mathematical concepts, with increased use of contexts and applications that will enable students to relate mathematics to everyday experience.

History The three Es of History **Exploration:** During a History lesson the students learn how to find information independently. How to research using books, computers and artefacts. **Enquiry:** Students are encouraged to ask questions about the world and what people said happened. **Evidence:** Students learn to evaluate and judge the facts they are given. They learn how to spot bias and prejudice in what people say.

Religion The aim of Religious Education is to awaken people to faith and then to help them throughout their lives to deepen and strengthen that faith. All our Junior Certificate classes follow the State Syllabus for Religious Education and take the Junior Certificate Exam. The syllabus covers all religions and also areas such as Social Justice and atheism.

Civic, Social and Political Education The aim of CSPE is to help students to become citizens who know their **rights, and responsibilities.** At the end of the course, students will have an understanding of issues related to the law, democracy, the environment, the local community, development of society, the dignity of being human, how everyone worldwide depends on each other in some way.

Geography Students will learn about the physical world and the **economic** and social aspects of the world. Geography is **cross-curricular** and links with science, religion, art and history. Geography is often called the "*mother of all sciences*" as studying other people and other places led to other scientific fields such as biology, geology, mathematics, chemistry, etc.

Junior Certificate Choice Subjects

Students are invited to choose two of the following subjects for completion at Junior Certificate.

Science Studying science opens the students to a range of ways of thinking e.g. analysis of observations, spotting trends and patterns, as well as some mathematics and computation, in addition to the important practical laboratory work.



THERE ARE MANY COMPETITIONS FOR SCIENCE STUDENTS!

Home Economics has a direct relevance to the present and future life of every young Person. There is a mixture of theory and practice which helps to prepare you for the world of living and provides a good basis for future roles later life.

Business Studies will help you if you wish to start your own business, as you will have the knowledge of accounts, calculating profit and commission, **Become a teacher, Work in Business or Accounting.** There are many fun projects, games; interesting talks for Business students such as: Build a Bank with AIB, TY mini company, Placements with Morgan Stanley Bank in London, Allianz Business in the Community links.



Music The Music Department aims to introduce students to a wide ranging repertoire of music that they can enjoy listening to and develop their creativity through various composing activities. Music promotes skills of concentration and technical control of an instrument use ICT to create and research music. Students have the opportunity to participate in the annual Emmanuel Concert in the Helix Theatre and the Dominican Liturgical Music Summer Camp in Knockadoon, Cork. **We also provide after school music lessons in: Voice training / Piano, Violin and Guitar.**

Art, Craft, Design The syllabus for first, second and third year students in post primary education, aims to develop the expressive, communicative and functional modes of art, craft and design in the individual within the art class with drawing as the central activity. This syllabus is assessed at the end of third year at two levels, Ordinary and Higher. The quantity and quality of work produced determine the differences between the two levels. **Note: A new specification for Junior Cycle Art, Craft, Design will be taken by first year students from September 2017.**

Languages

It is compulsory for all students to study one of the following languages (unless they have a DES exemption certificate.) **Students are invited to choose one of the following for completion at Junior Certificate and Leaving Certificate.**

Spanish and French Our aim is to improve your daughter's ability to communicate through a 2nd European language. The course for French and Spanish focuses on four key areas; speaking skills, writing, listening, and reading. We use IT, games, teamwork and debates to teach both languages to the highest standard.

Non Exam Subjects

The following non-exam Subjects are compulsory for all our Junior Certificate Students

SPHE Social, Personal and Health Education, as part of the curriculum, supports the personal development, health and well-being of young people and helps them create and maintain supportive relationships.

Physical Education applies a holistic approach to the concept of physical activity for young people. It recognises the physical, mental, emotional, and social dimensions of human movement, and emphasises the contribution of physical activity to the promotion of individual and group wellbeing. Learning in physical education involves the acquisition of knowledge, concepts, skills, and attitudes central to physical education, together with recognition of its potential for integration with other curriculum areas.

ICT has become an integral and accepted part of everyday life for many people. ICT is increasing in importance in people's lives and it is expected that this trend will continue, to the extent that ICT literacy will become a functional requirement for people's work, social, and personal lives. The use of ICT in appropriate contexts in education can add value in teaching and learning, by enhancing the effectiveness of learning, or by adding a dimension to learning that was not previously available. ICT may also be a significant motivational factor in students' learning, and can support students' engagement with collaborative learning.



Senior Cycle 4th/5th/6th Year

At senior level our students have the option to choose three of the following subjects to study for their Leaving Certificate.

Music, Home Economics, History, Geography, Biology, Chemistry, Art & Craft, Accountancy, Business, Religion as an exam subject.

Senior students are invited to choose one of the following languages French or Spanish.

Students may study Preparation for the World of Work and Enterprise Education depending on the Leaving Certificate course they decide to complete.

As a Dominican School and a member of the Le Chéile Catholic Schools Trust all senior students are requested to study Religion. Those who take RE as an exam subject have five class periods non exam religion for three class periods per week.

School Polices and Plans

We as a school have the following polices which are all available on request from the school office and / or our website www.stdominicsballyfermot.ie

Child Protection • Anti- Bullying, Anti- drugs • Health & Safety • SPHE & RSE
• Admissions, Code of Behaviour • School Tour • Healthy Eating • Diversity • Attendance & Punctuality • Diversity • Use of I.T., Dignity in the Work Place • Junior Certificate Schools Programme • Religious Education, Leaving Certificate Applied • Learning Support • Positive Mental Health (in process)

We continue to develop and evaluate our policies as required to meet the needs of our students.

Career Guidance • Learning Support • Junior Certificate Schools Programme
• Transition Year and Subject plans • Developing Equal Opportunities within Schools (DEIS) • School Self Evaluation Plan (SSE) • School Improvement Plan (SIP)

We have been highly commended for our innovative Teaching & Learning Methodologies, Pastoral Care of our Students and Management of our school in all recent Department of Education & Science inspections which can be located the Department of Education and Science website: www.DES.ie

Attendance & Punctuality

We are committed in partnership with parents, students, SCP, NBSS and local agencies to promote good attendance and punctuality in our school, to enhance teaching and learning and educational progression for all our students.

We as a school community believe that it is important to be on time, this skill and value of punctuality is a lifelong skill that should be developed by us all.

We encourage Parents / Guardians to ensure that their daughter attends school on time every day so that she can reach her full educational potential.

We provide the following supports: Free Healthy Breakfast (8.00-8.40) for all students • Supervised Hot / Cold lunches available in school canteen • Computerised Rolls • Daily Individual Class Register • Tracking • Texting / Phone calls • Weekly Attendance Meeting • Positive Attendance Certificates • Regular Liaising with EWO • Home Visits • Meetings with students who find school challenging.



Pastoral Care Supports for our Students

We have the following Pastoral Care support system in place to support your daughter.

Class Tutor The Class Tutor takes a special interest in each of the students in her / his tutor class. She / he supports them in their personal, academic and social development.

Year Head Students also have a Year Head who is responsible for a whole year group. She / He supports students in their social, academic and personal development and will often be the liaison between parents and school management.

Care Team Meets regularly to discuss issues of concern for students and to develop a support plan that will enable them to remain in school to complete their second level education. The care team consists of school management, the HSCL Teacher, Career Guidance, SCP Team, NBSS and Learning Support.

School Completion Programme (SCP) was set up as part of Department of Education and Skills (DES) with the DEIS (Delivering Equality of Opportunity in Schools) Strategy aims to increase the numbers of young people staying in primary and second level schools and in doing so improve the numbers of students who successfully complete the Senior Cycle, or the equivalent.

Career Guidance Our Career Guidance Counsellor is available to support students in their academic and personal choices in life.

Home School Community Liaison Teacher We place a high value on the importance of parent's and guardian's role in enhancing their children's education. To support this we have a full time Home School Community Liaison Co-ordinator who works to promote active co-operation between home, school and relevant community agencies in promoting the educational interests of our students.

Family Therapy Centre We have an on-site Family Therapy Centre with Part Time qualified therapists to support our students.

National Behavioural Support Service (NBSS) provides support and expertise to partner post primary schools on issues related to behaviour. We in St. Dominic's are happy to have this service within our school community to

support and encourage students to behave responsibly, to ensure that there is a happy and safe teaching and learning environment for all.

Our Proactive Response to Preventing Bullying We in St. Dominic's believe that every Student / Staff member has a right to feel safe and protected. We invite parents / guardians / students to tell us about any bullying concerns they may have, so that we can begin the process of supporting those who need our help in stopping bullying from continuing. It is always the right option to inform a trusted adult if bullying is taking place.

Stand-Up Bullying Report Tool We have recently installed the ISPCC STAND UP AGAINST BULLYING TOOL on our school website. (www.stdominicsballyfermot.ie) as another proactive response to **preventing bullying within our school.**

Our online reporting tool allows for concerned individuals to report bullying instances via an online document. This report will be sent to an anti-bullying coordinator within our school and will be responded to in line with our anti-bullying policy.



Business in the Community Partnership



Our Business in the Community Partnership with Allianz Worldwide Care in Parkwest provides a student mentoring programme which encourages students to stay in school, increase their self esteem and develop an awareness of the workplace. They also provide:

Modern Language support programmes for senior students with native French and Spanish employees

Skills and Work Programmes providing the students with a unique insight into the World of Work and an opportunity to enhance and develop their presentation and communication skills.

Reviews

Read all the latest great reviews left online from some of our students and parents:

St. Dominic's Secondary School is without question one of the most inclusive, encouraging and thinking outside the box schools. By this, I mean St. Dominic's caters for the needs of all students equally, encouraging each one as an individual to achieve their goals and dreams. I feel so lucky to have had an opportunity to go to school there, I met my mentor Sr. Liz Smyth there who was, at the time, our leadership teacher. She has played a huge part in helping me become who I am today. The current school Management, Principal and staff team go the extra mile each time for the current students, constantly thinking of new ways to engage the students. I am lucky to have both my daughters there now. I can see the impact that St. Dominic's is already having on them, helping them to become confident young women. **Janice Mc Garry**

I moved to St. Dominic's in fourth year and it was without a doubt the best decision that I have ever made. It allowed me to mature and the teachers treated you like an adult as time went on. It's a school that allows each student to be different but welcome at the same time. I've always been given tremendous support through extra classes and just a shoulder to lean on. Teachers became friends in the end and they always have given 100% to the students. I can't praise the school enough, and I'm sad to have to go. I owe my results to their hard work and encouragement and will always have a good word to say about St. Dominic's. I would definitely recommend this school, and staff. **Leanne Cuffe**

As a staff member and an SNA for nearly five years this term, I would not consider sending my daughter anywhere else this September. The subjects are varied, the modules are modern and created to meet each individual and the support given to each student to reach their full potential is remarkable. The staff all offer extra volunteer hours, as well as helping in pre and after school clubs. The activities, extra curricular activities, speakers, day trips, student exchanges, breakfast and homework clubs and group work that is created and implemented is all to meet the needs of the person and teaches needs and goals for each student's personality. St. Dominic's not only has a high standard and percentage of students reaching third level education but also uses a very holistic approach in enabling strong, confident, balanced and determined young ladies to leave after 6th year. **Lisa Palmer**

