SACRED HEART SCHOOL PROFILE

Sacred Heart School Mission Statement - *"Developing, Caring and Supporting"*

- Developing the potential of all students, their moral, academic, social, aesthetic, Physical and spiritual education.
- Caring for all members of the school community.
- Supporting partnerships between school, parents and the local community.

In keeping with the spirit of Catherine McAuley, the Founder of Mercy Schools, and with CEIST we show a special interest in the disadvantaged.

History of the Sacred Heart School

The Sacred Heart School was established in 1925. The school was inspired by the vision of Catherine McAuley and established by the Sisters of Mercy to provide a Christian education for the young women of Westport and the surrounding area. The school was a boarding school from 1925 to 1970. The school ceased to provide boarding from 1970 onwards following the introduction of free transport. In 2007, the trusteeship of the school was handed over to CEIST (**C**atholic **E**ducation, an **I**rish **S**chools **T**rust). The first lay Principal was appointed in 2001. Today the characteristic spirit of the school remains the same.

Sacred Heart School has always had a reputation for presenting students to the world in a state of readiness, to allow students to utilise their talents and aptitudes to their fullest and in a manner that is considerate of others and morally mature. These characteristics have helped shape the school into the entity that it is today.

School Context Factors

Sacred Heart School is a girl's non-fee paying voluntary Catholic secondary school. Enrolment is generally between 500 and 600 students. There are 546 students enrolled in the current academic year 2021-22. The school serves a very large hinterland and has approximately 20 feeder national schools. There are 42 teachers on staff including the senior management team and the school employs 8 ancillary staff.

The socio-economic background breakdown of our students includes the full spectrum of socio-economic groups. There is some diversity in the student population with a number of European students attending the school. There are currently 10 Ukrainian students enrolled in the school for the next academic year.

Employment in the town is still relatively high and community organisations are very active. Westport is County Mayo's premier tourist destination and is popular with holiday makers from all over the world and Ireland. The town has a large Pharmaceutical Manufacturing Company (Abbvie) and an extensive services sector.

Our Vision for our school

We endeavour to provide a safe environment where students can develop skills and talents to grow and flourish. Our school promotes student participation in self-directed learning and seeks to instil the values that young adults require as they begin to make choices that will affect the rest of their lives. Caring for everyone in our school community through inclusion, respect, care and kindness for self and others underpins our ethos and all our school policies and is an extremely important part of our vision.

The Aims of our school; the key ideals, beliefs and values of the school

Our school is committed to providing the best possible education for all our students as a community of learners: showing respect, tolerance and care, valuing and celebrating diversity and creativity, and actively promoting inclusion and wellbeing for all. Respect for all the school partners towards each other and towards others in society is a cornerstone of our school.

We are dedicated to creating a happy, safe and orderly learning environment, where our students can develop into self-motivated young people. Our ethos is based on Catholic values and our mission statement.

Curriculum

The school offers the following programmes:

- Junior Cycle
- Leaving Certificate
- Leaving Certificate Applied
- Transition Year
- LCVP

The school is engaged in curricular cooperation with Rice College Westport. This cooperation has afforded both schools the opportunity to enhance and broaden their curriculum both in the Transition Year Programme and at Senior Cycle.

Extra-curricular

The school offers an extensive range of extra-curricular activities ranging from sport, music, drama, public speaking and art. This year the school achieved Connacht 'A' Gaelic Football titles in U-14, U-16 and U-18 age groups. The school drama club is highly successful and has attained all-Ireland success for the past number of years. Our Facebook and Instagram page highlight the many achievements of students in extra-curricular activities.

School Developmental Priorities (2018-2022)

Priority 1: Promote and live our School Ethos
Priority 2: Promote excellence in Teaching and Learning
Priority 3: Engagement in Strategic School Development Planning
Priority 4: Improving School Building and Grounds
Priority 5: Managing the Organisation
Priority 6: Partnership with stakeholders

Sacred Heart School Westport is a Microsoft Office 365 school. One of the key targets in relation to Teaching and Learning has been the extension of IT as a teaching and learning tool. Over the past 4

years the school has significantly expanded its ICT infrastructure. There are now 3 computer rooms and 3 mobile laptop trolley units available to teachers and students. Every teacher has been provided with a tablet. The current 1st year and incoming 1st year students are required to have laptops/tablets.

Another key priority has been the improvement of the school building and grounds. In February the Dept of Education sanctioned a new 600 school build to fully replace the existing accommodation. Currently modular accommodation is been installed on the school premises. This accommodation consists of 9 classrooms, 2 Science labs, Music room, Art room, Home Economics kitchen, staffroom and a number of offices. Parts of the old school build will be decommissioned from the end of August 2022.

SHS Westport is a vibrant community for teaching and learning. We strive to give students every opportunity to develop their skills and talents so that when they leave us they are well equipped for their future educational and careers paths and to take their place in society as capable and confident young women.