

Scoil Mhuire agus Íde Prospectus

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Open Day, Saturday 1st October 2022, 10.00am - 1.00pm
Principal's Address 12 noon
On-Line Application Form Link: <https://forms.gle/HTspzWf3KYiXB62D7>

Mission Statement

Our Prospectus is not only an introduction to our school but more importantly, it is an invitation to all to come and see for themselves the educational opportunities which we can offer to prospective students.

Acting Principal - Ms Michelle Thompson
Deputy Principal - Ms Joan Cahill

Our vocation and purpose in Scoil Mhuire Agus Íde is to help our students to take their place in society as educated, mature and committed Christians.

We want our school to be not only a centre of academic excellence but a caring community where personal faith is nurtured and developed.

Aims

At Scoil Mhuire agus Íde we aim:

- To create a caring environment in which everyone recognises the value of each individual and to encourage an awareness of, and a response to, the needs of others.
- To foster an appetite for learning and to develop self-discipline, initiative, responsibility and perseverance.
- To involve the students in the life-long process of education and to ensure that everyone achieves success in life.
- To value all kinds of achievement, and to learn to cope with success and failure.



*Principal
Ms. Michelle Thompson*



*Deputy Principal
Ms. Joan Cahill*



General Information

The School Day

The school day begins at 8.50am and finishes at 3.30pm - Monday to Thursday and finishes at 1.00pm Friday. Students are expected to be in school at 8.45am. Classes are 1 hour in length with 6 class periods Monday to Thursday and 4 class periods on a Friday. To facilitate student access to the canteen there is a split morning break at 10.20am and 10.50am. Lunchtime is from 1.00pm to 1.30pm. A book rental scheme is available for 1st, 2nd and 3rd year students.

Assessment/Exams

House Exams will be set for 1st, 2nd, TY and 5th year students at November and Summer. 5th Year students will also get assessments in October and February. Formative assessment will also take place in the classroom on a regular basis. Results and feedback will be communicated to the students and parents on an ongoing basis. For Junior Cycle students Classroom Based Assessments (CBAs) will be undertaken during a defined period within normal class contact time and to a national timetable. Students will complete one CBA in second and third year in most subjects. After the second CBA students will then complete an assessment task worth 10% in most subjects. Continuous assessment will apply to 3rd and 6th year students and results will be communicated to home. Pre-Junior and Leaving Certificate Exams will take place during the second term to keep parents informed of student progress. Students, parents and teachers find this system of assessment to be very beneficial in recent years, in supporting academic progress throughout the year.

Evening Study

To facilitate students and parents, we provide supervised evening study from 3.45pm to 5.45pm Monday to Thursday and Friday from 1.30pm to 3.30pm. Study is also provided for during the October and February Mid Term Breaks, Easter and Saturdays.

Homework

The School Journal is our daily means of communication with Parents or Guardians and should be checked regularly. Parents or Guardians signature will be required on a weekly basis. Homework is an essential element of the educational process. We would recommend as a general guide that a First Year student should do at least two hours per night, with Third Years and Seniors doing at least three hours per night. No parent should be satisfied with their child's report that he/she has no homework. Revision and more revision is the best regular form of homework and parents should insist on regular weekly revision for school work.

Uniform

School Uniforms are available in local outlets in Newcastlewest. Full uniform must be worn at all times. Scoil Mhuire agus Íde PE uniform is available to purchase from O'Neill's and is compulsory for all students. A link with purchase details is sent at the end of each academic year. We encourage students to take care of their uniform and maintain it in good condition. We count on parents and guardians support in this very important aspect of student's training in self-discipline.

Lockers

Students are supplied with a school locker which is used to store books, PE gear and any money or valuables. The school supplies all students with a lock and lockers must be locked at all times. Valuable jewellery should not be worn in school.





Curriculum

Junior Cycle Curriculum

The Junior Cycle is a three year programme. Scoil Mhuire & Íde offers a broad range of subjects to students. Students study seven core subjects and two option subjects. All first year students partake in a subject taster programme. This allows all students to experience seven optional subjects before choosing two for Junior Cycle.

Subjects available include:

Core Subjects

- Irish
- English
- Maths
- History
- Geography
- French
- German
- Science

Option Subjects

- Business Studies
- Home Economics
- Music
- Visual Art
- Graphics
- Wood Technology
- Coding

Non Examination Subjects

- Physical Education
- Religious Education
- SPHE
- CSPE
- Lifeskills
- Digital Literacy



Transition Year

Our Transition Year Programme provides our students with the opportunity to get a broad educational experience, away from the pressure of formal examinations with a view to increasing maturity before proceeding to Senior Cycle. SMI's Transition Year Programme has been highly commended by the Inspectorate. The programme consists of a variety of subjects in an effort to facilitate our students. Students sample each subject and make informed choices for their future study. Our theme this year is 'Treat People With Kindness'. It is hoped that students will, during this year, take greater responsibility for their own learning and decision-making and develop a range of critical thinking and problem solving skills which will be of benefit to them at third level. Transition Year will provide an opportunity for students to reflect on and develop an awareness of the value of education and training in preparing them for the ever-changing demands of the adult world of work and relationships.

Scoil Mhuire agus Íde boasts a very successful, organised, action packed Transition Year programme. The Transition Year team have, over the years, developed their own unique Transition Year curriculum to meet the ever changing needs of our students and the programme also makes extensive use of the wide-ranging resources and talents within the staff. They also have established strong community links and they take full advantage of local expertise in the delivery of the programme.

Currently students are offered places in many courses and fundraising activities both within school and outside the school environment.

The following are some examples of what they have participated in:

- Work Experience
- Individual Work Application
- Law Ed
- Mini Med School
- Pay It Forward Initiative
- Hope Foundation & Team Hope Shoebox Appeal
- Integrated Dance
- Brothers of Charity
- West Limerick Children Services
- Sign Language
- Yoga
- Driver Education

- Manual Handling/Food Safety
- First Aid
- Fencing
- Mountain Biking
- Self Defence
- Young Social Innovators & Future Leaders
- Vex Robotics
- Junk Kouture
- Exciting Fashion Show Extravaganza

Students are presented with a folder of certificates at the end of the Transition Year Programme and they have a very impressive Curriculum Vitae.

Students sample the extensive range of Leaving Cert subjects available within the school before subject choices are made for fifth year.

Each year our Transition Years undertake a week of Team Building exercises. This year's group look forward to 3 days in Killary Adventure Center and a number of different adventure day trips, for example to Ballyhass Lakes and Kilfinane Outdoor Education Centre. This 'getting to know you' time has proved invaluable in 'bonding' the students as they embark on their new programme. All Transition Year students are also encouraged to undertake the various tasks that lead to the awarding of the Bronze Gaisce Award (The President's Award). The emphasis throughout Transition Year is on students learning how to learn and how to become independent learners. Experience (and fantastic exam results.) has shown that following our programme the students are better equipped and better motivated to undertake the Leaving Certificate programme.



As one of our past Transition Years put it:

“Our school has definitely the best and most beneficial TY programme around so of course I didn’t have to think twice about doing TY. I learned skills and made new friends that I will have forever. The opportunities are endless, you just have to make the most of them. I would 100% recommend doing TY, it was definitely the best school year of my life and I would do anything to go back”,
(Mia Forrestal).



Senior Cycle

Senior cycle is a two year programme and a wide variety of subjects are offered. Students typically study seven exam subjects, three core subjects and four optional ones.

Core Subjects

- Irish
- English
- Maths

Option Subjects

- History
- Geography
- French
- German
- Physics
- Chemistry
- Biology
- Agricultural Science
- Home Economics
- Art
- Accounting
- Economics
- Business

- Music
- Design and Communication Graphics
- Construction Studies
- LCVP
- Leaving Certificate P.E.

Non-Examination Subjects

- Religion Education
- Career Guidance
- SPHE
- Physical Education

LCVP

The Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme (LCVP) is an intervention designed to enhance the vocational dimension of the Leaving Certificate. The programme was introduced in response to the challenge placed on Ireland's education system by a changing work and business environment. The LCVP combines the academic strengths of the Leaving Certificate (established) with a new and dynamic focus on self-directed learning, enterprise, work and the community.



Religious Education

Scoil Mhuire agus Íde is a Catholic school which promotes the Christian ethos while welcoming students of other faiths. In the Religious Education Department we encourage students to reach their full potential. Students are inspired and motivated to develop spiritually, morally and intellectually. The Religious Education programme emphasises the importance of self-directed learning and independent thought. It also fosters a spirit of inquiry, critical thinking, problem solving, self-reliance, initiative and enterprise.

First, Second and Third years follow the curriculum as devised by the Department of Education. There is flexibility in the Senior Cycle where we deal mainly with moral, social and justice issues.

In the Religious Education Department our events are structured around the Liturgical year. In September we have a school mass for each Year Group. In November we focus on the month of the Holy Souls. During Advent we prepare for Christmas and students receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation during Advent and prior to Easter during the Lenten Season.

The Religious Education Department is a hive of activity. SMI offers Catholic education which strives to liberate, empower and motivate students to use their individual gifts with confidence, creativity and generosity in a spirit of loving and responsible service. Students participate in charitable community work, e.g. Daffodil Day for Irish Cancer Society, Team Hope Shoebox appeal, St. Vincent De Paul Christmas Hampers. During the season of Lent, students raise awareness and fundraise for Trócaire. Students also participate in the Pay it Forward initiative where they are inspired to complete random acts of kindness throughout the school and wider community. Students are given the opportunity during their time in SMI to participate in a retreat which gives them the opportunity to deepen their faith. Speakers are also invited to the school to discuss faith related topics with the students.

The Religious Education Department looks forward to welcoming all new students into the SMI school community.



Digital Learning

Digital Technology in the Classroom

Digital Technology is seen as a valuable tool to aid teaching and learning in Scoil Mhuire agus Íde. As a Google school, our Virtual Learning Environment allows students to access notes, homework assignments, remote classes and recorded lessons through Google Classroom. This allows students every opportunity to engage with schoolwork and have their resources and materials stored in one place. Staff in Scoil Mhuire agus Íde are provided with on-going training in Digital Technology, which ensures its efficient use as a pedagogical strategy in the classroom. We recognise the importance of providing students with the opportunity to develop the digital literacy skills that they will need to excel in today's society.

In SMI we are continually investing and upgrading our IT resources. Currently at students disposal is a fleet of 130 Chromebook devices, as well as a Computer lab equipped with desktop computers. Student's have a designated "Digital Literacy" class period in 1st and 2nd Year - this ensures they develop the necessary skills to fully engage in the digital aspect of their secondary school experience.

Digital Technology is used to promote collaboration, problem solving and critical thinking in students - key aspects of the new Junior Cycle. Digital Technology allows students the opportunity to work

through content at their own pace and in the style that best suits their strengths.

VEX Robotics

As part of the TY programme students engage in Vex Robotics. VEX Robotics encourages creativity, teamwork, leadership, passion, and problem-solving in the STEM subjects offered in SMI. Students gain an understanding and knowledge through the connecting of concepts from each of the STEM domains by designing, building and coding their own robot. Students participate in a regional final hosted by DELL and then can progress to the National finals hosted by CIT. Vex Robotics is a hands-on meaningful learning experience for students.

Coding

In Scoil Mhuire agus Íde we are delighted to have introduced our first Short Course for the Junior Cycle. Over the past number of years students displayed a keen interest in Computer Science. Coding students are getting the opportunity to transform ideas, solutions, and instructions into the language that the computer can understand. Students are developing an understanding of how computers process systems. In SMI the aim of this short course is to develop students' ability to write and test code through the development of programmes.



Extra Curricular Activities

Extracurricular Activities are an important part of life in Scoil Mhuire Agus Íde. They provide pupils with a wide range of opportunities which complement the academic curriculum, allowing students to take advantage of all the facilities available at our school. Extracurricular activities can help students succeed in much more than just their academic endeavours. Sports, for example, train students to maintain patience and resilience in the face of difficulty. These activities can also work to build skills that a classroom alone cannot always foster. A debate club offers additional public speaking practice for students, which further builds upon oral presentation skills from class work. Activities are also available at lunchtime to engage students and help improve their social skills.

Extracurricular Activities provide excellent opportunities for team-building skills and training students to focus on long-term goals. Such a myriad of skills are invaluable when entering Third Level Education and indeed the workplace. They are also fun and offer students the opportunity to spend time with others of similar interests. Students can meet friends from different social groups by membership in such activities.

The extracurricular activities available in SMI include:

Public Speaking

- Quiz Teams
- Educational Tours at home and abroad

Music

- Musicals
- Choir
- Trad Group



Sport

- Athletics
- Badminton
- Basketball
- Camogie
- Hurling
- Equestrian
- Football
- Ladies Football
- Golf
- Gymnastics
- Rugby
- Soccer
- Uni-golf
- Volleyball



Competitions

- VEX Robotics
- Formula 1 in Schools
- Student Enterprise
- Young Scientist
- Concern Debating League
- Texaco Children's Art Competition



Supporting Our Students

There is a whole school approach to the provision of the Student Support (Pastoral Care) programme within the school. This programme and policy development is overseen by the Student Support Team which is drawn from the various departments within the school - Guidance, Religion, Additional Educational Needs, Wellbeing and Yearheads.

Each year group is assigned a Year Head and each class in First Year, 2nd Year and 3rd Year has a Class Tutor. The Class Tutor establishes a special relationship with the class and so is a very significant person in the students' lives and is a key link between home and school. The Class Tutor also works with the students to encourage Reflective Practice across all subjects.

First Year Induction

As part of the Student Support Programme the school implements an Induction Programme for First Year students.

The Induction Programme includes:

- Helping students cope with transition from a one-teacher to multi-teacher system.
- Explaining and familiarising the students with the Timetable and the wide range of subjects.
- Looking after the day to day needs and concerns of students.
- Prospective First Years are invited to visit the school on a number of occasions prior to entry to help them become familiar with the campus.
- Parents of First Year students are given the opportunity to meet with the Class Tutor and Year Head in October to review First Year students progress.

First Year students partake in an Option Taster Programme allowing students to experience all optional subjects before making their choice for Junior Cycle.

Wellbeing

The wellbeing of our students in SMI is paramount as wellbeing is central for students to achieve their full potential. The Junior Cycle years are a critical time in young people's lives. Students are exposed to a range of influences and require support to make positive responsible decisions relating to their health and wellbeing and the wellbeing of others.

We want our students to feel safe, enjoy school and have a sense of fulfilment. Wellbeing is one of the principles that underpins Junior Cycle education.

In Scoil Mhuire agus Íde we equip our students with the necessary skills to overcome obstacles and develop their emotional intelligence. Wellbeing will provide learning opportunities to enhance the physical, mental, emotional and social wellbeing and resilience of students. Students will be enabled to build life-skills and develop a strong sense of connection to our school.

To achieve this we use a holistic approach where aspects of health and wellbeing permeate every facet of school life. Students have a wellbeing class which helps them realise their potential and be resilient in dealing with the normal stresses of life. Each year group has a Guidance Counselor who provides students with personal, educational and vocational support.

Guidance & Counselling

Scoil Mhuire agus Íde supplies a comprehensive Career Guidance and Counselling service to all its students. It helps students to grow in self-knowledge and self-esteem by providing professional expertise and information to enable them make constructive life choices. These choices are focused on the areas of personal, educational and career issues. The work of the Guidance Counselling Service includes:

Consultation - with parents, teachers, school management and outside agencies.

Assessment - helping students to obtain a better self-understanding through the use of psychometric tests and other inventories.

Information - supplying students with objective and factual data on education and training opportunities etc.

Referrals - by the Guidance Counsellor to appropriate agencies where it is deemed necessary to satisfy the needs of the individual student. Students may also be referred to the Guidance Counsellor by parents, teachers or school management.

Supporting Our Students

Personal Counselling - helping students to explore their thoughts and feelings and the choices open to them, giving care and support to students learning to cope with the many aspects of growing up.

Feedback - giving feedback to concerned parties within the school on the needs of individual students.

Career Guidance is seen as a process not an event. Students are encouraged to develop greater self-awareness, to identify their broad range of skills, abilities, interests, values and subsequently the career areas which best compliments them and will enable them to flourish. The Career Guidance service provides individual appointments for all students, career information, personality profiles, aptitude and interest tests, college-visits, guest speakers and

consultation with parents. The underlying aim is to facilitate all our students in the process of making good career choices.

Additional Educational Needs (AEN)

In accordance with our Mission Statement's aim to create a caring community for each and all of our students, we endeavour to meet any special needs that may arise for our students, be they physical or academic needs. All students are assessed on entry and support is offered if needed. This involves working with students on an individual basis, in small groups, or with targeted team teaching. Parental approval for this is always sought and teacher-parent contact is welcomed. By promoting the self-esteem of our students it is hoped that all have access to an education that they can participate in and benefit from.



Student Leadership

Student Council

The Student Council of Scoil Mhuire agus Íde is a representative body of both Junior and Senior level students. It acts as a medium of communication between the students, staff and management of the school. It aims to promote an active involvement by students in the running of the school. It contributes to the development of school policies and allows students to make suggestions regarding matters of general concern to the student body.

As outlined in the School's mission statement the Student Council of Scoil Mhuire agus Íde aims to ensure that students take their place in society as educated, mature and committed Christians. The Student Council also strives to promote better mutual respect, fairness and honesty between staff and students. It hopes that students will develop essential life skills such as listening, diplomacy, compromise, communication and leadership. The Student Council strives to make a positive contribution to every aspect of the school

community. It allows students to have their voice heard. The Student Council is an important part of school life and aims to play a significant role in the development of the school.

Pay It Forward Initiative

Transition Year students are involved in the Pay It Forward Initiative. A Kindness Committee is elected each year and along with their fellow TY students spearhead many kindness activities throughout the year.

Being kind to one another acknowledges our own capacity for kindness and also has the benefit of 'feeling good' for both giver and recipient. In promoting kindness we hope to change attitudes, build self-esteem and mental health resilience creating a sense of cohesiveness both in our school and in the wider community. Activities include - Welcome Jigsaw for First Years, Christmas cards for local nursing homes, Wellness Wall, Kindness quotes over school intercom, Advent Kindness Tree.



School Behaviour

Scoil Mhuire agus Íde is a Catholic all ability school committed to providing opportunities to develop the unique talents of all our students in a positive, challenging and caring learning environment. Our Mission Statement and ethos urges all in the school community to be the best that they can be and to strive to achieve their personal best - whatever that may be. Our most important concern here in SMI is to provide a teaching and learning environment designed to achieve this.

Code of Behaviour

Our school Code of Behaviour has undergone major reviews over the past number of years and is updated annually. The Code aims to promote good behaviour and self-control, helping to create a safe, secure learning environment for all members of the school community.

The core principles which underpin our Code of Behaviour are as follows:

We aim to create a climate within our school which encourages and reinforces good behaviour.

We aim to create a positive and safe environment for teaching and learning.

We encourage our students to take personal responsibility for their learning and their behaviour.

We try to build positive relationships of mutual respect and mutual support among students, staff and parents.

We aim to ensure that our school's high expectations for the behaviour of all the members of the school community are widely known and understood.

Anti-Bullying

In Scoil Mhuire agus Íde the dignity of every individual is valued. Every student has the right to enjoy his/her learning and leisure time free from intimidation within the confines of the school. We are a 'telling school' - bullying is too serious not to report every incident. All forms of bullying will be taken seriously and will be dealt with in accordance with our Anti-Bullying Policy and our school rules.

The Equal Status Act, 2000 sites nine grounds of discrimination:

Gender, Marital Status, Family Status, Sexual Orientation, Religion, Age, Disability, Race and Membership of the Travelling Community.

Behaviour is expected that respects diversity across all nine grounds. Our Anti-Bullying Policy is reviewed annually in accordance with circular 045/2013.



Facilities

- 2 Food Studies Room
- Art Craft & Design Area
- Learning Support Suite
- Library
- Gymnasium
- Sports Area
- General Assembly
- Science Laboratories
- 2 Wood Technology Rooms
- Design and Communication Graphics Room
- Autism Classroom
- Career Guidance Suite
- Basketball Courts
- GAA Field
- Lockers

Canteen

Canteen facilities are provided in school - lunch orders are taken and provided in the school. Students may also bring their own lunch.

Library

In Scoil Mhuire agus Íde, we are proud to have developed a peaceful and inviting space in our student library. A room that has been designed and decorated by past students, it is well stocked in terms of research

materials to support student learning across all subject areas. We have space to promote group and project work, as well as an IT suite where students can work independently. The library catalogue is updated annually with lots of non-fiction titles as well as other resources, including board games and project materials. Of course, we also update our collection of young adult fiction regularly, and include audiobooks and graphic novels. Students also have the option of borrowing books for home reading.

Extension

Scoil Mhuire agus Íde has been granted a multi million euro extension. This extension will give our students and staff more space and the environment needed to further develop our learning and skills required for an ever changing world.

The new building will consist of seven General Classrooms, Multi Media Room, Design and Communication Graphics Room, Home Economics Room, Art Room, two Science Laboratories, three Special Education Tuition Rooms, toilets and general purpose rooms. The building is now at an advanced design stage and plans will be available in the near future.



Facilities

Class Mhuire

Students enrolling in Scoil Mhuire agus Íde with a diagnosis of Autism will have the opportunity to enrol in our Autism Classroom in 2023/2024. Our Autism Classroom will have a variety of facilities available including a kitchen area and a multi-sensory room. In Scoil Mhuire agus Íde we recognise that our students learn in a variety of ways and need various learning environments. Our Autism classes will take a maximum of 6 students each and this will allow our teachers and SNAs to work intensively with each student, addressing specific needs and challenges, ensuring that they meet their educational requirements and potential.

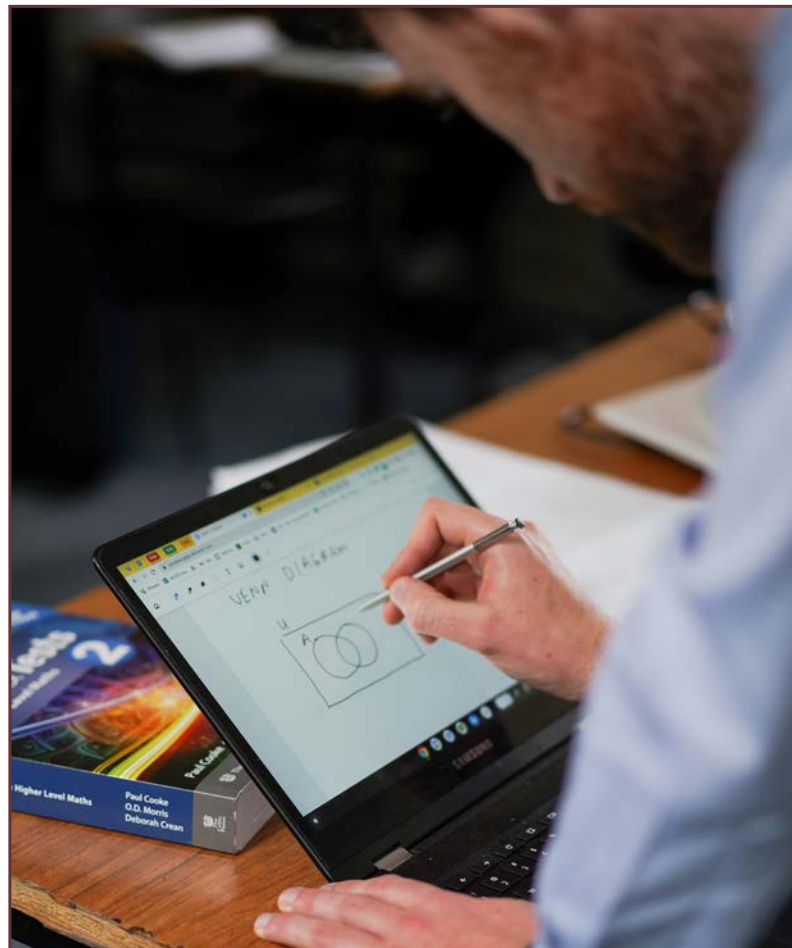
Inclusion is central in Scoil Mhuire agus Íde and therefore students will be offered dual enrolment allowing them to move between the Autism Classroom and mainstream school classes wherever possible. Students will be offered a wide range of subjects and levels which can be tailored to their specific needs. Each student will have a bespoke timetable that responds to their needs and adapts dynamically with those changing needs.

Wood Technology Room

SMI offers Wood Technology as part of our Junior Certificate Programme. Students have the opportunity to explore the natural and made world, through the medium of design, seeking out opportunities to creatively and innovatively apply the materials/resources in making and shaping their environment. SMI currently has 2 Wood Technology rooms. Both rooms are equipped with state of the art equipment to help build fun, attractive and creative projects.

Construction Studies

Construction Studies is now an established subject offered to students for the Leaving Certificate curriculum in SMI. Construction Studies introduces students to the knowledge and skills associated with Construction Technology and construction materials and practices. This is achieved through both theoretical study and integrated practical projects. The subject opens up endless opportunities in careers such as product design, graphic design, engineering, architecture, trades & furniture design and production.

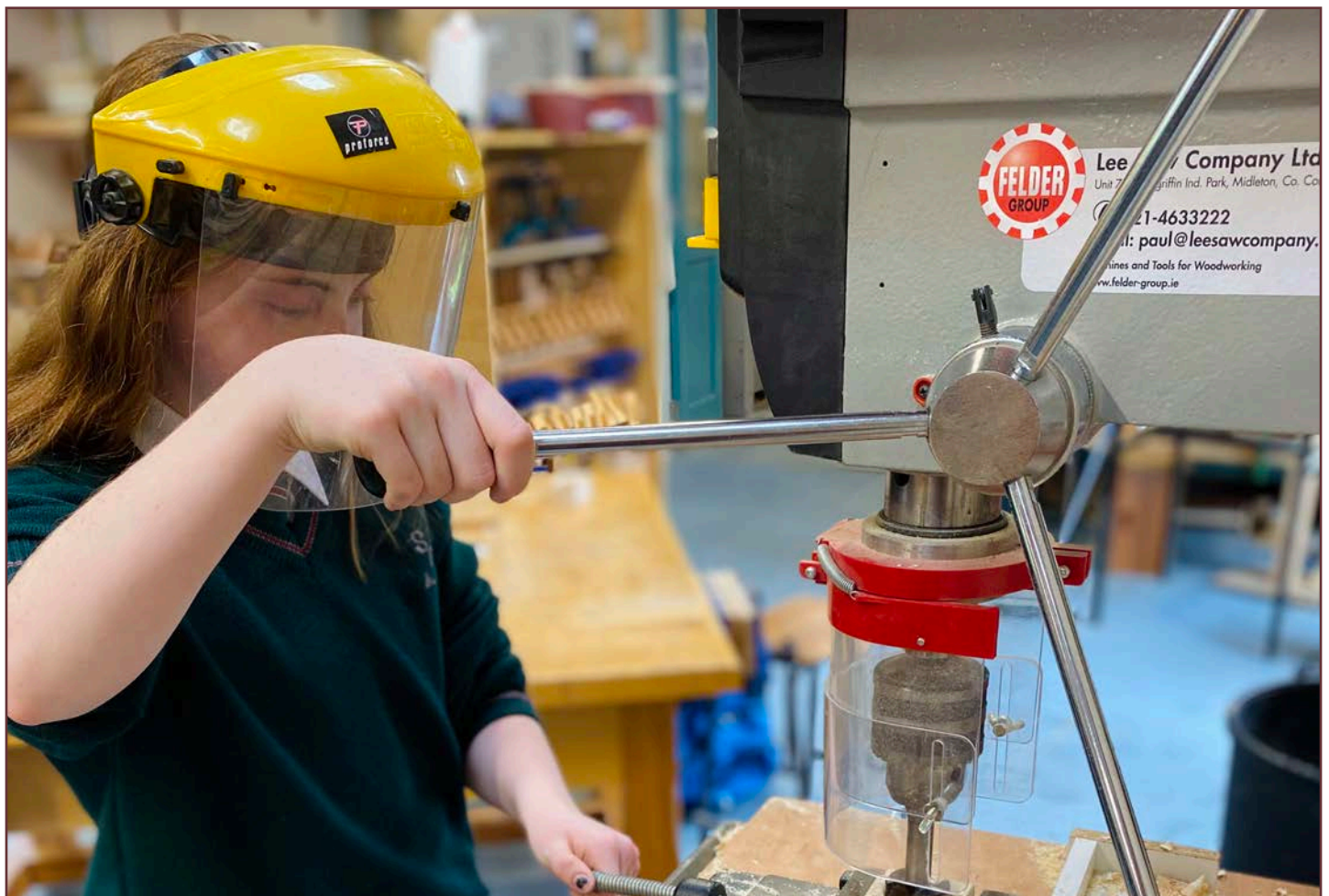


School Policies

School Policies have been developed in the following areas:

- Admissions
- Guidance
- Child Safeguarding Statement
- Pastoral Care
- Wellbeing
- Social Personal and Health Education (SPHE)
- Anti-Bullying
- Additional Educational Needs (AEN)
- Homework
- Critical Incident
- Acceptable Use Policy
- Substance Abuse Policy
- Dignity at Work Policy
- GDPR
- Mobile Phone Use Policy
- Internet Acceptable Use
- Religious Education Policy
- Covid 19

Copies of these are available for view to parents/ guardians on our website www.smincw.ie and from the school office.



Whole School Evaluation

Whole School Evaluation has become an integral part of school life in modern Ireland. SMI underwent a rigorous week-long inspection by a team of Department of Education Inspectors in March 2019. Full reports of this and all inspections carried out by the Inspectorate can be accessed on the school website www.smincw.ie and the Department's website www.education.ie.

During this inspection, the inspectors evaluated and reported under the following headings or areas of enquiry:

- Quality of school leadership and management.
- Quality of teaching and learning.
- Implementation of recommendations from previous evaluations.
- The school's self-evaluation process and capacity for school improvement.

Both staff and students were deemed by the Department Inspectorate to have excelled in all these areas.

Other subject departments to have undergone inspection in recent years include Business, Geography, French, English, Junior Science, Biology, Agricultural Science, SPHE, Physical Education, Home Economics and Career Guidance.





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