

Dominican College

Portstewart

Celebrating 100 Years



800th JUBILEE
ORDER OF PREACHERS

1216 - 2016

Developing the Whole Child

We are committed to...

Principal's Welcome



Thank you for your interest in our school.

Dominican College enjoys a wonderful location with magnificent views out over the strand, the sea and the town of Portstewart. Our students enjoy their school and appreciate its beautiful setting. There is a very strong sense of an inclusive community within the College.

We seek a disciplined learning environment where everyone has a sense of purpose and where we develop everything that makes each individual the special person which he or she is.

The College is unique amongst Catholic Grammar Schools in Northern Ireland in that a very significant proportion of our students are drawn from other denominations as well as coming from a wide geographical area. This diversity helps us to get to know ourselves and others and equips our students for life after school.

High standards in all aspects of school life are very important at Dominican as we seek to help each student achieve his or her best, in and out of the classroom, whatever their ability.

We are grateful for the positive interest in DCP.



The Dominican Sisters' vision, dedication and witness since 1917 embody the legacy that they have entrusted to us as a school family and community and it is this legacy that we continue to build on today.

Our school ethos focuses on treating each and every pupil as an individual, celebrating their unique talents and developing their full potential across a wide range of academic and extracurricular areas. We promote high academic aspirations, encouraging all our pupils to aim for excellence in all aspects of life and also to participate fully in the life of the school.

Our Dominican ethos promotes values of trust, tolerance and mutual respect.

Over the years Dominican College Portstewart has continued to adapt to meet the educational needs of successive generations, always planning that students from Dominican College will display learning and leadership in their spiritual, social and professional lives.

Dominican College exists for its students. The quality of pastoral care in this school is outstanding and a key feature of the school is high quality teaching and learning. High levels of mutual respect exist in this school and

Dominican pupils demonstrate high levels of motivation and engagement showing independence and maturity in thought and action and high levels of confidence and self-esteem.

Dominican College nurtures the individual needs of the pupils, encourages their diverse talents, promotes a sense of self-worth and develops their full potential as confident and well-rounded individuals who are able to contribute to society and the economy.

Dominican pupils are characterised by exemplary behaviour and a strong sense of respect and fellowship for one another.

It is a great privilege for me to be Principal of this school, leading a dedicated and hard-working staff team whose aim is to help each of our student fulfil their full potential within and beyond the classroom. You are very welcome to our 2023 School Prospectus and I hope to be able to welcome you to our Open Night and Open Morning in January 2023.

Gerry Lynch
Principal.



History of the school

Dominican College is a Catholic Co-Educational Voluntary Grammar School. It was founded, as a school for girls, in 1917, by the Dominican Sisters, who had purchased a spectacular site, formerly known as 'O'Hara's Castle'.

The school became co-educational in 1968 and has grown steadily to its current population of over 660 pupils and will continue to grow to a projected school population of 675 pupils over the course of the next few years.

Over the years the College has seen many changes. In the 1970s there were up to 130 boarders at the school but, when boarding ended in the mid-1990s, the boarding accommodation made way for new classrooms, an ICT Suite and the Art department. There is no longer a Community of Dominican Sisters living on the site but the rich legacy which they left us is at the heart of the Dominican Way in Education which we seek to follow.

Recent investment in ICT facilities, with three further suites added to our existing provision, means that the school is well prepared for the technological challenges which lie ahead. The school is currently involved in an exciting Enhancement Programme funded by DE which will see a significant enhancement of Art, Drama and Music as well as enabling the school to continue to deliver a high-quality curriculum to all students.

As part of the area plan compiled by the Catholic Commission Dominican College Portstewart has been recognised as playing a vital role in the education of young people in the Portstewart and surrounding areas in the twenty first century. The school proudly celebrated its centenary in 2017 and we continue to envisage a bright and rewarding future for all our students.



Education - The Dominican Way

Our Dominican tradition has been handed on to us through the vision and dedication of our predecessors in education. We remember them with pride and gratitude. It was their response to the needs of their own time that created the tradition which continues to inspire us as Dominican educators today.

Our Dominican school seeks to create a community permeated with the gospel spirit of freedom and love in constant search for truth. The Dominican motto “Veritas” reflects a desire to promote Truth in all its forms. The aim of the College is to assist each pupil, in a safe and secure learning environment, in the pursuit of their full human and spiritual development. The school is concerned not merely with imparting knowledge and skills which have their place, but more importantly with training pupils to think, evaluate and to make decisions. The school has a long tradition of educating young people from all faith traditions and we value the contribution made to the school both by our Catholic students and also those from other traditions.

The influence of our staff in developing the identity and values of the school cannot be overestimated and through the building of good relationships and mutual respect, we seek to create an atmosphere where real learning can take place.

We seek to engender an atmosphere enlivened by the Gospel spirit of freedom and charity.

To this end we encourage pupils to:

- Believe in a sense of human worth
- Value human life
- Make responsible choices and decisions
- Respect each and every individual
- Develop a spirit of independence and initiative
- Appreciate cultural richness and the world we inhabit

We are committed to...



Our vision

Through ever changing times and circumstances our vision remains constant:

- The school values the importance and uniqueness of each person, and aims to help each reach his/her potential;
- We aim to provide opportunities and experiences through a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum, which appreciates the varied needs of all pupils and prepares them for adult life;
- We seek to foster an educational partnership involving parents, pupils, school and the wider community for the benefit of all;
- We seek to create a school which, as an integral part of a wider community, facilitates the implementation of these aims.





Building the bridge -

In Dominican College we recognise that the transition from primary to secondary school has the potential to be very challenging, given the changes it involves for young people.

We believe the foundations your child will lay in Year 8 must be those on which they will continue to build throughout their Dominican education.

Our aims are:

- To build a bridge from where your child is now to their new life in Dominican College;
- To create a secure, positive learning environment which celebrates the uniqueness and individuality of every pupil;
- To work in partnership with parents to ensure a smooth and effective transition for each child both socially and academically from their Primary school to Grammar School.





We recognise that the first year in a new school is a challenging one. Pupils in Year 8 in Dominican College experience their curriculum in a variety of teaching groups including a form class which will be as evenly balanced as possible in terms of academic ability, gender and feeder primary school and we aim to ensure that your child will know at least one other person in their class.

In Dominican we believe that our older pupils have much to offer our younger pupils in terms of mentorship, leadership and friendship. Senior pupils are assigned to each class in Key Stage 3 with the aim of helping ensure that all pupils feel welcomed, secure and valued within their new school. All pupils are fully supported and encouraged by a Form Teacher, Head of Year and Head of Key Stage as well as a strong pastoral support team to help them achieve their full potential within and beyond the classroom and to enable them to develop strong and positive relationships ensuring their well-being at all times.

Successful Dominican Pupils will:

- D**evelop independent learning skills.
- O**rganise themselves effectively for each school day.
- M**anage their study time effectively.
- I**nsist on producing their best work at all times.
- N**ote that preparation for and participation in class is vital.
- I**ntegrate themselves fully within both class and year group.
- C**onsolidate work done in school with careful home study.
- A**gree to and meet all deadlines for homework and project work.
- N**urture and develop their talents in all areas of school life.





Pastoral Care

'The quality of arrangements for pastoral care in the school is outstanding'

(DENI Inspection Report)

As Dominican educators our pastoral care system exists primarily to enable students to develop their full potential. Its kernel is that it is inextricably linked with the academic, moral and spiritual life of the school. Each individual pupil is within its ambit and every member of staff is committed to it. Dominican Education, which fosters the growth of the whole person, finds expression in a written pastoral programme in our school.

The key to our pastoral approach is founded on the principle 'only in the measure that we elicit the co-operation of our pupils is our work a real success.'

'Love is always kind and patient It is always ready to make allowances, to trust and to hope'

(1 Cor. 13:4-7)

At the heart of this statement lie core values building a school community permeated by a spirit of love, trust and forgiveness:

- Freedom – since we hope to encourage a mature faith response we will bear in mind the importance of winning the pupils' co-operation;
- Good relationships will be fostered and form a secure bond between staff, pupils and parents;
- Responsibilities – each student's contribution to the school will be recognised and celebrated;
- Inclusivity – we strive to ensure our pupils feel a sense of belonging to the Dominican family

Social Justice

“A person’s words flow out of what is in their hearts”
(Luke 6:45)

The search for Justice and Peace is fundamental to the Dominican ethos. We aim to empower our pupils to appreciate their individual and collective responsibility in contributing to a more just society, both in our country and abroad.

Justice, peace, reconciliation and mutual understanding will find clear expression first and foremost in the daily life of our school. We aim to educate our students to be people of integrity and responsibility, whose potential has begun to be realised and who will use their gifts to contribute to a more just society.

“In this life we cannot do great things. We can only do small things with great love”
(Saint Teresa of Calcutta)

“No conflict between faith and reason”
(St Thomas Aquinas)

“Education is the engine for personal development”
(Nelson Mandela)



Throughout their school life, our pupils will be given opportunities to:

- Raise their awareness of local, national and international issues
- Engage in constructive, meaningful and challenging debate and discussion
- Experience and contribute to the network of support that DCP provides to others
- Reflect on the importance of their role within the broader community
- Develop ecological awareness and responsibility for our planet
- Evaluate the effectiveness of decisions and actions taken
- Realise they CAN and DO make a difference



“ Truth and peace can rarely be imposed from the outside; it must be born within and between communities through meetings and dialogue and then carried outward. ”

(Jean Vanier)

Commitment to Truth

Dedication to Justice

Appreciation of the world around us

Devotion to Study



All Dominican pupils are encouraged to be pro-active and get involved in some of the many Social Awareness initiatives including:

- Volunteering in a range of local and national causes
- Participating in charitable fundraising
- Supporting the work done by Trocaire, St. Vincent de Paul and other charities
- Completing the Dominican Award
- Benefitting from the opportunities provided by their involvement in social awareness initiatives
- Recognising and assisting others where injustice exists
- Protecting and safeguarding the environment for future generations

We are committed to...



Religious Education

Religious Education continues to play an integral part in our school. In the tradition of St Dominic our main aim is to guide our pupils in search of the Truth of the Gospel in an environment where the spiritual dimension is emphasised alongside the intellectual, emotional, social and physical development.

Throughout their seven years at Dominican, we seek to nurture each pupil's spiritual development through a range of liturgical experiences. Dominican aims to widen the pupils' horizons by promoting the understanding of, and respect for, the beliefs, traditions and cultures of others.

We also aim to encourage students to see their shared responsibility as stewards of creation in these changing and challenging times and the Dominican ethos strongly promotes social justice. The words of Christ, "The truth will make you free", underlie all our educational efforts and we aim to elicit a free response which is at the heart of the gospel.

At Dominican we aim to:

- Provide the environment in which students may experience their Christian faith;
- Facilitate and support the ongoing development of the faith and spiritual life of our students;
- Provide opportunities for students to develop initiative, independence and critical thinking within the perspective of their faith.



Curriculum Provision

We pride ourselves on providing a curriculum characterised by quality, breadth, balance and scope. Our curriculum takes account of the Entitlement Framework (DENI) and caters for the abilities and needs of all our students. Our well qualified and dedicated staff help our students reach their full potential.



KEY STAGE 3 OVERVIEW

At Key Stage 3, the following subjects are delivered:

| | | |
|----------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------|
| Accelerated Reading | History | Personal Development |
| Art and Design | Home Economics | Physical Education |
| Drama | ICT | Religious Studies |
| English | Irish | Science |
| Financial Capability | Learning for Life and Work | Spanish |
| French | Mathematics | Technology and Design |
| Geography | Music | Careers Education (Yr10) |

We are committed to...





KEY STAGE 4 OVERVIEW

At Key Stage 4, the following subjects are delivered:



| | | |
|-------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------|
| Art and Design | Geography | Motor Vehicle Studies |
| Business & Comm Systems | Health and Social Care | Music |
| Creative Cookery | History | Polish |
| Creative Arts & DT | Home Economics | Religious Studies |
| Digital Technology | Irish | Double Award Science |
| Drama | IT Applications | Single Award Science |
| English Language | Key Skills | Spanish |
| English Literature | Learning for Life and Work | Sport |
| French | Mathematics | Technology and Design |
| Further Mathematics | Media Studies | Vocational Studies (OCN) |

We are committed to...



SIXTH FORM OVERVIEW

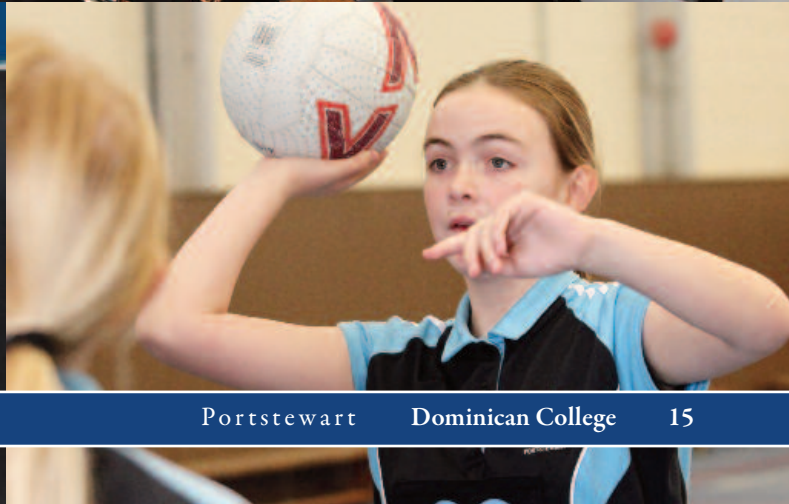
At Sixth Form, the following subjects are delivered:

| | |
|------------------------|--------------------|
| Applied Science | ICT (Single Award) |
| Art and Design | ICT (Double Award) |
| Biology | Mathematics |
| Business Studies | Media Studies |
| Chemistry | Music |
| Construction | Performing Arts |
| Digital Technology | Physical Education |
| Engineering | Physics |
| English Literature | Polish |
| French | Psychology |
| Further Mathematics | Religious Studies |
| Geography | Spanish |
| Health and Social Care | Technology |
| History | Travel and Tourism |

Dominican College is an approved centre for the following awarding bodies: CCEA, EDEXCEL, OCN, OCR, Pearson and WJE. This ensures the school has the flexibility to offer a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum for all our KS4 and KS5 pupils offering both academic and vocational pathways. We are also a member of the Coleraine Area Learning Partnership.



...empowering young people



We are committed to...



Careers Education, Information, Advice & Guidance

The Careers Department, in line with the school aims, seeks to help all pupils through guidance and education to gain the knowledge, skills and attitudes to prepare them as best possible for adult life. We also seek to provide objective and impartial guidance in preparation for key transition changes for each pupil. At all times the interests of the individual is placed above the interests of our school and we ensure that all our pupils have a full range of pathways both academic and vocational at Key stages 3, 4 and 5.

This is supported by:

- A relevant curriculum – timetabled careers lessons
- Access to careers information – using the careers library and ICT facilities
- Experience of work through placements, guest speakers, workshops and interview skills day
- Ongoing Parental involvement and partnership with the local careers service
- Links with business, community groups and educational establishments





Extra Curricular Provision

We firmly believe in the importance of extra-curricular activities and how they enhance the overall education, enrichment and development of our students. Diversity and inclusion are at the heart of our extra-curricular provision and there is 'something for everyone....'

Benefits of extra-curricular activities:

- Creates and develops a greater sense of identity with and belonging to the school;
- Develops positive attitudes such as commitment, perseverance and industry;
- Promotes teamwork and responsibility to others;
- Enriches and builds on the work done in class;
- Increases levels of confidence, pride and sense of achievement;
- Provides opportunities for pupils to pursue their own interests;
- Learning about leadership, time management and prioritizing;
- The experience of a wide and diverse range of interests;
- Helps to raise self-esteem and build solid relationships.

We are committed to...

Extra- Curricular provision currently offered at Dominican College:

- Sports activities including:
 - Badminton Club
 - Camogie, Hockey, Netball
 - Boys Soccer, Girls Soccer
 - Gaelic Football, Hurling, Rugby
 - Athletics
- Senior and Junior Choirs
- Orchestra, Wind band and other ensembles
- Instrumental and singing tuition
- Ukulele Club
- The Dominican Award
- St Vincent De Paul Society
- Language Club and English as Additional Language Mentors
- Python Programming, Digital Futures App Design and QUB Coding
- Eco Club
- Stem Club
- Lego Club
- Junior Science Club
- Healthy Hearts and Healthy Minds Walking Club
- Running Club
- School Council
- Homework Club
- School Musicals
- Chess Club
- Work Experience and Interview Skills



...encouraging individual creativity



U6th Study Area

All content correct at time of print.
For queries contact the school or visit
www.dominicanportstewart.com



Dominican College

Portstewart



In Partnership with Parents
and the Community

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