



# St. Joseph's Patrician College 'The Bish'



**PROSPECTUS**





## Principal's Welcome

Welcome to Saint Joseph's Patrician College, otherwise known as 'The Bish'. Our school was founded in 1862 by Paul O'Connor, a member of the Brothers of Saint Patrick (Patrician Brothers) with funding from the Bishop of Galway. Hence the 'Bish' nickname. The Bish is a Catholic all boys voluntary secondary school and welcomes students from all backgrounds, faith communities and abilities.

Our school has a long and proud record of high academic achievement, sporting success and cultural engagement deeply rooted in the traditions and values of the Patrician Brothers. Our school motto comes directly from Bishop Daniel Delany, who founded the Brothers in 1808: Love God, work hard and take care of one another. These words continue to guide and inspire us as we provide a safe and happy all-round education for the students in our care. There is a lot of diversity in the school and we pride ourselves on welcoming of people of all cultures and all faiths, and none, while still retaining our catholic ethos.

Saint Joseph's Patrician College is run by a Board of Management under the trusteeship of the Le Chéile Schools Trust, which was established in 2008 by 13 religious congregations, the Patricians are one of them. We are presently situated in Nuns' Island in the centre of Galway city close to the Cathedral and welcome over 750 students each day to our school. We continue to be the number 1 all boys feeder school to University of Galway and the majority of our Leaving Cert students achieve the college place of their choice.

Bish past pupils contribute to the economic, cultural, artistic, sporting and political life, not only of Galway city but also on the national and international stage. All of the above is underpinned by strong relationships between students and staff

There have been significant changes in The Bish over the last 3 years. We have been able to open 7 new practical classrooms in Nuns' Island: Art Room, Music Room, Home Economics room, Technology Room, 2x Graphics rooms (One which is also a computer room) "Classroom of the future" that allows students to work in groups and develop their problem-solving skills.

We have also introduced 6 new optional subjects at Junior Cycle and 3 new Leaving Certificate Subjects. It is our intention that when the optional Junior Cycle subjects have worked through the year groups, we will be in a position to further expand our subject choice at Leaving Certificate level.

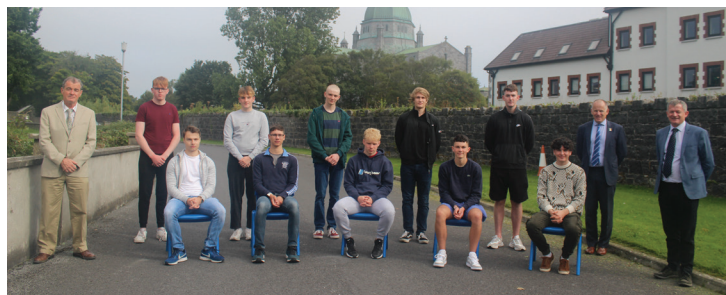
We are very proud of these developments and are keen to welcome prospective pupils and parents to the school to get an idea of the positive atmosphere and ethos in the school. This prospectus will help give a small flavour of life in the Bish.

*Enjoy reading our prospectus.*

**John Madden**  
**Principal**

## Academia

For over 160 years, we in the 'Bish' have taken great pride in the academic successes of our students. We are the number one feeder school to NUIG in the country. Among our most recent Leaving Cert. graduates, over 34% achieved over 500 points.



## JUNIOR CYCLE

From first to third year, all students study Irish, English, Maths, Science, French, Business Studies, History, Geography, Religious Education, Social Personal and Health Education (SPHE), Civic Social and Political Education (CSPE) and Physical Education. In addition, students choose two of the following optional subjects - Music, Art, Technology, Technical Graphics, Home Economics, Spanish.

## JUNIOR CYCLE WELLBEING

As part of the JC three-year course, all students will receive 400 hours of Wellbeing modules to include Digital Literacy, Digital Portfolio, Guidance, Life Skills, Learning to Learn, Mindfulness, Friends for Life, Swimming and Choir. These hours also include SPHE, CSPE and PE.



## SENIOR CYCLE

At Senior Cycle, students must undertake studies in English, Irish and Maths. They then choose four of the following options: Physics, Chemistry, Biology, Physics with Chemistry, Applied Maths, Agricultural Science, Business, Economics, Accounting, French, History, Geography, Design and Communications Graphics (DCG), Computer Science, Politics and Society, P.E (Exam) and LCVP



## NON-EXAMINATION SUBJECTS IN SENIOR CYCLE

Students are required to participate in Physical Education, Religious Education and Relationship and Sexuality Education (RSE).



## LEAVING CERTIFICATE APPLIED PROGRAMME(LCVP)

LCVP is an optional subject with three modules that include work experience, enterprise education and preparation for the world of work. It makes links between Leaving Certificate subjects and the real world.



## FACILITIES

Our facilities include science labs, computer rooms, graphics rooms, a gymnasium, a weights room, technology room, art room, music room, classroom of the future and buses. We also have use of sporting facilities in neighbouring NUIG.





## Sport

The Bish aims to develop the whole person. We hope that our students strive for excellence on the sports field as well as in the classroom. Our school is privileged to have a renowned successful sporting history. There is a wide range of sports to choose from including Football, Hurling, Soccer, Rugby, Rowing, Athletics, Swimming, and Badminton. Teams have enjoyed unprecedented success at international, national and provincial level. The Bish boasts all-Ireland victories in soccer, basketball and rowing in recent years. We encourage everyone to play sport - some try two or three sports in first year. Swimming in 1st year takes place as part of the Physical Education programme.



## FAITH AND CULTURE

At the core of the ethos of the 'Bish' is that the school should be a place "where each student is helped to reach his full potential." Along with academia and sport, an appreciation for culture and the arts is fostered and encouraged as it is an integral part of helping each student to reach his full potential.



## BISH BASH

The school talent show takes place every second year in the Black Box theatre in December. It is a major event in the school calendar and over ten per-cent of the school body participate each year. The type of performers range from Irish dancers, traditional musicians, singers, and much more. In 2017, a clip of one Irish dancing performer went viral and has amassed over seven million views to date. 'Bish Bash' creates a warm, welcoming space that allows every student to express himself artistically.



## EDUCATIONAL AND CULTURAL TRIPS

There is a trip abroad organised each year with the intention of bringing to life what is being taught in the classroom. Trips in recent years include a visit to Shakespeare's Globe Theatre in London, the beaches of Normandy and Rome. There are also subject specific trips within Ireland organised by class teachers every year such as trips to Google, Aviva Insurances, Educational and Cultural Trips the Guinness Brewery, The Dáil and many more.



## Ski Trip

A school ski-trip travels to Europe during the February midterm each year. Students from all year-groups are invited to come along, and the ski resorts visited over the past few years include Sauze D'Ouix, Sestriere, Montgenevre, Sansicario and the White Mountains of New Hampshire.



## Student Council

Our Student Council consists of two representatives from each year group. Nominees put themselves forward and are elected by their peers. The Student Council is underpinned by the ISSU charter (Irish Second Level Students' Union) and is an opportunity for the promotion of student voice. Recent accomplishments by the student council include the setting up of a chess-club, a wheelchair basketball workshop, Student ID cards, a Colour Run, a workshop with Médecins Sans Frontières and donations to local charities through money raised by Non-Uniform days. Other cultural events include Languages Week, Seachtain na Gaeilge, and BakeOff competitions.



## Bish Parents' Council

Bish Parents' Council support the running of the school through various activities. They are involved in all of the major events which happen in the school calendar – incoming induction of first years and leaving certificate graduation mass among others. Last year they were centrally involved in the Colour Run and Le Chéile Day as well as our Ukrainian fundraiser. All major school policies are agreed following consultation with the Parents' Council. There is a small number of fundraising events that the Parents' Council organise throughout the school year however it is not their main focus. Some of their past fundraisers include - Duck Race, Bish-Breakfast, Colour Run, and The Cube to name but a few. The Bish Parents' Council also organise the annual Golf AM/AM which is always a great day for parents, students and the broader Bish Community.





## Pastoral Care

When you send your son to The Bish, we understand that you are entrusting us to support him as he navigates a time in his life between childhood and becoming an adult. Many teenagers experience difficulties during adolescence and to support your son during these times we have 2 guidance counsellors on staff. They are available to listen to and support your son with any difficulty he may have, whether it is school related or not. The guidance counsellors at The Bish have more available hours per week to meet with students or parents than any other secondary school in the county. If you or your son has any problem during his time at the Bish, you are always welcome to get in touch. As well as the confidential counselling service, the guidance counsellors can also support your son with educational and career guidance in areas such as subject choice and helping him to explore career options.



## Class Masses

Class Masses take place throughout the year. Each class at junior level attends at least one regular parish morning mass. The class is accompanied by the R.E. teacher and the Principal or Deputy Principals. Students participate in over 12 roles during the liturgy by reading the scriptures, bringing the gifts to the altar and by reading the prayers of petition. We are thankful to the community in St. Augustine's who always welcome our students to the church. Our 6th Year Graduation mass is celebrated in one of the local churches in May every year and constitutes one of the most significant and important events in the school year.







## Transition Year

This is an optional year which provides students with an opportunity to develop life skills and to experience subjects before committing themselves to the Leaving Certificate programme. Transition Year was reintroduced to The Bish in September 2018 and has grown each year with over 80 students participating in this year's programme. Students study core subjects throughout the year as well as sampling all Leaving Certificate optional subjects. Work experience is also a central component of the programme and there are many opportunities to develop additional skills and achievements including Gaisce, Coaching, First Aid and many more.



### OUR EXPERIENCES:

Following on from the reintroduction of TY there has been a noticeable improvement in the maturity levels of our senior cycle students. The students who have participated in TY are in position to make better subject choices going into 5th year. They are also better equipped to make CAO choices or indeed access future employment opportunities.







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