

# Excellence *through* Care



Our Lady and St Patrick's College, Knock

PROSPECTUS



# Welcome

Our College is a very special place and our students, staff and governors are exceptional people. Our Vision Statement of 'Excellence through Care' guides us every day as we provide a strong, dynamic education in which students are valued as individuals, with a culture of celebrating achievement. Our six Key Values of Care, Honesty, Respect, Inclusion, Safety and Trust inform our vision, building upon a distinguished history, and combining innovation with the best traditions of Catholic education.

Our prospectus and accompanying information booklet will give you a flavour of the established success of our school and the many ways that we maximise opportunities for our students with the aim that they become independent, innovative, life-long learners.

Our pursuit of academic success is built on a solid foundation of excellent and supportive teaching. We are dedicated to developing leadership and independence in each of our students – important attributes that they will use and value throughout their lives. We listen to and act upon our students' views and they play an important role in shaping decisions within the College.

Our state-of-the-art facilities are put to constant use through various events – exhibitions, drama performances, orchestras, sports, debating and community involvement.

We are ambitious for our students. From the day they join us, they will experience an enrichment package, enhanced by our solid links with top universities and established businesses. For our students' education, the classroom is just the beginning.



Deborah McLaughlin  
Principal



# College History and Tradition

Our Lady and St Patrick's College, Knock was founded as a Diocesan, Co-Educational Voluntary Catholic Grammar School in 1985 with the amalgamation of the Sacred Heart of Mary Grammar School, Holywood, Co Down and St Patrick's College, Knock.



The College is situated in its own spacious 18 acre site in the Cherryvalley district of Belfast. Students come to the College from a wide area covering South and East Belfast, North Down and Ards. The rural and urban catchment area has the advantage of allowing young people from diverse backgrounds to mix and make friendships. As students of Our Lady and St Patrick's they are all assured access to a comprehensive and progressive curriculum with an extensive range of extra-curricular activities.

We are very aware that young people have varied needs and gifts, and our aim is to meet the former whilst helping them develop the latter. They need personal support as well as a firm academic framework; encouragement to enjoy their leisure and the worlds of art, culture and sport, as well as the challenge of intellectual discipline; the opportunity not only to succeed themselves but also to serve and perhaps to lead.

Our committed staff and range of facilities allow us to cater for almost all of our students' interests, be they popular or specialist. The College's Pastoral Care system, based on Tutor Groups, helps each boy and girl grow towards maturity. We are a vibrant school, proud of what we have achieved, and in this rapidly changing world we are constantly seeking better ways of preparing our students to meet its demands.



# Catholic Ethos

As a Catholic Grammar School one of our aims is to build on the faith already laid down in the home. The Religious Education Department of Our Lady and St Patrick's College, Knock has as its primary objective the development of the student's spirituality in order to prepare him or her for life.



A comprehensive programme has been designed to meet all the needs of the young person. This programme has a strong pastoral dimension, including a Retreat experience. The Religious Education Department also seeks to promote awareness, sensitivity and respect for other sincerely held beliefs. Community worship is at the heart of College life.

The College Oratory provides a place for meditation and worship. We conduct liturgical services throughout the year – Advent Prayer Services, Lenten Penitential Services, Tutor Group Masses. The College has a Chaplain and Lay Chaplain who, together with a Chaplaincy team of students, lead a weekly Prayer Group and liturgies throughout the year, and organise our fund-raising campaigns. As part of their curriculum all students study Religious Education and it is a core, compulsory subject at GCSE.

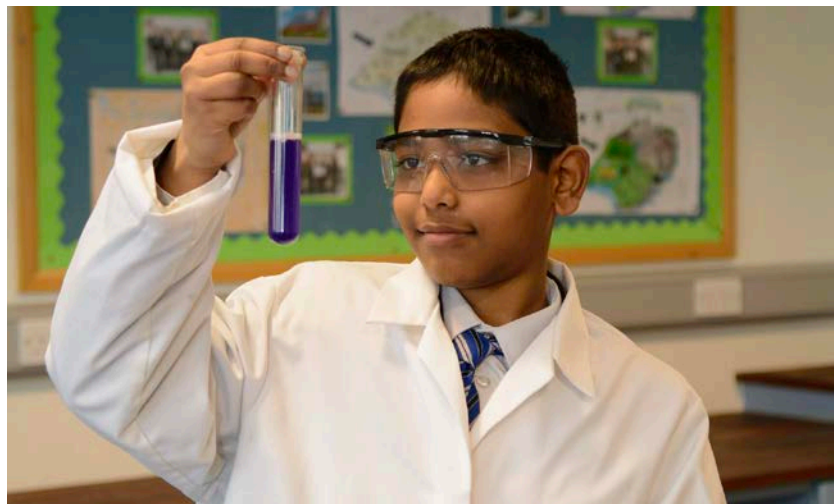




# Academic Excellence

First and foremost, we are proud of our strong academic record.

The fact that year after year our examination outcomes are significantly above national averages and that we add value to every young person's potential, shows that we are a very successful school. This success is nurtured by a relentless quest to improve what we do. It is also built on our blend of academic rigour, combined with a determination to challenge all groups of learners, regardless of their starting points. We have a high reputation for the quality of teaching and learning. It is this ambition, combined with care for the individual student, that underpins the continued success of our students.





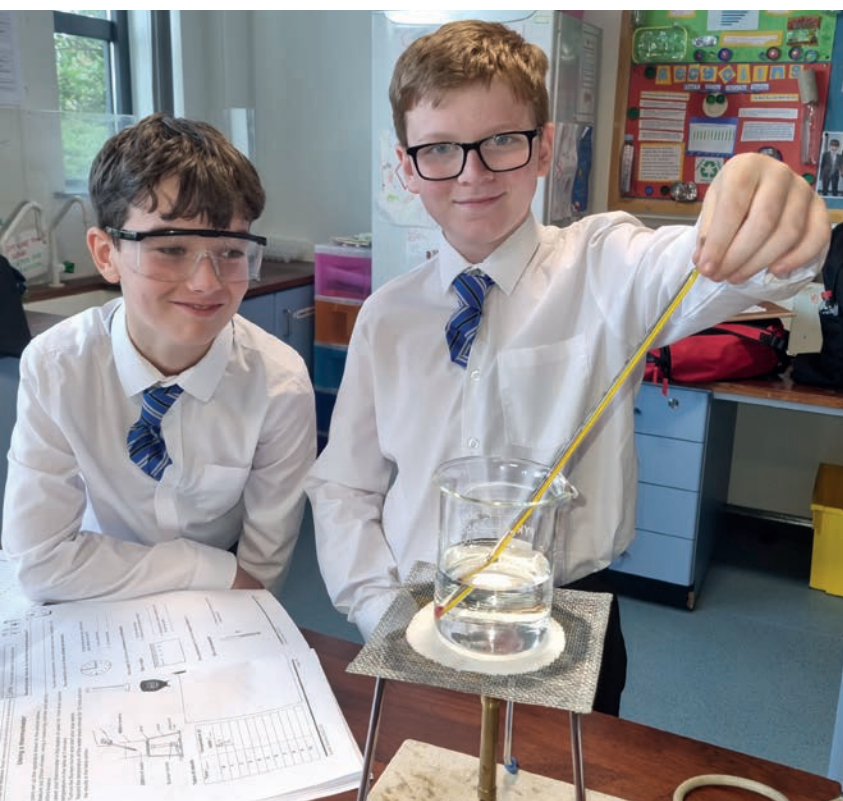
# Transition

The College is separated into three phases, enabling us to tailor all aspects of our curriculum and enrichment: Junior School (Key Stage 3, Years 8, 9 and 10); Senior School (Key Stage 4, Years 11 and 12); and Upper School (Sixth Form, Years 13 and 14).

Transition from Primary School to Grammar School is extremely important in Our Lady and St Patrick's College, Knock. It is such a fundamental aspect of making students successful, independent learners throughout their school life. We pay particular attention to how students settle in and enjoy their transition period between Years 7 and 8. Students have their own Tutor who takes them through our Induction and Personal Development programmes. Junior School students have their own lunch-time and our Sixth Form students provide leadership to our younger students through a very successful peer mentoring structure.

The curriculum offer is balanced and challenging, and is taught in a number of interactive and

engaging styles, supported by robust tracking and monitoring. We run extensive programmes for study support, Homework Club, revision classes and individual student support sessions.



*“My experience at Knock has been great. Our teachers are very helpful and our Year 13 Mentors have really made us feel part of the school. Making friends has been easy and there is something for everyone.”*

**Sarah, Year 9**





# Enrichment

We have a strong emphasis on enrichment and educating the whole child and it is our expectation that students get involved in extra-curricular activities.

We host wonderful plays, musicals and concerts with our orchestras and various ensembles and bands, for our own students and the wider school community. We celebrate the creativity of our students through Drama and Art exhibitions. The Duke of Edinburgh Award, John Paul II Award, Bar Mock Trial and Pramerica Community service scheme are established successes here and our haul of trophies from regional and national sporting events is a real testament to our strong sporting tradition. Departments are encouraged to organise activities which include an annual ski trip, educational and sports visits to USA, China and Europe.



*“OLSPCK is a great school whether you like sports, arts or the academic side of school. The sports facilities here are amazing, the library has a wide variety of books and the classrooms are a great place to study.”*

Lucy, Year 10



# Sixth Form

The Upper School (Sixth Form) at Our Lady and St Patrick's College, Knock is an exciting place to study. We offer our students academic rigour and challenge, as well as providing them with the grounding and opportunity to be the leaders of the future.



Students have a wide range of choices with over twenty-five A-Level courses on offer as well as enrichment classes in Mandarin. Work in the Upper School is demanding and student achievement and attainment are high. Most students study four AS Levels, taking three through to full A-Level.



The majority of our students progress on to Higher Education, many of which attend Russell Group universities. We have a comprehensive Careers and work experience programme to support their ongoing education and ensure their future study and career success.



We offer a wide variety of enrichment activities, including academic visits, voluntary work, clubs and talks from guest speakers. Students can build up their enrichment hours through volunteering in the school community and have leadership opportunities to be Prefects and Peer Mentors, supporting younger students through their studies. They have dedicated study areas and a Recreation Room in which to socialise.



# Inspiring Confidence

The learning environment is a visual statement to parents, staff and students of the high expectations that the College sets for the whole of its community.

Our purpose is to try and go beyond what we believe to be possible by embracing modern technology and using space creatively to maximise learning opportunities. Our school building and facilities are “the third teacher” after parents and our staff.

*“OLSPCK is a safe and nurturing environment for our children where they can learn and grow in confidence with opportunities to develop their social and sporting interests while achieving academically.”*

Year 13 Parent







# Inspiring Success

Success means different things to different people and every student is encouraged to be successful in his or her own way. For us, success starts with providing an atmosphere where the emotional needs of every person are met and where everyone is given a wide range of opportunities to develop existing talents or discover new ones.

At Our Lady and St Patrick's College, Knock we find a way to reward young people whether in academic performance, sporting triumph, artistic and musical accomplishment or in any of the activities we provide. However, we think our greatest success lies in our ability to help produce resilient, balanced, rounded individuals who are equipped to deal with the wider world and can contribute to the common good.

## **Gifted and Talented**

We recognise and nurture the talents of all our students. A wide range of enrichment and extension activities are built into our everyday lessons and the personalisation and target setting arrangements in individual subjects ensure that we cater for gifted and talented students. Our programmes of subject learning, accelerated classes, sports and music, as well as our leadership activities and university visits, offer our gifted and talented students a wide variety of opportunities.



# Community

By developing their sense of community, cultural awareness, respect and tolerance of differences, we help our students to take their place in society.

Students participate enthusiastically in the development of the school, fund-raising for charitable causes, and are active in the local community, building their self-belief, self-esteem, leadership skills and community spirit.



*“We have been helping older people in our community, it is lovely to hear their stories about when they were young.”*

**Denis, Year 13**



*“Pastoral Care at Knock is outstanding. The members of the Pastoral Team who have supported our family have demonstrated, judgement, commitment and great warmth.”*

*Year 11 Parent*



# Values

## From Values to Statements of Principle

**Care:** At OLSPCK, as a Catholic College, we seek to nurture a ***caring culture*** of supported ambition. We have high expectations with respect to behaviour and the hard work that is required for all to realise their full potential. Everyone in the College will be supported to meet these expectations in a caring environment. We show our care by being sensitive to one another's differing emotional and practical needs and by being committed to meeting those needs with positive support.

**Honesty:** At OLSPCK, we seek to create a ***culture of honesty*** in all our relationships. Honesty is a fundamental value that is essential for building trust, fostering healthy relationships, building teams and promoting personal growth. Cultivating honesty as a value requires being truthful, practising self-reflection, building trust and being accountable.

**Respect:** At OLSPCK, we embed the value of universal respect in all that we do. Each member of the community is respected for the different contributions each of them brings to the life of the College, as a student, teacher, member of staff, parent or other stakeholder. We show our mutual respect by engaging with one another in ways that demonstrate our willingness to listen to differing views and to consider all matters together in a patient, reflective and considerate manner.

**Inclusion:** At OLSPCK, we are ***fully inclusive*** of all and we celebrate together our diversity and our commitment to equality. Inclusion demands that there is a level playing field for all to achieve, regardless of natural privilege or social position, and for each to realise their full potential. We create an inclusive culture by taking positive action that seeks to overcome any obstacles that make it more challenging for some to achieve self-confidence, self-respect and self-esteem as a result of social circumstance or bad fortune.

**Safety:** At OLSPCK, everyone enjoys the right to work, study and play in a ***safe***, caring, respectful, trusting and inclusive ***environment***. If each of us does not feel safe, then we cannot benefit from the efforts we are making to embed our other key values into our culture. We show our commitment to safety by demonstrating very clearly that socially unacceptable or bullying behaviour towards any other member of our College community will not be tolerated.

**Trust:** At OLSPCK, we create an ***atmosphere of trust***. If we are to flourish, we all need to feel confident that we can be trusted to contribute positively in our differing ways to the life of the College. We show our trust by treating everyone with consistent fairness, by respecting confidences and the privacy of others, and by demonstrating that openness and honesty will be rewarded with warm support.



# Exploring Possibilities

Our Lady and St Patrick's College, Knock cares for young people in a way that encourages them to develop to their full potential within a supportive Christian community. We seek to prepare our students to play an active and responsible role in society and to use their talents for the service of others.

This Mission Statement guides us in the task of enabling our students to realise their full potential. It stresses the importance of relationships. Students are to be cared for and their talents developed in a harmonious manner. They are to be encouraged to use these talents for the benefit of others.





# Beyond the Classroom

Athletics  
Badminton  
Bar Mock Trial Competition  
Basketball  
Camogie  
Chamber Choir  
Chaplaincy Group  
Coding Club  
Community Service Group  
Cookery Club  
Cross-country  
Debating  
Deutscher Klub  
Drama  
Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme  
Dungeons and Dragons Club  
Flute Ensemble  
Folk Group  
Gaelic Football (boys and girls)  
Geography Club  
Golf  
Homework Club  
Hurling  
John Paul II Award  
Junior and Senior Choirs  
Junior and Senior Orchestras  
Justice Group  
Lego Club  
Musical Theatre Club  
Netball  
Outdoor Pursuits  
Prayer Group  
Rugby  
School Magazine  
Soccer (boys and girls)  
School Productions  
Ski Club  
St Vincent de Paul  
STEM Club  
String Quartet  
Traditional Music Group Trócaire  
Ulster Project  
Young Enterprise  
Young Apprentice



*“I will always be grateful for the opportunities that Our Lady and St Patrick’s College, Knock gave me.”*

**Peter, former student**

# Parents and the College

Regular contact with parents and carers is maintained throughout a student's time at the College. Written reports are sent to parents annually and meetings are held to discuss the academic and social development of all students. If, at any time, parents are concerned about their son or daughter, they are encouraged to contact the College immediately.

A calendar of events is listed in the Student Planner which is given to each student at the beginning of the academic year. The Student Planner contains details of all parent/teacher meetings, advice on the amount of time to be spent doing homework, dates of examinations, deadlines for the coursework components of GCSE and A-Level examinations, dates of field trips and when the terms begin and end.

Parents of Year 10 and 12 students have the opportunity to meet Careers staff, Tutors, subject teachers and Heads of Department on Options Days, as these students prepare to choose their GCSE and A-Level subjects.

Communiqué, a twice yearly newsletter, keeps parents informed about the life of the College. A regular e-bulletin to parents and our text message service are used to maintain links between school and home. Parents are urged

to ensure that they receive and read the newsletters. Parents can consult the College website at [www.knock.co.uk](http://www.knock.co.uk) for details of admissions criteria, school events, calendars, policies and procedures.

Parents are encouraged to support and play an active part in our Parent Teacher Association which organises a number of events each year with the aim of furthering the positive relationship between home and school.





*“The College has simply exceeded our expectations from day one. Our children are challenged to do their best in every field of endeavour.”*

**Year 10 Parent**

# College and Management Information

Our Lady and St Patrick's College, Knock is an 11-19 Catholic Voluntary Co-Educational Grammar School under the trusteeship of the Down and Connor Diocese.

## **Postal Address**

120 Gilnahirk Road  
Belfast  
Co Down  
BT5 7DL

## **Telephone**

028 9040 1184

## **Email**

info@knock.co.uk

## **Website**

www.knock.co.uk



## **Chairperson of the Board of Governors**

Mr Leo O'Reilly

## **Principal**

Miss Deborah McLaughlin

## **College Enrolment**

1330 students

## **Year 8 Admissions**

190 students

## **College Colours**

Blue, Black and White

## **School Times**

School opens	8.00 am
Morning Registration	9.20 am
Classes begin	9.30 am
Morning Break	11.05 am – 11.20 am
Junior Lunch	12.50 pm – 1.25 pm
Senior Lunch	1.25 pm – 2.00 pm
Classes end	3.34 pm







[www.knock.co.uk](http://www.knock.co.uk)