



**St Kieran's College
Secondary School
Kilkenny**

**School Plan
2025-2028**

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Part 1 - Introduction and Enrolment Trends

Introduction

St Kieran's College is an all-boys voluntary secondary school under the patronage of the Bishop of Ossory. The College was established in 1782, 'the first Catholic College in the Kingdom' to open its doors after Grattan's Parliament had relaxed the Penal Laws in the same year.

The College was situated in a number of different locations during the following decades before the foundation stone of the present neo-Gothic building was blessed in 1836. Two years later the College had a permanent home. Since then, many extensions have been added, making St Kieran's College a fine blend of historical and modern building styles.

The present College crest replaced an earlier one in 1874. St Kieran is represented with mitre and staff, standing between two pillars. The motto is *Hiems Transit* ("Winter has passed") from The Song of Songs (2:11) which refers to the 'winter' of the Penal Laws era.

In keeping with the aims of the College founders, we at St Kieran's College strive to prepare an educated, committed, Catholic laity, keeping in mind its particular role in promoting solid Christian values.

With a proud tradition as the oldest secondary school in Ireland, St Kieran's College boasts over 760 students from a cross section of society, both urban and rural, and from all socio-economic backgrounds.

Sustainability

Our school plan outlines initiatives to integrate sustainability across all aspects of school life. This includes implementing green practices in operations, incorporating environmental education into the curriculum, and engaging the school community in sustainability projects. The school has established a Sustainability Team (to add students in 2025/26), Co-ordinator role, Transition Year Module (Environmental and Sustainability Studies), Sustainability Policy Statement and is in the process of establishing an outdoor classroom/school garden.

Enrolment

During the lifetime of this School Plan it is anticipated that the school population will grow as follows 2025-2029

2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29
833	840	840	840

The demographic profile of the diocese of Ossory is changing rapidly as evidenced by analysis of Census 2022.

Part 2 - School Structures

The College Trustees are the legal owners of the school who determine the purpose of the school and what it expects to achieve.

The Board of Management is appointed by the College Trustees. It consists of four nominees of the trustees, two nominees of the parents (selected through the Parents' Association) and two nominees of the teaching staff. The Board serves for a three-year term. The College President is the Chairman of the Board, and the Principal is the ex-officio Secretary of the Board. It is entrusted by the Trustees to look after the conduct, management, and financial administration of the school in accordance with the school ethos.

The members of the Board of Management 2023 – 2026 are:

Rev Dr Dermot Ryan (Chairman)

Mr Michael Hogan

Ms Yvonne O'Dwyer

Mr Tom Hogan

Mr Kevin Cummins

Ms Una Dillon

Ms Hollie Hickey

Mr Michael Walsh

Teaching Staff

- Ryan, Rev Dr Dermot (President)
- Finan, Adrian (Principal)
- Maher, Ken (Deputy Principal)
- Smith, Liam (Deputy Principal)
- Allan, Evelyn – French
- Archbold, Kenneth – PE, Science and Biology
- Brennan, Edward - Wood Technology
- Brennan, Fergal – Religion, Wellbeing and Music (Chaplain)
- Brennan, Jennie - SPHE, CSPE and Business
- Brennan, Tom – PE and Science
- Buckley, Gerard – Maths and Technology
- Byrne, Shane - PE and Maths
- Carey, Michael - Maths and PE
- Connolly, Michael - SPHE, Religion and Resource
- Corcoran, Chloe - Spanish and Resource
- Cotter, Laurence – English
- Darmody, Patrick – Agricultural Science and Biology
- Dermody, Jason - History and RE

- Donoghue, Michaela - Irish
- Dowling, Brian – Career Guidance
- Dowling, Ronan - Biology and Science
- Dunne, Jennifer - Spanish
- Farrell, Grace - Irish and Home Economics
- Farrell, Jonjo – Religion, History and Resource
- Fitzgerald, Paul – Business and Business Studies
- Glendon, Eoin - English
- Heffernan, Eamonn – DCG and Technical Graphics
- Hennessy, David – Maths and Science
- Hickey, Hollie – Irish
- Kavanagh, Joseph – Maths and Chemistry
- Kelly, Ollie - Irish
- Lynch, Carl – Maths
- Lynch, Ronan - Geography and Resource
- Maher, Brian - Science and Resource
- Maher, Eadaoin – Career Guidance and Resource
- Mannion, Loretta – Irish and English
- McDonnell, Emma - English
- McElwee, Patricia - Irish and PE
- McQuad, Aoife - English and Resource
- Morgan, Stephen – History and Geography
- Norton, Jacqui – French and Irish
- O’Connell, Michaela - Art
- O’Gorman, Edward - Music
- O’Neill, Martin – History, Geography and English
- O’Sullivan, Peter - Accounting and Economics
- Pollard, Eoghan - Technology
- Reddy, Simon – Science, Maths and Resource
- Ruth, Richie – Technology, Technical Graphics and DCG
- Ryan, Lester – Business Studies, Accounting and Economics
- Staunton, Ciara - English and History
- Tomkins, Ben - Wood Technology
- Walsh, Evan - CSPE, Religion and Business
- Walsh, Gerry – Maths
- Walsh, Martin - RE, SPHE and Business
- Walsh, Michael – PE and Maths
- Walsh, Shane - RE and SEN
- Windle, Richard – Chemistry, Physics and Science

Non- Teaching Staff

- Bergin, Pauline – Special Needs Assistant
- Bibby, Paula – School Secretary
- Cahill, Eamonn – Music Lessons
- Malone, Enda – Caretaker
- Moran, Susan - School Accounts
- O'Dolan, Jennifer - Special Needs Assistant

The Parents' Association consists of parents of students and meets on a regular basis, usually with the Principal in attendance. At these meetings, issues of concern to the parents are brought to the Principal's attention and he in turn informs them of developments in the school.

The Student Council

The Student Council comprises of five boys from Sixth Year and two boys from all other years. Sixth Year boys form the Council Executive - Head Student, Chairperson, Treasurer, Public Relations and Secretary. Each year in May, elections take place for the following year.

The Student Council is the voice for students in the school and a vehicle for student participation in the operation of the school. Meetings are held during lunchtime and take place on a fortnightly schedule.

Pastoral Care

Pastoral care in St Kieran's College is rooted in the belief that all of the teachers in our school make up the team of people who deal with the lives of the students on a daily basis and are therefore the pastoral care team of the school.

As well as subject teachers, each class also has a Form Teacher and a Year Head. These are teachers that the students can approach with any issue, worry or problem, which may arise during the course of the school year. Year Heads speak to the students within their allocated year on a daily basis. The tutor is a significant person for pupils to approach should they be experiencing difficulties. The tutor is an important support to the year head and the Pastoral Care team and will have detailed and coordinated lesson plans for their tutor classes

There is also a Student Support Team meeting that takes place in the school every week. The Student Support Team consists of the Guidance Counsellor, Mr Brian Dowling, the SEN Co Ordinator Ms Eadaoin Maher, Chaplain, Mr Fergal Brennan and members of management. Year heads attend meeting termly. Important issues arising in the area of Pastoral Care are focused on during these meetings.

Year Heads

First Year	Ms Jacqui Norton
Second Year	Mr Tom Brennan
Third Year	Mr Michael Walsh
Fourth Year	Mr Lester Ryan
Fifth Year	Mr Richie Windle
Sixth Year	Mr Paul Fitzgerald

Posts of Responsibility - AP 1

House Examinations Coordinator
Subject Choice Coordinator
ICT Coordinator
Data Transfer/Student Induction/Open Evening Coordinator
Subject Planning/JCT Coordinator/Peer Collaboration
Student recognition/PR
Academic Tracking Coordinator
School Environment/Positive Behaviour

Posts of Responsibility - AP 2

School Attendance
School Uniform/Staffroom Supplies/Staff Welfare
Maintenance of Laboratories and Science Equipment
Student Council/School Ethos
Examination Fees/Leaving Cert Mock Examinations Officer
Visual Layout Coordinator/Locker/Diary Coordinator/STEM
First Aid Coordinator
SSE Coordinator/Junior Cert Mock Examinations Officer
Sustainable Earth Co Ordinator

Part 3 - Curriculum

St Kieran's College is making full provision for the relevant aspects of the curriculum (SPHE, Stay Safe, RSE)

Junior Cycle

The Junior Cycle is of three years duration. Pupils take a broad range of subjects in First Year, most but not all of which are taken to the end of Third Year. At the end of First Year some subject choice takes place. The three-year cycle culminates in the state Junior Cycle examination. It is school policy that as many pupils as possible take Higher Level options in the Junior Cycle examination.

The subject options available are outlined below:

First Year

All First Years will study the following subjects:

- Irish, Technical Graphics, English, Science, Maths, C.S.P.E., History, Religious Education, Geography, Business Studies, Art, S.P.H.E., Music, Applied Technology, Materials Technology Wood, Physical Education, French or Spanish.

One period per week will also be assigned to the Form Tutor for Form Class where students will follow a school developed programme on Wellbeing.

Second Year

All students will study the following Core Subjects:

- Irish, English, Maths, History, Geography, Science, Physical Education, C.S.P.E., S.P.H.E., Religious Education, French or Spanish

Second Year students will also select two of the following subjects:

- Technical Graphics, Business Studies, Applied Technology, Music, Visual Art, Materials Technology Wood.

Transition Year

St Kieran's College has a six-year cycle that includes Transition Year. All students are expected to participate in this programme.

All Transition Year students will study the following subjects:

- Irish, Social Studies, Heritage and Horizons, Environmental and Sustainability Studies, Personal Finance and Money Management, English, Religious Education, Maths, Business Studies, World of Science,

S.P.H.E., Career Foundations, Physical Education, Computer Studies, Portfolio, DCG/Technology/Wood, Civic and Community Engagement, French or Spanish, Music and Art

Students will participate in the following modules:

- Coding, Circuit Training, Home Economics, Drama, Music, Environment Studies and Film Studies.

All students in Transition Year are encouraged to participate in the Civic and Community Engagement in which students volunteer to get involved with local community organisations. This programme and other activities throughout the year are designed to develop a greater degree of social awareness and enhance the spirit of giving amongst our student body.

Together with all of the above the Programme Coordinator, Ms Hollie Hickey organises a multitude of other activities, excursions, guest speakers and other co-curricular activities aimed at the holistic development of our students.

Senior Cycle

The Senior Cycle is of three years duration. Some subject choice is entailed in the subjects taken by pupils for Transition Year. During Transition Year, students make their subject choice for Fifth Year. Pupils take seven academic subjects for the Leaving Certificate: Irish, English, Maths and four others.

All Fifth and Sixth students will study the following subjects:

- Irish, English, Maths, Pastoral Religious Education, SPHE (5th Year only), Physical Education and Career Guidance.

In addition, students will also study four of the following subjects:

- History, Geography, Construction Studies, French, Spanish, Physics, Chemistry, Biology, Art, Economics, Business, Religion, Design & Communications Graphics, Music, Accounting, Agricultural Science, Engineering, Home Economics, LCVP, PE, Computer Science and Technology.

All examination subjects except LCVP are offered at Higher and Ordinary Level. LCVP is a common level assessed on a continual assessment format.

Assessments

The term “Assessment” refers generally to the gathering and interpretation of information related to a student’s learning abilities, learning attainments, learning strengths and learning needs. Assessment is used to monitor a student’s progress and to provide the teacher with information to make decisions about what and how the student is learning. Assessment allows

school to provide students and parents with information regarding progress and meeting targets.

There are four school house examinations each year which are reported through the Tyro App - Halloween, Christmas, Easter and Summer. Assessments are formative, summative and diagnostic. Each examination is one hour/one and a half hours in duration. A separate timetable is created for each set of assessments during timetabled class time. First Year Halloween Reports are Formative. Third and Sixth Years complete Mock Examinations in February. Both years do not complete Easter examinations and their Summer examinations are the State Examinations. Transition Years are assessed through interviews and presentations throughout the year with reports published to parents at Christmas and Summer.

Additional Educational Needs (AEN)

The SEN team coordinates and offers support to teachers of students with Special Educational Needs. The SEN team, made up of coordinator Ms Eadaoin Maher and two other teachers, along with all resource teachers, support the students academically, as well as socially and personally, to facilitate their holistic education. The work is carried out with the mainstream teachers, Special Needs Assistants and in collaboration with home and external agencies.

St Kieran's College has established a class (*Ionad Chiaráin*) to provide an education exclusively for students with autism commencing in August 2025.

The School Timetable will be delivered to teachers in a timely manner in advance of the commencement of a new academic year. Timetables are subject to change as determined by the needs of the students.

Part 4 - School Profile

Opening Times

St Kieran's College secondary school office is open from 8.00am to 4.30pm Monday to Thursday and 8.00am to 3.30pm on Friday during the Academic Year.

- Lessons begin at 8.50 and end at 4pm Monday to Thursday.
- Lessons begin at 8.50 and end at 1.00 on Friday.
- Each lesson lasts one hour.
- Break is from 10.50 to 11.00 Monday to Friday.
- Lunch break is from 1.00pm to 2.00pm Monday to Thursday.
- The school closes for student holidays at Halloween, Christmas, February mid-term, Easter and Summer.

Classes

- It is school policy not to stream classes in First Year. Classes are divided into mixed ability in consultation with the Entrance Assessment Results.
- After First Year, classes in Irish and Maths will be divided in accordance with the levels taken by students. Classes in all other subjects will be of mixed ability.
- The greatest possible level of choice is given to students when selecting optional subjects for Second and Fifth Years. Subject groupings are not pre-determined by the school but emerge following an annual consultation process aimed at satisfying the greatest number of students.
- School Management and the teaching staff also keep under review the desirability and possibility of introducing new subjects to the school's curriculum, subject to the provision and funding by the DES of all necessary resources.

Books - school books are provided via the School Book Scheme

Student Booklists are updated each year and are available on the school website.

Uniform

- Black V-necked pullover with white band inset on V.
- College Crest on pullover
- Mid grey pants, **Hopsack material**
- Light grey shirt
- College tie
- College Jacket
- Appropriate footwear (Runners are not permitted except for during P.E. and games)
- Runners with clear soles which are non marking for P.E. class
- TY students have a crested tracksuit, t shirt and half zip for activities

Students are reminded that their name should be clearly marked on all items of uniform. The school uniform is available at: Paul's, High Street, Kilkenny and Duggan's Menswear, High Street, Kilkenny.

Extra Curricular Activities

It is hoped that every student will be offered opportunities to take part in extra curricular activities that suits his aptitudes and interests. It is in extra curricular activities that transformative leadership can be encouraged and developed.

As a renowned hurling academy, opportunities are available for all students to wear the black and white with pride. Students are invited and encouraged to participate in a wide variety of sports and other activities. Each year, the

school competes in inter-school competitions in Basketball, debating, Choir, Handball, Hurling, Gaelic Football, Badminton, Swimming, Athletics, Cross Country, Golf, Soccer, Equestrian and Chess.

Teams enter Business Quiz Competitions, Inter-School Debate Competitions, Student Enterprise Awards, the Young Scientists' Competition, the Young Social Innovators Initiative and *An Gaisce* Awards. The school has begun to stage one drama production each year in collaboration with Loreto Secondary School, Kilkenny. Our Jazz Band and Trad Band perform and compete locally and nationally. Students regularly participate in cultural and educational outings.

There are over 35 teachers who volunteer to take extra curricular activities in the school each year. The school uses our Supervision Policy in all school related activities.

Study

St. Kieran's College has a proud academic record and pupils are encouraged to develop study patterns and a routine that will allow them to fulfil their potential in their time with us. After-school study facilities affords pupils, especially those in the final year of their Leaving Certificate and Junior Cycle courses, the opportunity to work in a supervised study facility after school.

The Study hall is a spacious room, dedicated for purpose that runs along an entire top floor of the school building. It allows pupils from 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 5th year to work in a supervised environment conducive to study and is a tremendous asset for the school to have. If there is an excess of demand for places, preference is given to the students in the exam classes.

A separate supervised sixth year study facility is available in the College Canteen/Refectory.

Study commences at 4.15 pm on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday and runs until 6.15 pm. There is also a study session on Friday afternoon from 1.30pm to 3.30pm. There is a charge for study which can be organised through the office.

Part 5 - Creating A Caring Community

Mission and Ethos Statement

St Kieran's College, as Ireland's oldest all-boys Catholic Secondary School, continues its founding aim of the pursuit of real excellence in education and formation, in the light of the Gospel, so as to allow all our students to realise the fullness of their potential.

Academically, spiritually, physically and emotionally our students are encouraged to strive for all that is possible in the relentless pursuit of perfecting their individual gifts and talents.

In so doing they bring to life the joy intended by our motto, “Hiems Transiit”, for themselves, those they love and the community where they will live, serve and lead.

Religious Education

Religious Education is central to the curriculum. Religious Education is scheduled for two class periods per week for each year group at Junior Cycle and one class period at Senior Cycle.

In keeping with the spirit of inclusiveness of Catholic education as outlined in the school’s RE policy, boys of non-Christian faith may be excused attendance at sacramental celebrations. All boys must participate in Junior Cycle RE classes as prescribed by the NCCA National Curriculum.

Liturgies

Throughout the school year we hold many prayerful liturgies in order to celebrate together as a community and to mark special occasions in the lives of our students. Some of our liturgies are outlined below:

- September - Beginning of school year Mass.
- November Service/prayers for the dead.
- Advent liturgies.
- December - Christmas Carol Service in St Mary’s Cathedral.
- March - St Kieran’s Day.
- Lenten ceremonies.
- May - End of Year Mass.
- May - Graduation Mass

Pupils are encouraged to play an active role in the liturgical calendar and asked to serve as Ministers of the Eucharist and the Word. Students of all faiths and none are included in Religious Education, school celebrations and liturgies.

Cairdeas

Each year approximately thirty of our Fifth Year students take part in the Cairdeas programme. Each Fifth Year is assigned approximately five students to look after and monitor. They meet each of their students on their first day and at regular intervals throughout the year particularly during the first term. This assists greatly with the induction process of students transitioning from primary to secondary school. For more information on our Cairdeas programme.

Retreats

Every year all students get the opportunity to go on retreat. The aim of the day is to allow students a chance to relax, be with friends and time to reflect. This day is available to all students. For more information on these retreats.

Part 6 - Promoting Partnership

All the stakeholders are invited and expected to take a full part in school life. Structures are in place to accommodate and encourage communication between all stakeholders.

The Board of Management

The Board of Management meet regularly to direct and guide the school and plan for its future and to ensure on a day to day basis that the school functions as is intended to do so. Through school management, the Board ensures that all voices within the community are heard.

Senior Management Team

The Senior Management Team direct and guide the school in day to day operations to ensure that the mission and ethos of the school is fulfilled and that all partners, parents, students, staff within the school community are supported in their work at all times,

Parents

The Parents' Association meet regularly with school management and can meet teachers at formal parent teacher meetings. Parent Teacher Meetings take place for each year group.

Parents will be supplied with four assessment reports per year and are free to meet with, telephone or e-mail any member of the teaching staff, Year Head, Deputy Principals and Principal.

Students

The students of the school elect a Student Council. Two representatives are elected from each year group. The sixth years elect the five representatives and oversee the running of the council. Mr Fergal Brennan is assigned teacher to liaise with the Council and attend Council meetings. The Deputy Principal, Mr Liam Smith is committed to engage with the Council and to formally reply to issues raised. It is intended that the Student Council be invited to address the Board of Management on an annual basis.

Teachers

Teachers work with students on a daily basis and are encouraged to continue to forge close links and good working relationships with their parents, management and the Board of Management. Staff Meetings take place at regular intervals throughout the school year.

Part 7 - School Self Evaluation

St Kieran's College continuously engages in the process of School Self Evaluation and develops annual targets.

Part 8 - Policy Framework

The Board of Management (BOM) has ratified all these policies. Each policy is reviewed and updated on an on going basis following consultation with the various stakeholder groups – students, parents and staff. Each policy has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Department of Education and Skills (DES). A number of policies are formally reviewed every year at the request of the BOM.

In the policy development and planning process, St Kieran's College recognises its responsibilities to its Trustees, and to the national legislative framework. In this latter regard, particular attention must be paid to the following:

- Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Acts, 1989 and 2005
- Education Act, 1998
- Education (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act, 2007
- Employment Equality Acts, 1998 - 2004
- Education (Welfare) Act, 2000
- Teaching Council Act, 2001
- Equal Status Acts, 2000 - 2008
- Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs Act, 2004
- Vetting Acts, 2012 and 2016
- Children First Act 2017
- GDPR 2018

Additionally, the school seeks to uphold and implement all agreements made at national level between the partners in education i.e. DES, Joint Managerial Body (JMB), the Association of Secondary Teachers, Ireland (ASTI), representative bodies of parents and students.

The school is also mindful of recommended best practice as outlined in inspection reports issued by the DES. To date, inspections have been carried out in the following subject areas:

- A Whole-School Evaluation: Management, Leadership, Learning was conducted in 2009, 2017.
- Various Subject Department Inspections have been carried out on a regular basis in recent years.
- An Incidental Inspection – March 13th 2017.
- P.E. Follow Up Inspection - March 23rd 2018.

- A Whole-School Evaluation Follow Up Inspection - April 4th 2019.
- Covid 19 Inspection - May 24th 2021.
- Geography Subject Inspection - March 9th 2023
- SPHE and Child Protection and Safeguarding Inspection - January 31st 2024 & March 20th 2024

The BOM of St Kieran's College commits itself to the principle of inclusiveness with regards to the provision of mainstream education for all (except where such provision would have a seriously detrimental effect on the provision of services to other students), respect for diversity and encouraging students to develop their ideas and values.

The development of the School Plan is a shared responsibility of students, parents, staff, the Senior Management Team and the Board of Management.

Policy Availability

This policy has been made available to school personnel, published on the school website, provided to the Parents' Association and Student Council. A copy of this policy will be made available the Department and the patron if requested.