

## Principals Address – Open Night November 2018

### Our Motto

“Our Best, Always.”

### Mission Statement

Presentation, Wexford, is a Catholic Secondary School for girls only, guided by the ideals of Nano Nagle, foundress of the Presentation Congregation.

*“Inspired by the vision of Nano Nagle, our school is committed to the pursuit of excellence in a caring, respectful and inclusive community.”*

### CEIST

Presentation Secondary School, Wexford operates under the trusteeship of C.E.I.S.T. – Catholic Education- an Irish Schools Trust.

#### *Promoting Spiritual and Human Development*

We believe a knowledge of and a personal relationship with Jesus Christ give meaning and purpose to our lives.

#### *Achieving Quality in Teaching and Learning*

We are committed to excellence and to continually improving the quality of teaching and learning.

#### *Showing Respect for Every Person*

We respect the unique and intrinsic value of every person.

#### *Creating Community*

Our schools are faith communities of welcome and hospitality where Gospel values are lived and where there is special care for those most in need.

#### *Being Just and Responsible*

We seek to act justly and responsibly in all our relationships.

## Our Standards

- Happy students and staff
- Caring and supportive towards each other
- Support
- High quality learning
- High personal standards
- Christian ethos
- Respect and manners
- Care and support
- High quality teaching
- High standards of behaviour
- Positive Reinforcement
- Homework
- Prefects and leadership
- Professionalism and respect

## What am I as Principal Proud of? What can we offer your daughter?

- I am proud of our long-standing tradition and culture of success, achievement and excellence in the academic, sporting, artistic and scientific arenas.
- ***Our students***
- I am proud of the successes our students have achieved throughout the years both academically or extra-curricular. Our past-pupils have become successful in all the professions including medical, legal, business, journalism, education, engineering, art, drama and many others.
- I am proud of our students, they represent the school impeccably, whenever they leave our school here and go on various trips and excursions the positive feedback we receive about them from outside of our school always blows me away.
- They are proud to be a Presentation student.
- ***Our teachers***
- The high expectations the staff and parents and indeed students have in all they do, be it academic, sporting or cultural. Presentation, Wexford has a vibrant, enthusiastic and dedicated teaching staff who are committed to helping students achieve their potential.
- Our School Staff are Open and adaptable to growth, who Give above and beyond
- They have embraced Progressive Teaching and Learning methods and the use of ICT and iPads
- ***Care of our students***
- We also have a welcoming and friendly environment for pupil with excellent support structures in place, with class tutors, year heads, student support team, counsellors, and wider staff.
- An excellent Special Education Team and Guidance Team that look after our students.
- We are all proud of the fact that was noted in our recent WSEMLL that Members of the school community create a climate of security and well-being for students and staff.
- Most students expressed pride in attending the school, feel safe and cared for, and agree there is a positive atmosphere. Almost all parents surveyed agree their child feels safe and well looked after.
- High quality student support structures are in place and we try our best to provide students with a wide variety of valuable opportunities for personal and social development.
- I am proud of our Holistic development of all students which we give high priority to; we try to be inclusive and give opportunities to our students to develop their capacity for leadership and to contribute to school life. Student welfare is one of our top priorities.
- ***Our school***
- I am proud of our excellent facilities and our wonderful campus here in the heart of the town.

- Excellent facilities including 2 computer rooms, 4 state of the art Science labs, 2 Home Economics rooms, Concert Hall, Art rooms, music room, library, sensory room, oasis room, computers & data-projectors in every classroom, a pitch, basketball court and a full sized sports hall.
- Due to increasing numbers in Wexford Town and the very high take up of Science subjects in the school, we will have a new wing where construction will begin in 2019 housing an additional science lab, and two classrooms.
- ***Our history and community spirit***
- We are very proud of the fact that we are the first home of education in the town and a long history since 1818.
- Our history and legacy in Wexford for 200 years - A strong sense of community within the school and the wider community.
- The impact of this legacy on such a wide community as was evident during the course of our bicentenary celebrations in October
- The sense of belonging here in the school, and that all students feel that they are part of a school community and are an integral part of it.
- ***Student leadership & Student Voice***
- I am proud of the amount of students involved in leadership roles in our school with over 200 pupils involved in leadership positions in the school in roles such as
- Student Council, Senior Prefects & Junior Prefects, Meitheal , Peer Mentors, Positivity Group, Green Schools, Class Captains and Vice Captains
- ***Our Positive Behaviour System***
- Positive reinforcement, Well Done Cards, Student recognition
- ***Our successes – Inspections and Exams results***
- Our recent WSEMLL report where the findings and recommendations are an accurate reflection of the current high standards of education and learning provided to students at the school.
- Outstanding success in Junior and Leaving Certificate examinations. Our student's results keep improving each year and the school is above the national average at both Higher-level take up and median grade achieved at both Higher Level and Ordinary Level at both Senior & Junior. Our results are a credit to both teachers, students and parents.
- ***Our extra-curricular***
- I am proud of the wide variety of extracurricular activities provided by a generous and committed staff who give up their time on a voluntary basis. I fully encourage your daughter to get involved, whether it be through sports, music, drama, creative writing or debating, it creates a holistic person.
- Basketball, Gaelic Football, Athletics, Equestrian, Soccer, Badminton, Green Schools, Couch to 5K, Deep green, Feminist society, choir, Athletics, the list goes on.

*Finally, I am proud of the fact that every member of staff here, do all that we can to make sure our students achieve their full potential*

## Curriculum

We offer a wide-ranging curriculum

One of the great advantages of a large school, such as ours, is that we can provide a wide range of subjects. In junior cycle, students study a broad range of subjects, since it will allow them to identify their strengths and preferences before having to focus their choices in second year and indeed into Leaving Certificate.

We have a broad curriculum but are always working on improving it. Currently we offer 16 optional subjects for the Leaving Certificate. We were very excited to be chosen as pilot's schools for Politics & society, and new Leaving Cert PE. We hope to introduce Computer Science in the next few years.

Our transition year here in the school as is best practice is optional and choice for our students, though as a former TY coordinator I would encourage the majority to take the programme.

We are currently reviewing how we offer our optional subjects to our 1<sup>st</sup> years from September 2019. A Board of Studies here is carrying out this review in the school.

- **All students will study:**  
English, Irish, Maths, Religion, and a Language depending on choice.  
Wellbeing -consisting of: PE, SPHE, CSPE, Friends for Youth, Life Skills, ICT, Junior Cycle Key Skills
- **Currently the options are as follows:**  
German/French – Rank 1, 2  
Home Economics, Music, Art, Technical Graphics, French/German/Spanish (2<sup>nd</sup> Language) – Rank 1- 5  
Business Studies, Science, History, Geography – currently all students study these as core subjects: the Board of studies are carrying out their review and looking at whether all of these subjects will remain core or become optional.

*If there are any changes, we will inform you as soon as we know ourselves*

## Admissions Policy

Like all schools in the area, we are currently drafting a new Admissions policy, which will come into effect for incoming first years from September 2020.

As soon as our trustees and board of management have approved it, we will inform parents/guardians and it will be uploaded onto our website.

### **Fifth & sixth Class Worries & fears**

They say there are many things they are looking forward to, topping the list here is getting a locker, as well as having some concerns around starting a new school ( for some, the worry of not getting a locker!!).

Their main worries however are the following:

- The size of the school and getting lost; as well as now being the youngest in the school
- The different subjects and the amount of homework they will have in each of them as well as the dreaded Friday homework
- Understanding their timetable and the rules of the school
- Studying and exams
- In addition to these practical concerns, the children also worry about social issues such as friendships, social groupings and bullying.
- Not being with friends.

### **What students said by Easter of 1st year**

"I worried I won't have any friends in my class."

"I worried my old friends will act differently."

"I worried because everybody else will be bigger."

"I worried I will be crushed."

"I worried about being organised."

"I worried about being late for class."

"I worried about not knowing where to go."

"I worried about teachers being too strict."

"I worried about the content of the new subjects."

**We are here to help in any way possible**

### Some impartial advice for Parents/Guardians when choosing a secondary school

- How many schools should you look at? - Even if you have your heart set on one school, try to visit at least three to compare and contrast. If you can.
- Are the students well presented and polite?
- Are the facilities well maintained?
- What are the exam results like?
- What progress do students make?
- How will the school cater for your child's needs?
- Will the size suit your child?
- What is the learning environment like?
- Does the school, and indeed staff make you feel welcome?
- What extra-curricular activities are offered?
- Do students respond if you ask them a question?
- Does the school share information and news with the wider community?
- How are the students dressed? Are they smart and put together in uniform generally?
- What school trips are programmed and at what stages?
- Does the school have areas for student leadership and student input?
- Ask Around For Feedback  
School websites, publications and open days are designed to show each school in the most positive light, but this is unlikely to be a true indication of what happens on a day-to-day basis. Talk to friends and family to see if they have any feedback about each school on your short list
- What does your child think of the school?
- Ask Your Child What THEY Want  
While you can always reserve the right to make the final decision, it is often useful to ask your child what they want from a secondary school.  
Do they want to go to the same school as their friends? Do they want to go to a co-ed or single sex school? Are they willing to travel a bit further to go to school?

*That is all for now. Take a few deep breaths and good luck with your research and decision-making.*



William Ryan

Principal

November 2018