



Saint Augustine's School

Hospitality Compassion – Respect – Justice – Excellence



Obelisk Park
Carysfort Avenue
Blackrock
Co. Dublin

Phone: 01 288 1771, Fax: 01 283 4117
Email: staugustines@sjog.ie

www.saintaugustines.ie

Saint Augustine's School

Introduction

Saint Augustine's is a school for children aged 6-18 years who have special educational needs, described as mild learning difficulties. Often their basic skills in reading, writing and maths are delayed. The school, comprising 14 well equipped classrooms and 4 purpose built vocational training units, also provides residential facilities for up to 30 students from Monday to Friday. The school has approximately 160 students in the primary, post-primary and Vocational Development departments.

Class Groups

We offer a full-time placement in small classes (no more than twelve students per class). As well as a full academic curriculum, we offer a range of activities designed to enhance the individual's whole development e.g. swimming, outdoor recreation, personal development programmes etc.

Facilities

- ≈ Extensive modern computer suite
- ≈ Large gymnasium
- ≈ Ceramics workshop
- ≈ Library
- ≈ Study room
- ≈ Play and therapy room
- ≈ Modern dining area
- ≈ Oratory
- ≈ Domestic science rooms
- ≈ Outdoor facility for basketball, tennis and football

Whole School Discipline

The school places importance on the need for students to behave in a mature and responsible manner. The Discipline for Learning (D.F.L.) scheme makes students aware of our high expectations. In turn students are rewarded for meeting these expectations.

Individual Education Plans (I.E.P.s)

At Saint Augustine's we recognise that all students are individuals with individual gifts, strengths and needs. This is why every student in Saint Augustine's has an Individual Education Plan. This is a written plan which documents the student's goals and targets for the coming year, and the strategies which will be used to enable the student to achieve these goals. Individual Education Plans may cover areas such as

behaviour, independent living skills, reading, maths, work experience and language skills. Parents are invited to put forward their own suggestions and to consider ways in which they can support the student's development.

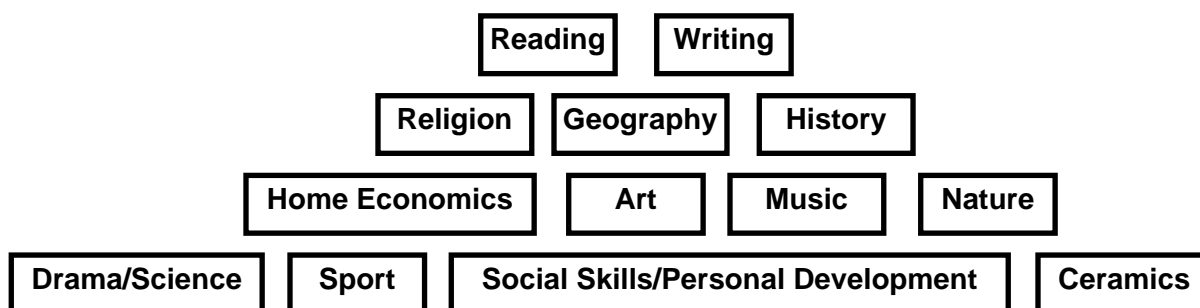
Annual Reviews

Review meetings are held at the start of each academic year where staff discuss the student's needs and review progress. Teachers, instructors, psychologists, speech and language therapist and other relevant staff (child care staff/work experience co-ordinator) attend these review meetings. Students are encouraged to contribute to this process. The student's progress, and his/her Individual Education Plan are discussed with parents/guardians on Parents' Day (which happens within a month of review meetings).

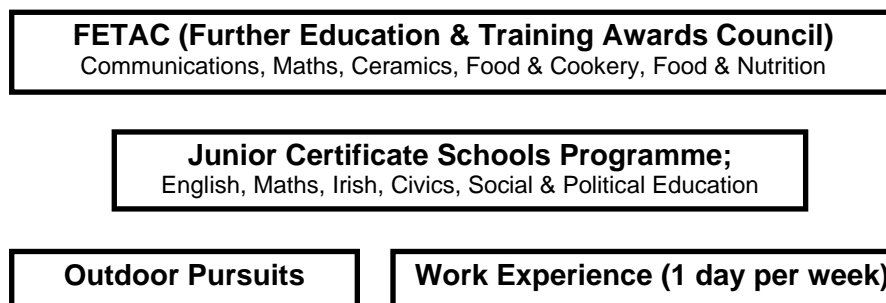
Saint Augustine's School

School Overview

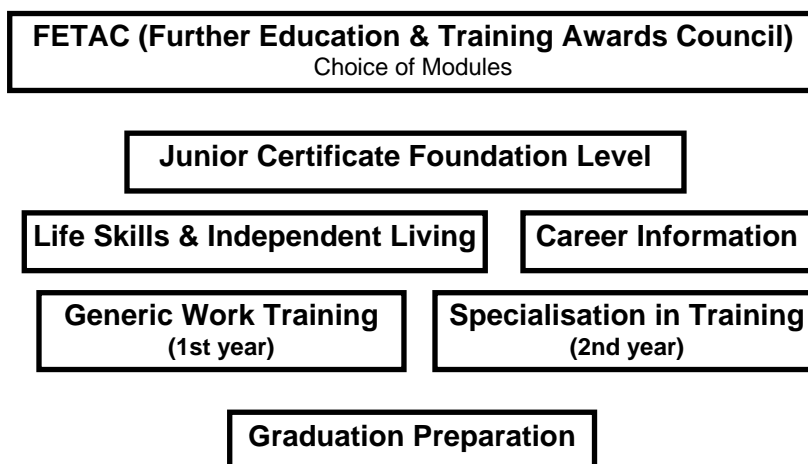
Students aged 6-14 years (classes primary 1-3 and post primary 1-6); these students follow a broad primary curriculum including;



Students aged 15-16 years (Pre Vocational 1 & 2); this group avail of the above programmes, and additionally those listed below;



Students aged 16-18 years (Vocational Development Programme); these students have 3½ hours classroom work and 3½ hours vocational training per day. They participate in above programmes plus:



Vocational Development Programme

Structure of Programme

The Vocational Development Programme is offered to students in their final two years in Saint Augustine's.

The programme aims to provide a broad and balanced education and training, which will equip our young people to lead independent, satisfying and responsible adult lives.

There are a number of key elements to this programme:

Support Services

- Social Work
- Psychology
- Speech & Language Therapy
- Pastoral Care
- Psychiatry

Vocational Skills Training



Social, Life and Independent Living Skills



Student



Academic Education



Work Experience and Career Development Skills



Leisure & Recreation



Vocational Skills Training

Induction Period (1st year only)

The first six weeks of term is a period of induction where students become familiar with the staff and structures of Vocational Development. During this period students attend class and also rotate through the following skill areas:

- Catering
- Car Valeting
- Horticulture
- Office and Retail

During this time students also partake in Art & Craft and Social, Life and Independent Living Skills programmes.

At the end of the 6 week period, students choose three skill areas they would like to participate in during their first year. Based on these choices, and a needs assessment, students are assigned to a skill area on a term basis as follows:

Term 1	October - December
Term 2	January - April
Term 3	April - July

Within each skill area students follow programmes that lead to certification either by FETAC or Department of Education (Junior Certificate Schools' Programme).

In the final year at Saint Augustine's students will have the option to specialise in a particular area. Depending on the individual's needs and ability participation in more than one area may be accommodated.

Academic Work

Students in Vocational development have 4 teachers available to them, enabling teaching in small groups.

The academic programme aims to enable each student to achieve his or her full potential. It is hoped that each student will gain qualifications at the highest level of which he or she is capable.

Some students will continue with FETAC Awards and build their portfolio of qualifications, while others may take subjects at Junior Certificate Foundation level.



Saint Augustine's is an approved school for participation in the Junior Certificate Schools' Programme (J.C.S.P.).

All students, whatever their level of study, will be aiming to develop key academic skills in order to live full, independent and satisfying lives.

Leisure & Recreation Programme

Sports & Recreation:



Students have the opportunity to participate in a wide range of physical and recreational activities and are encouraged to participate in such activities outside Saint Augustine's in their own communities. It is hoped this will give them the knowledge and confidence to lead active, healthy lifestyles.

Additionally, FETAC modules in Health Related Fitness, Outdoor Pursuits and Swimming are offered to students.

Music & Drama:



The Music & Drama programme offered to students includes a wide range of activities with the emphasis on enjoyment and participation. This programme is viewed mainly as a creative opportunity however N.C.V.A. modules in Music and Drama will be offered to students.

Leisure and Social Outings:

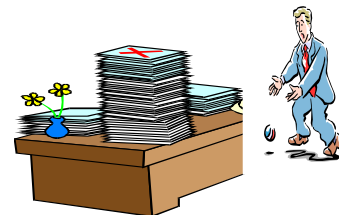


Opportunities are also available, throughout the year, for students to visit community facilities and take part in leisure pursuits e.g. hill walking, pitch n' putt, visiting museums, libraries, places of historical and cultural interest, as well as more everyday activities such as shopping and visiting restaurants.

Work Experience Programme

The Work Experience Co-Ordinator gradually offers students more diverse and challenging work placements over the course of the two-year programme. Work experience is viewed as a very important part of the Vocational Development Programme as it aims to promote independence and confidence in students so that they are best prepared for the world of work or further training.

During each year relevant information is made available to students and parents/guardians in respect of employment and further training opportunities. This includes preparing current students for the world of work, as well as supporting past students for up to three years.



Career Development Programme

During the final year it is important that students and parents/guardians begin to plan for the future. Excellent opportunities exist for students leaving Saint Augustine's in the following areas:

- Further training
- Supported Employment
- Open Employment

As part of the preparation for leaving students take part in the following:

- Work Experience
- Deciding on areas of interest
- Preparation of a C.V. (Curriculum Vitae)
- Visits to training centres, FÁS offices etc.

Information is also made available to students and their families/guardians through talks and our annual Careers Day. It is important to stress that the final year goes quickly and we encourage Parents/Guardians to seek information and begin planning as early as possible.

Positive Futures Planning

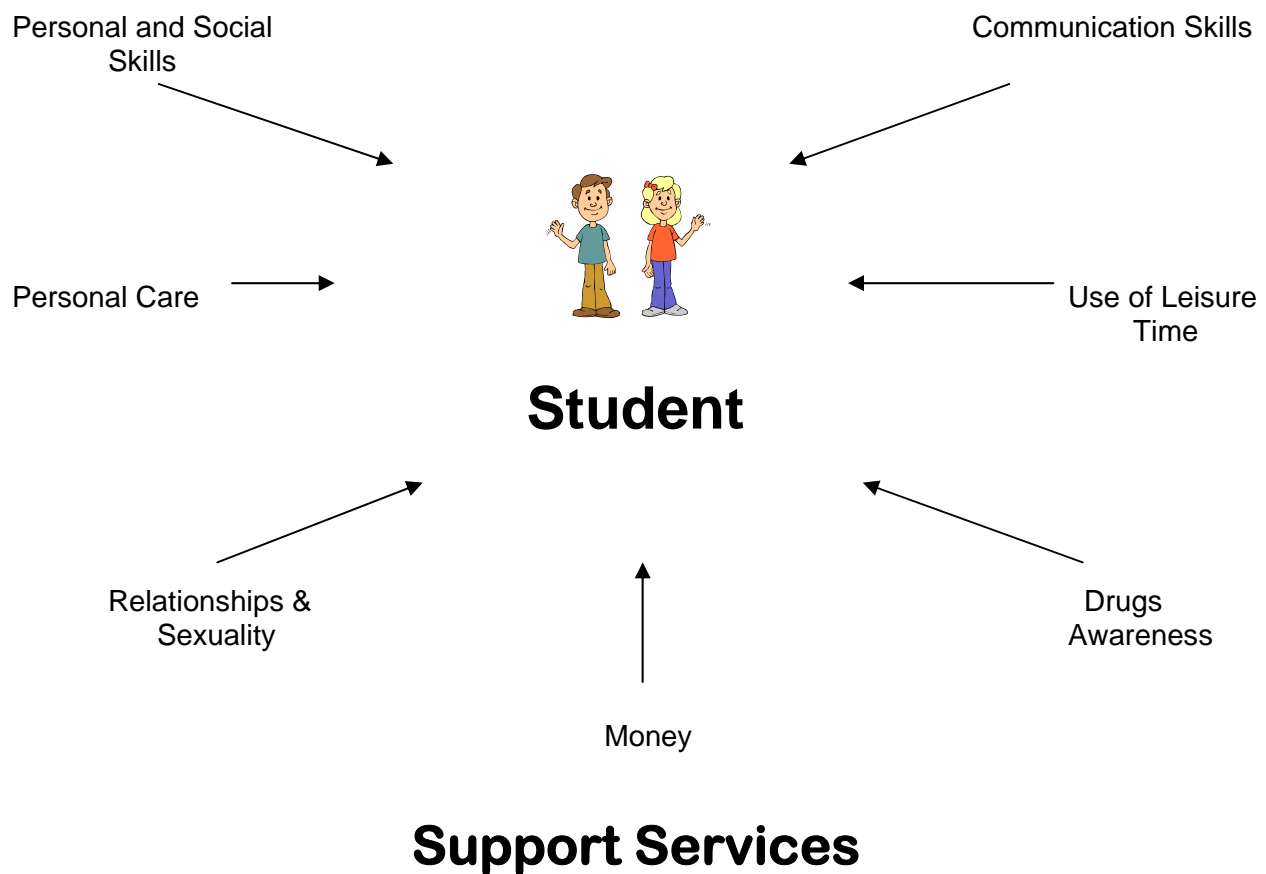
Towards the end of students' time in Vocational Development and before graduations each student is the centre of a Positive Futures Planning meeting.

Those attending the meeting are significant people in the student's life i.e. family members, teacher, instructors etc. The student is facilitated to reflect on specific attainments to date with the help of those who know the individual well. While negative experiences and deficits are acknowledged the emphasis is always on positive attributes of the focus person i.e. the student.

When the profile is complete we then look to possible future options with the student and family. At this point the information gained from our Career Development Programme combined with the student's attributes and ambitions create a picture of life after Saint Augustine's. The new supports that will come into play are identified and significant people are named in the future plan.

Social, Life and Independent Living Skills Programme

In preparing young people for life after school it is important they have good social skills, can communicate and interact positively with each other and work through difficulties. This programme aims to develop these skills through modules which include:



Further services offered at Saint Augustine's to students and their families also include:

- Speech and Language Therapy
- Pastoral Care
- Psychology
- Social Work
- Psychiatry

Qualifications and Certification

FETAC (Further Education & Training Awards Council) – www.fetac.ie

The Further Education and Training Awards Council (FETAC) is the statutory awarding body for further education and training in Ireland. FETAC makes quality assured awards that are part of the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ).

Students in Saint Augustine's will complete FETAC modules from the following list:

- Maths, Food and Cookery
- Craft (Ceramics)
- Craft (Wood)
- Office Procedures
- Horticulture
- Caring for Children
- Communications
- Food and Nutrition
- Craft Textiles
- Personal Care & Presentation
- Living in a Diverse Society
- Computer Literacy
- Personal & Interpersonal Skills
- Health Related Fitness
- Drama
- Work Orientation
- Music Appreciation
- Preparation for Work
- Personal Effectiveness

Saint Augustine's School is an accredited centre for the delivery of FETAC programmes.

Portfolios of Achievement

Graduating students, upon completion of their final year, are presented with a Portfolio of Achievement. This is a very important document and includes; School Reference, Curriculum Vitae, qualifications, certificates achieved etc.

J.C.S.P.

The Junior Certificate Schools' Programme is a national, three-year Department of Education and Science programme. Students in Pre Vocational 1 and 2 and First and Second year Vocational Development follow the programme. Teachers and Instructors assess students' achievements in the curriculum areas of the academic and vocational training programmes. Statements of achievement build up a profile of the student. The Department of Education and Science personnel who maintain regular contact with Saint Augustine's validate this profile. Students may sit Junior Certificate examinations as part of this programme.

Individual Education Plans

Individual Education Plans (I.E.P.s) are an important part of the service at Saint Augustine's. An I.E.P. contains not just academic goals but targets relating to practical skills, work experience, independent living, social skills and leisure.

Over the years we have found that the most effective I.E.P.s are the product of a joint effort by all relevant staff, parents/guardians and, of course, the student. A draft I.E.P. is put together before students return for the commencement of each academic year and parents will be asked to meet with staff at Saint Augustine's early in the first term to discuss this.

I.E.P.s are reviewed by the students' tutor and updated on a regular basis to take account of changing needs.

Residential Facilities



Saint Augustine's offers a five-day residential service comprising five four bedroomed houses situated on the school grounds. This service aims to provide students with opportunities to develop responsible approaches to life.

A variety of programmes and activities are organised for students individually and collectively, which assist the young person in developing their potential. Much emphasis is placed on developing Independent Living Skills e.g. basic living skills, self-care, use of local facilities and communication with adults and peers.



The Activities Programme is organised to suit the varying needs of students. Football, indoor hockey, swimming, table tennis and pool are regular events. The needs of students not specifically inclined towards sporting activities are catered for in library activities, music, drama and arts and craft.



Saint Augustine's specifically value and encourage involvement of parents in the residential service. Parents are encouraged to keep in regular contact with Child Care staff. In addition to this informal contact regular meetings are also arranged within Saint Augustine's or indeed at home to assess the progress of each student availing of residential service.