



# Mater Dei Academy

CORK



## Strategic Plan 2023 – 2026

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# Prayer to Our Lady of Knock

*Our Lady of Knock, Queen of Ireland, you gave hope to your people  
in a time of distress and comforted them in sorrow.*

*You have inspired countless pilgrims to pray with confidence to  
your divine Son, remembering His promise, "Ask and you shall  
receive, seek and you shall find".*

*Help me to remember that we are all pilgrims on the road to  
Heaven. Fill me with love and concern for my brothers and  
sisters in Christ, especially those who live with me.*

*Comfort me when I am sick, lonely or depressed.*

*Teach me how to take part ever more reverently in the Holy Mass.*

*Give me a greater love of Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament.*

*Pray for me now and at the end of my death.*

## Amen



# Introduction

**Mater Dei Academy** is an independent post-primary Catholic school whose mission is to create a Christ-centered school community dedicated to our students' formation in the Faith, academic excellence, and the evangelisation of society, rooted in the Gospel message of Jesus Christ.

The Academy's mission and teaching philosophy are guided by the Catholic Church's Declaration on Christian Education, *Gravissimum Educationis*, which sets out the fundamental principles of a comprehensive, religiously-informed, education;

*“The Church is bound as a mother to give to these children of hers an education by which their whole life can be imbued with the spirit of Christ and at the same time do all she can to promote the complete perfection of the human person, the good of earthly society and the building of a world that is more human.”*

The Academy seeks to fulfil this mission primarily through second level education to boys and girls in the classical Catholic tradition. The school opened on September 1st, 2020 with an initial enrolment of 12 students, and has currently almost forty students attending. Due to the increasing numbers enrolling, in 2022, the Academy moved from temporary premises of the Dominican community at St. Mary's, Pope's Quay in Cork city to the Farranferries Education and Training Campus on Redemption Road, a location synonymous with Catholic education in Cork for over 150 years.





Mater Dei Academy is not a fee-paying school. Instead parents support the Academy through regular voluntary donations. This means that the Academy is dependent on donors and benefactors to support the growth of the project in these pivotal early years.

As part of its mission to deliver academic excellence, the Academy is a recognised Cambridge International school and our junior cycle students take International GCSE examinations in preparation for their senior cycle studies. A major academic aim of this Strategic Plan is the implementation of our Senior Cycle programme culminating in the first Leaving Certificate class in 2026. The appointment of the Academy's first Principal Teacher in 2023 will represent a key milestone in the Strategy.

Through the intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary, we are planning for the Academy to grow to over 100 students by the end of this Strategic Plan as it transitions from mostly volunteer to full-time staff.

Thank you sincerely for your vital support of Mater Dei Academy and its wider mission at this critical moment in its growth.



**PÁDRAIG CANTILLON MURPHY**  
Chairman, Mater Dei Academy



# Key Performance Indicators for 2023-2026

- Student enrolment to grow to over 100 students by 2026.
- International fee-paying student enrolment to grow to 10% of students by 2025.
- The Academy to transition from mostly volunteers to predominantly full-time paid staff by 2025.
- Significant growth of 15% year on year in the Mater Dei Education Programmes leading to increased demand for enrolment in the Academy.

## Provisional Hiring Plan

2022 - 2023	2023 - 2024	2024 - 2025	2025 - 2026
Principal Teacher (F/T)	English Teacher (F/T)	Leaving Cert (LC) Science Teacher (F/T)	Special Needs Assistant (F/T)
Science / Mathematics Teacher (F/T)	Language Teacher (P/T)	LC History Teacher (F/T)	
Business Manager (P/T)	Physics Teacher (P/T)	LC Language Teacher (F/T)	
	Chemistry Teacher (P/T)	LC Business Teacher (F/T)	
	Biology Teacher (P/T)	Business Manger (F/T)	

# Pillars

## Pillar 1 LIFE IN CHRIST

### Aims of this Pillar for the Period:

- 1.1** To deepen the Sacramental and Liturgical Life of the Students and Staff at Mater Dei Academy through Daily Mass at the Academy in addition to the existing sacramental liturgies and devotions;
- 1.2** Recognising the importance of spiritual as well as academic guidance, the Board will seek to appoint a full-time chaplain to serve the spiritual needs of the Academy;
- 1.3** Where possible to facilitate online participation in the Academy's liturgies by families, friends and benefactors;
- 1.4** To create a Choral Society at the Academy with the primary function of providing music at the liturgies in the Academy;
- 1.5** To enable students to benefit from local, national and international pilgrimages to contribute to their pastoral formation in the context of our rich Catholic heritage;
- 1.6** To empower students to take their place as active citizens of Ireland, with clear understanding of their rights and responsibilities as citizens, as well as fostering a social conscience through activities that benefit the underprivileged and marginalised in our society.

## **Pillar 2 ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE**

### **Aims of this Pillar for the Period:**

- 2.1** To appoint a Principal Teacher to lead the Academy;
- 2.2** To appoint the necessary full-time and part-time staff to support the delivery of academic excellence across the Junior and Senior Cycles;
- 2.3** To implement the Junior Cycle examinations to international standards as outlined in the Academy's Examinations Working Group report (December 2022);
- 2.4** To implement a comprehensive Senior Cycle curriculum culminating in the first Leaving Certificate examinations at the Academy in June 2026;
- 2.5** To partner, where appropriate, with suitable external providers for the provision of an adequate subject range for students at Senior Cycle (Leaving Certificate) at Mater Dei Academy;
- 2.6** To formalise the successful Academy's Socratic Seminar series through the publication of themes and pedagogical approaches;
- 2.7** To equip students with the necessary understanding to make informed vocational and career choices upon graduation from Mater Dei Academy through thoughtful career guidance and support throughout the Senior Cycle;
- 2.8** To actively support and encourage staff of the Academy in their ongoing professional development and training needs.

# Pillars

## Pillar 3 NATIONAL IMPORTANCE

### Aims of this Pillar for the Period:

- 3.1** To significantly expand the Mater Dei Education programmes at primary and post-primary levels through enrolment growth and extended online learning opportunities for students who are not physically enrolled at the Academy;
- 3.2** To explore the potential for both boarding and hosting of students from elsewhere in Ireland to study at Mater Dei Academy;
- 3.3** To expand our international collaborations to enable more visiting students to benefit from studying at Mater Dei Academy;
- 3.4** To actively support Catholic parents throughout Ireland by providing educational resources and support with particular attention to the areas of social media, technology and the dignity of the human person;
- 3.5** To expand our national reach through regular seminars, national conferences and invited talks on classical and Catholic education, with particular attention to the Irish context;
- 3.6** To engage with key stakeholders to explore potential for delivering the Mater Dei Academy education model in other educational settings in Ireland;
- 3.7** To deepen our online presence leveraging social media channels and published media (St. Joseph's Cloak magazine) to publicise the classical model of Catholic education as delivered at Mater Dei Academy.



## **Pillar 4 FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY**

### **Aims of this Pillar for the Period:**

- 4.1** To create a transparent and sustainable funding model which can support the Academy's mission into the future;
- 4.2** To appoint a financial / business manager to identify and grow supporting streams of revenue to the Academy and its related activities;
- 4.3** To identify and target international foundational support for specific needs within the Academy including required infrastructure (Science Laboratory, Music room, Art room) and staffing supports;
- 4.4** To examine the role that fees may play in a long-term sustainable funding model while maintaining the Academy's commitment to provide for all qualified Catholic families irrespective of their financial means;
- 4.5** To create a strategy for wills and bequests to support the Academy into the future;
- 4.6** To implement a Buildings Working Group which can work with existing stakeholders to secure a suitable long-term home for Mater Dei Academy with facilities suited to the needs of the students and staff.

# Financial Plan

The Academy's financial model remains relatively stable where parent and non-parent donations remain the single biggest contributor to the Academy's running costs. Other sources of income to date have included fees from international students and income associated with the Mater Dei Education programmes for primary home-schoolers. It is envisaged that all existing funding streams will need to grow steadily in the years ahead to support the hiring of full time staff as envisaged in the Academy's Hiring Plan. As the number of students continues to grow, the dependence on non-parent donations will decrease. However, at this critical juncture, the support of non-parent donations remains critical to the operation of the Academy and will continue to play a vital role through to the completion of this Plan's cycle in 2026.

To date, the Academy has not received any substantial foundational support. Going forward it is hoped that foundational support can be sought for specific needs, both infrastructural (e.g., establishment of science laboratories, music and art rooms) as well as staffing support. A targeted drive for foundational support in Ireland, USA and elsewhere will be launched in 2023.

The Financial Plan makes provision for the Academy's continued location at Farranferris. The Board of Trustees is extremely pleased with the current location for the Academy and believes it to be the ideal location for the school to grow and flourish into the future. We look forward to working together with Northside Community Enterprises and the Cork and Ross Diocesan Office to deepen this relationship.

# Financial Projections

Projected Income	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26
Donations (Parents)	€ 46,476	€ 58,095	€ 72,619	€ 90,774	€ 113,467
Donations (Non parents)	€ 60,942	€ 71,084	€ 81,746	€ 94,008	€ 108,109
Student admission fees	€ 2,020	€ 2,121	€ 2,227	€ 2,338	€ 2,455
Mater Dei Education	€ 17,675	€ 35,351	€ 38,886	€ 42,774	€ 47,052
International students	€ 9,357	€ 36,300	€ 43,560	€ 47,916	€ 52,708
Foundation support	€ 500	€ –	€ 20,000	€ 40,000	€ 80,000
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>€ 136,971</b>	<b>€ 202,951</b>	<b>€ 259,038</b>	<b>€ 317,811</b>	<b>€ 403,791</b>
Projected Expenses	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26
Pay Expenses	€ 35,573	€ 81,695	€ 238,565	€ 338,386	€ 367,374
Non Pay Expenses	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26
Insurance	€ 1,500	€ 1,650	€ 1,815	€ 1,997	€ 2,196
Publicity and advertising	€ 1,500	€ 1,575	€ 1,654	€ 1,736	€ 1,823
Rent	€ 15,000	€ 15,000	€ 15,000	€ 18,000	€ 21,600
Examinations	€ 7,000	€ 7,700	€ 8,470	€ 11,317	€ 12,749
Office expenses inc. book publishing	€ 5,000	€ 5,500	€ 6,050	€ 6,655	€ 7,321
Bank charges inc. online fees	€ 800	€ 880	€ 968	€ 1,065	€ 1,171
Professional fees	€ 2,000	€ 2,200	€ 2,420	€ 2,662	€ 2,928
Travel	–	€ 1,000	€ 1,200	€ 1,440	€ 1,728
Office Expenses	€ 39,800	€ 43,205	€ 46,047	€ 56,189	€ 64,265
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>€ 75,373</b>	<b>€ 124,900</b>	<b>€ 284,612</b>	<b>€ 394,574</b>	<b>€ 431,639</b>
<b>Projected Balance for FY</b>	<b>€ 61,598</b>	<b>€ 78,051</b>	<b>-€ 25,574</b>	<b>-€ 76,764</b>	<b>-€ 27,847</b>
<b>Projected Balance</b>	<b>€ 102,261</b>	<b>€ 180,312</b>	<b>€ 154,738</b>	<b>€ 77,975</b>	<b>€ 50,127</b>



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