Schools of Sanctuary

All are welcome , All belong

PLANNING FOR SANCTUARY IN TEACHING AND LEARNING

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INTRODUCTION

The intention of this document is to bring your school's "Sanctuary journey" into the teaching and learning space to aid with subject planning.

The Schools of Sanctuary programme is based on three principles- Learn, Action and Share.

The Schools of Sanctuary journey is closely aligned with current Department of Education and Youth priorities for inclusion, equality, wellbeing, participation and educational opportunity. It supports the development of school communities in which every student feels welcomed, valued, respected and supported to reach their full potential.

Your school's Sanctuary journey and the points of connection therein may inform whole school and subject planning. E.g the Sanctuary portfolio can be aligned with and act as a testimony or addition to the Wellbeing SSE. Indeed, the portfolio should be considered a 'living document', one that could therefore be an ongoing reference for the school's Wellbeing process.

Post Primary Schools

Post Primary Schools

- Post-primary schools can use Schools of Sanctuary to strengthen inclusive education and support belonging, participation and integration across the whole school community.
- Schools can play a major role in taking an active stance against racism, discrimination and prejudice and in standing in solidarity with minority, migrant, refugee and other marginalised or vulnerable students, their families and communities.
- Schools of Sanctuary can empower students as active participants and agents of positive change, supporting a culture of welcome, inclusion, respect and belonging in the classroom and across the whole-school community.
- The Schools of Sanctuary approach supports the development of knowledge, skills, attitudes and values that enable young people to participate confidently and responsibly in an increasingly diverse society.
- Students can be supported to develop intercultural awareness, critical thinking, communication, collaboration, creativity, digital literacy, active citizenship and respect for diversity.

- Teachers can facilitate students to explore issues of identity, culture, migration, human rights, equality, sustainability, democracy and participation through appropriate curriculum areas and learning experiences.
- Schools can use the Schools of Sanctuary journey to support inclusive teaching and learning, student voice, wellbeing, relationships and the development of a positive school culture.

We can help support and develop the Junior Cycle key skills through the Schools of Sanctuary Learn, Act and Share approach.

SOS Elements	LEARN	ACTION	SHARE
MEANING	is a vital building block for schools and underpins the aim that is shared by all schools- to equip students with lifelong knowledge, awareness and skills to be empathetic and empowered global citizens of the future.	is the way in which the school makes its commitment to welcome and inclusion visible and tangible. It is where the theory and idea of sanctuary comes to life and where students can get directly involved.	is the way in which the school makes its Sanctuary commitment visible to the wider community and the national Sanctuary network. It is how your school shares in the wider vision that those who seek sanctuary here find a culture of welcome and inclusion wherever they go
SKILLS	Being Literate Managing Information & Thinking Being Creative	Working with Others Managing Myself Staying Well	Communicating Being Literate Working with Others

The three key principles of Schools of Sanctuary are: Learn, Action, Share. These principles align directly with school ethos across all types of school communities and patronage in Ireland. Below are some examples of how our principles align with a sample of school patronage in Ireland today.

SOS PRINCIPLE	ETB ETHOS	CEIST ETHOS	EDUCATE TOGETHER ETHOS	ERST ETHOS
LEARN: Equip students with lifelong knowledge awareness to be empathetic and empowered global citizens of the future	**Core value: Excellence in education / Care/ Equality** The ETB school ethos establishes that excellence in education is underpinned by the core values of care, respect, community and equality.	**Core value: Being Just and Responsible** Through the curriculum and various activities, students are encouraged to reflect critically on issues of social justice	**Ethical Education:** it's a curriculum that is living in Ireland's equality-based schools and it seeks to offer students the opportunity to meaningfully and critically reflect upon the world around them. Ethical Education focuses on questions of equality, justice, sustainability and active citizenship	**Key element: excellence in teaching and learning** The Edmund Rice School raises awareness about the universe of which we are a part,and about the diversity of race and religion that characterises our world and our schools today.
ACT: make a commitment to welcome and inclusion visible and tangible	**Core value: Equality** an ETB school, equality is about treating all members of the school community equally and recognising and celebrating the diversity of these members. It is exemplified in prioritising resources on the basis of need and promoting a culture of inclusion.	**Core value: Showing respect for everyone** promotes the positive attitude towards the social inclusion of minority groups and stands in solidarity with those most in need.	**Core Principle:** **Equality based education** All students are treated with care and equal treatment regardless of their socio-economic, cultural or religious background.	**Key element:** **Creating a caring school community** Works for social justice: The school partners seek to live by Christian values and are encouraged to stand in solidarity with those who are powerless and marginalised. The school's policies and practices reflect an environment that is welcoming and inclusive.

SHARE Schools become a beacon for sanctuary and make their commitment visible to the wider community	**Core value: Community** The involvement of individuals, community bodies and local organisations in the school is encouraged in order to promote active citizenship and support the learning and welfare of students.	**Core value: Creating community:** Creating an environment where all feel safe and valued and are empowered to participate in the life of the school community .The school builds up a supporting community around itself with parents and past pupils	**Core principle: Democratically run** Educate Together schools place a big emphasis on community spirit and on parental involvement. Student councils are encouraged to contribute to school life and the wider school community.	**Key element: *Promoting partnership*** Engagement with others and inclusiveness are hallmarks of a partnership that respects and celebrates diversity of culture, race and creed.

PLANNING FOR THE SCHOOLS OF SANCTUARY JOURNEY

Becoming a School of Sanctuary involves pursuing a commitment to inclusion, embedding integration across the whole school community. Elements of Schools of Sanctuary are present right across the curriculum and it is very possible to embed the Schools of Sanctuary message aligning to both Junior and Senior Cycle curriculum.

We understand the pressures in the classroom so we have created links across the following subjects to aid with planning and allowing for a cross-curricular approach.

CURRICULUM LINKS
JUNIOR CYCLE

The Junior Cycle Framework continues to provide the curriculum framework for students in post-primary education. The Framework is underpinned by eight principles, including inclusive education, wellbeing, engagement and participation, creativity and innovation, and choice and flexibility. The 24 Statements of Learning and Junior Cycle key skills provide an important basis for connecting Schools of Sanctuary with teaching, learning and assessment across subjects, short courses and other learning experiences.

ENGLISH

JUNIOR CYCLE ENGLISH - CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS

SOL 1. The student communicates effectively using a variety of means in a range of contexts

SOL 3. The student creates, appreciates and critically interprets a wide range of texts
SOL 4. The student creates and presents artistic works and appreciates the process and skills involved
SOL 6. The student appreciates and respects how diverse values, beliefs and traditions have contributed to the communities and culture in which she/he lives

JUNIOR CYCLE RELIGION - CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS

SOL5 The student has an awareness of personal values and an understanding of the process of moral decision-making.
SOL6 The student appreciates how diverse values, beliefs and traditions have contributed to the communities and culture in which she/he lives.
SOL7 The student values what it means to be an active citizen, with rights and responsibilities in local and wider contexts.
SOL8 The student values local, national and international heritage, understands the importance of the relationship between past and current events and the forces that drive change.
SOL11 The student takes action to safeguard and promote her/his wellbeing and that of others.

JUNIOR CYCLE GEOGRAPHY - CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS

SOL 9: The student understands the origins and impacts of social, economic, and environmental aspects of the world around her/him.
SOL 6: The student appreciates and respects how diverse values, beliefs and traditions have contributed to the communities and culture in which she/he lives.
SOL 7: The student values what it means to be an active citizen, with rights and responsibilities in local and wider contexts
SOL 8: The student values local, national, and international heritage, understands the importance of the relationship between past and current events and the forces that drive change.

JUNIOR CYCLE HISTORY- CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS

SOL 6: The student appreciates and respects how diverse values, beliefs and traditions have contributed to the communities and culture in which he/ she lives.
SOL 7: The student values what it means to be an active citizen, with rights and responsibilities to local and wider contexts.

SOL 8: The student values local, national and international heritage, understands the importance of the relationship between past and current events and the forces that drive change.
SOL 9: The student understands the origins and impact of social, economic and environmental aspects of the world around him/ her.

JUNIOR CYCLE CIVIC, SOCIAL AND POLITICAL EDUCATION (CSPE) SHORT COURSE – CONNECTIONS

SOL 5: The student has an awareness of personal values and an understanding of the process of moral decision-making.

SOL 6: The student appreciates and respects how diverse values, beliefs and traditions have contributed to the communities and culture in which she/he lives.

SOL 7: The student values what it means to be an active citizen, with rights and responsibilities in local and wider contexts.

SOL 9: The student understands the origins and impacts of social, economic and environmental aspects of the world around her/him.

SOL 10: The student has the awareness, knowledge, skills, values and motivation to live sustainably.

SOL 11: The student takes action to safeguard and promote her/his wellbeing and that of others.

JUNIOR CYCLE VISUAL ART CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS

SOL 3: The student creates, appreciates and critically interprets a wide range of texts.

SOL 8: The student values local, national and international heritage, understands the importance of the relationship between past and current events and the forces that drive change.

JUNIOR CYCLE MFL- CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS

SOL 6: The student appreciates and respects how diverse values, beliefs and traditions have contributed to the communities and culture in which she/he lives.

ENGLISH AS AN ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE (EAL)

Schools of Sanctuary can connect strongly with the experience of students learning English as an additional language.

Learning experiences can support:

- communication and confidence in English;
- participation and belonging within the school community;
- recognition and valuing of students' home languages and cultures;
- intercultural awareness and respect;
- collaboration and peer relationships;
- student voice and participation;
- access to the wider curriculum.

Schools should recognise multilingualism as an asset and provide appropriate opportunities for students to use their full range of linguistic and cultural resources in learning and participation.

JUNIOR CYCLE BUSINESS STUDIES- CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS

SOL 7: The student values what it means to be an active citizen, with rights and responsibilities in local and wider contexts.
SOL 9: The student understands the origins and impacts of social, economic, and environmental aspects of the world around her/him.

WELLBEING PROGRAMME FOR JUNIOR CYCLE

If being a School of Sanctuary is being a place where students are safe, welcome, included, valued and supported, it is clear that 'sanctuary' is very closely linked to 'wellbeing' in many ways

Success indicators:

Culture & Environment

• Children, young people and staff experience a sense of belonging and feel safe, connected and supported.
• Systems are in place so that the voice of the child/young person, teacher and parent are heard and lead to improvements in school culture and ethos.

Teaching & Learning

Teaching and learning that is supportive of student wellbeing
• is democratic and students have a voice in relation to teaching, learning, assessment and reporting on a day-to-day basis
• is inclusive, and consciously addresses the specific needs of minority student groups and encourages students to support each other and act as positive role models for other

CURRICULUM LINKS

SENIOR CYCLE

The redevelopment of Senior Cycle is being introduced on a phased basis. Schools of Sanctuary can connect with both existing and newly redeveloped Senior Cycle specifications through themes including identity, culture, diversity, human rights, democracy, social justice, sustainability, wellbeing, active citizenship and participation.

The curriculum connections below should therefore be read as opportunities for integration with the relevant Senior Cycle specification in use in the school. Where a subject is undergoing redevelopment, schools should consult the current NCCA specification and Curriculum Online materials rather than relying on older syllabus aims.

SENIOR CYCLE ENGLISH – CURRENT SPECIFICATION

Aims

- To provide an awareness of the value of literature in its diverse forms for enriching their perceptions, for enhancing their sense of cultural identity
- Developing control and power over language is the most essential educational achievement for all students if they are to become confident, thoughtful and discriminating adults and citizens.

RELIGION

Aims

- To appreciate the richness of religious traditions and to acknowledge the non-religious interpretation of life.
- To contribute to the spiritual and moral development of the student.

SENIOR CYCLE GEOGRAPHY

The redeveloped Leaving Certificate Geography specification is being introduced as part of the Senior Cycle redevelopment and is included in the 2026 tranche.

Schools of Sanctuary connections can include:

- diversity, migration and population;
- identity, place and belonging;
- social, economic and environmental inequality;
- sustainability and climate action;
- global interdependence;
- human rights and development;
- local, national and global citizenship;
- fieldwork, research, interpretation of evidence and geographical enquiry.

These themes provide opportunities for students to explore the experiences of migration and sanctuary through geographical perspectives and evidence-based enquiry.

SENIOR CYCLE HISTORY – CURRENT SPECIFICATION

Aims:

- To provide students with a perspective of change in a world of change.
- To develop in students an appreciation of the society in which they live and of other societies, past and present.
- Students should develop an understanding of, and an ability to apply such concepts
- power and authority - conflict and reconciliation - democracy and human rights - culture and civilisation - economy and society - identity and community

SENIOR CYCLE POLITICS AND SOCIETY

Aims:

- To develop an understanding of the social systems within which people act: locally, nationally and more widely
- an understanding of and a respect for human rights and responsibilities, for human dignity and for democratic modes of governance
- a commitment to and a capacity for active participation in the learners' social and political worlds
- a commitment to and a capacity for critical, discursive and independent thinking
- a commitment to and a capacity for engagement in peaceful and
- democratic means of resolving conflicts
- a sense of care for others and a respect for and a valuing of diversity in all areas of human life within the parameters of human rights principle

Schools of Sanctuary connections include human rights, equality, diversity, democratic participation, active citizenship, conflict resolution, social justice and respect for human dignity.

SENIOR CYCLE ECONOMICS - CURRENT SPECIFICATION

Aims

- To understand the economy within which people act locally, nationally and globally
- To appreciate the ethical, historical, social and environmental dimensions of economics, and reflect on how economics contributes to the social and political development of society
- identify indicators of economic growth, social cohesion, inequality, and environmental sustainability; examine relationships between the indicators

  Schools of Sanctuary connections can include inequality, social cohesion, sustainability, migration, labour markets, public policy and the economic dimensions of inclusion and integration.

SENIOR CYCLE PHYSICAL EDUCATION

The redeveloped Leaving Certificate Physical Education specification is being introduced as part of the Senior Cycle redevelopment in 2026.

Schools of Sanctuary connections can include:

- participation and belonging;
- teamwork and collaboration;
- respect for others;
- inclusion and equality in physical activity and sport;
- wellbeing and lifelong physical activity;
- leadership;
- communication;
- participation in the social and cultural life of the school and wider community.

Physical activity can provide meaningful opportunities for students from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds to build relationships and participate as equal members of the school community.

SENIOR CYCLE MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES – CURRENT SPECIFICATIONS

Aims

- To equip learners with a broad acquaintance with the cultural,social and political complexion of countries in which the target language is a normal medium of communication and thus to help raise their awareness of cultural, social and political diversity generally.
- Understanding, describing and discussing in general terms issues that transcend cultural divisions

SENIOR CYCLE CLIMATE ACTION AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Schools of Sanctuary connections can include sustainability, climate justice, inequality, global interdependence, human rights, active citizenship and community action.

SENIOR CYCLE DRAMA, FILM AND THEATRE STUDIES

Schools of Sanctuary connections can include identity, belonging, diversity, representation, storytelling, empathy, communication, collaboration and creative expression.





TRANSITION YEAR IDEAS

Transition Year provides opportunities for students to develop personal, social, educational and vocational competencies through active, experiential and community-based learning.

Schools of Sanctuary can be embedded within TY through student-led projects, community involvement, work experience, intercultural learning, citizenship, creative projects and action for positive social change.

Students can use their TY experience to explore issues of identity, migration, inclusion, diversity, human rights and belonging and to take meaningful action within their school and wider community.

Some practical ideas of how you can incorporate Schools of Sanctuary into your Transition year programme.

- TY students undertaking their Gaisce Award could explore how their contribution to the school's Sanctuary journey could be used as part of their 'Community Involvement'
- The UNHCR's Young Champions for Refugees programme and Amnesty International Ireland's Education & Activism programme are great TY opportunities and even offer some work experience possibilities!

- In many schools, the TY musical is a BIG deal!. How can participation in this big event be as inclusive as possible? Is language a barrier? Is the choice of musical itself a barrier? Involve students in these discussions and let them lead in decision-making
- WORK EXPERIENCE : Think about how a 'buddy system' as part of your school's wellbeing/sanctuary planning may support students who may face difficulties in acquiring a work placement/ experience opportunity.
- If companies/organisation are offering TY workshops etc to your school, ask them about their diversity and inclusion policies and how they factor in minority representation and intercultural awareness in their interactions with students
- Game Changers (Trócaire) is a programme for young people who want to learn about issues affecting our world today. Game changers encourages young people to engage with global justice issues by creating either board, card or digital games. It is open to young people from primary, post primary and youth settings
- Get involved in the YSI programme, working in teams, students explore issues of concern to them (locally, nationally or globally), and take creative and collaborative action on one that they are passionate about. Students could focus on issues around racism, integration or tackling misinformation.
- Invite speakers to talk about their experience of International Protection in Ireland or living in Ireland as an immigrant. Our brilliant Sanctuary Ambassadors have stories and lived experience to share with your school community.
- Intercultural events aimed at showcasing and celebrating religious, cultural, and ethnic diversity in the school could be organised by you TY students. These can be once-off, regular, or take place over an extended period of time. They can include intercultural or diversity events, or celebration of specific religious or cultural events.
- Action-focused events which could include protests, strikes, or fundraising events such as bake sales, no-uniform days, or sponsored walks to raise awareness and money for organisations chosen by the school, or to assist in responding to an issue of interest to the children. These could be planned and organised by your TY students.

Participation in the Schools of Sanctuary journey can also complement school activities and student learning across a range of programmes and initiatives, including:

- Amber Flag
- Yellow Flag
- YSI
- Gaisce
- The Big Idea
- Worldwise Global Schools
- PPLI
- Erasmus+ programmes
- Show Racism the Red Card
- Child Talks (Children's Ombudsman's Office)
- Belong To
- Narrative4

Sanctuary Outcomes

Refugee/Migrant Pupils/Students

● Increased feeling of inclusion/belonging
● Increased confidence to make friends, speak to others, share their stories, make social connections in the school
● Involved in decision making processes, feel engaged, valued

All Pupils

● Developed intercultural skills including awareness of other languages, religions and food
● Increased empathy and compassion
● Improved understanding of world geography, culture and politics
● Increased understanding of the value of advocacy and the importance of equality at all levels of life
● Increased ability to critically engage with issues of racism, discrimination, migration, identity and representation.

● Increased confidence to participate in democratic, collaborative and community-based action that promotes equality, inclusion and belonging.

Parents

● Increased confidence for participation in school, and better understanding of school in Ireland.
● Increased sense of belonging within the school community.
● More skills and confidence to help their own children's education
● Have opportunity to share their culture and skills

School Community

● Increased levels of knowledge and awareness around refugee and migrant experiences, international protection in Ireland and the role of the school in supporting welcome, belonging and integration.
● Increased understanding of the important role of the school in providing welcome, being a safe space, providing information and enabling integration through friendship
● Schools can show evidence of their commitment to ensuring a welcoming atmosphere where students feel safe, welcomed, included and valued
● Schools find positive and effective ways of engaging in advocacy and lobbying on behalf of under-represented groups
● Schools will discover a fresh and deeper appreciation of the diversity of cultures and languages in their school community.

CONTACT INFORMATION

For more information or to speak to one of the regional schools of Sanctuary Coordinators

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