

History of Dungannon



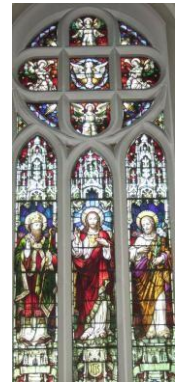
The Sisters in Dundalk readily accepted Dean Byrne's invitation and agreed to establish a community in Dungannon as soon as a convent and school were provided. When a site was procured building work began straight away. By the summer of 1894 the convent and adjoining school were completed.

St. Patrick's Church, Dungannon



Convent of Mercy, Dungannon

The new buildings, and especially the convent in coursed rusticated stone with a fine triple-lancet window in its projecting chapel gable, became worthy additions to the skyline of Northland Row, creating a positive architectural link between the Royal School to the South and St. Patrick's Church to the North.



Notice the fine triple-lancet window in the Convent Chapel

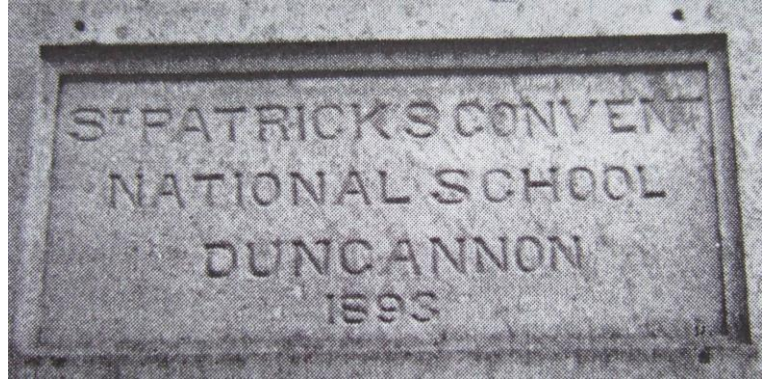
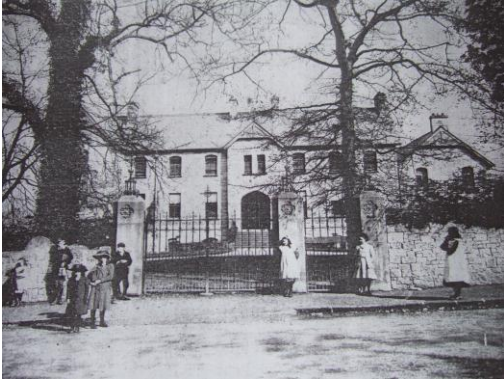


Convent Chapel, Dungannon

July 2nd 1894 saw the arrival of the Sisters and the establishment of the Convent of Mercy in Dungannon. His Eminence Cardinal Logue celebrated the first Mass in the convent chapel on July 14th.

In 2012 the Sisters moved to a smaller residence on Killym Road in Dungannon.

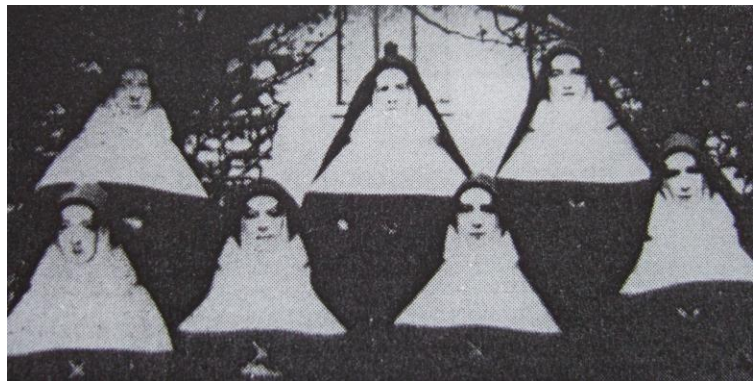




The newly arrived Sisters energetically undertook the running of the Convent school. As well as the usual literacy and numeracy skills, the school curriculum included cultural and practical activities. As the school was at first co-educational, boys as well as girls were given singing and music lessons, taking part each Christmas in an annual theatrical production. Each Sunday Sisters conducted the church choir and taught catechism class after the last Mass. The Sisters took great care in preparing the children for the Sacraments of First Confession, First Communion and Confirmation.



Sr. M. Kevin Mc. Grath, the first Superior of the community and the first Principal of the Convent Primary School



First Community of Mercy Sisters in Dungannon

Children were taught to cook in the cookery room, a room equipped with a fireplace and a black kitchen range. Lunch was often prepared there for children who had to walk long distances to and from school.



*Building to the far-right is now the
CCMS Office*

For almost a century the Convent School served the needs of the children of Dungannon. Many Sisters taught there and these were joined by lay teachers as the number of pupils grew. In time lay teachers outnumbered Sisters on the school staff. Disused haysheds and a byre were converted into classrooms in 1965 to accommodate the growing numbers. These were refurbished in 1993 and now serve as offices for the Council for Catholic Maintained Schools (CCMS).

To mark the bicentenary of the birth of Catherine McAuley in 1978 Mrs. Gallagher, a teacher of the school wrote and produced a play entitled *Catherine* staged in the Girls' Academy to the delight of all those who saw it. A gifted artist as well, Mrs. Gallagher also produced a beautiful oil painting on an earthenware plate of a scene from Catherine's life, which she presented to the Sisters as a souvenir of this great occasion.



*The painted plate by
Mrs. Gallagher depicts a
scene from the life of
Catherine McAuley*

As mobile classrooms mushroomed to accommodate growing pupil numbers, it became evident that a new school was needed. St. Patrick's Primary, a new co-educational school was opened in 1991 on the Killyman Road, replacing both the Convent School and the Monastery School of the Presentation Brothers. This brought to an end a memorable era in the history of Primary Education in Dungannon.



St. Patrick's Primary School, Dungannon



St. Patrick's Primary School, Dungannon



St. Patrick's Academy, Dungannon

ST. PATRICK'S ACADEMY

When the Boys' Academy moved to Killyman Road in 1902 to become St. Patrick's Boys' Academy, the building also provided, for the first time, for the education of girls post-fourteen years of age in Dungannon. Housed within the same building, St. Patrick's Girls' Academy and St. Patrick's Boys' Academy remained separate entities. This separation continued even when they moved together to a new site on the Killymeal Road in 1975. Sisters were in the role of principal of the Girls' Academy from 1902 until 1988. Carrying on the tradition of service in the Old Academy, a number of Sisters also taught in the new school. In 2003 the schools became [co-educational](#).

ST. PATRICK'S COLLEGE

In November 1961 a new dimension of Catholic education was ushered in when St. Patrick's Girls' Intermediate School, later named St. Patrick's High School, was blessed and opened, thus ensuring access for all girls in the area to post primary education. Girls were provided with a rich curriculum of academic, practical and commercial subjects, together with all the enrichment that education within a Catholic ethos provided. As with the Academy, the girls shared a school building with a corresponding Boys' School, while maintaining their own identity as St. Patrick's Girls' School. A Sister was principal in the school from the beginning, and continued in this role until 1993. Other Sisters taught a range of subjects. In 2008, boys and girls came together into a brand new co-educational school, St. Patrick's College.



St. Patrick's College, Dungannon

