

Louisburgh

On 7th October, 1919, Srs. Gertrude Chambers and Columba Waldron arrived from Tuam, and on 1st November they were joined by Srs. Michael Mannion and Veronica Lynagh. Sr. Michael taught music lessons. In June 1920, the first co-educational secondary school in Ireland was set up in the dining room of the hotel. The pupils were prepared for the Intermediate Certificate, and those who obtained scholarships then transferred to St. Brigid's and St. Jarlath's in Tuam.

The new convent was completed in 1926, and the school room was transferred to the convent. The numbers remained low, as the children left school early, to work on the farms or emigrated to England or America.

In 1926, Sr. Cecelia from Tuam took the place of a teacher who had been appointed Principal in Tully in Louisburgh Primary School, leaving the position unoccupied. On the following year, when the Principal retired, Sr. Laurence O'Brien was appointed as Principal, and Sr. Cortona Cunnane as assistant. The school was in a very bad state of repairs but they did not get a new school until 1938.

In 1929, Sr. Gertrude established a very successful knitting industry, which was a major boon to the area as girls were able to get full employment in it.

The Louisburgh Primary Schools were amalgamated in September 1996. The old convent Primary School was transferred to the Parish and it continues to be used as a Parish Centre. Sr. Mary Kelly was the last sister to teach in the Louisburgh Primary School.

In 1951, Fr. Joseph Moran was appointed Chaplain to the Secondary School. Sr. Josephine, the Principal, and Fr. Moran worked extremely hard to make the school a success. They negotiated with the various departments and succeeded in getting public transport for pupils living a distance from the school. With the help of Sr. Agnes, they provided a free light breakfast and light lunch service. They also introduced other subjects to the curriculum. The numbers increased, and in 1960, Sancta Maria, the new Secondary School building was built at a cost of £8,000. In 1960 the Parish Priest's old house was purchased. Apart from £1,200 received for a pre-fab building, no capital grant was paid by the Government until 1980. The Sisters' salaries and the income from the use of the convent as a holiday house helped to defray the cost.

In 1978 it was decided to press ahead for a new school. Money was collected and on 14th March, 1986, the new school was opened. Further extensions took place and on 15th November, 2019 a new school building was opened on the centenary of the arrival of the Sisters of Mercy.

Louisburgh Convent was vacated in 2000 and it was bought by the HSE in 2001.

18, The Beeches was purchased for the Sisters. Srs. Ann Feighney and Marie King lived in the small house from 2000 until it was sold in 2013. Sr. Marie continued to teach in the school for a further year.