

# DEMENTIA AWARENESS

## SCHOOL AMBASSADOR PROGRAMME

We are inviting all secondary school Transition Year students to begin a conversation about supporting people living with dementia in our community. We hope this initiative will bring a better understanding of what is needed to make our neighbourhoods more welcoming and inclusive places for everyone.

Saint Joseph's Shankill, Ireland's leading dementia care provider, brings their experience and advice to a **one-hour information and awareness session** covering:

- General information about living with dementia
- Introduction to Saint Joseph's Shankill
- How best to communicate with a person living with dementia
- Question and Answer session

For more information or to book a session contact Nicola:

Email: [nicola.yau@sjog.ie](mailto:nicola.yau@sjog.ie) / Telephone: (01) 282 3000

Website: [www.saintjosephsshankill.ie](http://www.saintjosephsshankill.ie)

*The best talk I have ever booked for my students. So informative. My students were so engaged and moved by the wonderful work done at Saint Joseph's.*

Sarah Connor  
Marino College, Dublin

*An informative and lively talk about a serious topic. The students learned a lot and it was amazing to see how many of their lives were touched by dementia, yet we did not know. Highly recommend.*

Jennifer Bratten  
Cnoc Mhuire Granard, Longford



**Saint Joseph's Shankill**  
Dedicated to Dementia Care





# About Saint Joseph's Shankill

Saint Joseph's Shankill is the largest home in Ireland solely dedicated to dementia care. Our vision is to lead the way in dementia care through innovation, education and community engagement. We want to ensure families and communities are supported, engaged and empowered to enable people living with dementia to enjoy the quality of life they deserve.

We have moved from a traditional medical care approach to one where we focus on each individual's feelings. We connect with each person emotionally to make sure they know they are still needed and that they still matter.

60 people call Saint Joseph's Shankill their home. We also provide a Day Care Club for 30 people. We hold the 'Outstanding' Butterfly Model of Care accreditation from *Meaningful Care Matters*. In 2020 we won the *Charity Impact Award* and in 2021 we received the *Investing in Volunteers Award*, the national quality mark for volunteer management.

## Book a session

Thank you for your interest in our School Ambassador Programme. To book a session, please provide the following information to: [nicola.yau@sjog.ie](mailto:nicola.yau@sjog.ie)

- Preferred date and time for session
- Number of students expected to attend
- Preferred format: We will provide in-person talks to schools in Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown and north Wicklow. For all other areas we can facilitate talks over Zoom or Teams.

In exchange we ask for a donation from the school such as €2 per student or for your students to organise a fundraising event for us.

## Before the session

We recommend that students complete their own *Life Story* before the session. We will provide this template when you book your session. This will start them thinking about their own lives, what's important to them and what makes them unique.

During the session, the presenters will introduce the concept of Life Stories and Memory Boxes. If the students have thought about their own *Life Story*, it will help them to understand why we use this in our model of care.

**Each student's *Life Story* is personal and we will not ask them to share it with us or anyone else.**

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*Making moments matter*



*Our unique home*



# What is dementia?

Dementia is the name for a range of conditions that cause damage to the brain and is most commonly found in (but not limited to) the elderly population. This damage can affect memory, thinking, language and the ability to carry out everyday tasks. There are many conditions that cause dementia, Alzheimer's disease is the most common cause. Dementia is a progressive illness, but it is not a normal part of aging. Early symptoms may include:

- Memory loss, particularly for recent events
- Misplacing things regularly
- Losing track of time
- Problems with language, difficulty finding the right word
- Changes in personality, mood or behaviour
- Difficulty in following conversations
- Becoming confused in familiar surroundings or situations
- Difficulty managing money and everyday tasks
- Difficulty solving problems or doing puzzles
- Loss of interest in hobbies and pastimes
- Repeating a question or story several times.

**64,000**  
people in Ireland  
are living with  
dementia

## The facts about dementia

11 people are diagnosed with dementia every day in Ireland so the chances are everyone knows someone living with this illness and the effects it has on people and their families.

In Saint Joseph's Shankill we describe four stages of dementia: Early Experience, Different Reality, Repetitive Emotion and Late Experience. People live in one of our six lodges with others at the same stage of dementia. Each lodge is different to the next but in every lodge people are loved and cherished and we are all part of one big family.

We are privileged to care for them and we ensure they know they truly matter to us. We know we are providing EXCELLENCE in dementia care. We could not achieve this without the support of our community.



For more information on how to get involved check out: <https://saintjosephsshankill.ie/how-to-help/schools-programme/>