



Ard Scoil Chiaráin Naofa



First Year Experience

We are very aware of the significance and importance of a smooth transition from primary to post-primary school. In order to ensure all first years make that transition as successfully as possible we spend a lot of time, in particular during the first term, listening to first years and ensuring they are settling in. We offer the following supports:

TO STUDENTS

OPEN DAY & TRANSFER PROGRAMME

Sixth class students are invited to the school to sample some of the option subjects and become more familiar with the facilities in the school. The school also participates in the Transfer Programme for sixth class students in the local primary schools during May.

AUGUST/SEPTEMBER FIRST YEAR INDUCTION PROGRAMME

Students are given practical help to familiarise themselves with the school day, e.g. class times, timetable, using their lockers etc.

MENTORING PROGRAMME

Senior students act as mentors to first years especially at break times and also organise activities for the year group. They play a very important role in our induction programme. This allows students to gain confidence in their new surroundings.

TUTOR AND YEAR HEAD SYSTEM

Each class is assigned a class tutor who works closely with the subject teacher and the year head to monitor the progress of each individual student in the year group.

TEAM BUILDING

A trip in the first term helps students bond as a group.

HOMEWORK CLUB

Teachers are available to help students with their homework. The club generally operates three days per week from 3.40pm - 4.30pm and is funded by School Completion Programme. A snack is also provided for students each day before club begins.

ACKNOWLEDGING ACHIEVEMENT

Academic success and positive behaviour is reinforced by the school Reward Scheme for first and second years, positive comments in student journal, and our annual awards ceremonies. Students are encouraged to actively participate in school life by becoming class prefects, deputy prefects, mentors or members of Student Council.

Students are also encouraged to join various school committees including Green Schools and Health Promoting School committee.

TO PARENTS AND GUARDIANS

HOME SCHOOL COMMUNITY LIAISON

The H.S.C.L. works closely with parents to develop strong links between home and school and is an invaluable support for parents, students and teachers.

OPEN NIGHT

Parents are given an opportunity on Open Night to visit the school where teachers and students will be available to answer any questions.

PARENT/TEACHER MEETINGS

NEWSLETTERS

INFORMATION EVENINGS

COMMUNICATION

Parents are encouraged to have an active role in their child's education and are very welcome to contact the school. Appointments to see class teachers, tutors, year heads or any staff member can be made by ringing the school secretary. We appreciate feedback from parents on their child's experience and progress in school.



The Curriculum

JUNIOR CYCLE

First year students are in mixed ability classes and study the following core subjects:

- | | | |
|-----------|-------------|-------------------------------------|
| • English | • Geography | • Civic Social Political Education |
| • Irish | • Science | • Social Physical Health Education* |
| • Maths | • French | • P.E.* |
| • History | • Religion* | • I.T.* |
- *Non-exam subjects*

A system of subject sampling is in operation in the school and by the end of first year all students will have studied the following optional subjects:

- | | |
|--------------------|-----------------------------|
| • Art | • Technical Graphics |
| • Home Economics | • Material Technology Wood |
| • Business Studies | • Material Technology Metal |
| • Music | |

At the end of first year, students are in a better position to make informed decisions when choosing the option subjects they will study for their Junior Certificate. Students will choose three subjects from the following list:

- | | |
|----------------------|-----------------------------|
| • Art | • Business Studies |
| • Home Economics | • French |
| • Technical Graphics | • Material Technology Wood |
| • Music | • Material Technology Metal |

The Junior Certificate School Programme is also provided in the school for all Junior Cycle students.

SENIOR CYCLE

TRANSITION YEAR

We have a very vibrant and diverse T.Y. programme in operation in the school. It is not compulsory and students apply for places on the programme. This successful programme provides a bridge to enable students make this successful transition from Junior to Senior cycle, encourages personal and social development and recognises the need for students to grow in independence. Work experience is an integral part of the Transition Year programme with two one-week work placements taking place during the year.

LEAVING CERTIFICATE

The majority of our students complete the established Leaving Certificate. All of the following subjects are taught to higher level depending on demand.

- | | | |
|-------------------------------------|--------------|--------------------------|
| • English | • French | • Construction Studies |
| • Irish | • History | • Engineering |
| • Maths | • Geography | • Home Economics |
| • I.T.* | • Art | • Design & Communication |
| • P.E.* | • Accounting | • Graphics |
| • Social Physical Health Education* | • Business | • Agricultural Science |
| • Religion* | • Biology | |
| • Career Guidance* | • Chemistry | |
| | • Physics | |
- *Non-exam subjects*

LEAVING CERTIFICATE VOCATIONAL PROGRAMME

The L.C.V.P. is run in conjunction with the established Leaving Certificate. The L.C.V.P. combines the academic strengths of the established Leaving Certificate with a dynamic focus on self-directed learning, innovation and enterprise. The primary goal of the LCVP is to prepare young people for adult life by ensuring that they are educated in the broadest sense, with an ability to cope and thrive in an environment of rapid change. The L.C.V.P. examinations are accepted for points within the C.A.O. system of application for third level colleges.

LEAVING CERTIFICATE APPLIED

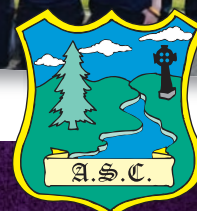
The Leaving Certificate Applied is a two year Leaving Certificate available to students who wish to follow a practical programme with a strong vocational emphasis and caters for the diversity of students in Senior Cycle. Students go on work experience one day per week, changing placement at the end of each module to ensure a variety of skills and occupations is experienced.

Career guidance counselling is provided in the school as a timetabled subject and on a one-to-one basis to support our students. Guest speakers from a range of disciplines visit the school and students are encouraged to attend college and university open days.

Extra-Curricular Activities

Our school community recognises the importance of extra-curricular activities and actively encourages all students to become involved. We offer a wide range of academic, sporting and cultural activities to cater for a variety of interests. These activities include:

- Gaelic Football
- Hurling
- Soccer
- Pitch & Putt
- Golf
- Basketball
- Fishing
- Sports Day
- School Tours
- Day Trips
- Public Speaking
- Drama
- Panto
- Choir
- Guitar lessons
- Storytelling
- Enterprise
- Gaisce
- Fundraising
- Quizzes
- Competitions
both local and national



Frequently Asked Questions

Will my child be in a mixed ability class?

In first year all classes are mixed ability but in second/third year classes are divided for English, Maths and Irish based on whether the student is studying Higher or Ordinary level.

How is the school day structured?

Students have nine classes per day. They begin their day with their tutor at 9.00am roll call and classes finish every day at 3.25pm. Break time is at 10.55 – 11.10am and lunchtime is from 1.00pm – 1.34pm.

Will my child have locker facilities?

Yes, all students are assigned a locker at the beginning of the year. When students begin each academic year they receive the key to their locker, containing all of their required books. Students can access their lockers before and after school as well as at break time and lunch time.

How will my child with special needs/learning difficulties be catered for?

The year head and H.S.C.L. will work closely with the primary school and the parents to ensure all relevant information, psychological reports etc. are transferred. If your child qualifies for resource hours they will be provided to best meet the needs of your child. The school, with guidance from the Learning Support Co-Ordinator, will use a variety of approaches to maximise the effectiveness of support provided.

How will my gifted child be catered for?

The school has links with the Centre for Talented Youth based in D.C.U. which provides programmes for students identified as having high academic ability.

Will my child get to choose his/her Junior Certificate subjects?

All students study History, Geography, Science, C.S.P.E., English, Irish and Maths. At the end of first year, students will choose three option subjects from a list of seven. Students also study the following non exam subjects; Religion, Information Technology and Social Physical and Health Education.

Will he/she be guaranteed a place in their chosen option subjects?

Every effort will be made to ensure students secure a place in their chosen options. Students will be asked to rank their preferences in the event that there is excess demand for particular subjects.

If I have a concern whom do I contact?

If you have a concern please contact the school secretary to make an appointment to see your child's teacher, tutor or year head. The H.S.C.L., who works closely with parents, can also be contacted. If you need to speak with the principal or deputy principal you are also welcome to ring and make an appointment.

Can students go home for lunch?

Students are not permitted to leave the school grounds during lunchtime.

What food is available at lunchtime in the canteen?

A range of reasonably priced hot or cold food and drink is available to purchase at lunchtime. As a Health Promoting School, students are encouraged to bring in healthy lunches and only healthy options are available in the shop in the canteen.

How much will school books cost?

The school operates a school book rental scheme to minimise the cost to parents.

How do your Leaving Certificate results compare to the national average?

Ard Scoil Chiaráin has a strong record of academic success and consistently features as one of the top feeder schools in Offaly.

How will I be informed of my child's academic progress?

Parents will be informed of their child's progress formally by term reports which are posted out to parents three times during the year. Tutors and year heads also keep parents informed throughout the year. Parent/Teacher meeting are also scheduled during the year for all year groups.

How will the school communicate with parents/guardians?

The school values the input and involvement of parents and open communication is fostered through the use of the student journal, text messages, phone calls home as well as letters and newsletters.

Is after school study provided?

Supervised after school study is provided at a reasonable price, Monday – Friday from 3.45pm – 5.45pm.

How much homework can I expect my child to get in first year?

Generally first year students have 1 – 1.5 hours homework per day.



Ard Scoil Chiaráin Naofa is a non-denominational co-educational post primary school. We provide a caring environment for all those who study here and encourage students to maximise their potential by developing all of their individual talents and abilities to the full. We are proud of our fine tradition of academic, cultural and sporting excellence. We recognise and appreciate that we are partners in education with parents, students and the wider community.

Ard Scoil Chiaráin Naofa boasts a long tradition of academic success and excellence. Our students have progressed to many third level institutions in Ireland and abroad. The school is justifiably proud of all of its former students whose excellent exam results formed a solid basis for further academic achievements.

“A caring and supportive ethos was evident in the school, with students being valued as individuals.”

WHOLE SCHOOL EVALUATION

“The school provides an extensive range of programmes to ensure that the students’ educational experience is fulfilling, challenging and appropriate to their needs.”

WHOLE SCHOOL EVALUATION

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