



Ard Scoil Chiaráin Naofa



PROSPECTUS

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 and general school routines.

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. A Team Building trip in the first term helps students and mentors bond.

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. Therapeutic support and guidance is available as required.

ACKNOWLEDGING ACHIEVEMENT

Academic success and positive behaviour is reinforced by the School Reward Scheme for junior students, positive comments in student journal/VSware, 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 Active Flag 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 are available to answer any questions.

PARENT/TEACHER MEETINGS

Parent/Teacher meetings take place during the school year and are highlighted at the beginning of each academic year. Dates are included on the school calendar for each year group.

INFORMATION EVENINGS

A range of information evenings are organised during the school year to support your son/daughter's learning.

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. All parents are encouraged to join our active Parents' Council.



PARENTS' APP

We use the VSware App to communicate with parents. Parents receive notifications re student's progress, attendance, behaviour and our merit system.



Frequently Asked Questions

How is the school day structured?

School begins every morning with roll call at 8.55am and finishes at 3.50pm everyday except Wednesday as students have an earlier finish time of 1.15pm. Classes are one hour long and students have 6 classes everyday except Wednesday, when they only have 4 classes.

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

The year head and HSCL will work closely with the primary school and the parents to ensure all relevant information is shared. If your son/daughter is identified as needing support it 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 the support provided.

How will my gifted child be catered for?

The school has links with the Centre for Talented Youth based in DCU 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, English, Irish and Maths. Students will also choose three option subjects from a list of eight before they commence first year. Students also study the following non exam subjects: Religion, Social Personal & Health* Education, Civic Social & Political Education* and Physical Education*
* Subjects offered as short courses for Junior Cycle.

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 and the timetable will be devised to maximise as many students as possible getting their preferred 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 subject teacher, tutor or year head. The HSCL, 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 canteen. Nutritious snacks are provided free of charge at break time to all students. Hot meals are provided at a subsidised cost and an online fob system operated by the canteen service provider allows parents to top up students' accounts. The canteen operates as a cashless business and students will need to register and set up fob to avail of canteen food.

How much will school books cost?

The school operates a school book rental scheme to minimise the cost to parents. This can be paid online using our online payments system. The details of the free book scheme for junior cycle students mentioned in this year's budget are not yet available.

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 accessible online to parents three times during the year. Tutors and year heads also keep parents informed throughout the year. Parent/Teacher meetings are also scheduled during the year for all year groups.

How will the school communicate with parents/guardians?

The main mode of communication with parents is through the school vsware app. This allows parents to gain feedback in real time on student's behaviour, our school merit system and attendance. The app is a very convenient way to inform the school of absences and updates. The school values the input of parents and open communication is fostered. Parents are encouraged to get involved in the Ard Scoil Chiaráin Naofa Parents' Council.

Is after school study provided?

Supervised after school study is provided at a reasonable price subject to demand. Study operates after school for a two hour session. A short break is provided after last class prior to the commencement of study.

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.



The Curriculum



BROSNA CENTRE

The Brosna Centre caters for the needs of students with Autism who meet the criteria for an ASD specialist class setting. The Centre comprises of three classes and caters for a maximum of 18 students. ASCN offers a broad and inclusive programme for all our students including our Brosna students. Students can access mainstream classes and are encouraged to become involved in school activities and extra-curricular activities. Individual learning programmes centred on developing social, communication, organisation and life skills are offered in an Autism specific learning environment.



JUNIOR CYCLE

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

- English
- Irish
- Maths
- History
- Geography
- Science
- Religion
- IT
- Wellbeing
- *Civic Social Political Education**,
- *Social Personal Health Education**,
- *PE**

** Subjects offered as short courses for Junior Cycle*

Students choose three subjects from the following list which they will study for their Junior Cycle.

- Business Studies
- Graphics
- Modern Foreign Languages – French
- Wood Technology
- Engineering
- Home Economics
- Music
- Visual Art



The Junior Cycle Profile of Achievement (JCPA) is issued by schools and reports on: the student's achievements in the state certified examinations including the Assessment Task, as well as Classroom Based Assessments. The JCPA also reports on the student's achievement in Wellbeing. Level 2 Programmes and short courses are also recorded on the JCPA.

The Junior Certificate School Programme is also offered in the school.



The Curriculum

SENIOR CYCLE

TRANSITION YEAR



We have a very vibrant and diverse Transition Year programme in operation in the school. It is not compulsory and students apply for places on the programme. This successful programme enables students to make a 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.

LEAVING CERTIFICATE

Students following the Leaving Certificate (Established) programme generally study seven subjects for examination: English, Irish, Maths and four subjects from the option list below.

- Accounting
 - Agricultural Science
 - Art
 - Biology
 - Business
 - Chemistry
 - Construction Studies
 - Design and Communication Graphics D.C.G.
 - Engineering
 - French
 - Geography
 - History
 - Home Economics
 - Music
 - Physics
 - I.T.*
 - P.E.*
 - Religion*
 - Career Guidance*
 - Social Personal & Health Education S.P.H.E.
- * Non-exam subjects*

Option subjects are provided subject to demand and are offered at all levels.

LEAVING CERTIFICATE VOCATIONAL PROGRAMME

LCVP is run in conjunction with the established Leaving Certificate. The LCVP 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 LCVP examinations are accepted for points within the CAO system of application for third level colleges.

LEAVING CERTIFICATE APPLIED

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

Career guidance and 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. We are very proud of the links we share with TUS as part of the Business Partnership Programme.

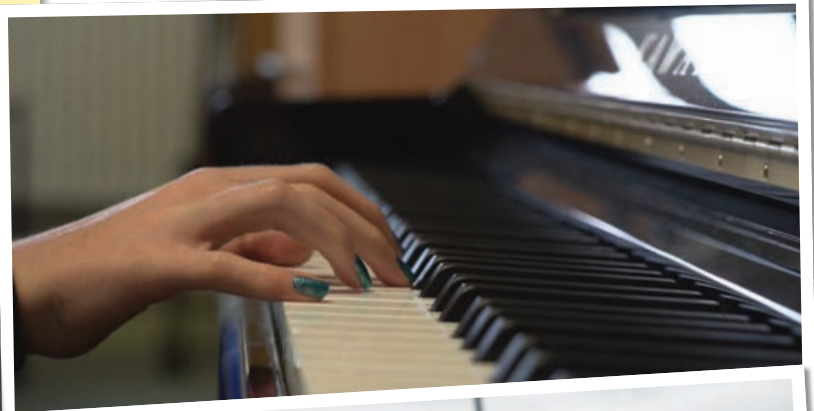


Extra-Curricular Activities

Extra-curricular Activities: Learning Beyond the Classroom

Education isn't confined to textbooks and classrooms alone. At Ard Scoil Chiaráin Naofa, we offer a diverse range of extra-curricular activities that cater for a wide spectrum of interests. From sports and arts to clubs and community service, our extra-curricular programmes provide students with the opportunity to explore, excel, and have fun outside the regular curriculum. These activities foster teamwork, leadership, and personal growth, enhancing the holistic development of our students. 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
- Competitions
- Quizlet
- Maths Club
- History Club
- Badminton
- Active Flag
- Gaisce
- Green Schools
- Lego League
- Vex Robotics
- STEMP
- Foreign Exchange



School Life

POSITIVE LEARNING COMMUNITY

Ard Scoil Chiaráin is a very progressive learning environment where all stakeholders have a voice. We pride ourselves in being proactive and responding to the needs of all within our learning community. Students are actively encouraged to avail of the many learning opportunities offered by third level colleges, namely Trinity, TUS, UCD and Maynooth. Our students are currently participating in the following programmes: Getting into Law, Lego League and STEM Passport for Inclusion. Year on year our student numbers have grown, with over 320 students attending. Our school campus has developed accordingly to meet these needs. We are all very excited with the planned development of a new school to meet our growing needs.



Ard Scoil Chiaráin Naofa has a seventeen-member Student Council which represents the student body. Each year group elects student representatives. All students are encouraged to join focus groups which explore students' experience of learning and school. We are a very student centred learning community where feedback from students is sought and encouraged. Feedback from students is also gained through the use of online surveys and forms.

DIGITAL LEARNING

- All students use the Office 365 suite to access the curriculum and complete relevant work.
- We have a fully furnished specialist computer room for IT as well as laptop trolleys for use in classes.
- We integrate digital resources into our curriculum, ensuring that students gain the skills necessary to thrive in the digital age.
- The TEAMS platform is used to complement the work done in school and homework.
- Teachers use iPads as a teaching tool.



Ard Scoil Chiaráin Naofa is a multi-denominational co-educational post primary school under the trusteeship of Laois and Offaly Education and Training Board. We provide a caring environment for all 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. We embody the ETB ethos of care, respect, equality, community and excellence in education.

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.

“The school is characterised by a warm and supportive environment which is underpinned by a high quality care system.”

WHOLE SCHOOL EVALUATION

“The school provides a broad and balanced curriculum that is designed to meet the needs of the students.”

WHOLE SCHOOL EVALUATION

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