



COLÁISTE BRÍDE



Information Booklet for First Year Parents 2023



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Welcome from the Principal

Dear Parent/Guardian,

Welcome to Coláiste Bríde.

On behalf of the entire school community, I thank you for choosing Coláiste Bríde and for entrusting us with your daughter's/ward's education.

The transition from primary to secondary school offers exciting opportunities and challenges for your daughter/ward and we hope that through the spirit of partnership, we can work together to ensure that she will be happy here while also achieving her full potential both in academic and extra-curricular endeavours.

As a school founded by the Sisters of Mercy and under the trusteeship of CEIST we are guided by the following core values;

- Promoting Spiritual and Human Development
- Achieving Quality in Teaching and Learning
- Showing Respect for Every Person
- Creating Community
- Being Just and Responsible

Our core values support and nourish the lives of the people who are at the heart of our school community; students, staff and parents.

It is necessary that parents/guardians know how our school operates and this handbook will provide you with information that will be essential for your child's educational journey with us. As well as outlining important information on procedures, it also offers useful tips and advice about how you can support your daughter/ward in her new learning environment.

We are fully aware that the transition to second level school can differ for each child, depending on her personality. For some, the move will happen quite easily, but a few children may have some difficulty transferring. This is to be expected and should not be cause for alarm unless difficulties persist beyond the first few weeks. To help your child, we offer a variety of supports, including our Induction Days and have in place an excellent support service which includes a Pastoral Care Team which meets on a regular basis to discuss any issues of concern that students might have. Please contact the school should you have any concerns about your child.

We look forward to welcoming your child here in August.

Yours sincerely,



Ms. Kiera O'Sullivan
Principal

Basic Information

- Phone: 053 9234245
- Email: office@colaistebride.ie
- Website: www.colaistebride.ie

In September there will be:

- 765 Students
- 65 Teachers



Supporting your Child in their Transition to Post Primary

First-Year Support Team:

- Year Head: Olive McGuinness
- Guidance Counsellor: Aisling McDonald
- Home School Community Liaison: Eleanor Harpur
- Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator: Louise Murphy
- Class Tutor & Subject Teachers
- Principal: Kiera O'Sullivan
- Deputy Principals: Rose McConville & Niall Moynihan
- Cara Leaders

Year Head

Your daughter's/ward's Year Head Ms. McGuinness takes responsibility for the pastoral care of the First-Year group.

Should parents or guardians have concerns about how their daughter/ward is settling in to First-Year they should contact Ms. McGuinness.

Ms. McGuinness will notify relevant teachers when requested by a parent or guardian if an out of school or home situation impacts on the student's school life.

Ms. McGuinness will work closely with our teachers, our Fifth-Year Cara leaders, our mentors for incoming First-Year students, to ensure that your daughter/ward quickly settles into life in secondary school.

Class Tutor

Students meet with the class tutor once a week as part of their Pastoral Care class.

The Tutor will provide a pastoral care support for the student and will help them settle into secondary school.

In the first few weeks, students will follow a Transition to Secondary School programme in their Pastoral Care class.

The Tutor will also monitor your daughter's school journal and provide guidance and support in relation to their journals.

Special Educational Needs

Our SEN support team is led by our SEN co-ordinator Louise Murphy, learning support co-ordinator Niamh Duggan and SEN teacher Orla Foley

The team is supported by class teachers and our SNAs Avril Lynch, Mary Wickham and Bride Kinsella. If your daughter/ward has any special educational needs, and if you have not done so already, please contact our SEN co-ordinator, Louise Murphy, as soon as possible.

Cara Leaders

The **Cara Programme** is an anti-bullying & mentoring programme. Fifth Year students receive training to equip them with the skills to become mentors for incoming First-Year students. It is a programme based on pro-respect within the school community, and one that enables students to take responsibility for the happiness of others and for the safety and well-being of all who share our school environment.

Three Cara leaders are assigned to each First-Year class and will support students from their first day in Coláiste Bríde.



First-Year Class Structure

Base Classes

All First-Year base classes in Coláiste Bríde are of mixed ability, the classes are divided up to ensure that within each class there is a broad mix of students by ability. We do not stream or set classes as both national and international educational research has found that all students benefit more from a mixed ability setting.

For most subjects, students will stay with their base class, the exceptions are for Maths, Home Economics and Science.

Due to health and safety requirements Science and Home Economics classes have restrictions in the number of students in a room and as a result, students from either two or three base classes will be mixed to make up the classes for these subjects.

We timetable all First-Year Maths classes at the same time as it allows us to have a learning support Maths group with two teachers team teaching the class. The other four Maths groups will be of mixed ability.

Division of Classes

Secondary school provides your daughter/ward with an opportunity to make new friends in a new learning environment. It is a fresh start in a new class, with new girls from a large number of primary schools.

First-Years adapt quickly to their new classes and classmates.

However, if you feel that it would be absolutely vital to your daughter's well-being and happiness, we can place her in a class with a friend.

Alternatively, if you feel that it would be absolutely vital to your daughter's well-being that she **not** be placed in a class with someone we can address this also.

Email Donna in our office at office@colaistebride.ie if you wish to make a request for the placement of your daughter. Any requests must be made before the school year commences.

The next steps...

Education Passport

Over recent weeks your daughter's primary school may have asked you to complete an Education Passport for your child.

This will assist us in making the transition as smooth as possible.

The *Education Passport* materials are available to view at www.ncca.ie/transfer and include a

- *6th Class Report Card My Profile* sheet for children
- *My Child's Profile* sheet for parent(s)/guardian(s)
- A *Special Educational Needs Summary* form will be added to support the sharing of information for those children who have identified learning needs.

Education Passport
Pas Oideachais
Supporting your child's transition
from primary to post-primary school
Ag tacú le hainistiú do leibhín ón
mbeurscoil go dtí an iarbhuiscoll

My Child's Profile

To be completed by parent(s)/guardian(s)



Your child will soon be moving from primary school to post-primary school.

As part of your child's Education Passport we invite you to add information about your child by completing this form.

Please complete and return to your child's primary school principal **within five working days.**

This is my/our first experience of a child starting in post-primary school. Yes ☐ No ☐

Child's name Primary school name

Child's home language(s)

1. In school, my child enjoys... Ar scoil, baineann mo pháiste sult as...

Please note that requests by students to be placed with friends that are written on the Educational Passport will not be considered. If you, as the parent or guardian, have a specific request for a class placement for your daughter/ward you should email your request to office@colaistebride.ie.

Book Rental

The book rental scheme is available to all incoming First-Years. It includes most of the books and materials that the student needs for her First-Year in Coláiste Bríde.

- The cost of Book Rental for First-Years is €165.
- If you are in receipt of a medical card the cost is €130.
- The total cost if you were to purchase all the books yourself would be approximately €390.
- Please complete the online Book Rental application form and return it to the school before June 30th.
- The bundle includes a number of workbooks which do not need to be returned.

- The art pack, which students keep, includes sketch pads, pencils etc., everything the student needs packed in a convenient art box.
- The maths pack includes a calculator, mini-white board and maths set which students keep as their own.
- Students should take care not to lose or deface books, parents/guardians will be required to pay the cost of any replacements needed.
- Some books will be kept until the end of 3rd Year while others will change each year. All books are **returned before the summer holidays**.

Locker & Journal

€45 to be paid online or on the first day of the school year to the Year Head.

- All students are required to have a locker.
- The Year Head will distribute lockers on the first day. Students should purchase a lock that is suitable for their locker and keep the spare key of their lock at home. Lockers should always be kept locked when not in use.
- Students are not expected to carry all their books around all day. Before 8:40am books should be organised for the first three classes. At break-time books should be organised for the next three classes. At lunch-time books should be organised for the classes after lunch. There is plenty of time after class at 3:45pm or 2:45pm to collect and sort books for homework before catching the bus.

Uniform

- A navy school jumper with red stripe, costing approximately €40.
- A plaid Coláiste Bríde school skirt, costing approximately €75, or the Coláiste Bríde school uniform trousers, costing approximately €35 - €40.
- A Coláiste Bríde school jacket, costing €50, with a student's initials embroidered €5. As the jacket is a compulsory part of the uniform, we advise all students to have their initials put on the jacket.
- A white shirt.
- A red tie.
- Navy socks or navy tights.
- Navy or black shoes only: **no boots, canvas shoes or runners are allowed**.
- Only a plain navy scarf or headscarf is permitted.
- Each of the above uniform items are available from Burke O Leary's and Mat Mernagh's, Enniscorthy. Uniforms are available to order by phone or in person.
- The school shirt and tie can also be bought from most shops providing uniforms, including large national retailers.
- The school skirt is worn by most students. It is very durable and if cared for the skirt will last for the duration of a student's time in Coláiste Bríde. They can also be sourced second hand in very good condition.
- The P.E. uniform consists of a navy tracksuit/leggings, school quarter zip and runners.



- Please note that although they are for sale in local clothes shops a school crested hoodie is **not** part of either the school or PE uniform and students are **not** permitted to wear a crested hoodie in school.

Uniform Expectations

- If a student is unable to wear an item of the uniform to school, they must present a note at the office before 8:40 am that morning.
- Hair dyed or bleached to unnatural or fluorescent colours is not permitted.
- Nails of inappropriate length and style are not permitted.
- For Hygiene and Health & Safety reasons some subjects may have their own rules in relation to nails.
- Students are permitted to wear make-up and jewellery, but not to excess.
- Visible tattoos are not permitted.
- For safety reasons facial rings are prohibited.
- Runners/trainers and/or tracksuit/hoodie/zip top, etc. may only be worn for P.E. classes.
- The school authorities are the judges of what constitutes acceptable standards of dress, hairstyles and jewellery.

Key Dates including Induction

- Book Rental Forms returned by Friday June 30th.
- You will receive a reminder text in August regarding the first day of school and the €45 for lockers and journals.
- This can be paid online through VShare
- We are planning for the following reopening in August:
 - Thursday 24th of August First-Year Induction Day 1.
 - Friday 25th of August First-Year Induction Day 2.
 - After their induction First-Years will not be required to attend school until Friday 1st of September, on that date all year groups are back in school.
- In September we will have an information night for parents/guardians on how to support students after the initial few weeks.

School Procedures

Communication

Communication between the school and home and vice versa is extremely important:

- The student's School Journal and VShare are the main forms of communication between home and school.
- Our text message system which will provide you with links to letters from the school which can be accessed from our website.
- We will also text parents/guardians if their daughter/ward is late or absent from school, it is important that if you change your phone number that you let the school know as soon as possible otherwise you will not receive these messages.
- Phone calls and appointments - please be aware that due to teaching commitments if you ring the school the Year Head or teachers may not be able to contact you back immediately.

- School Reports are published on our administration software VS Ware
- Digital Newsletter, which we email to you throughout the school year.
- Our website www.colaiстеbride.ie has information on our school including our school's policies and procedures.
- We also post news from our school on Twitter [@colaiste_bride](https://twitter.com/colaiste_bride).

School Journal

- The school journal is the main form of communication between home and school.
- Students use it to write in all their homework and as a calendar for upcoming events such as tests.
- Towards the back of the journal is a section where teachers record discipline issues such as a student having no homework or no books.
- Notes in relation to absences or lateness should be written in the appropriate sections of the school journal. These notes must be dated and signed to be accepted.
- The journal should be signed each week by a parent/guardian. This will be checked and countersigned by the class Tutor.
- The school journal is the most important book for First-Year students. Students should have their school journal with them in class at all times. Students who arrive in school without a journal should present themselves to their Year Head or the Deputy Principal at the office before 8:40am.
- If a student loses their journal it will have to be replaced at a cost of €10.



Signing Out of School/ Permission to Leave

- Students are not allowed leave the school grounds or absent themselves from class without permission.
- Breaches of this are dealt with very severely as it is extremely important that your daughter/ward is where she is supposed to be at all times.
- We have a duty of care to your daughter/ward and it would be negligent of us to not enforce this.
- If your daughter/ward is feeling unwell, she should inform her teacher and go directly to the office.
- The office will contact you immediately.
- **If your daughter/ward is feeling unwell and needs to go home from school early, then she will have to be collected from the school.**
- If a parent or guardian is unable to collect her and you make alternative arrangements, you should inform the school of who will be collecting your daughter.
- If we have not been informed, your daughter/ward will not be allowed to sign out of school. This is important to ensure the health and safety of your daughter.

- If your daughter/ward must sign out for an appointment, etc she must show the "Permission to Leave Note" in their journal to their Year Head to be countersigned before 11:00 am each day.

1 Permission TO LEAVE	Date:	Departure time:	Student Name:	Class:
	Return time:	Reason:	Date: / /	Departure Time: Return Time:
	Signed by Parent/Guardian:	Date: / /		
	Signed by Year Head:	Date: / /		

Absence

- Students are expected to be present and on time for all classes and to attend school regularly.
- However, if a student is unable to attend school an "Absence Note" must be completed in the school journal by a parent/guardian and presented on return from an absence from school
- There is an expectation that students should find out what work they may have missed out on.

1 Record of ABSENCE	Date: / /	Student Name:	Class:
	Number of days absent:	Absent from: / / to: / /	No. of days:
	Reason for absence:	Reason: <input type="checkbox"/> Illness <input type="checkbox"/> Urgent Family Reason	
		<input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="checkbox"/> Medical Appointment	
		Details	
	Signed by Parent/Guardian:	Date: / /	

Late

- Students arriving **late** to school must **Sign in** at the Front Office before going to class. Otherwise they will be marked as absent.
- Students who arrive late to school must present a Late note signed by a parent/guardian to the office explaining the reasons for being late.

1 LATE NOTE	Date:	Student Name:	Class:
	Late time:	Date: / /	Arrival Time:
	Signed:	Reason:	
	Date signed:	Signed by Parent/Guardian:	Date: / /
		Tel no.:	

VS Ware

VS Ware is the administration software programme the school uses.

Details about your daughter/ward such as their timetable, attendance and Christmas & Summer test results will be available on VS Ware.

VSware is also the programme that administers our text alert system to keep you updated.

Through VSware we will also text you automatically if your daughter/ward signs out of school, is late or absent from school.

It is important that if you change your phone number that you let the school know as soon as possible otherwise you will not receive these text messages. Payments can be made through VSware, please note that online payments include a VSware administration charge.

You can access our Parents' Guide to VSware on our website at

<https://www.colaistebride.ie/uploads/1/0/7/6/10762948/parents-guide-to-vsware..pdf>.

In your pack you have been provided with an individual login and password.

VShare is accessed through the school's website or at <https://colaistebrideenniscorthy.vshare.ie>.

Teaching & Learning

Subjects for First-Year

Students will study the following subjects in First-Year:

- English (2 class periods)
- Literacy (1 class period)
- Irish (3 class periods)
- Maths (3 class periods)
- History (2 class periods)
- Geography (2 class periods)
- Religion (2 class periods)
- Art (1 class period)
- Business (1 class period)
- French (2 class periods)
- German (2 class periods)
- Home Economics (1 class period)
- Music (1 class period)
- Science (1 class period)
- Pastoral Care (1 class period)
- Physical Education (1 class period)
- SPHE, Social, Personal and Health Education, (1 class period)
- CSPE, Civic, Social and Political Education (1 class period)



At the end of First-Year students select the subjects they will study for Junior Cycle.

Junior Cycle Wellbeing

- The Junior Cycle provides for an area of learning at Junior Cycle called Wellbeing. Wellbeing will cross the three years of Junior Cycle and will include learning opportunities to enhance the physical, mental, emotional and social wellbeing of students.
- There is a requirement on all schools to provide First-Year students with 400 hours of timetabled Wellbeing classes over the three years of their Junior Cycle.
- In Coláiste Bríde Wellbeing is made up of:
 - PE, SPHE, CSPE, Pastoral Care and Literacy.



School Day

Students should be in school at 8.35am at the latest in order to have their books organised. The first bell rings at 8:40am which is the signal for students to make their way to class. All students must be in their seat in class for Morning Prayer at 8.45am.

Break begins at 10:45am, at 11:00am the first bell sounds at the end of break which is the signal for students to make their way to their next class which begins at 11:05am. The bell at 1:40pm signals the end of lunch and again students should make their way to the next class which begins at 1:45pm.

Time	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
8:45					
9:45					
10:45	Break	Break	Break	Break	Break
11:05					
12:05					
1:05	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch
1:45					
2:45				End of day	End of day
3:45	End of day	End of day	End of day		

The school day finishes at 3:45pm Monday to Wednesday and at 2:45pm on Thursdays and Fridays.

Office 365

To support teaching and learning all students are provided with a Microsoft Office 365 account. This is accessed using the email address provided by the school. Office 365 supports blended learning through Microsoft Teams and OneNote. Our Microsoft Office 365 subscription allows students install Office, including Microsoft Word, PowerPoint and Excel on up to 5 PCs or Macs, 5 tablets, and 5 smartphones.

Students are responsible and accountable for any communications or activities associated with their school email addresses.

Students are expected to follow the same rules for good behaviour and respectful conduct online as offline – these rules are found in both Coláiste Bríde's Code of Behaviour and our Internet Acceptable Use policy.

The email address will be valid for the duration of the student's time in Coláiste Bríde.



Voluntary Contribution

Families are asked to contribute an annual voluntary contribution to make up the shortfall in the funding that the school receives.

Your generous support plays a vital role every year in ensuring that our students benefit fully from the high-quality teaching and learning environment in the school.

Contributions allow us to provide services such as our student wellbeing area, the school library, retreats & wellbeing days, internet safety talks, study skills talk, extracurricular activities, class set of iPads, etc.

The voluntary contribution costs for next year are as follows:

- One daughter/ward €100
- Two daughters €150
- Three or more €200

School Life

Extra-Curricular Activities

Extra-curricular activities play an important part in the holistic development of each student. They are especially important at First-Year level in establishing friendships and a good team spirit. You should encourage your daughter/ward to get involved. Activities are organised on a voluntary basis by school staff and mainly take place at lunchtime. These activities may include basketball, hockey, camogie, Gaelic football, soccer, athletics, debates, board games, science club, book club, maths club.

Lunch Time

Lunch is from 1.05pm till 1.40. First-Year students eat their lunch in their Home Rooms. We would advise students to only use the canteen as a treat and should instead bring a healthy packed lunch to school. A rota is drawn up to organise cleaning of classrooms at the end of lunch however each student is responsible for cleaning up after herself.



Canteen

The school canteen serves free hot food and sandwiches for lunch each day. First-Year students bring their food back to their base classroom to eat it.

Study Classes

Students should always have both a reading book and schoolwork in their bag at all times. Students are not permitted to go to their lockers for a study class.

Students' Responsibilities

Be in school every day – attendance and punctuality are crucial.

Always do your best.

Be prepared for each class.

Abide by the Code of Positive Behaviour.

Our school's ethos places great value on being respectful to every member of our school community. It is expected that students treat their fellow students, staff and guests with respect and courtesy at all times.

Code of Positive Behaviour

Our Code of Positive Behaviour is printed in each school journal. Please take the time to read this important school document. In enrolling your daughter/ward in our school you have made a

commitment that our Code of Positive Behaviour is acceptable to you and your daughter/ward and that you will make all reasonable efforts to ensure compliance with the code by your daughter/ward. Our approach to discipline is based on a system of fairness where there is co-operation between student, parent/guardian and teacher within the school community. Although the Class Tutor helps monitor the student journal, their role is more of a supportive and caring role. The Year Head will deal with most disciplinary issues, more serious issues will be dealt with by the Principal and/or Deputy Principals.

Settling In — What you can do to help

At Home

- Set a regular pattern for homework time. Show interest in work done. Praise good effort.
- Provide a quiet, well-lit place to work.
- Turn off the TV or devices during homework time. Actively help your daughter/ward to revise.
- Remove access to mobile phones when doing homework, study and at night-time.
- In the first few weeks, each evening, help your daughter/ward to check their timetable regarding homework, books, equipment or notes required for the school next day.
- Fill in the absence, late or permission to leave notes in the Homework Journal when relevant.
- Check and sign the Homework Journal each week.
- Agree to a reasonable bedtime given the earlier start to the day.
- Agree an appropriate time for getting up in the morning.
- Ensure your daughter/ward has a good breakfast each morning.
- Encourage your daughter/ward to take part in extra-curricular activities.
- Encourage your daughter/ward to talk to teachers if in difficulty.
- Avoid over-protection and allow your child to become more independent.

Contact with school

- Read the teachers' notes in the Homework Journal and discuss them with your daughter/ward.
- Ring and/or make an appointment to see the Teacher or Year Head if needed.
- Phone the Front Office if you need to get a message to your daughter/ward.

Students: what to do if...

I AM ABSENT	Put an Absence Note signed by a parent or guardian in the Notes Box before 8:40 on the first morning you are back. Your parent or guardian should contact the school to speak to your Year Head if you are absent for a longer period of time.
I AM LATE	Sign in at the main office with a signed Late Note.
I NEED TO LEAVE SCHOOL EARLY	To leave school early your parent or guardian must sign a Permission to Leave Note. You must show this note to your Year Head before 11:00. You will not be allowed to sign out unless your Year Head has also signed the Permission to Leave note. If your Year Head is unavailable the Principal or Deputy Principal can sign this note. Go to the Front Office with your journal to sign out at the time to leave.
I CANNOT FIND THE CORRECT ROOM FOR CLASS	Ask any teacher you see on the corridor
I HAVE NOT GOT MY COMPLETE UNIFORM	Please present a note explaining why you do not have an item of uniform to your Year Head, the Deputy Principal or the Principal in the morning before 8:40am. If you do not have a note you should still go to the Front Office before 8:40am.
I NEED TO GO TO THE TOILET URGENTLY	Firstly, students should go to the toilet before school at break and at lunch. You should not go to the toilet between classes unless you have first received your teacher's permission. If you really must go to the toilet during class, ask permission from the class teacher and present your journal at the correct page for the teacher to sign.
I AM HAVING DIFFICULTIES WITH A SUBJECT	Tell your subject teacher and talk to your Year Head
I CANNOT SEE THE BOARD WELL IN CLASS	Tell your teacher and ask to sit in the front of the class
BULLYING	Report bullying incidents to a Meitheal Leader or any staff member. You should also report any bullying incidents you see happening to other students.
MOBLIE PHONES	First-Years will not be permitted to use their at break or lunch time.
THE FIRE ALARM RINGS	Follow the teacher's instructions. Do not panic.

I FEEL ILL	Tell your subject teacher and report to the Front Office.
I LOSE SOMETHING/FIND SOMETHING	Report it to the Front Office.
I AM WORRIED ABOUT SOMETHING IN SCHOOL	Speak to your parents/guardians, class Tutor, Year Head or Guidance Counsellor
I LOSE MY LOCKER KEY	Report it to the Front Office.
I CAN'T DO P.E. BECAUSE OF AN ILLNESS	Your parent or guardian writes a note in your school journal and show it to the P.E. Teacher
I HAVE FORGOTTEN MY LUNCH	Speak to the Front Office.
I CAN'T TURN UP FOR SPORTS EVENT OR SCHOOL ACTIVITY	Inform teacher in charge or ring school office with an explanation
SOMETHING BAD HAPPENED AT HOME	Speak to any teacher.
SOMETHING BAD HAPPENED ON THE WAY TO SCHOOL	Speak to any teacher.

Final Thoughts

- Support your daughter/ward by checking the school journal regularly.
- If there are issues, please contact the specific Class Teacher or the Year Head.
- Information may be found on the School website
- Encourage your daughter/ward to get involved in as many school activities as possible.
- Be positive! Try not to worry about the transition.
- We really look forward to welcoming your daughter/ward here and we will do everything we can to help your daughter/ward enjoy her time in Coláiste Bríde and to achieve her academic potential.