

Parent Information Booklet

2026 / 2027



ASHBOURNE
COMMUNITY NATIONAL SCHOOL

Ashbourne Community National School
Killegland, Ashbourne, Co. Meath A84R984.

Email: ashbournecns@lmetb.ie Ph: 0868522068



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Information for Parents 2026 / 2027

Dear Parent/Guardian,

At Ashbourne Community National School (CNS) we will endeavor to make your child's time here a very special experience. The year ahead is an exciting opportunity to create a happy learning environment for everyone in our school community. We look forward to getting to know you all over the coming weeks and months. To facilitate this, we will host annual parent information meetings in late September for all classes. At these meetings you will have the opportunity to get to know your child's class teacher and find out about the year ahead. We are a developing school and as such we will welcome new staff to our school community this year. As a result, class allocations will be announced for all classes in late August when recruitment is completed.

This booklet is designed to help you prepare your child for school by offering some helpful tips and useful information.

Eoin Murphy (Principal, Ashbourne CNS)



Mission Statement

At Ashbourne CNS we seek to provide a safe physical and social environment that reinforces a sense of belonging to the school community and wider society. We strive to enable every pupil to realise



their full potential regardless of any aspect of their identity or background. We promote a fully inclusive education that recognises the plurality of identities, beliefs and values held by pupils, parents and staff. We prepare open-minded, culturally sensitive and responsible citizens with a strong sense of shared values.

Pupils, staff and parents at Ashbourne CNS worked together to define our mission statement and our school values. Our four key school values: **Courage, Creativity, Collaboration** and **Care** are now proudly displayed on our school crest. The crest itself was designed collaboratively by all of us and represents who we are and who we are striving to become. This pupil led design was created during our Creative Schools journey, an initiative awarded to us by the Arts Council of Ireland 2020 – 2022. During this initiative, we collaborated with a graphic designer who taught us about the design process, carried out pupil workshops, consulted, gathered and then realised our pupils' ideas to form our amazing crest. Something we are all extremely proud of. The crest was officially launched by the Ombudsman for Children, Dr. Niall Muldoon, during our *Celebration of Creativity Day* on May 25th 2022.



**Please see the section on school uniforms for further details about wearing our school crest.*

About Our School



Ashbourne Community National School is a multi-denominational school under the patronage of the Louth and Meath Education and Training Board (LMETB). We opened in September 2019 to our first pupils. Community National Schools (CNS) are child-centered, publicly accountable schools

which strive to provide a high-quality education for every child. You can learn more about CNS schools on page 6.

We believe that everyone in the school community has the right to be happy and to be able to learn and work in a safe and respectful environment. To do this we have a responsibility to work together to support and encourage each other. In order to build the trusting respectful relationships which are the cornerstone of our school, we listen to and accept others for who they are. We negotiate our differences using Restorative Practices and learn to become resilient using Glasser's '7 Caring Habits' as our school rules.

At Ashbourne CNS we...

1. Listen
2. Support
3. Encourage
4. Negotiate
5. Respect
6. Accept
7. Trust



This helps establish a structured framework and an explicit language to build positive relationships for students, teachers, and parents. By working together using these habits, we cultivate the sense of community which is vital to promoting wellbeing for all.



Restorative Practice

Alongside our 7 Caring Habits, we use Restorative Practice to enhance relationships within our school community, as we believe that 'learning takes place in a relationship'. Restorative Practice is both a philosophy and a set of skills rooted in respecting each other and aims to build positive relationships



between people. It is a proactive, skills-based approach that is centred on the understanding that relationships can be restored when they have been harmed by conflict or wrongdoing.

Restorative approaches are underpinned by values of respect, equity, interconnectedness, understanding, empathy, belonging and fair process. Our intentions, through the use of Restorative Practice at ACNS, are:

- To put the values of Ashbourne CNS into action (Courage, Creativity, Collaboration and Care).
- To foster and encourage positive behaviour.
- To grow and learn.
- To honour relationships.
- To repair harm.
- To develop resilience.

Growth Mindset

At Ashbourne CNS we also promote Growth Mindset. Growth Mindset is about fostering the belief that all pupils/adults can improve and develop their knowledge and skills through effort. Intelligence or talent are not innate gifts. Praising effort and hard work instead of praising talent or intelligence helps pupils develop a growth mindset. When pupils and adults have a growth mindset, they build the resilience needed to overcome adversity and support well-being.

During our whole school assemblies, we take the time to acknowledge pupils who have fostered a growth mindset through our weekly Growth Mindset Awards. These are presented to pupils who have tried something new, persevered when a task became challenging and/or for fostering a mindset that views challenges themselves as opportunities for learning.



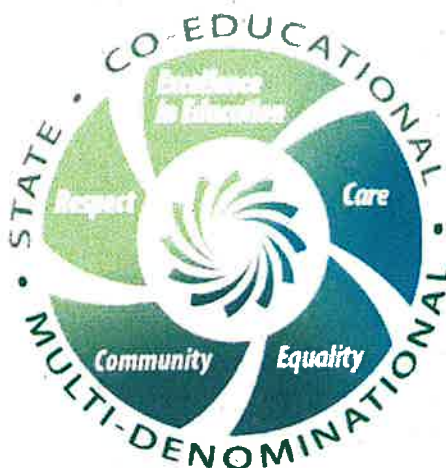
Code of Positive Behaviour

Restorative Practice, Growth Mindset and Glasser's Caring Habits are the foundations on which our Code of Positive Behaviour was created. It is available to [view on our website here](#) where all school practices are outlined in further detail. You must agree to adhering to this policy in order to enrol your child in the school.



Core Values and Ethos of Community National Schools

Community National Schools are state run co-educational, multi-denominational schools underpinned by the core values of: Respect, Community, Equality, Care and Excellence in Education.



In Community National Schools, all students are given equal opportunities for enrolment in line with the Education (Admissions to School) Act 2018. Once enrolled, our schools strive to provide all students with equal opportunities to engage with the curriculum and school life. In all aspects of school life, all members of our school communities are treated equitably regardless of their race, gender, ethnicity, religion / belief, age, family status, civil status, sexual orientation, ability or socio-economic status. You can learn more about Community National Schools at www.cns.ie.

School Office

Our school office is open from Monday to Friday 09.00 to 15.00 for any information or assistance you might require. Our office can be very busy so please check out the parent section on our [website](http://www.cns.ie) for



information before contacting us on ashbournecons@lmetb.ie or by phone [0868522068](tel:0868522068). Please email rather than leaving a voice message.

If you need to contact your child's teacher, please email the office and they will pass on your message to the relevant teacher. If you would like to meet with them, email to arrange an appointment outside of school hours as during school time they are devoted to teaching your child. Please outline rationale for meeting in advance.

All calls, emails and messages to the office will be responded to during working hours of 09:00 to 15:00 in term time. Teachers will respond to communications outside of class time but during working hours. The office closes for July and August.

Aladdin Schools Connect

Our school uses Aladdin Schools software to give you secure access to your child's details and data regarding attendance, test results, report cards etc. This is all provided via a secure login and enables parents/guardians to update phone numbers, addresses and other contact details should there be any changes. Please [download the Aladdin Connect App here](#). It is widely used by most primary schools.

When your child is enrolled, the school office will set up a student profile for your child and send you details on how to log in.

Aladdin Connect is the main form of communication between home and school. Any absences are to be recorded on the app. Absences of more than 20 days are reported to the Education Welfare Officer. We do not provide work for children going on holidays or on long term leave.

Way2Pay

In addition to Aladdin our school uses Way2Pay. This is a secure provider of online payment capabilities for schools. This system facilitates payments for items such as our school crest, swimming lessons, school tours and fieldtrips, and school contributions. Please contact the office for further information on how to use Way2Pay. Logins will be issued in same manner as Aladdin.

Junior Infants

Junior Infants will start school on Tuesday 1st September 2026 @9.10am



As per rules for National Schools, to ease the transition to big school, the Junior Infant school day will be from 09:10 – 12:00 noon from **September 1st – Sept 14th inclusive**. Junior Infants will commence their normal school hours of 09:10am to 13:50 from **Tuesday 15th of September 2026**.

Preparation for School – Junior Classes

Starting school is a major milestone in the life of your child. Before your child starts Junior Infants in September, it is important that they are as independent as possible. It would greatly help your child's progression this year if they were able to do the following things by themselves before starting school:

- Put on/take off their coat, button/unbutton it and hang it up.
- Fasten/tie their own shoes – Velcro fasteners are handy.
- Use and flush the toilet independently. Open trousers etc.
- Washing their hands with soap and drying them without assistance.
- Use a tissue where necessary and understand cough etiquette.
- Open food containers and fruit independently.
- Recognise and look after their own belongings.
- Share toys with others and take turns.
- Tidy up and put toys and their lunch away after them.



Other examples of ways in which you could help your child prepare for their learning include conversing with your child regularly, reading to your child and repeating nursery rhymes in their mother tongue. It is also very important to encourage your child to manipulate toys such as jigsaws, Lego, play dough and to provide paper and crayons for colouring and scribbling/doodling at home.

Preparation for School - Older Classes

In the older classes we look to further develop pupils' independence. They will be expected to organise their own school day including belongings and begin to take ownership over school events e.g. knowing what days P.E is on and that tracksuits are required on these days.

All personal belongings should be labelled with the pupil's name. The school does not take responsibility for loss or damage to any pupil property.



Preparation for School – All Classes

A few things for all parents/guardians to note:

- Please remember to have a name label on your child's belongings including their uniforms to help both them and us keep track of their things.
- Due to allergies all types of nuts are not permitted on the school grounds.
- If your child needs prescribed medication during school hours, please contact the school for an Administration of Medicine Form. Children are not permitted to have non-prescription medication at school.
- Camera phones are not permitted at school. All phones are to be turned off in school bags and not to be taken out until outside the school gate.
- The school does not facilitate birthday parties. Party bags, cake or birthday invitations are not to be given out during school time. Birthdays and special occasions will be celebrated in other ways.
- School bags with wheels are not permitted on Health & Safety grounds.
- Shoes with wheels are not permitted on Health & Safety grounds.

Parent Information Meetings

Parents of pupils from senior infants to sixth class will have the opportunity to attend a class information meeting in September. Here you will have the opportunity to meet with your child's class teacher where they will outline information about our school ethos, values, and a general overview of the school year ahead for their pupils. Scheduled dates will be announced in due course.

Parent Teacher Meetings

Our Parent Teacher meetings will take place between the 26th and 27th of January 2027. Closer to the time, dates and times will be released on Aladdin and parents/guardians will get to book a slot most suitable to them.

Breaks and Healthy Eating Policy

Ashbourne CNS participates in the Hot School Meals programme. "The Lunch Bag" provides healthy meals for every pupil in the school should they wish to





participate. You will receive a login at the beginning of the school year and can select what meals suit you and your child best from the menu provided. Any left over food is brought home in a lunch box which is provided. If your child is not in school or going on holidays please ensure you pause the lunch order on the given dates to reduce food waste.

All classes will have two breaks per day for a total duration of 40 mins in accordance with curriculum guidelines. You will still need to provide a snack and water. Please ensure that all food is prepared for small hands. Manageable portions of fruit, cheese, bread, and crackers are advised.

Our school actively promotes healthy eating. Fizzy drinks and unhealthy foods such as chocolate, biscuits, sweets, crisps and chocolate spread are not permitted.

Nuts are not allowed due to allergies. If your child has a food allergy, please inform the class teacher.

Please ensure that your child's lunch box and water bottle can be easily opened and is also labelled clearly with their name.

Sharing is caring but your lunch is your own. Children are not allowed to share lunches and birthday cake/party bags are prohibited.

Eco-Friendly / Green Schools



At Ashbourne CNS is a green school. We are conscious of the need to preserve the environment for our children. Staff, students and parents work together to minimise our the litter and waste within the school. With this in mind, we ask parents not to send any packaging into the school as part of your child's snack.

We encourage children to take home all waste and food that has not been eaten in their lunch box to help us reach our target of reducing food waste and litter around the school grounds. A lunchbox and reusable products are advised. The use of cling film, tin foil and other nonrecyclable plastic products are strongly discouraged (kitchen roll is a good alternative). All waste and uneaten food will go home with children.

Books

The cost of school books is currently provided for by the Dept of Ed Book grant. Children need to come to school with basic stationary in a pencil case. Nothing fancy that can distract them.



Junior Infants – 2nd Class: pencil case, pencil, rubber, sharpener.

3rd Class – 6th Class: pencil case, pens, pencil, rubber, colouring pencils, sharpener and ruler



Morning Drop Off

All classes start at 09:10. The children will enter the building @9am and are supervised by staff. Class starts at 9.10am. The board of management does not accept responsibility for pupils arriving on school grounds before 9:00am.

Roll call takes place from 09:50-10:00 for all classes as per Rule 55(4d) of the Rules for National Schools.

Arrival after roll call AND for a period of less than 4 hours of school does NOT constitute attendance.

This is outlined in Rule 56(2c) of the Rules for National Schools. Therefore, children attending for less than 4 hours are marked absent as per rule 56.

Parents/guardians of infant children: When you arrive at school be as casual as you can. Assure your child that you will be back shortly, say goodbye and leave without delay. The teacher will bring the children out to parents/guardians at home time, specific guidelines will be shared in advance of the opening. Once children enter the care of the teachers, they are not permitted to leave again without permission from staff or by written request of parents.

Collection / Going Home Time



- Junior and Senior Infant classes go home at 13:50.
- All other classes finish at 14:50.

It is very important that the children are collected from the school on time. If for any reason you are delayed, please call the school to let the teacher know.

If your child is to be collected by someone else the office must be notified preferably in writing of this in advance of collection.

If your child has to leave school early, they must be signed out at the office by the designated adult. Children from 2nd class may walk home with written permission on Aladdin.



Parking and Traffic Restrictions on Campus

To **KEEP ALL CHILDREN SAFE** the following parking and traffic restrictions are in place:

- Pupils are encouraged to walk, scoot or cycle to school.
- Bikes and scooters must be dismounted at the school gate and stored in bike sheds. Electrical scooters are prohibited.
- Use of both vehicle and pedestrian gates for pedestrian access and exit.
- No parking/pulling in or turning is permitted in/at or near gates where pupils egress. Staff will ask anyone in this area to move on as it poses high risk to pupils leaving/entering school grounds. Please use turning circle.
- Staff accompany class to exit points and gates for collection.
- Staff on duty to manage pedestrian traffic and direct parents, guardians, and pupils accordingly inside of campus and around gate areas.

Please co-operate with signage and personnel and please walk and cycle to school if possible.

We appreciate your co-operation.



School Uniform

Our official school uniform and tracksuit are stocked and available in ANU FASHIONS, Garden City, Ashbourne, A84TE86.

School crests if required can be purchased by sending an email to the office with the required amount needed, a payment link will then be set up via Way2Pay. The crest should be ironed/sewn onto the jumper or cardigan. The crest should always be positioned on the upper left-hand section of the jumper/cardigan.

The uniform comprises of:

- Navy skirt or pinafore, navy trouser
- Red polo shirt
- Navy V-neck jumper or cardigan.
- Navy or red tights or socks.
- Although there is no specific type of school shoe, please adhere to the following guidelines:
 - Junior and Senior Infants must have shoes with Velcro or must be easy to manage independently, **no laces please!**
 - Shoes must be comfortable and suitable for play and physical education (P.E.).
 - Shoes with wheels, lights or high heels are not permitted.
 - Wheeled school bags are not permitted for health and safety reasons.
 - Jewellery worn around the neck needs to be inside the shirt and only studs are permitted as earrings.



On P.E. days pupils are required to wear:

- Navy tracksuit bottoms and a navy round neck sweatshirt
- Red polo shirt
- Runners are required.





Again, these are readily available from Dunnes, Tesco and Marks and Spencer's etc.

All children are expected to present in full correct uniform with crest.

Your Child's Learning and Development

The Primary School Curriculum sets out 7 curricular areas. Your child will be learning about...

Figure 3: Curriculum areas and subjects



Play is the work of a child. Aistear, the early childhood curriculum framework for infant classes, emphasises the importance of play, communication and engaging children in problem solving, inquiry-based approaches to develop their knowledge, skills and curiosity. Playtime is an essential part of the infant school day. Structured play can assist your child in developing the necessary skills to build relationships, be creative, think and plan, use language and develop fine and gross motor skills. At Ashbourne CNS we take a holistic approach to learning, aiming to develop a love of learning in children which drives them to maximise their potential academically and socially.



Our school seeks to engage in a number of external initiatives that support the national primary school curriculum. Since opening, we have been successful in being awarded initiatives such as Creative Schools, Languages Connect (as featured on RTE News Today) and BLAST (Bringing Live Arts to Students and Teachers) multiple times.

Information on the Primary Curriculum Framework can be found [by clicking here](#).



Information on the Primary Mathematics Curriculum can be found by [clicking here](#).

Ashbourne CNS Student Council

The Student Council of Ashbourne CNS allows pupils of all ages to develop leadership skills by organizing and planning events that contribute to our school spirit and community welfare. The student council is the voice of the student body, giving the pupils of our school a say in how our school develops. Pupils who are interested in being a member of the Student Council can put themselves forward for election each year.

Books, Equipment and School Contributions

The Department of Education recently introduced the Free Primary Schoolbooks Scheme meaning that all textbooks, workbooks, copies and some stationary will be provided by the school at no cost to families. All books are classified as school property.

As a result of the Free Primary Schoolbooks Scheme, School Contributions for the 2026/2027 school year are significantly lower than before. Please see below a breakdown of this charge, it will be collected at the beginning of the school year via the cashless payment solution Way2Pay.





Proposed Student Direct Costs from Parents/Guardians for all classes for the Academic Year 2025/2026

Code	Details	Student Direct Cost €	Way to Pay Setup %
S5511	Insurance	€6.32	12%
S5514	Book Rental		
S5515	Activities & Trips	€35.68	69%
S5521	School Journals		
S5522	Text a Parent & Aladdin	€10	19%
S5523	Printing & Photocopying for students		
Total		€52	100%

Important Details

- Children need to be independently dressing and toileting for school.
- Supervision before school starts at 09:00 in the yard. Parents must stay with their child until are admitted to the building @9am.
- The Board of Management does not accept responsibility for children before 9:00am
- Junior Infants will start school on the 1st September at 9:10am, finishing at 12:00. For the first day of school Junior Infants can be brought straight to their class at 09.10 by their parents/guardians where they can say goodbye and leave without delay.
- From the 1st September 2026 to the 14th of September the Junior Infant school day will be from 09:10 – 12:00.
- From Tuesday 15th of September normal school hours of 09:10 – 13:50 will apply for Junior Infants.



- To KEEP ALL CHILDREN SAFE on a very busy campus parking and traffic restrictions will be in place.
- A uniform of a navy skirt, pinafore, trouser or tracksuit bottom with a red polo shirt and a navy jumper or cardigan is in place. Uniform can be purchased from ANU Fashions.
- School crests are available to buy on Way2Pay and can be ironed on to jumper/cardigan.
- Your child's name should be clearly written on everything they own. The school is unable to take responsibility for lost or damaged items.
- Our school has a healthy eating policy. Please promote this when preparing snacks.
- Nuts are not allowed due to allergies.
- We ask parents not to send any packaging into the school as part of your child's lunchbox. Any waste is sent home.
- Party bags are not allowed at school. Staff will not facilitate distribution of invitations, party bags or cake.
- Textbooks, workbooks, and copies will be provided by the school.
- A basic stationary for each class is outlined in the above document.
- Valuables such as computer games, smart phones and jewellery are not allowed at school as they could be lost or damaged. The school cannot take responsibility for such items.
- As per our Acceptable Use policy mobile phones are prohibited from use in school. All phones are to be turned off in school bags and are not to be taken out until outside the school gate.



Ashbourne CNS

2026/2027 School Calendar

August 2026						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
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23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

November 2026						
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29	30					

February 2027						
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28						

May 2027						
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30	31					

September 2026						
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December 2026						
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27	28	29	30	31		

March 2027						
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14	15	16	17	18	19	20
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28	29	30	31			

June 2027						
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13	14	15	16	17	18	19
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27	28	29	30			

October 2026						
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January 2027						
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31						

April 2027						
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25	26	27	28	29	30	

School Opens: 1st September 26
 Mid-term: 26th- 30th October 26
 Closure Dates: 10th Sep, 13th Oct
 Christmas: 23rd Dec 26 - 5th Jan 27
 Mid term: 18th - 19th February 27
 Easter: 22nd March - 2nd April 27
 Summer Break: 25th June 27



Ashbourne CNS School Calendar 2026-2027

School Re-opens	School will reopen on 1 st September 2026
Staff Meeting	TBC
Mid -Term Break	School will close from 26 th October to 30 th October 2026 inclusive for the Mid-Term break
Christmas Holidays/End of Term	School will finish at 12pm on 22 nd December 2026 and re-open on 6 th January 2027 for Christmas Holidays/End of Term.
Staff Meeting	TBC
Parent-Teacher Meetings	Parent-Teacher Meetings will be held on 26 th and 27 th January.
Bank Holiday	School will close on 1 st February 2027 for St Brigid's Day.
Mid-Term Break	School will close from 18 th & 19 th February 2027 for the Mid-Term Break.
Bank Holiday	School will close on 17 th March 2027 for St Patrick's Day.
Easter Holidays/End of Term	School will finish at 12 pm on 19 th March 2027 and re-open on 5 th April 2027 for Easter Holidays/End of Term.
May Day Bank Holiday	School will close on 3 rd & 4 th May 2027 for the May Bank Holiday.
Staff Meeting	TBC
June Bank Holiday	School will close on 7 th June 2027 for the June Bank Holiday.
Summer Holidays	School will finish at 12pm on 25 th June 2027 for Summer Holidays.
Curricular Training Days Full closure	10 th September, 13 th October and further days to be advised.