

First Year Information



Welcome to Our Incoming First Years 2017

First Year Students will Start their first day in Loreto College, Swords on Monday, 28 August 2017. The day will begin at 9 a.m. and will finish at 12.35 p.m.

What to expect?

1. Full Uniform to be worn to school on First Day.
2. No Text Books – all you need is one copy book and a pen.
3. Students will be provided with an individual timetable and locker – students must provide their own lock. Always leave the locker locked.
4. All students will get a Hardback school journal – it is a good idea to write timetable into the journal for future reference.
5. Bring a snack for the 11 o'clock break.
6. You will meet the Principal, the Deputy Principal, Guidance Counsellor, Chaplain and Year Head.

Various Activities will take place during the year—we have a First Year Sports Day in early September where all first years get to try all the different sports on offer—a fun day and another opportunity to make a new friend.





Lunch Time Arrangements

Lunch Pass:

The purpose of the lunch-time pass is to give students the opportunity to go home for lunch at 1.15 each day. As the lunch break is for 40 minutes only, we feel that only those students who live within a reasonable proximity to the school should apply for this pass so that they can return to school in time for afternoon classes which begin at 1.55 sharp.

We expect that students who apply for this pass will only be going to their own homes for lunch. We would also like to point out that the pass issued to the student is her property and is only to be used for the purpose intended and is not to be transferred to other students. Where the school feels that the system in place is not working, parents will be contacted and lunch-passes may be withdrawn on a temporary or permanent basis or other sanctions imposed.

To ensure that the lunch passes achieve the purpose as set out then it is necessary that all students understand and comply with the conditions outlined above. If you have any queries regarding the above or wish to discuss your daughter's lunch-time pass with the school then please feel free to contact us.

Ms Sharon Gunn, Deputy Principal will issue a letter to each student who wishes to go home each day for lunch—this letter must be signed by Parent/Guardian and returned to the school with a passport size photo and €1 to cover the Lunch Pass.

Staying in School for Lunch

Currently the local Supermarket Centra offer a lunch service to our students. Students order and pay for their lunch before 9 a.m. or during the 11 a.m. break and their lunch will be delivered to the school for 1.15 p.m. Students may bring their own packed lunch if they prefer. Students eat their lunch on the Concourse and then go outside (weather permitting) for some air for 15 mins.

Only 6th Year Students and those with a Lunch Pass have permission to leave the school premises during lunch time.



1st Year Year-Head

Each Year Group has a designated Year Head who is responsible for the year group. For First Year 2017 the Year-Heads will be Ms Theresa Sheelan and Mr Brendan Kindlon. If Parents have any concerns re. their daughter they may telephone the school and either speak to the Year Head by phone or if necessary make an appointment and meet in person. It may be necessary to leave a message and have the Year Head return a call as Year Heads also teach fulltime.

What happens if I need to take my daughter home early from school?

If you have made an appointment for your daughter such as for the dentist, doctor etc. you should give your daughter a note requesting that she be allowed to leave school at a particular time—the note must be handed to the Year Head in the morning and your daughter will be given a 'Blue Slip' which she must leave into the general office when leaving. Students may not leave without first obtaining a 'Blue Slip'. We also ask that where parents are calling to collect their daughter that they only present themselves at the office at the time requested in the note—this will avoid having to disturb other classes

What happens if my Child is Ill in School?

The Year Head will telephone the parent/guardian and request that the student is collected from school. Students must be collected and will not be allowed to walk home alone. If a parent cannot come to the school they must make arrangements to have the student collected.

What do I do if my child is out of school?

Parents are requested to telephone the school if they feel their child will be absent from school for more than two days. On their return to school following absence the parent must ensure they give a note explaining the absence—this note will be kept by the class tutor .





Helping Your Child To Settle In School

The transition from Primary school to Secondary school is one of those life events that most people can recall in some way or other. In the main, it's a fairly manageable period and one that parents often get more emotional about than their children. The purpose of this article is to outline the major issues involved so that the experience can be facilitated and undertaken

Big fish to small fish



By the time a child reaches their final years in primary school, they will be totally familiar with their school environment. They'll know their teacher very well, be comfortable with most if not all of the people in their class and will probably know most of the other faces in the school too. By sixth class, they are the most senior people in their school, they will be used to being given responsibility and they tend to be looked up to by the younger boys and girls in the school.

But within the space of two short months, September 1st sees these same students revert to being the most junior again in a brand new environment in a different location, with a different smell and atmosphere. Change can be a daunting task for any one of us but when you are 12 or 13 – with so many other 'complications' in your life - it is a change that takes quite a lot of adjusting to.

The important thing to constantly remind yourself is that children and teenagers are more resilient and adaptable than we are (or give them credit for). Remember too that within a few short weeks, their new surroundings become more familiar and they'll be running from the PE Hall to the Science Lab and on to the Art room without the slightest stumble. The first couple of weeks can be traumatic though and this section offers both parent and child a survival plan to make the transition as smooth as possible.

Constant routine becomes constant change

The biggest change when entering the secondary school system is probably the constant change in the day-to-day routine. In primary school, they had one teacher all day in the one classroom. In Secondary school however, that routine changes utterly. There is a subject change every forty minutes approximately, and with this subject change there is a change of teacher. It is not unusual for a student to encounter eight or nine different teachers during a typical school day. A tip to help your child cope with this is to advise them to write down the name of each new teacher beside the name of the subject.

Some subject changes will involve a change of classroom too and the second big change that the new 1st years have to cope with is the constant movement between classrooms throughout the day. Depending on their subject choices, students will be moving all around the school. Getting lost during the first few weeks will be inevitable for some. A good tip is to advise your child to always stay with at least one other person from the class...there is definitely safety and confidence in numbers!

The Schoolbag

Their timetable will take a lot of getting used to. Part of this new routine will involve the organisation of the schoolbag before each day. It's a new skill that some may struggle with and a little help in the early days will ensure they have the right books, and the right homework on the right day!

Homework

Homework time is obviously going to increase and with it comes several new adjustments to be dealt with from the Primary School homework routine. Not all subjects are covered every day and not all subjects involve homework. This may mean that your child has two hours homework on one night and maybe one hour the next night. One of the best skills you can help your child to learn is that of effective time management. Help your child to even out their homework pattern by encouraging them to develop a homework timetable. Certain subjects get homework nightly (Maths), others on every other day, others still on a weekly basis (Irish essay). Help them to devise a method to spread out the workload over the 5 nights of the week. Don't under-estimate the importance of getting a structure and a sense of organisation at an early stage of their secondary school lives. Learning how to successfully manage their time is an invaluable life skill and will make the transition into their new environment a whole lot easier.

School Reports

A new experience that comes with secondary school is the regular reports that come home from the school. Aside from the exams reports, most schools have a regular report that must be signed by the parent. It will usually have a mark per subject and space for any comments by any of the teachers. It might include number of days absent or late and any general notes relating to your child's performance. Again, these should be monitored and taken seriously, particularly in first year. It is important that your child sees you as an extension of the school system – if you're dismissive of feedback from the school, it allows a negative attitude to develop in your child which is not in anyone's interest. If you have an issue you would like to discuss with a teacher or the principal, it is best done without the involvement of your child in the initial instance anyway.

Extra-curricular activities:

Taking part in after-school activities is a great way of getting to know more students in the school. Whether it's in the drama circle, the computer club or on the playing field, each student should find activities which they enjoy. Taking part in such activities builds confidence, they get to mix with other students from other years and as a result, they settle into the school environment a lot quicker. Students should be encouraged, from both home and school, to try out new activities. Even if they may have tried something before, or even if they don't know what the activity entails, students should be encouraged to try

