



2nd March 2021

Dear parent/guardian,

We hope that you and your family are all keeping well during these challenging times.

We are writing to keep you informed about a number of things and also to assist you with planning for your child's transition from primary to post-primary school. We have made some changes to our *Clár Fáilte* programme (Transition from primary to post-primary) for this year so please read this letter carefully.

Clár Fáilte (CDL Transition Programme for incoming First Year students)

We normally host our '*Clár Fáilte*' session in the school building each May for our incoming first year students and their parents/guardians. This is usually the first official gathering of our incoming first years but unfortunately is not possible this year due to Covid-19 restrictions. Instead, we will upload a series of videos onto the school website after Easter. These videos will provide you with further information about the school and guidance on the transition from primary to post-primary school. We will send you a notification when the videos are published after Easter.

In addition, we will have an extended induction for all incoming first year students at the start of the academic year in August. During the induction days, only first year students will be present in the building and all of our múinteoirí (teachers) and some of our daltaí (students) will be present to welcome your son/daughter into our school. During the induction sessions, students will participate in different 'getting to know you' activities and they will become familiar with the physical building. We will also send you a *Summer Newsletter* in June that will contain lots of really useful information in a student friendly format.

We hope that a gradual introduction to the school will ease any anxieties that students may have about starting post-primary school.

Other specific planning meetings will also take over the coming months, for example; individual meetings may be held with parents/guardians regarding; student medications (non-routine), low incidence special educational needs, transfer meetings with sixth class teachers/primary schools, transfer meetings with NEPS (National Educational Psychological Service), meetings between the Year Head and parents/guardians, ...etc. We will contact parents/guardians where necessary to set up individual meetings.

Arrangements regarding School Uniform Fittings and Deliveries:

There are currently two suppliers of the school uniform; *School Uniforms Direct* (www.schooluniformsdirect.ie) (2014 – present) and *Anu Fashions*, Ashbourne (new for 2020/21). The dates for measuring/delivery with *School Uniforms Direct* are listed below:

<u>Date & Time</u>	<u>Event</u>
Tuesday 13 th April 2021 (2:30 - 4:00pm)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Initial measuring for school uniforms in <u>Donaghmore-Ashbourne GAA</u>➤ Payment of €50 deposit (Cash or Card) to uniform supplier
Tuesday 20 th April 2021 (2:30 - 4:00pm)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Second opportunity for measuring for school uniforms in <u>Donaghmore-Ashbourne GAA</u>➤ Payment of €50 deposit (Cash or Card) to uniform supplier➤ Opportunity to pay another instalment off uniform cost
3 rd , 10 th & 17 th August 2021 (1:30 – 3:00pm)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Collection of uniforms from <u>Donaghmore-Ashbourne GAA</u>➤ Payment of balance for school uniform

Please note that details about the school uniform and uniform policy are available from the school website (under the documents tab). Please read the school uniform policy carefully and note especially the types of footwear that are permitted. Please contact the school if in doubt regarding any queries.

Applications for School Transport:

Bus Éireann are responsible for all school transport. Information about the School Transport System is available on www.buseireann.ie. All applications for School Transport in 2021-2022 must be submitted to Bus Éireann by a deadline (usually the last Friday in April each year but check the website). We would advise parents/guardians to keep an eye on their website and not to delay in submitting applications.

Language Preference Forms 2021-22:

A link to an online *Language Preference Form* for you to complete with your son/daughter, will be texted to parents/guardians in the coming days. The purpose of the online form is to find out which language (Spanish/French) that the student would like to study for their Junior Cycle. We will do our best to facilitate all preferences but maximum numbers will apply in language classes due to DE (Department of Education) and Union guidelines. Please complete the form by 3pm on Friday 19th March 2021. Please note that forms cannot be handed in at reception due to Covid-19 restrictions.

Financial Planning for the transition from primary to post-primary:

A list (**provisional**) of the *Student Direct Costs* for 2021-2022 is included with this letter (see below). **The school has reduced the direct costs for the coming academic year in order to alleviate any financial pressure on parents/guardians due to the Covid-19 pandemic. These reductions are in response to Covid-19 and will not be sustainable in the years ahead.**

A text message will be sent to parents/guardians in the coming weeks with a link to our online payment system (*Way2Pay* instructions overleaf) to facilitate payment of deposits (€70 deposit) for *Student Direct Costs*. Another text will be sent in June regarding the payment of the balance (total less deposit paid) before students start in August 2021. The *Way2Pay* manual for parents is available on the school website (colaistedelacy.ie). Please also see instruction sheet below regarding *Way2Pay*.

Guidance will be provided after Easter regarding the iPad contract. ***Please refrain from purchasing an iPad for school use until the nominated supplier of the iPads and Managed Service is announced.*** For your information, St Declan's Credit Union in Ashbourne provided favourable loan rates for local parents last year where required.

CAT4 Exams (Standardised Tests done at Entrance to Post-Primary schools)

This year, the ***Cognitive Abilities Tests*** (CAT4) will take place when the students start (during the first term). The CAT4 exams are standardised tests which will be used to support the school in understanding the students' developed abilities and learning preferences. They also help to identify potential areas where a small number of students may need targeted support. The CAT4 exams should hopefully reduce student/parent concerns as students cannot "study" for these exams in advance. These tests do not test any particular subject or area of knowledge. Instead, these standardised tests assess a student's ***potential*** in different areas of reasoning (verbal, non-verbal, quantitative and spatial ability reasoning). The tests are digital and will be done online. Further details will be provided for students when they commence in August.

Commencement of Academic Year 2021-22:

We often get enquiries at this time of year regarding when the first year students will commence. Our first year students *usually* commence around the 26th/27th August each year. Due to Covid-19, we expect that the commencement of the school year will be dictated by public health advice in August 2021. We will contact you during the summer with the exact times and arrangements.

We thank you for enrolling your son/daughter in Coláiste De Lacy. We look forward to meeting you all in the future. In the interim, stay safe!

Le gach dea-ghuí,

Iníon Uí Bhéoláin (Principal) & Máistir O'Higgins (Deputy Principal)

Proposed Student Direct Costs for LMETB Schools for 2021/2022

LMETB School/College	Coláiste De Lacy, Ashbourne
Details	Estimated Cost €
Book Scheme (per year)	€60.00 (reduced cost for 2021-2022, was €120.00)
Option Subjects Materials & Consumables	€20.00 (reduced cost for 2021-2022, was €30.00)
Student Diary/Homework Journal	€15.00 (customised student handbook and Wellbeing Journal...not just a homework diary)
PPAI with IPB	€8.50
Lock (applies to 1 st year/replacement only)	€9.00
Photocopying	€5.00
Student & Parent Newsletters and associated publications/consumables/costs	€2.50
Text to Parents	€8.00
Mock Exams	€5.00 (exam papers, CD-ROMs for languages, P&P....does not include any external correction of exam papers)
Buses	€0 (due to school closure in 20-21)
Proposed Total Contribution Collected for 2020/2021	€133.00 for First Year students (includes Lock) €124.00 for other students (excluding replacement Lock)

Please note that the above *Student Direct Costs* are **provisional** at present and are simply provided as a guide. Confirmed costs will be communicated after Easter.

IRELAND'S LEADING PARENTAL PAYMENT SYSTEM



Dear Parents

Our aim is to become a cashless school over time and to this end we are introducing Way2Pay, Ireland's fastest growing Parental Payment System. While Way2Pay is designed to help schools manage, receipt, track and audit school money, it also provides a comprehensive and wonderful flexible system for parents. Parents can enjoy the ease of paying by text, and/or an online dashboard with lots of information, receipt, history etc. In fact parents have three payment options.

PAY ONLINE ON WWW.WAY2PAY.ORG

Login and view all activities and bills from your child's school. In fact with the Way2Pay dashboard you can see all activities for all your children's schools, payment history, upcoming bills, last three payments, quickly contact school and Way2Pay. You can store your card details, pay by installments, upload credit and make financial plans.

See your Way2Pay family dashboard: click www.way2pay.org for your username AND password enter your mobile phone number in 35387xxxxxx format. You will be asked to set your own password at this point. Note: Click on Plus Icon (+) to add payment amount.

PAY BY TEXT MESSAGE

Your school will send you payment requests by SMS. You simply click on the link on the SMS to pay in three easy clicks.

Note: Click on Plus Icon (+) to add payment amount. Paying by text: you will be asked a security question before seeing your bills.

IF YOU FORGET YOUR PASSWORD

Simply go to Way2Pay.org, enter your phone number and click to receive a text message with a new link. This enables you to pay any outstanding bills.

Note: Click on Plus Icon (+) to add payment amount. Paying by text: you will be asked a security question before seeing your bills.

Way2Pay offers support directly to parents so if you are having any difficulty using any of the options above please get in touch directly with their help desk on **01-8041269** during office hours or email support@way2pay.ie. We thank you for using Way2Pay and help our school in our aim to go cashless.

Thank you,
Principal

