



SAINT VINCENT'S CASTLEKNOCK COLLEGE

A Handbook for parents of First Year Students

Welcome

Thank you for choosing St. Vincent's Castleknock College for your son. We appreciate you are entrusting us with your son's education for the next six years. Together with your help and active participation, we are confident he will receive every opportunity to excel and flourish.

Our Mission

To have a College which is concerned with the development of the whole person in a Christian atmosphere; which encourages involvement of a balance of religious, intellectual, cultural and sporting activities; and which promotes the growth of self-worth and respect for others in the spirit of St. Vincent de Paul.

The Objectives of St. Vincent's Castleknock College are:

- To pursue excellence in all areas of College life, academic, creative, cultural and sporting.
- To nurture a friendly and caring environment which allows each student to develop his own natural talents and gifts.
- To actively generate a happy social environment where students learn to appreciate the skills of group interaction and the value of friendship.
- To recognise the College's responsibility towards the wider community in developing a spirit of service.
- To offer opportunities for the spiritual development of each member of the College Community.

The Crest

The crest features a picture of an open book, with a cross to symbolise the Catholic faith of the Vincentians and shamrocks symbolising the successful establishment of the Irish Vincentians in Ireland. These symbols tell the story of the purpose and essence of the College in one picture. The motto of the college is also seen on the crest, "Nos Autem In Nomine Domini" which means in English: "We however in the name of the Lord". This is a quotation from the 20th Psalm of the Old Testament from verse 7 which states: "Some trust in chariots and some in horses, but we trust in the name of the Lord our God", Psalm 20:7 NIV.

Chaplaincy

Chaplaincy is a vital part of the student support service at St. Vincent's Castleknock College. The office has an open-door policy where students can drop in at any time and be supported through the ups and downs of school life. It is a confidential and non-judgemental space.

If the chaplaincy service is not qualified to deal with a particular issue it will direct the student or parent to an appropriate service.

It also facilitates the spiritual and liturgical life of the College community. While promoting the Catholic ethos of the school, it is available to students of all faiths and none. The liturgical dimension of its work helps mark significant occasions and events in school year, such as the opening and closing of the year masses, graduation service, memorial service, etc. and of course special seasons such as Easter and Christmas.

Aware of the diverse nature of the student population, the chaplaincy team seeks opportunities to host inter-faith services and para liturgies.

The chaplaincy service is rooted in the Vincentian ethos and so it has a special concern for people who are struggling or on the margins. It promotes an awareness of Vincentian social justice and encourages students to get involved in organisations and activities aimed at supporting people in need, such as the SVP Society, the Ambo Deaf School, Vincentian Lay Missionaries (VLM) and De Paul Trust Ireland, etc. It helps support and facilitate the school's immersion program in Ethiopia and Kenya.

The services of the chaplaincy office are also available to support the parents of our students. You can contact the Chaplain by email Chaplaincy@castleknockcollege.ie or phone +353 (1) 821 3051. Any such contact is treated with the utmost confidentiality.

Year Heads

The Year Head for First Year can be reached by phone +353 (1) 821 3051 (Extension 251). Any problems arising with the student should be referred in the first instance to the Year Head. Notes for absence can be submitted through VShare – submit an absence request.

Family Mass

In each year that your son is at St. Vincent's Castleknock College, there will be an opportunity to join other families for a Family Mass. The First Year family mass will be celebrated on Sunday 10th March at 11:00. All families, regardless of faith, are welcome to attend this celebration which is also an opportunity for families to meet and socialise over a cup of coffee in the College refectory arranged by the Parents' Core Group. This gathering has proved to be a popular and enjoyable event in the First Year's calendar. First Year students also get to host our College Carol Service. Something to look forward to in the run up to Christmas 2024.

The School Day

- School starts each morning at 08:40. This means that a student must be present at his first period classroom at that time. First bell is at 08:35 to alert students to get ready.
- Classes finish at 15:35 on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday and at 12:45 on Wednesday.
- There is a small break each day at 10:40 and most students take a drink and snack at this time. Sandwiches, wraps, drinks and milk are available in the refectory.
- Lunch is at 12:45 for First Year students. A hot, nutritionally balanced lunch is available. New students are provided with a Debitrak card (Debitrak information leaflet is included in the pack). Students who bring their own lunch also eat at tables provided in the refectory.

Uniform

- All items of school uniform, PE tracksuit, sports gear and kit bag are available from Leddy Uniforms, St. Brigid's Shopping Centre, 3 Main Street, Blanchardstown, Dublin 15. Telephone 01 823 5466 Website www.leddyuniforms.com E-mail sales@leddyuniforms.ie.
- The school blazer is a mandatory requirement and not an optional item of uniform. The blazer is worn on all formal school occasions and when representing the College at all sporting and/or cultural events.
- A student is required to wear black socks that cover his ankles and plain black shoes – i.e. plain black leather upper and black sole. Non-leather black shoes are not acceptable. It is unacceptable to wear runners with the school uniform.
- A student should ensure his top shirt button is closed and that the knot on his tie covers the top button of his shirt.
- If a student is without the proper uniform, he will not be allowed to attend class.
- **All items of the uniform, PE and sports kit including school and kit bags must be labelled with the student's name.**
- Before leaving home, please make sure that the student is wearing his full school uniform with no extra non-uniform items of clothing. Good habits established in the first year are more likely to continue when well enforced from the start.

Punctuality /Attendance

- Students should be in school 10 minutes before classes begin.
- Students may only enter the school premises through the official school entrances.
- Absence from class will be recorded by teachers on VShare.
- Students who arrive late for class must sign the late sheet at reception.

Locker

- Each student is assigned a locker by his Year Head. Parents are asked to encourage students to use their locker for storing both schoolbooks and sports gear. Books can be very heavy and cumbersome. It is the student's responsibility to manage his locker.
- All books and school/sports bags should be clearly labelled - many students may have the same bag.

Extra Supports

If a student has an exemption from Irish, has a medical problem, or has been assessed for special needs/learning support and a report is available, we need to know. Please forward any letter of exemption from Irish, or any psychological or medical report as soon as possible. If you have already sent a psychological/medical report and a more up to date report is now available, please forward a copy to the Admissions Office. It is important for us to have up-to-date reports in order to ensure that we can deliver to the student the supports that he needs.

Student Journal

- The student journal is issued on the first day and will be a primary source of information during the year. In the journal you will find a calendar of key dates, library rules, uniform, student council and main points of the Code of Behaviour and Anti-Bullying Policies.
- Parents will be asked to sign a digital permissions page which is available on the College website in August showing that you agree to our policies for photos, tours, sports, internet, phones, and medical situations. A copy of the permissions page is in the journal.
- Parents will also be required to complete a digital form before term begins.
- The journal includes information about the College, its history, and the outreach programmes we have with other institutions.
- VShare is the main means of communication between parents and the Year Head. If a student is absent from school, notes can be submitted through VShare.
- Teachers assign work online on MS Teams and also ask that work is noted in the journal.

Fees

Tuition fees are reviewed annually. The Accounts Department will issue the invoice for 2023/2024 in July with bank details and a direct debit mandate form. The appropriate discount for more than one son in a family attending the College will also apply. The payment options available are:

- By cheque/EFT – If you wish to pay the full tuition fee in advance of your son's registration date in August, please pay by either cheque or EFT.
- By monthly direct debit – The College has a direct debit system in place. Ten equal payments debited from your bank account commencing on 15th August 2023. If you paid by direct debit this year for an older sibling and wish to do so again, then no action is required on your part. The new amount will be taken automatically from your bank as before.

If, however, you set up your own standing order last year, then you are reminded that you need to do so again and send details to: richard.ofarrell@castleknockcollege.ie.

Code of Behaviour

The College Code of Behaviour is available on our website at www.castleknockcollege.ie. Please read through this code with the new First Year student before term begins.

Student Council

The Student Council at St. Vincent's Castleknock College plays an important role in College life. The Council is there to promote active student involvement regarding College policies. On a regular basis, the Council liaises with the Senior Management Team to discuss matters raised by the classmates of Council members. The Student Council provides the official platform whereby the concerns of students are put forward for discussion.

In recent years, the Council has played an active role in the following areas:

- Revision and amendment of the College Anti-Bullying Policy and College Code of Behaviour.
- Assisting with the drafting of the College Social Media Policy.
- Increasing the number of secure bicycle spaces for students wishing to cycle to school.
- Highlighting the need for high-visibility vests and cycling helmets to be worn by students who travel by bicycle.
- Negotiating with kitchen staff regarding menus and evolving dietary requirements.
- Helping with the College Open Night, Uniform Swap, Lost & Found, SVP Christmas Food Appeal and fundraising for Ambo, Ethiopia and Kenya.
- The College was awarded the coveted Green Flag and the Council assisted the College in this endeavour.

Each September, two students are elected from each class. At the end of each academic year, one Fifth Year member is elected as Student Council President for the coming year. Student Council badges are distributed to Council members. Meetings are held once a week. An agenda is set and minutes are taken. The Staff Student Council Liaison Officer attends every meeting and reports to the Board of Management regarding matters arising.

Communications

- "Knock News" is a text message service used for last minute announcements. We ask parents to advise the College (info@castleknockcollege.ie) of your latest contact details.
- The website contains all ratified school policies (we recommend you read these) and calendars for the academic year and the co-curricular activities. The website also contains a huge amount of other information about the College.
- The Headmaster's Bulletin is issued each Friday by email and details the weeks news and upcoming events. This is the best way to keep up to date with what is going on in a student's school life.
- Parents are encouraged to follow the College Twitter and Instagram accounts for the latest news.
- An archive of the most recent bulletins is in the News section of our website.
- Our attendance policy requires that we inform parents before 11:00 by a text message if your son's name is not on the attendance list.

Procedure when a student becomes ill at school

- The student approaches his class teacher to say that he is feeling unwell.
- The student is sent to his Year Head (accompanied by a friend if deemed necessary). The Year Head will then send the student to reception where a parent is contacted.
- The student then waits outside reception for a parent to collect him.
- When the student is leaving with his parent, a sign out form must be completed.
- Above are the procedures for regular illness e.g. headaches, cold, nausea, etc.
- In the case of emergency, appropriate action will be taken to ensure the safety of each student.
- It is very important that these procedures are followed by each student to ensure his safety.
- A direct call to a parent from the student's mobile phone may result in staff not being aware of the student's illness and is therefore in breach of school regulations.
- Care of each student when ill, as at all other times, is central to our policy on pastoral care.

Core Group & Parents Representative Association

- Each year group in the College is represented by a Core Group of parents who volunteer to act as a liaison group within the College.
- Regular meetings of the Core Group are arranged and these are facilitated by a representative of the College management team.
- A template for providing feedback to the representative of the College management team will be provided to ensure a streamlined response from all year groups.
- These meetings provide a forum for regular exchanges between Parents' Representatives Association (PRA) and the College management team.
- Items of relevance to the broad educational welfare of the students may be raised (*this is not to be confused with items pertaining to individual students, which should be raised individually with the Year Head in the usual manner*).
- There will be a social evening arranged by the PRA for First Year parents and students in September, following which the First Year Core Group will be formed.
- Two representatives from the Core Groups of each of the six years form the Parents Representative Association (PRA) and meets with the Headmaster throughout the year on specified dates.

The Alton Library

Dedicated in memory of Dr. Bryan Alton, MD, FRCPI 1931-36

Opening times: Monday – Friday 08:00 – 16:00

Library Facilities & Activities:

- Spacious learning and study space with a separate wellbeing and leisure reading corner.
- Over 6400 items in six collections: fiction, non-fiction, reference, self-help, quick reads and graphic novels.
- Subscription to 14 magazine titles.
- Excellent IT facilities (student dedicated A4 colour printer, 10 computers and two sets of tablets available for class use).
- Full-time librarian.
- Scooter online catalogue (OPAC).
- No library card needed – all incoming students are registered with library management system upon arrival at school.
- Library induction class for all First Year students.
- Students' and staff wish lists.
- Reading classes.
- Author visits.
- Workshops: wellbeing, creative writing and diversity awareness.
- Participation in national literacy campaigns: World Book Day Ireland, Children's Books Ireland Shadowing Scheme, Great Reads Award, Excelsior Award.
- 2 interest clubs: Film Club and Book & Comics Fan Club.
- Competitions: Spelling Bee, First Year Scrabble Competition, art and photo challenges.

Library Rules:

- **Be safe:** Walk, don't run. All bags must be placed on the shelving units at the entrance to the library. The library computers are available to all students. Computer use and internet access are in accordance with St. Vincent's Castleknock College Internet – Acceptable Use Policy. Computer games are not allowed on the library computers.
- **Be considerate:** Respect other library users. Loud conversation is not permitted. Disruptive behaviour will result in a withdrawal of library privileges. Eating and chewing gum are not allowed in the library.
- **Be responsible:** The Alton Library lends materials for **two weeks**. Books may be renewed unless they are reserved for another student. You may borrow three items at a time. You are responsible for all items you borrow. When you borrow, return materials on time. When you browse, leave books and other things on the library desk for re-shelving.

Mobile phones

Students may take mobile phones to school provided they observe the following conditions:

- Phones must be powered off during the school day. A student may use the office phone if he wishes to contact home urgently at any time.
- A student who wishes to go home for any reason during the school day must see his Year Head and then arrange to do so through reception and not independently by mobile phone. This ensures that correct procedures for leaving school before the ending of classes for that day are observed.
- Responsibility cannot be taken by the school authorities for students who arrange independently to go home without following proper procedure. Any such arrangement is a breach of the Code of Behaviour and will incur sanctions.
- A student who is found using a mobile phone during school hours will be obliged to leave the phone and it's SIM card at reception. The phone will be returned to a parent only.
- The school reserves the right to view contents of the phone, in the presence of the student, to ensure that it contains no images or information which would compromise any member of the school community. Any photographs taken in the school building, on the grounds or during any school activity in or outside the school, will be removed before the phone is returned.

Music

Music is one of the strengths of St. Vincent's Castleknock College, also contributing to good health and happiness. In fact, some of our best sportsmen also end up being some of our best musicians. We have a number of opportunities for students to participate in, including the chance to begin learning a new instrument.

- Individual music tuition is available on a number of instruments including voice and keyboard/piano. Private lessons take place during the school day at different times each week. There is an additional charge for this tuition. The timetable for lessons is posted on the music noticeboard each week and students must consult this to confirm the time of their lesson. The rotating timetable ensures that no student misses the same class too often. This arrangement has proved popular with parents and will continue this year.
- First Year students are permitted to take tuition in one instrument only.
- Students are encouraged to take part in one of a number of ensembles available to them, which include First Year Band.

Sport

We have a strongly held view that sports and activities are essential for good health and wellbeing. Every student is encouraged to take an active part in sports for the duration of their time at the College and avail of all the opportunities offered.

Parents are asked to ensure that students are actively participating in some sporting activity in the College. Rugby is the sport of choice and full participation is mandatory for First and Second Year students. Wednesday afternoon is dedicated to rugby in terms 1 and 2. There is rugby training on Monday, Wednesday and Thursday after school until approximately 17:00. Matches are scheduled for Saturday and any boys selected for a team are expected to attend. When there is no match scheduled, training will take place instead from 10:00 – 11:30.

Please note: All queries regarding rugby are to be sent to the student’s Head Coach via MS Teams. MS Teams will be the main communication channel that will be used over the course of the year, so it is important that the student checks his MS Teams account regularly.

Our insurer has asked that we request all parents to sign a “Permission to participate in sport” form. Signing this form does not diminish your rights. It is simply to allow us to assure our insurer that all parents are aware that in any contact sport, such as rugby, there is an element of risk and accidents can and do occur from time to time.

First Year Sports Timetable					
Day	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Before School 07:55 - 08:30					Badminton Cricket
Lunchtime	Table Tennis	Table Tennis	Tennis	Table Tennis	Table Tennis
After School 15:45 - 17:00 or Wednesday 13:30 - 15:00	Rugby Basketball *	Chess Cross Country Table Tennis Tennis	Rugby Cricket **	Rugby Basketball *	Badminton Cricket

* Basketball does not begin until the second term (after Christmas break)

** Wednesday afternoon Cricket commences in April

Athletics and additional activities commence after Easter – Monday, Wednesday and Thursday.

Rugby Training / Match Times				
Day	Monday	Wednesday	Thursday	Saturday
Training times	15:45 - 17:00	13:30 - 15:00	15:45 - 17:00	10:00 - 11:30
Match start time		14:00		10:30

How to set up a Parental account on VSware

Please go to castleknockcollege.vsware.ie and click “Create or reset your password”.

- Enter the parent’s username which will be emailed to you in August.
- Enter the last 4 digits of the parent’s mobile number and click “Send code”.
- Parents will get a code via SMS – this can take several minutes to arrive.
- Enter the code by message when it is received in the next screen on VSware and then enter a new password twice.
- Once done parents can then log in with your new password.

If you are still having problems kindly contact reception by email info@castleknockcollege.ie or phone +353 (1) 821 3051 (Extension 0).

School Reports

- School Assessment Reports are issued on VSware in October, December, Spring and Summer. Any concerns that you may have about a student’s progress arising from these reports should be raised in the first instance with the Year Head.
- Parents will be issued with a username for VSware in August (see above). Please keep this safe as it will remain the same throughout the six years at the college. Parents will be asked to generate your own password. VSware is used to enable you to keep a record of all school reports.

How to find VSware child ID number

(used for Parent Teacher Meeting bookings)

Your son’s school ID number which he will have for his six years at the College.

- Log onto VSware.
- Go to Dashboard.
- Click on your son’s name.
- Click on personal information.
- Click school tab and your VSware child ID number is there.

PTM Logon

- Parent Teacher meetings are held once a year. Time and date to be confirmed for January 2024.
- We use a booking system allowing you to select the teachers you want to meet.
- This is popular with parents as specific times are assigned for meetings. The system works well as long as everyone remembers to limit their meeting time to 5 minutes.
- The website for scheduling meeting times becomes active 1 week before the date. Three days before the meeting the link is closed and the timetable is generated based on everyone’s choices. At that stage you need to log in a second time to print off your timetable.
- To select appointment times, please log on to:

<https://ptmorg.com/parentlogin.php> using the following:

School roll number: 60100Q. Student ID: VSware “child ID number” (see above).

ICT Facilities

- The College has an extensive and growing ICT environment in place to complement and aid a student's learning experience in today's modern digital world.
- We have two modern, fully equipped computer labs, two shared sets of laptops for use in the classroom, as well as additional shared computing facilities in the library and an extensive high-speed Wi-Fi network.
- All internet access within the College, both in the computer labs and via the Wi-Fi, is filtered in accordance with the Broadband for Schools Programme to ensure a safe and age-appropriate browsing experience at all times.
- Every student is issued with an individual computer account and Office 365 account during his registration day, which he will retain throughout his time in the College. This information will be on a label in his school journal.
- The Computer account is used to access the various computing resources throughout the College.
- The Office 365 account is used for undertaking coursework, including receiving and submitting assignments and to keep up to date with the latest College news.
- We encourage parents to read our Internet Acceptable Usage Policy together with the new First Year student and if you have any queries, to direct them to the student's Year Head.
- MS Teams is the virtual journal.
- It is the responsibility of the student to come to school each day with his iPad fully charged.

Office 365

At the First Year registration in August 2023, the student will be given his St. Vincent's Castleknock College student email account. Please follow instructions below:

- Open the web browser and enter <https://login.microsoftonline.com> . Don't Google it! Google search will offer to bring you to the Home version of Office which will not accept St. Vincent's Castleknock College login details.
- Enter the student's e-mail address as shown on the label in his journal, then click (or tap) on "Next".
- Enter the student's password as shown on the label in his journal, then click (or tap) on "Sign on".
- The first time the student logs in he will be required to enter some security information. This is useful if the student ever forgets his password. Simply click (or tap) on "Next".
- Next to "Security questions are not configured" click (or tap) on "Set them up now".
- Choose three questions from the list and enter three corresponding answers that are easy for the student to remember, but not so easy for others to guess. When the student is finished, click (or tap) on "Save answers".
- The student does not need to set an authentication phone or authentication e-mail so he can click "Finish" to complete.
- Make sure to keep his password safe and do not let anyone else know what it is – he can change it to something more memorable if he prefers, but make sure it is not too difficult that he will forget it!
- If a student cannot get into his account or suspects someone else may have access, contact our IT department in room 1-22 or email elarning@castleknockcollege.ie .

Private School Bus Services available to students

Kildare

James Coaches 01 627 5465 / 087 416 8077 (Double decker bus for College students only).

Serving:

- Celbridge, Leixlip, Lucan (Weston area and Woodies), Castleknock College arrive 07:50.
- Kilcock, Maynooth, Carton, Castleknock College arrive 07:50.

Pick up from College:

- Early bus: Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday at 15:45.
- Late bus: Monday, Tuesday and Thursday at 17:10.
- Wednesday at 13:00.

Booking: contact James Coaches directly.

Meath

Tony Divine Coaches 086 252 3812.

Serving:

- Navan, Dunshaughlin, Dunboyne, Littlepace, Ongar, New Ongar Road, Castleknock College.
- Navan, Dunshaughlin, Ratoath, Clonee, Ongar, Clonsilla Bridge, Castleknock College.

Pick up from College:

- Early bus: Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday at 15:45.
- Late bus: Monday and Thursday at 17:00.

Booking: contact Tony Divine directly.

Meath from Ashbourne

Celtic Coaches, Ciarán Clarke 086 408 4861.

Serving:

- Ashbourne, Ratoath Kilbride, Hollystown, Tyrrelstown, Blanchardstown, Carpenterstown, Castleknock College.

Pick up from College:

- Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday at 15:45.
- Wednesday at 13:10.

Booking: contact Ciarán Clarke or www.celticcoaches.ie or info@celticcoaches.ie.

Meath from Trim

Adrian Byrne 086 271 2137.

Serving:

- Trim, Summerhill, Batterstown, Castleknock College.
- Trim, Batterstown, Castleknock, Castleknock College.

Pick up from College:

- Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday at 15:45 and 17:15.
- Wednesday at 13:00 and 15:00.

Booking: contact Adrian Byrne on info@trimtaxi.ie

Book List

The booklist for August 2023 is published on the website at www.castleknockcollege.ie/parents in June 2023.

- Please ensure that all books are clearly marked with your son's name and his class name.
- Keep all E-book codes secure and safe.
- Your son will receive his class name and timetable at registration in August 2023.



Unit 3/10, Block 4, Ashbourne Business Park, Ashbourne Co Meath A84X710 Tel: 01 8352621
Co. Reg: 499039 VAT No: IE3521663LH

St. Vincent's Castleknock College
College Road
Castleknock
Dublin 15
D15PD95

22/02/2023

Bookhaven.ie – 1st Year School book online offer

Dear Parent,

I would like to make you aware of a very attractive offer for parents of incoming 1st year students to St. Vincent's Castleknock College for the academic year 2023-2024.

The following offer can be made available to parents of **1st year** St Vincent's Castleknock College students from 1st May 2023 to Saturday the 1st July 2023.

11% discount on new school books for all 1st year school book online orders placed using the quick code on bookhaven.ie from 1st May 2023 to 1st July 2023.

HOW IT WORKS

1. Go to bookhaven.ie & input e87g1y into the quick code field which will bring you to the 1st year booklist.
2. Add the items you require to your cart.
3. Click on "Your bag". Use promotion code e87g1y in the "Discount Codes" field to get your 11% before Saturday the 1st of July 2023.
4. Proceed to checkout and complete your billing and delivery details and click on "Place order".

Kind regards,

Evan Murphy
General Manager
The Book Haven

Branches: Artane Castle S.C., Ashbourne Business Park, Balbriggan, Blanchardstown (Roselawn S.C.), Clarehall S.C. (Malahide Road), Donaghmore S.C., Knocklyon (Knocklyon S.C.), Naas (Monread S.C.), Sutton, Swords

16.03.2023