



ASHBOURNE
EDUCATE TOGETHER
NATIONAL SCHOOL

Welcome Booklet

**Ashbourne Educate Together National
School**

www.ashbourneetns.ie

Ph 01 835 7493

Message from Principal

Dear Parents/Guardians,

I would like to take this opportunity to welcome you all to Ashbourne Educate Together National School. We are delighted to share in this wonderful milestone with you and your family and we look forward to introducing your child to the wonderful learning experiences of school life here in AETNS.

I would encourage all parents/guardians to read all sections of this booklet so that you are familiar with procedures and policies within our school.

Ashbourne ETNS is an equality based school where each and every child is made to feel valued and respected. Our school ethos is visible and present in the day to day running of the school. Our school is equality based, child centred, democratically run and co-educational. We believe that children grow and thrive when they are happy. In Ashbourne ETNS we strive to provide a happy, supportive and secure environment where each child will develop to the best of his or her potential.

I wish to emphasise the importance of communication, if you have any concerns, your child's class teacher is always there to listen and support and he/she should always be the first port of call.

I look forward to meeting with you all over the coming months and I hope you enjoy your journey with us here in Ashbourne ETNS.

Slán libh go léir,

Lynn Hicks

Board of Management

The Board of Management of Educate Together is constructed as follows:

Chairperson: Noel Gildea (Patron's Nominee)

Secretary: Lynn Hicks (Acting Principal)

Treasurer: Lynn Ridgeway (Parent Nominee)

Others: Sara May (Patron's Nominee)

Michael Kennedy (Parent Nominee)

Alan Tobin (Community Nominee)

Meg Houlihan (Community Nominee)

Gráinne Begley (Teacher Nominee)

The Board of Management has a statutory obligation to ensure through the Principal and teaching staff that:

- General education provision within the school is of a high quality.
- The needs of students are identified and responded to by the school.
- Appropriately qualified competent teaching and non-teaching staff are appointed, subject to approval of the Patron and Department of Education.
- School plans are developed, implemented and regularly evaluated.
- Management and staff development needs are identified and provided within available resources.
- Parents receive information on their child's progress.
- The school complies with all rules and regulations prescribed by the Department of Education and Skills.

School Day



The 2019 school year begins on Thursday August 29th

Junior Infant School Day

Thursday 29/8/19 to Friday 30/8/19: 8:30am- 11am (Wk 1)

Monday 2/9/19 to Friday 13/9/19: 8:15 am – 11.30am (WK 2 & 3)

From Mon 16th September Junior Infants are in for the full school day

from 8:15am – 12:55pm.

Junior/Senior Infant School Day: 8:15am - 12:55pm

1st-6th Classes: 8:15am - 1:55pm

Junior Infants students will enter classrooms through the courtyard. The courtyard gate will be open from Approx. 8:05am. Parents will escort children into the courtyard. On the first days of school parents are welcome to bring the children into the classroom, take a moment and enjoy the milestone of your child starting in “big school”. On the first morning try not stay too long. Give your child a hug and let them get playing. The school will be sure to call you if there are concerns.

After a short time in school the children will be expected to line up in the courtyard. The children will practise this skill with their teachers first. For health and safety parents are requested to stay in the courtyard until the bell rings. **Please stand back from the lines of children in order that teachers have a good view of all the children.**

Attendance

Your child should attend school every day. Schools have an obligation to report absences of twenty days or more to the National Education Welfare Board. If your child is absent, please write a short note to the classroom teacher on their return to school or you can send an email to office@ashbourneetns.ie. There is no need to phone the school. For safety reasons children will not be released during school hours to anyone except parents/guardians. Children should only be collected early if it is absolutely necessary. School starts promptly at 8:15am each morning. If a child arrives to school after 8:35 am, **a parent/guardian must accompany him/her to the office to be signed in.** The roll book is a legal document which is taken every morning. Any child who arrives after the roll is taken or after 10 am will be marked absent on that day.

Uniform

Children in Ashbourne Educate Together do not wear a school uniform as we encourage children's individuality. An optional school tracksuit is available to order from the school or by contacting Steve Wright on 086 604 5820.

Please ensure that children wear suitable footwear and clothing that allows for safe and free movement during activities. It is also very important that children feel comfortable and confident in their own clothes. Minimal jewellery such as a watch or stud earrings are permitted. Other items such as bracelets and drop earrings can cause the child an injury or distress when lost or broken.

Trolley bags are not permitted in school due to safety concerns with the children using the stairs. Ensure children's school bags can fit an A4 size pocket folder.

Please label all jackets/coats/jumpers/lunch boxes/flasks. Let your child practice putting on and taking off their coat. Velcro fastened runners are ideal for young children and they promote their independence.

Infectious Illnesses

If a child has a serious medical complaint or any infectious illness, the class teacher and/or principal must be informed immediately.

When a child is unwell or has an infectious illness, he or she should not attend school. If a child feels unwell during the school day parents/guardians will be phoned. If a child has been vomiting we request that a child does not return to school for at least 24hours.

Parents are asked to provide the school with emergency contacts at the beginning of each year. In an emergency every effort will be made to contact parents or the emergency contact. Where this is not possible, the Principal and/or class teacher will seek qualified medical treatment at the earliest opportunity.

If a child requires assistance with taking prescribed medicine, parents/guardians must fill out an administration of medicine form which is available on the website and on the Aladdin App. The Board of Management must approve all administration of medicine requests.

Lunches- Healthy Eating

The school day is short and we want your child to receive the best education they can. Diet plays a big part in your child's behaviour. Treats can be given outside of school time. We promote a healthy eating policy in our school.



The following are not allowed: crisps, chocolate bars, biscuits, sweets, fizzy drinks, chewing gum, nuts (due to allergies), popcorn and for Health and Safety reasons hot drinks are not permitted.

An example of a healthy Lunch-

Sandwiches/crackers/breadsticks/wraps/rice cakes/
fruit/grapes/raisins/bananas/cheese/yoghurts/cheese strings/vegetable snacks such as
cucumber/baby tomatoes/carrots. Water/Milk/ Juice/ Smoothies.

Please ensure that your child's lunchbox and drink is clearly labelled. If your child does not finish their lunch, it will be sent home in their lunchbox. Please include a plastic bag/zip lock bag for empty yogurt containers etc. Practise opening lunch boxes, yogurts, bananas and drinks at home.

As we are a Green School children will bring home all packaging and waste from their lunches.

Books

Your child's books, copies and portfolios are kept in the school until the end of the year. At times books may be sent home for homework. Parents will be invited into the class during the school year to see their child's progress.

Mobile Phone Policy



Children should not bring mobile phones to school unless it is absolutely necessary to make contact with parents after school hours.

If parents must make contact with their children during school hours, they may do so on the school's landline 01-8357493.

Our mobile device policy is available to view online at
www.ashbourneetns.ie

www.ashbourneetns.ie

Ph 01 835 7493

Holidays

A school calendar is provided along with this booklet and is also available to download and print from our website www.ashbourneetns.ie.

A parent taking a child from school during school time for an extended time e.g. holiday is requested to inform the principal in writing including reason for and dates of absence.

Birthday Parties

Birthdays are acknowledged and marked by the class teacher if children wish them to be. Teachers do not take responsibility for distributing invitations to birthday parties. Please do not come into the school grounds and distribute invitations as it can upset other children and cause conflict and hurt in the class. No Birthday cakes/treats are to be sent into the class. Parents can share their contact details among the parents of their child's class via the Aladdin App, once their consent is given on the app.

Allergies/Administration of Medication

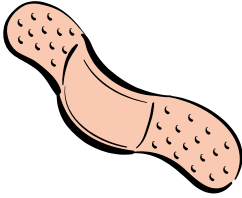
We have a duty to safeguard the health and safety of pupils. However, teachers/staff do not personally undertake the Administration of Medication (e.g. cough bottles, tablets, applications of cream).

The school requires parents/guardians to complete an Administration of Medicine Form to ensure that staff are made aware in writing, of any medical condition suffered by their child. This information should be provided at enrolment, the beginning of each school year or at the development of any medical conditions at a later date.

Where children are suffering from life threatening conditions or allergies, parents/guardians should outline clearly in writing on the Administration of Medicine Form, **what should and what should not be done** in a particular emergency situation, with particular reference to what may be a risk to the child.

Our Administration of Medicine Policy is on our website www.ashbourneetns.ie and will be available in the Aladdin App in the foreseeable future.

Accidents in school



If an accident happens in school, your child will receive first aid for minor cuts and bruises. If there is anything more serious you will be contacted by the school. It is school policy to contact parents/guardians whenever a child hits their head, however minor it may be.

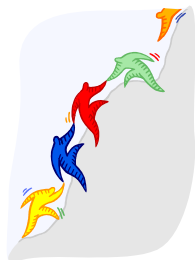
Parent Teacher Meetings

Teachers will meet with parents/guardians during the first term as a group and also on an individual basis at Parent Teacher meetings. Parents/Guardians and teachers will obviously meet on an informal basis daily.

However, if you have any concerns or questions, please make an appointment and we can meet to discuss these at an appropriate time that suits both parties and does not interfere with classroom teaching. We will send home written reports towards the end of the school year.

Parental Involvement

We believe that parents/guardians, the school and the community working together enhance the education of our students. Parental involvement in Ashbourne Educate Together is encouraged, welcomed and appreciated.



A Parent Teacher Association is up and running and they welcome parental involvement in the form of communication, fundraising and general events in the school (such as outings, school celebrations, parents' meetings). Please go along to any PTA meeting if you are interested in getting involved. Meetings take place once a month on the school premises.

www.facebook.com/Ashbourne-Educate-Together-Parents-Association

pta@ashbourneetns.ie – *whatsapp group details available here*

Where opportunities arise throughout the year we will ask for volunteers and invite parents/guardians to help us in the school and the classroom. This gives parents/guardians a chance to play an active part in their child's education and also the opportunity to observe areas of the curriculum.

www.ashbourneetns.ie

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Recycling



We are a Green School and we are working towards our third Green Flag. We will be encouraging your child to have an understanding and to engage in recycling. We would ask that lunches are placed in lunchboxes and that you will promote recycling at home. Any packaging brought in by students will be sent home to be recycled.

Subjects

The Department of Education and Skills is responsible for the education of children in Ireland. Under the curriculum laid down by the Department all students will be taught the following subjects- English, Gaeilge, Maths, Science, Drama, Geography, Music, History, Physical Education, SPHE (social, personal and health education) and Visual Arts. Our Learn Together programme will also be taught to children.

Ethics- Learn Together Programme



In Ashbourne Educate Together we celebrate all cultures and belief systems. Children learn about festivals and celebrations- e.g. Christmas, Chinese New Year, Diwali, Ramadan etc. The belief systems are only a small part of our programme. Other strands include- Moral & Spiritual Development, Equality and Justice and Ethics and the Environment. For more information: www.educatetogether.ie.

Faith formation classes and formal religious instruction classes are arranged by religious groups in conjunctions with parents outside of school hours in the local community. (See extra-curricular activities section for more information)

Aistear & Learning through play

Much of children's' early learning and development takes place through play and hands-on experience. Through play, children explore social, physical and imaginary worlds.

These experiences help them manage their feelings, develop as thinkers and develop socially, be creative and imaginative and develop language skills to lay the foundations for becoming effective

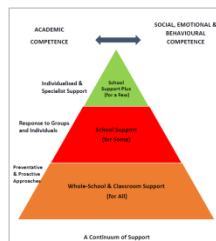
communicators and learners. Aistear is a programme for early childhood education. It ensures that your child's transition from pre-school to primary school is as seamless as possible.

In our Junior Infant and Senior Infant classes much of the children's learning is through structured play and we will have dedicated Aistear sessions.

Special Educational Teaching- The Continuum of Support

We welcome all children into our school. In relation to applications for the enrolment of children with Special Needs, we do request a copy of the child's medical and/or psychological or multi-disciplinary team report.

The Department of Education has set out the Continuum of Support framework to assist schools in identifying and responding to students' needs. This framework recognises that special educational needs occur along a continuum, ranging from mild to severe, and from transient to long term, and that students require different levels of support depending on their identified educational needs. Using this framework helps to ensure that interventions are incremental, moving from class-based interventions to more intensive and individualised support, and that they are informed by careful monitoring of progress.



Pupils who would benefit from extra support can receive support in various ways in class support and some in the form of withdrawal. Withdrawal takes place in small groups. More capable children may also receive extra support to ensure that they are being challenged.

Our aim is to provide for all our students through in class support, while also providing support in the form of 1:1 withdrawal and small groups of children where necessary.

We welcome all children into our school. In relation to applications for the enrolment of children with Special Needs, we do request a copy of the child's medical and/or psychological report or where such a report is not available, to request that the child be assessed immediately. The purpose of the assessment report is to assist the school in establishing the Educational and Training needs of the child relevant to his/her difficulties or Special Needs and to profile the support services required.

If you notice that your child is struggling with any aspect of schooling, let us know. Likewise, we will inform you, if we have any concerns regarding your child's educational, physical or emotional development. If this occurs, please don't panic. It is better to find out if there are concerns at an early stage in order to provide support.

Assessment of Need



Any parent/guardian who feels their child may have a disability can apply for an assessment under the Disability Act 2000. The HSE provides a team assessment for free for children of 6 years and under. This may alleviate any concerns you may have and will help us support your child. Please contact your local Health Centre or drop into the school for further information.

Homework



Homework given to Junior Infants will be minimal. Homework should take no longer than 10 minutes to complete. Try and encourage your child to complete their homework when they come home from school, as they are still in school mode. Leaving homework until late means your child will be tired and may learn to resent it. Homework should be a positive experience. Homework for children in other classes will be in line with our Homework Policy.

Language Acquisition

If English is not your child's first language, we would encourage parents to use their native language at home. Reading, poetry and games in your native language helps to promote fluency. This helps in the acquisition of languages by the child.

Behaviour

We believe that all children are equal and deserve to be respected. We expect that all children will follow the code of behaviour. All Staff and Visitors must also follow this code of behaviour. Bullying is not acceptable in our school.

We affirm our students and promote positive behaviour. There are clear class rules in which children have input. Sanctions are imposed for misbehaviour. If there is an ongoing issue regarding misbehaviour, parents will be informed. Please make sure that you have read and understand the

schools Code of Positive Behaviour and our Anti Bullying Policy which are both available to view on the school's website.

Parking

Parents/guardians have use of the Donaghmore Ashbourne GAA Car Park at the morning and home time. Parents/guardians of Junior and Senior Infants: an adult must accompany children to the courtyard. The Safety of everyone is the most important thing, please take your time coming in and out of the carpark and keep your speed to a minimum.

If the drop off zone is open in September 2019 the drop off or collection zone is strictly for 1st to 6th classes only.

Home Issues

If there are any issues at home such as separation, family bereavement, etc. it can be helpful to both the child and the teacher to have an awareness of the situation. Parental separation or family bereavement can be traumatic for the child if he/she is not supported. Any information is treated confidentially. Teachers can then support the student at school or link the family into suitable services. Teachers approach the issue with sensitivity and with a focus on the well-being of the children.

Tours

Parents are asked for permission when we are going on school tours. However, for local tours, example- going out in the local area, permission is not sought once parents sign the permission section of the registration form. Children are often engaged in active learning and leave the school to support the curricular objectives.



Extra-Curricular After School Activities

Extra-Curricular Activities are available for children from 1st Class onwards. A list of the activities available will be sent to parents/guardians at the beginning of each school year.

Formal religious instruction classes are arranged by different groups outside of school hours. Catholic Religion classes take place in the Parish Office at Ashbourne Donaghmore Church. If Parents of other religions are interested in setting up faith formation classes, please talk to the Principal. A minimum number of 10 children is required in order to set up these classes.

www.ashbourneetns.ie

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Ways in which you can prepare your child for school



1. Talk about school, concentrate on the positive aspects of school, such as the friends your child will make and the activities they will do such as painting, jigsaws, going on trips. Ask them about their day. Don't be surprised if they say they did nothing in school as often they don't realise that they are learning. Early oral language development has a strong impact on a child's reading ability.
2. Give your child input into their school life such as buying a new school bag, pencil case, new school shoes.
3. Practise nursery rhymes at home and read stories and fairy tales. Familiarity reassures children and gives them greater confidence. Reading readiness is the key skill to introduce your child to the mechanics of reading, reading direction, the conventions of writing, awareness of text and most importantly nurturing a motivation to read and develop a love for books.
4. Play helps a child develop motor skills, visual discrimination skills and vocabulary. Play also encourages children's social skills in order to establish friendships. Games such as snap, matching, jigsaws etc. have high educational value. Jigsaws help with concentration and problem solving.
5. Show your child how to open bananas, yogurts and put a straw into a drink.



6. Make sure your child has plenty of sleep. Starting school can be daunting and will be exciting, and also tiring.
7. On the first few mornings try not to stay too long in the classroom. Remember it is a valuable part of your parenting skills that you have developed your child to be independent enough to go to school. Give your child a hug and let them go into the class. If there are any concerns, we will contact you.
8. Encourage independence where your child hangs up their own jacket, carries in their own bag and takes down their own chair. Practice opening and closing the lunchbox and drink container they intend using for school.

9. Limit television viewing, especially before your child comes to school and before they go to bed.
10. Encourage your child to colour, write, scribble, paint, manipulate play dough, cut safely as this strengthens the child's hand muscles to enrich gross and fine motor skills.
11. Become involved in school life.
12. It is essential that your child eats breakfast every day. If you are late getting up and you do not have time to prepare/eat breakfast tell your child's teacher and send some fruit/bread for the child to eat when they get to school.
13. Bring your child on trips to the Library to encourage a love of books.
14. Please refrain from carrying your child into school. We want to foster their independence from the very beginning
15. Toilet –training: All parents and teachers know that accidents do happen. We would encourage parents over the Summer months to practice full independence in the use of the toilet. E.g. being comfortable with the door closed over, wiping themselves clean, and even practice how to manage as independently as possible if they have a wetting accident in school. It is advised to keep a change of underwear and bottoms in your child's school bag and letting them know it is there.

Useful Contact Details

Ashbourne Educate Together National School

Ph: 01-8357493

Email: Principal: ashbourneetns@gmail.com

Secretary: office@ashbourneetns.ie

Website: www.ashbourneetns.ie

Parents Association: www.facebook.com/Ashbourne-Educate-Together-Parents-Association or pta@ashbourneetns.ie

- Health Centre Killelland, Ashbourne: 01-8350535
- Garda Station: 01- 8351515
- Citizen's information: www.citizensinformation.ie
- Department of Social Protection: www.welfare.ie
- Department of Education and Skills: www.education.ie
- Educate together: www.educatetogether.ie
- NCCA: www.ncca.ie (National Council for Curriculum and Assessment)
- SESS: www.sess.ie (Special Education Support Service)

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