



Welcome Booklet

Roll Number: 20396Q

Welcome to Ashbourne Educate Together N.S.

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

Barbara Nugent



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Board of Management

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

<u>Chairperson:</u>	Noel Gildea (Patron's Nominee)
<u>Secretary:</u>	Barbara Nugent (Principal)
<u>Treasurer:</u>	Lynn Ridgeway (Parent Nominee)
<u>Others:</u>	Sara May (Patron's Nominee)
	Michael Kennedy (Parent Nominee)
	Alan Tobin (Community Nominee)
	John Sullivan (Community Nominee)
	Sally Casey (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.

Covid 19

The school follows all the Public Health advice in relation to Covid 19 .

Any future Public Health Advice relating to Covid 19 and schools will be communicated to the Parent Body and Students.

School Day



The 2022 school year begins on Tuesday 30th August

Junior Infant School Day

Please note that Junior Infants have an **induction timetable** for the first few weeks of school:

Week 1: Tuesday 30th August - Friday 2nd September 9.00am-11am

Week 2: Monday 5th September - Friday 9th September 8.30am - 11:50 am

Week 3: Monday 12th September onwards 8.15am - 12.55pm

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

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

Junior Infant students will enter classrooms through the courtyard. For the first week of school we ask Parents to wait outside the courtyard with their child and the courtyard gates will be opened by a member of staff at 9am. Parents can walk children to the door of the class.

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 and we will communicate to Parents when they will start to line up independently with their class.

Collection time is from the courtyard. The teacher will open the classroom door and hand over children to their Parents.

Little Break: 10.15am-10.25am

Big Break: 12-12.25 pm

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 enter the reason for the absence on the Aladdin App. Alternatively 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.** Please take your doctor's advice regarding rashes and infections. Do not send your child to school if they are ill.

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 8:15 am each morning. If a child arrives at 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 10am will be marked absent on that day.

Infectious Illness

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 24 hours.

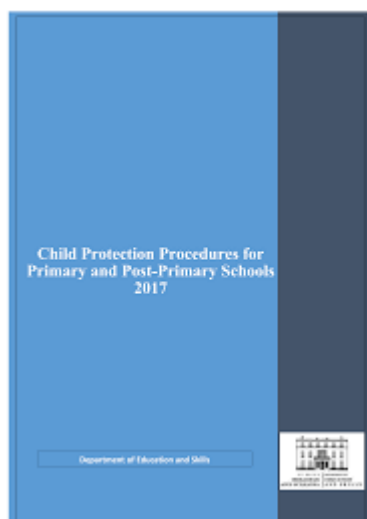
During Public Health Emergencies AETNS will follow advice, guidelines and directives of the Public Health Authorities and the Department of Education.

The school follows all the Public Health advice in relation to Covid 19, whatever guidelines and advice is recommended for the school year 2022/23, the school will implement these and update policies and procedures as advised.

Parents are asked to provide the school with emergency contacts on the Aladdin app at the beginning of each year. Please enter details of those responsible for pick up here also and state that in the description. 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.

Child Protection



The Department of Education issued circular 0081/2017 to inform schools and school management authorities on updated Child Protection Procedures. This circular gives clear direction and guidance to school authorities and to school personnel in relation to meeting the statutory obligations under the Children First Act (2015).

The Board of Management of Ashbourne Educate Together has adopted these procedures as school policy. Consequently, if school staff suspect or are alerted to possible child abuse (neglect, emotional, physical and/or sexual abuse) they are obliged to refer the matter to Children and Family Service of the HSE. The HSE will then assess the situation and provide support for the child concerned.

The Child Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment is available to view on our website.

In our school the **Designated Liaison Person** is Barbara Nugent.

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.

School bags should fit an A4 size pocket folder.

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



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.

A company called The Lunch Bag also delivers lunches to the school. Parents can download the app and pay for lunches for their child to be delivered to their class. We will provide Parents with more information on this later in the year.

The following are not allowed: crisps, chocolate bars, biscuits, sweets, fizzy drinks, chewing gum, nuts (due to allergies)

****NO NUTS ALLOWED AT ALL -NO NUTELLA, PEANUT BUTTER, PESTO, LOOSE NUTS****

If your child has any allergies or develops any allergies, please let us know immediately.

An example of a healthy Lunch:

- Sandwiches/crackers/breadsticks/wraps/rice cakes
- Fruit (which the child can easily manage) e.g. grapes/raisins/bananas/peeled oranges/apple slices
- Salad, tomatoes, rice, pasta dishes
- Vegetable Sticks e.g. carrot sticks/celery sticks/cucumber
- Cheese/cheese string/yoghurts (please ensure that your child has a spoon)
- 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 yoghurt containers etc. Practise opening lunch boxes, yoghurts, bananas and drinks at home.

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

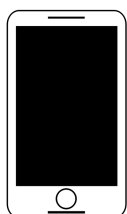
Books



In Junior Infants the cost of school books and other educational materials are included in the school fee. Parents do not have to buy books for Junior Infant students. The school will order the books and materials and they will be ready for your child in September.

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.

Device Policy



Children should not bring mobile phones to school unless it is absolutely necessary to make contact with parents after school hours. It is not expected that Junior infant students will have a mobile phone in school unless for medical need as directed by a doctor or paediatrician, e.g. Diabetes. If parents must make contact with their children during school hours, they may do so on the school's landline 01-8357493.

The Acceptable Usage Policy (AUP) and the digital device policies are available to view online at www.ashbourneetns.ie

It is very important that you keep us up to date with contact numbers in case of an emergency. Remember to let us know if you change your mobile number or email address.

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 available to view on our website www.ashbourneetns.ie

****NO NUTS ALLOWED AT ALL -NO NUTELLA, PEANUT BUTTER, PESTO, LOOSE NUTS****

If your child has any allergies or develops any allergies, please let us know immediately.

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 will be contacted via text whenever a child hits their head, however minor it may be.

Parent Teacher Meetings/Communication



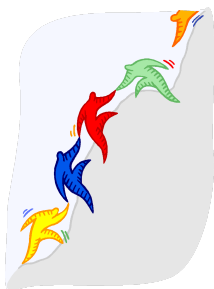
Regular communications to parents/guardians will be via email and notifications on the **Aladdin** App. These communications include newsletters and School report cards. Some urgent communication will be communicated to parents via text and/or phone call. It is imperative that parents provide a current and functioning phone number and email address to the school. It is the duty of parents/guardians to ensure that they keep the school informed of any updated contact information including email, phone number and postal address.

Parent Teacher meetings will take place during the school year.

Parents/Guardians and teachers will, of course, be available to meet on an informal basis throughout the year. However we would request that you **please make an appointment** through the office ahead of time. Teachers and parents can arrange to meet to discuss queries at an appropriate time that suits both parties and does not interfere with classroom teaching or supervision of children.

Junior infant students need a teachers' full attention and supervision especially in the first weeks of school and during morning transition. We would request that Parents do not look to speak to their Junior Infant Class teacher first thing in the morning as they are receiving children into the classroom. If you need to contact your child's teacher we would ask that you email or call the office and your message will be passed onto your child's teacher.

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** (PTA) is active in our school 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.

We understand that parents/guardians have different schedules. There will be lots of opportunities to get involved in school life throughout the year. All activities will be shared on our school website and with parents via our newsletter.

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

pta@ashbourneetns.ie

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.

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.

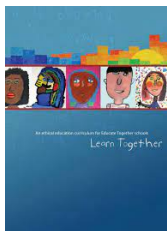
We are seeking to reduce our use of paper in an administrative capacity. Newsletters/School reports and the majority of school communications will be sent digitally so we strongly advise parents to avail of the **Aladdin App** and ensure we have a current, functioning email address for you on file.

Subjects

The Department of Education 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), including RSE (Relationship and Sexuality 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 & Justice and Ethics & 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.

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 lessons.

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 such as in class support and some in the form of withdrawal.

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 worry. 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 given to your child should reinforce the work that your child has completed at school. 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. We encourage your child to speak as much English as possible at school. Reading, poetry and games in your native language helps to promote fluency.

We encourage parents/guardians to use their native language at home as 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 and we take a school wide approach . 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. An adult must accompany junior and senior infants 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. We are very appreciative to the GAA club for allowing the use of the car park.

We request that parents are respectful of this arrangement and of the staff of the GAA Club at all times. Drive slowly and with care at all times please.

The set down area is strictly for 1st to 6th classes only. Junior and Senior Infants are required to have parents/guardian line up with them outside the courtyard until the gates are opened and staff are in place to supervise.

Home Life

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 Admission Form. Children are often engaged in active learning and leave the school to support the curricular objectives.

Ways in which you can prepare your child for school



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.

- Give your child input into their school life such as buying a new school bag, pencil case, new school shoes.



- 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. Bring your child on trips to the Library to encourage a love of books.



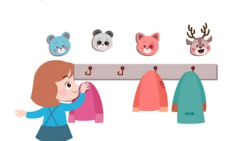
- Play helps a child develop motor skills, visual discrimination skills and vocabulary. Play also encourages children's social skills in order to establish friendships. Games such as snap, matching, jigsaws etc. have high educational value. Jigsaws help with concentration and problem solving.



- Show your child how to open their lunch box, school bag, bananas, yoghurts and put a straw into a drink. It is expected that your child brings food for both "little break" and "big break". If there is no lunch provided, the school will call home and ask that lunch be dropped in.

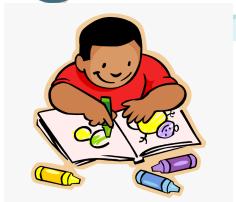


- Make sure your child has plenty of sleep. Starting school can be daunting and will be exciting, and also tiring.



- On the first few mornings try not to stay too long in the courtyard. 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.

- Encourage independence where your child hangs up their own jacket, carries in their own bag. Practice opening and closing the lunchbox and drink container they intend using for school.



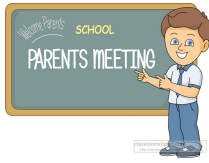
- Limit television viewing/screen time, especially before your child comes to school and before they go to bed.

- 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.



- 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.

- Please refrain from carrying your child into school. We want to foster their independence from the very beginning.



- **Toilet –training:** All parents and teachers know that accidents do happen. We would encourage parents over the Summer months to practise full independence in the use of the toilet. E.g. being comfortable with the door closed over, wiping themselves clean, and even practising 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 let them know it is there.

Useful Contact Details

Ashbourne Educate Together National School

Ph: 01-8357493

Email: office@ashbourneetns.ie

Website: www.ashbourneetns.ie

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

Other Useful Contacts

Health Centre Killegland, Ashbourne: 01-8350535

Garda Station: 01- 8351515

Citizens 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)

NCSE: www.ncse.ie (Special Education Support Service)