



CASTLEREA COMMUNITY SCHOOL

# PROSPECTUS

A WELCOMING, HAPPY AND INCLUSIVE COMMUNITY OF LEARNERS





# Welcome

As Principal of Castlerea Community School, I am delighted to introduce our school to you in this prospectus. Our aim is to give you an insight into CCS as a welcoming, happy, and inclusive community of learners striving for excellence in all aspects of their development. Our school is co-educational and multi-denominational, providing opportunities for all students regardless of ability, race, or creed.

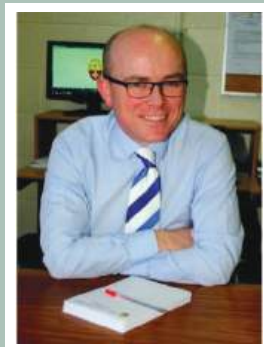
We offer a broad and balanced curriculum across all programmes at Junior and Senior cycle, and this is complimented by extensive co-curricular and extra-curricular programmes that foster the development of lifelong skills.

Student care is at the heart of our ethos with high quality student supports available to enable each student to reach their full potential. Our dedicated teaching staff inspire a love of learning and set high expectations for student engagement and academic excellence.

In reading through the pages of this prospectus we hope you will get a sense of our school and we very much look forward to welcoming your son, daughter or care to Castlerea Community School in the near future.



**Eileen Ryan**  
Principal



**Jarlath Burke**  
Deputy Principal



# Our Mission

Castlerea Community School is dedicated to the pursuit of excellence in education in a caring environment of mutual respect so as to foster the full potential of its students and staff. In partnership with parents we strive to create a desire for life-long learning, respect for the individual, an awareness of the needs of the disadvantaged, concern for the environment and an appreciation of our own unique culture.

# The School Week

## Monday-Thursday:

THE SCHOOL DAY

9.00 am - 3.55pm

HOMEWORK CLUB

4.00 pm - 5.00pm

SUPERVISED STUDY

4.15 pm - 6.15pm

## Friday:

THE SCHOOL DAY

9.00 am - 1.15pm

SUPERVISED STUDY

1.30 pm - 3.30pm

## The School Day

### 1st, 3rd, 6th years

Morning classes	9.00am – 11.00am
Break time	11.00am – 11.15am
Midday classes	11.15am – 1.15pm
Lunch break	1.15pm – 1.55pm
Afternoon classes	1.55pm – 3.55pm

### 2nd, TY, 5th years

Morning classes	9.00am – 10.20am
Break time	10.20am – 10.35 am
Midday classes	10.35am – 12.35pm
Lunch break	12.35pm – 1.15pm
Afternoon classes	1.15pm – 3.55pm



# Curriculum

Our school offers a five or six year post primary education - three years Junior Cycle, optional one year Transition Year and two years Senior Cycle. We offer a comprehensive range of subjects to our students in both cycles across all disciplines.

## Junior Cycle

The Junior Cycle framework concentrates on the building of key life skills in young adolescents, to prepare them for their lives as independent and responsible learners in the Senior Cycle and after school. These skills are developed in each learner across a wide range of subjects. Students are formally assessed throughout 1st, 2nd and 3rd year through CBA's and AT's (Classroom Based Assessments and Assessment Tasks) and written formal examinations take place at the end of 3rd Year.

In Castlerea Community School, students have the opportunity to make informed decisions on their subject choices through the taster programme during the first term of 1st year.

**All students take the following Core Subjects:**

Gaeilge*	English	Maths	History	Geography	Religion
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\*unless officially exempt

**In addition to the following Short Courses:**

PE	SPHE	CSPE
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**And 4 of the following Option Subjects:**

Applied Technology	Engineering	Business	French	German	Graphics
Home Economics	Materials Technology (Wood)	Music	Science	Visual Art	

**And these non-exam programmes:**

.be programme	FRIENDS programme	Study skills
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# Senior Cycle



Students entering Senior Cycle in CCS have four programmes to choose from:

**Transition Year (TY)**

**Traditional Leaving Cert (LC)**

**Leaving Cert Applied (LCA)**

**Leaving Cert Vocational Programme (LCVP)**

## Transition Year (Optional) - 1 Year

Transition Year is a unique one-year programme between the Junior and Senior cycles. It provides a bridge to enable them to make the transition from the more dependent type of learning associated with the Junior Certificate to the more independent learning environment associated with the Leaving Certificate. It encourages personal and social development and recognises the need for students to grow in independence.

Transition Year fosters academic achievement as students prepare for a Leaving Certificate programme, further study and adult and working life. It encourages the development of a wide range of transferable critical thinking and creative problem-solving skills. Transition Year offers students space to learn, mature and develop.

Over the years, we have built a Transition Year which is highly regarded and sought after. It is an activity based self-directed programme, which entails learning both inside and outside the classroom. The course allows them to build personal confidence, encourages maturity and to develop new skills and education for college and working life.

The TY programme comprises a weekly timetabled element, supported by many calendar events such as the following:

### Core Subjects:

English	Irish	Maths	Languages	History	Geography	PE	RSE	Religion
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### Sample Subjects

Agriculture & Horticulture	Art, Craft & Design	Construction Studies	Coaching Studies	Development Education		
Dreamspace	E.C.D.L	Food & Preparation	French	Future Leaders	German	Mechanics & Engineering
Personal Development	Public Speaking	Science	T.E.FL	Technology	Young Social Innovators	

### Calendar Events:

Activity Excursions & Challenges	Cycling	CPR4schools training	Drama & Poetry Workshops	Driver Education & Road Safety	
Enterprise Education	GAISCE	Garda Week	Golf	John Paul II Awards	Law Education
Leadership Training	Mental Health Awareness	Movie Magic	Project Supervision and Portfolio		
STEM workshops	School Musical	Team Building	Work Placement	Young Scientist/SciFest	Young St. Vincent de Paul

# Leaving Cert Applied - 2 Years

The Leaving Certificate Applied is a distinct, self-contained two year Leaving Certificate, available to students who wish to follow a practical or vocationally orientated programme. A key aspect of the programme is enabling students to prepare for adult and working life. The Leaving Certificate Applied is different in a number of ways:

- It is a practical programme that makes wide use of active and student centred learning methodologies.
- It includes seven Student Tasks that bring together the different learning experiences that the students have gained from the courses they have taken.
- It uses a unique system of assessment. The students' work is assessed over the two years of the programme and they gain credits as they go along. Practicals, interviews and terminal written papers are among the different forms of assessment used. The students' communication, problem solving and practical skills are also assessed.

# Traditional Leaving Cert - 2 Years

In general, students taking this option study seven subjects:

**Core subjects:** English Irish Maths

**Optional subjects:**

Accounting	Art	Agricultural Science	Biology	Business	Chemistry	Construction Studies
Design and Communication Graphics (DCG)	Economics	Engineering	French	Geography	German	Home Economics
History	Music	Physics	Technology	PE		

**Non-examination subjects:** RSE Religion PE Career Guidance Computers

# Leaving Cert Vocational Programme (LCVP) - 2 years

LCVP is similar to the traditional Leaving Cert with the added opportunity to study courses in Enterprise Education and Preparation for the World of Work. These modules are assessed prior to the terminal examinations in June and involve an element of work experience. Students wishing to take the LCVP must satisfy certain criteria regarding specific subject combinations.



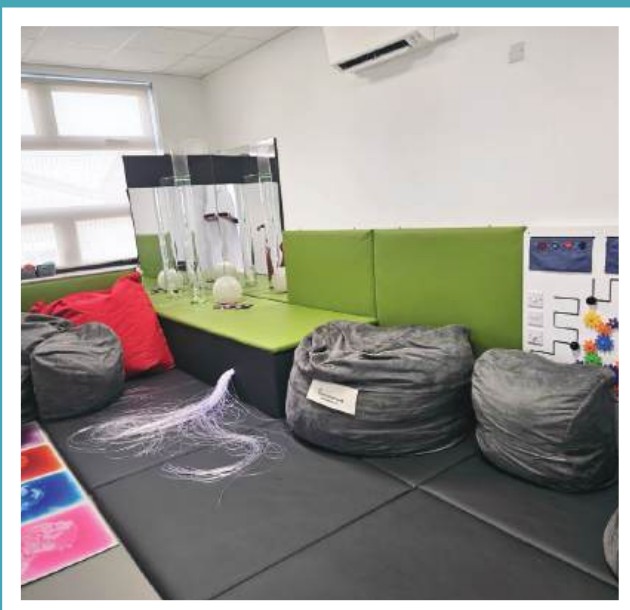


## Additional Educational Needs Programmes

Castlerea Community School is an inclusive school which seeks to ensure that all students, no matter what their difficulty, are enabled to acquire personal, social and academic skills, participate fully in school life, and to achieve success. Special Needs Assistants (SNA) offer other support to individual students and are an important part of the learning support team.

## Learning Support Programme

Learning Support is available in First, Second and Third Year to those who may need some additional support in reaching their full potential. This may take the form of one-to-one tutoring, small group activities or team teaching predominantly in Maths and English, but support can also be put in place depending upon the needs of the individual student. Reasonable accommodations for State examinations are applied for by the Learning Support Coordinator, where necessary.



## L1LP and L2LP programmes

The Level 2 Learning Programmes have been designed for students with a high moderate to low mild general learning disability. A Level 2 Learning Programme (L2LP) is made up of Priority Learning Units and Short Courses and can be combined with mainstream subjects, ensuring that those students gain recognition and status for their learning.

## Autism Suite

Castlerea Community School was delighted to open an Autism Class in the 23/24 academic year. This space is specially designed with tailored facilities to support students with autism. We in CCS strive to create an environment for all and this will be no different for our students who are supported within the Autism Class. We wish to create an environment where students in the class participate and engage in mainstream activities alongside their peers, where appropriate. By promoting understanding and acceptance we aim to create a sense of belonging and ensure that all students have equal opportunities to learn and grow together, inclusivity being a top priority for our Autism class.

In the Autism suite, we offer both Level 1 and Level 2 learning programmes, as well as the Junior Cycle and Leaving Cert curriculum. Each student will be offered a curriculum that suits their learning capabilities. This can be tailored to meet the individual needs of students. The L1/L2 learning programmes provide a structured and supportive approach to education, ensuring that each student receives the appropriate level of support and guidance to thrive academically and socially. These programs are in place to foster growth and success for our students.

Our autism class also has a purpose built Sensory Room, filled with sensory experiences to help create a calming and engaging environment. The Sensory Room is designed to provide a soothing and stimulating environment that can help regulate their sensory experiences. With various sensory equipment and activities, like lights, textures, and sounds, it promotes relaxation, focus, and self-regulation. It's a safe space for students to explore and find comfort.



# Extra Curricular

## Activities



Here, at Castlerea Community School, we encourage our students to participate in extra-curricular activities. These activities can help develop social and cultural skills as well as adding an enjoyable element to school life. Our activities include:

<b>SPORTS</b>	<b>Athletics</b>	<b>Soccer</b>	<b>Basketball</b>	<b>Gaelic Football</b>
	<b>Badminton</b>	<b>Gymnastics</b>	<b>Table Tennis</b>	

### Other Activities

<b>Library club</b>	<b>Chess &amp; Games Club</b>	<b>Field trips</b>	<b>Dance</b>
<b>Díospóireacht Gaeilge</b>		<b>GAISCE President's Award</b>	
<b>School Choir</b>	<b>School tours (home and abroad)</b>		
<b>Art Competitions</b>		<b>Poetry Competitions</b>	
<b>Public Speaking Competitions</b>		<b>Creative Schools</b>	
<b>Young Scientist Competition</b>		<b>Active Schools</b>	
<b>Board Games</b>	<b>Green Schools</b>	<b>Homework Club</b>	<b>Fundraising/Active Citizenship</b>
<b>Music Events</b>			
<b>Film/DVD club</b>		<b>Regional Business Competitions</b>	<b>Music Videos streaming Web TV</b>
<b>Quizzes</b>		<b>Stand Up Awareness week</b>	<b>Wellbeing week Activities</b>
<b>Erasmus + Trips</b>	<b>Gaelbhrtach</b>	<b>John Paul II Awards</b>	<b>Industry/Business Site Visits</b>



# Supervised Evening Study

Supervised study commences September and continues until the end of May and affords students the opportunity to study in a quiet and warm environment. Sessions run from 4.15pm to 6.15pm Monday to Thursday and 1.30pm to 3.30pm on Friday. As places are limited, a waiting list is operational and preferences is given to students from 3rd and 6th year.

# School Uniform

## Girls' Uniform

Pleated Tartan Skirt  
Navy Trousers  
White Polo Shirt / White Blouse  
Navy Crested Jumper  
Black Shoes  
School Jacket

## Boys' Uniform

Navy Trousers  
Blue Shirt  
Navy Crested Jumper  
Black Shoes  
School Jacket



# School Facilities and Services

Three ultra-modern fully equipped Science laboratories - refurbished in 2023  
Fully equipped Woodwork and Construction Studies room  
Engineering room with state of the art equipment  
Fully equipped Technology room  
Home Economics room  
New state of the art Autism suite fully equipped with sensory equipment  
A Dress Design room  
Colourful and vibrant Art Room  
Computer rooms which all teachers have access to  
Dedicated Laptop and tablet trolleys for completion of CBA's / project work.  
Career Guidance room.  
Modern Design & Communications Graphics room with state of the art computer aided drawing facilities.  
State of the art, fully equipped Music room.  
Indoor Sports Complex with integrated classroom for LCPE  
Sacred space accessible to all students for quiet moments of reflection  
Canteen - Free school lunches for all students  
Student lockers



Supervised evening study  
1st year Homework Club  
Junior and Senior cycle free schoolbooks scheme  
Fully stocked Library with Accelerated Reader database  
Elevator for full access throughout the building  
Full time Home School Community Liaison Officer  
Part time Schools Completion Coordinator  
Dedicated Student Support Team for Junior and Senior students  
First year subject taster programme  
School administration app VSware to allow for clear and regular communication between school and home.  
Parent's Room

# Support Services for Students

## Pastoral Care and Wellbeing

The aim of our pastoral care system is to ensure that the care of each student, in all aspects of their wellbeing and development - academic, physical, moral, spiritual, emotional and socially - are catered for in a meaningful way by the school. To achieve this, each year group is assigned a Year Head, assisted by a team of Class Tutors. These members of staff work with management, teachers, the Guidance Counsellor and the Chaplain to ensure the welfare of every student and that the needs of all students are met.

At Castlerea Community School, the wellbeing of our students is at the centre of all we do. Students in first, second and third year study a formal wellbeing programme including SPHE, CSPE, PE, mindfulness. be programme, Friends for Life programme and Study skills. This is in addition to and compliments the many informal wellbeing initiatives in the school for both Junior and Senior students.

## Prefects

Senior Students form an important role in supporting their fellow students. By acting as positive role models, they set standards for younger students to aspire to. The role of the prefects in the school is predominantly to support first year students with the transition from Primary to Secondary school, by operating a "buddy" system, meeting regularly with their buddies and organising events and activities for them.

## Home School Community Liaison

"Castlerea CS has a dedicated full time Home School Community Liaison (HSCL) Teacher whose job is to provide essential links between home, school and the local community. The Home School Community Liaison Coordinator (HSCL) aims to improve educational outcomes for children through supporting parents/guardians. The HSCL Coordinator provides support through Home Visits, transition programmes, classes,

courses and activities for parents, both recreational and educational, such as cookery, felting, basket weaving, walking group etc and offers information on other family supports available locally. In addition, HSCL Coordinators can encourage and support parents in attaining their own educational goals.

The HSCL is a vital link between family, school and the community and is a support to you and your child/children as you navigate your way through second level education."

## School Chaplain

The 1998 Education Act states that educators should "promote the moral, spiritual, social and personal development of students". The school chaplain has a key role in ensuring that these needs are being attended to in the school. Here in Castlerea Community School, the role of chaplain is part of a team and works closely in conjunction with school management, pastoral care teams, guidance counsellor, all staff and the Religious Education department. Personal relationship and genuine personal presence is at the core of what a compassionate Chaplain must be. The School Chaplain is present to those who find themselves at threshold times in their lives. He is available to students by appointment or on teacher referral, to listen and empower them to move forward when attending to various issues in their lives.

## Guidance Counsellor

The Guidance Counsellor provides for the needs of the students under three integrated areas: personal/social guidance and counselling, educational and career guidance. The Guidance Counsellor is available to meet students in class groups and for individual consultation with students and/or parents on matters related to career advice and/or possible personal difficulties. A drop-in guidance service for all of our students, past and present, is also provided. She liaises with the Principal, Deputy Principal, other staff members, members of the Pastoral Care team and relevant outside agencies as necessary, in providing this support and guidance.

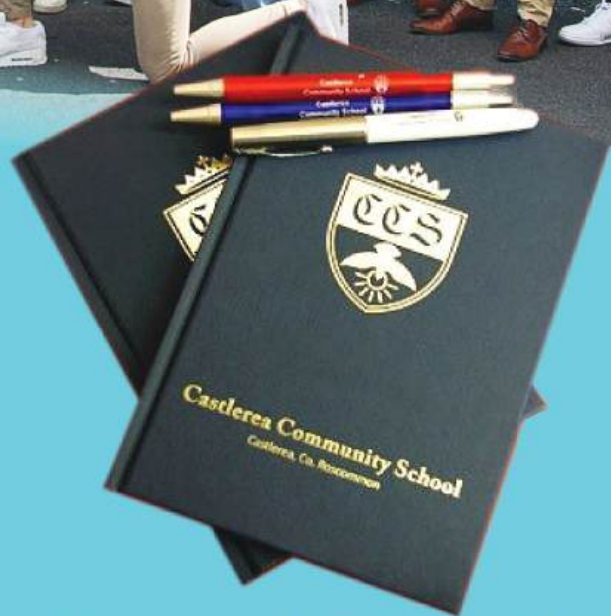
DREAM  
BIG FLY  
HIGH



## Student Journal

Each student is required to be in possession of a school diary and he/she must bring it to all classes. This diary is available for purchase at the beginning of the school year and is designed to:

- keep a record of all homework and class activities.
- provide a point of communication between teachers and parents/guardians
- record all requests by parents for students to leave school.
- monitor student attendance.
- assist in organising homework on a daily basis.



## Student Council

The Student Council forms an integral part of school life here in CCS, giving students an opportunity to voice their opinions and play an active role in the development of the school. The Council consists of a representative body of students, elected from and by the general cohort of students in the school. A member of staff will liaise with the Student Council, assisting them in playing a partnership role with the staff and school management.

## Parents' Council

The Parents Council plays a significant role in the life of the school. It acts as a very valuable link between the homes and the school, representing the views of parents, informing parents of developments in education and in the school, directing policy formation, organising events of mutual interest to parents and students and helping with the provision of extra resources and fund-raising. Membership of the council is open to parents/guardians of all students attending the school and are elected at the annual general meeting.



**CASTLEREA COMMUNITY SCHOOL**  
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