



Creagh College

Coláiste na Craobhaí Guaire

Information Booklet for Parents of Incoming First Year Students 2020/21

Welcome to Creagh College

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Table of Contents

What does a school day look like in Creagh College; including start and finish times?.....	3
What happens at the start of the school day?	3
Who is the Class Tutor?	3
Who is the best person to help me if I have a query or problem?.....	3
What times are breaktimes and what food/snacks are available?	4
Canteen Menu	5
What should I do if my son or daughter is late for school?	5
What should I do if my son/daughter is absent from school?	6
What should I do if I need to sign my child out of school?	6
What uniform do I have to wear?	7
PE uniform	7
What do I do if I forgot my PE gear?	8
How do I order my iPad and eBooks?	8
How can I get to school? - School Transport	10
Will I get into trouble with teachers?	11
Mobile phones	11
What extra-curricular activities do Creagh College offer to their students?	12
Additional Costs: Classroom Materials, Lockers, Insurance, Student Journals	12
Items that you should purchase before the school year begins	13
What will I study?.....	13
Optional Subjects/Modern European Language.....	14
What should I bring /wear for my first day at Creagh College	15
Your first week - Induction Week.....	15

What does a school day look like in Creagh College; including start and finish times?

- **Monday:** 8.52 until 4.00pm
- **Tuesday- Friday:** 8.52am until 3.20pm
- Every class is 40 minutes long.
- On Monday, students will have 9 x 40 min periods while every other day they will have 8 x 40 min periods.

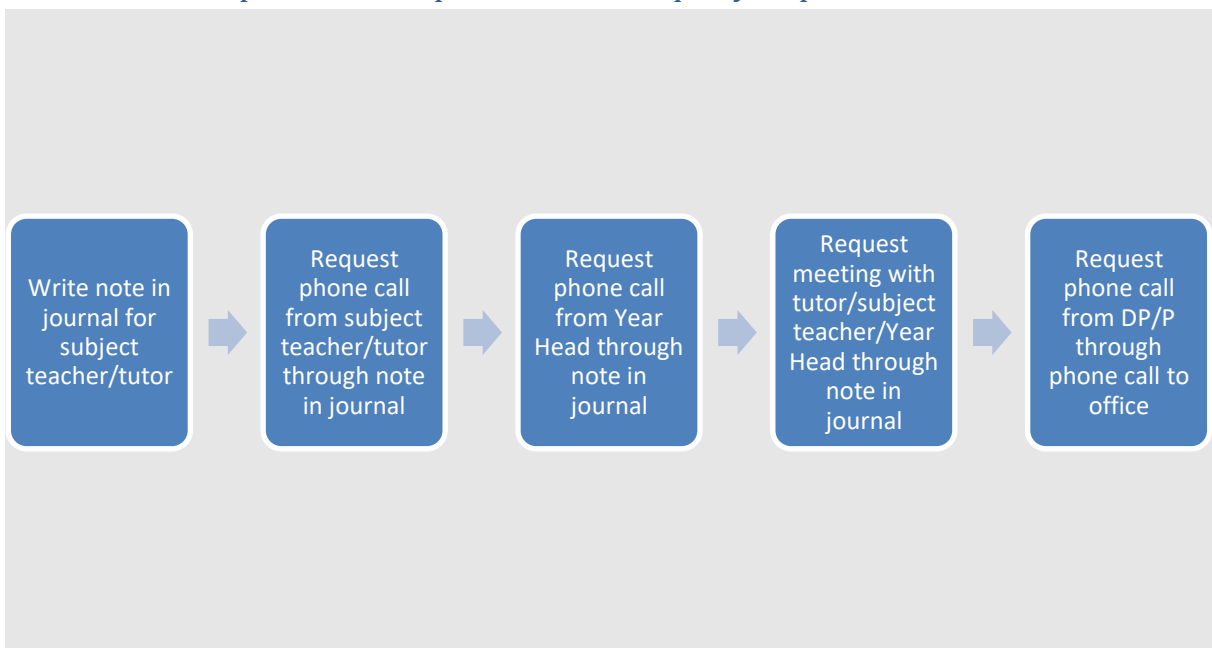
What happens at the start of the school day?

- Students should be in school every morning on time. This means students should be in school before 8.45 so that they can use the toilet, go to their lockers etc.
- First bell will ring at 8.45 and students should go to their tutor's classroom and line up quietly outside in alphabetical order.
- The second bell will ring at 8.52 and students will have an eight minute period with their tutor.

Who is the Class Tutor?

Each tutor group class has a class tutor. Every morning the class tutor will meet with their assigned tutor group. The class tutor will answer any questions you have about school, they will help you understand your timetable, and will explain the school rules and how the lockers work. If any of their students are feeling unsettled they will support them, and if there are any reports of bullying they will deal with this. If you have any query or concern, the class tutor is your first point of contact in the school. All absences must be reported to your class tutor.

Who is the best person to help me if I have a query or problem?



The Student Journal is an important channel of communication between the college and parents. Students are required to have their journal with them in every class. It can be very difficult to contact a teacher by phone so it is easier if you write your concern/note/request for a phone call in the student's journal.

Most queries, especially those concerning a particular subject or teacher, are most effectively addressed by putting a note for that teacher's attention in the space provided in the Student Journal.

In matters of greater urgency, parents may wish to discuss an issue with their child's Year Head. Again, this can be done in writing via the Student Journal. Alternatively, all tutors, subject teachers and Year Head's email addresses are on our website. You can also leave a message by contacting the office by telephone. All Year Heads have teaching duties to attend to, but every effort will be made to return calls in as timely a fashion as possible. Tutors and Year Heads will know your son/daughter best. However, if you wish to meet the Principal or Deputy Principal please telephone the office to make an appointment.

What times are breaktimes and what food/snacks are available?

- **Small break:** 11.00am until 11.20
- **Lunch:** 1.20pm until 2.00pm

Our small break is 20 minutes long and our lunch break is 40 minutes long. Students are not allowed to leave the college premises during lunchtime (students who live close to Creagh College may go home for lunch by prior arrangement with the college authorities).

Canteen facilities

We promote healthy eating in our school and have a wonderful canteen that offers our students a wide variety of healthy food. Students can pre-order and the canteen is open for both breaktimes. We are one of the few canteens in Ireland to have a Happy Heart Healthy Eating Award.

Paninis, wraps, fresh rolls, soup, variety of pasta dishes, fresh juices, fresh fruit and homemade flapjacks are all available. Students are offered a Special Meal Deal of the following: Pasta, Panini or Wrap, piece of fruit and a bottle of water for €4.

Treats are available from the canteen on Friday only. Please do not allow your child to bring high energy sports or caffeinated drinks as part of their school lunch. Drinking water fountains are located throughout the college and we would advise students carrying iPads in their schoolbags not to carry drinks in the same bag.

Canteen Menu

Pastas

Pasta King sauces change daily (e.g. Carbonara, Chilli Beef, Bolognese and Pomodoro)

Wraps & Sandwiches

Small Ham and Cheese Panini - €1.50

Large Ham and Cheese Panini - €3.00

Crispy fresh rolls - €1.50 (selection of filling; chicken+mayo, chicken stuffing, ham and cheese)

Cajun Chicken Panini - €3.00

Chicken and Stuffing sandwich - €2.50

Toasted Barbeque Chicken Wrap - €3.00

Snacks & Treats

Killowen Farm Yogurt - 80c

Home Made Scone with butter & jam - €1.50

Home Made Flapjack - €1.00

Selection of Chocolate bars available on Friday - €1.20

Propercorn/Manhattan Popcorn - €1.00

Home Made Soup and Brown Bread/Roll - €2.50

Drinks

Bottled Water - €1.00

Flavoured milk - €1.00

Orange/Apple Juice - €1.50

Meal Deals

Any large Panini/Pasta King with a bottle of water and a piece of fruit - €4.00

Also available on Fridays is our marinated Cajun Chicken fillet burger - €3.00

What should I do if my son or daughter is late for school?

- A valid note should be placed in the back of your child's journal in the **LATE NOTES** section, indicating why your child was late for school.
 - ✓ Your son/daughter should present this note to the front office where he/she will be signed in.
 - ✓ This note should then be presented to his/her tutor that morning if he/she arrives during tutor time or if not presented the next morning to their tutor.
 - ✓ Your son/daughter will be marked as LATE on the school roll for that day.
- Students should not come to school without a note explaining their lateness.
- If your son or daughter comes to school without a valid note, he/she will be placed in detention at lunchtime.

What should I do if my son/daughter is absent from school?

Here in Creagh College, we look upon attendance as one of the key components to a student's educational success. Students must be in school in order to learn. We do realise that there may be days when students do have to miss an odd day of school for reasons such as sickness or essential medical/dental appointments. We would encourage parents to try, where possible, to book these appointments outside of the normal school day. So, what do you do if your son/daughter has been absent for a day?

- A valid note should be placed in the back of the student's journal in the **ABSENCE NOTES** section. Parents/Guardians must clearly indicate the reason for the student's absence from school and the note must be signed and dated.
- The student then presents this note to his or her tutor upon his/her return to school. It is extremely important that the student provides his/her tutor with this note so it is recorded on the school's system for attendance.

Under the Education (Welfare) Act, 2000, as a school we are obliged to report on school attendance for any student under the age of 16 who has missed more than 20 days to TUSLA.

What should I do if I need to sign my child out of school?

If it is necessary to take a student from school during the school day, it is recommended that this be done during our break or lunchtimes. This will reduce any disruption to teaching and learning. The following are the steps involved in signing a student out of school:

- A note should be written in the student's journal, by the parent/guardian before he/she comes to school. The student then presents the note to his/her tutor that morning. The note should give a clear reason for signing out as well as the time that he/she will be collected at and if the student will be returning to school or not.
- The tutor signs the note during tutor time and records this for their own records.
- The student presents himself or herself to the front office at the time indicated in the note. A parent/guardian should be there to sign his/her child out of school. One of the secretaries will record the student's name in the book along with the time they left and the parent/guardian should sign this. * If for some reason a parent will not be there to sign the student out, as in the student has permission to leave school without an adult signing them out, this **MUST** be indicated in the note written in the journal. A phone call home may be required to confirm this.
- Where a child is signing back into school, for example if the child has attended a dental appointment earlier in the day, then the student is required to sign back into school. He/she must present himself/herself to the front office and sign the sign-in book.

What uniform do I have to wear?

The college uniform is as follows:

For boys:

- The official college jumper
- Grey trousers (not jeans or tracksuit bottoms)
- A standard white shirt with collar (not a polo or t-shirt)
- Black shoes (**all black- no coloured logos or soles**)
- Black or grey socks

For girls:

- The official college jumper
- The official college skirt (black, white and red tartan)- below the knee in length, or
- Grey trousers (2 specific styles available in Leddys and Funges- not jeans or tracksuit bottoms)
- White blouse with "revere" collar
- Black shoes (**all black- no coloured logos or soles**)
- Black tights or socks

Jumpers, skirts and grey girls' trousers are available from Funges and Leddys. Jumpers will cost approx. €40 to €45 depending on size and skirts will cost approx. €50 to €55, also depending on size. Boys' trousers, shirts and blouses are standard school uniform items and are readily available in most clothes shops including Tesco and Dunnes Stores.

Creagh College has an official college jacket. If a student wears a jacket to school it must be the official college jacket. It is a high quality waterproof winter jacket. It was designed and chosen in consultation with our Parent and Student Councils and enhances the image of Creagh College and represents good value for money. Jackets are also available from Funges. Please see our [uniform policy](#) for more information.

PE uniform

The **PE Uniform** consists of black shorts or black tracksuit pants. Students must wear runners in the hall and football boots are recommended when on the pitches. First years must wear the Creagh College top for PE which can be purchased through the school website from June 1st. All orders must be placed with Bodibro before July 17th so they will be ready for when school begins. An optional Creagh College tracksuit is also available from the same supplier, through the school website. To view all of the colleges sports gear available for purchase please follow the link for Bodibro on the school website.

What do I do if I forgot my PE gear?

Students unable to participate in PE:

If for some reason a student is unable to take part in a PE class, due to an injury, a signed & dated note explaining the type of injury should be written in the student's journal. If a student is feeling unwell but is well enough to attend school, it is recommended the student get changed and does some moderate exercise e.g. goes for a walk and gets some fresh air.

If a student forgets their PE gear:

Students will receive a note in their journal and be offered spare gear to wear for PE (school top & shorts). If for some reason no gear is available students will be given work to do for the class. If a student forgets it a second time they will get a second note and the teacher will ring home. If a student forgets gear on a third occasion the teacher will place the student on Lunch Time Detention and may request a meeting with parents.

How do I order my iPad and eBooks?

All iPads and eBooks need to be ordered through our technology partner's website - www.wriggle.ie. Please also read the accompanying 'Creagh College Wriggle Parents' Information Booklet' on our website. Contact details for queries in relation to the iPad Online Store: Wriggle - 01-5009060

Once the store opens on **Friday 22nd May**, and you have been given confirmation of your son/daughter's optional subjects, go to www.wriggle.ie and select the "ORDER" tab. You will be asked to enter a store code - our unique store code is 80440. Once you have entered this code, a range of stores will be presented to you. Please select the "Creagh College First year 2020/2021" store.

It is very strongly recommended that you purchase the iPad through our online store for a variety of reasons; it will be the latest available model iPad, it comes at an educational discount, and most importantly it can be much more safely and effectively managed under our Acceptable Usage Policy and our Mobile Device Management system.

Using the store is very straightforward. Simply follow each step on the store to select your required iPad, protective case, insurance options and the subjects your son/daughter will study. Not all subjects require eBooks, so some will not be available on the list on the store. Art and Classical Studies for example use other resources in Junior Cycle and do not require eBooks.

The store will close on **July 12th**, and any orders placed after this date cannot be guaranteed to be with you in time to start the school year and will be subject to a late processing fee imposed by Wriggle.

The iPad will be shipped directly to you at your home address, as will any physical workbooks or free textbooks.

Wriggle are this year introducing a **payment plan** option which requires pre-approval. To apply for preapproval go to www.flexifi.com and click "Apply Now". The outcome of your credit application will be sent to you within 24 hours, and if successful you can select "Flexifi" as your payment option when purchasing on the store.

Gorey Credit Union also offer a competitive loan rate to parents of students in Creagh College for the purpose of purchasing the iPad and eBooks.

iPad Training will take place during the first weeks of school. Students will attend classes which will enable them to begin using their devices straight away for school-work and homework.

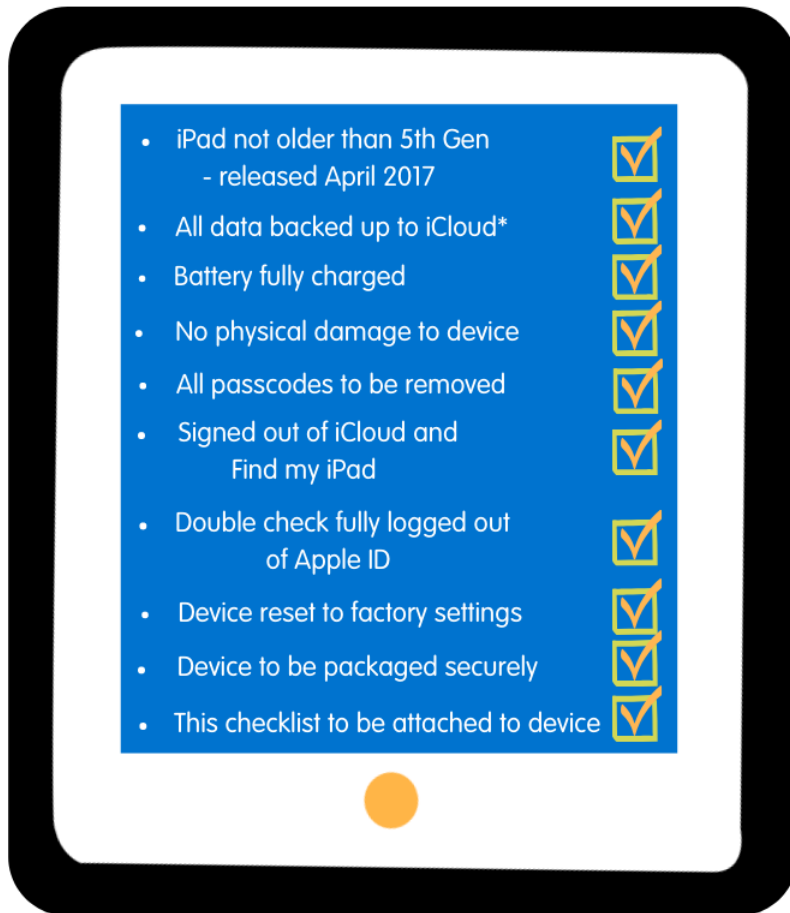
All devices purchased through our online store will be controlled using Apple Managed IDs. This means that students will not have the ability to download any apps either in or out of school time, delete the management profile, or misuse the iPad while in school. This will see greatly decreased distraction and allow parents easier access to applying restrictions to the device while outside of school.

If your son/daughter is using an iPad not purchased through our store (BYOD):

Though it is strongly discouraged, if you do decide to bring your own iPad (BYOD) and not purchase a new device through our store, the device will need to be sent to Wriggle with all of the steps in the image below followed.

Please note: All iPads will be reset before they are configured with the management system, eBooks and necessary apps, and any data left on them will not be recoverable afterwards. The College cannot be held responsible for any damage done to devices which are not properly packaged and protected by you for transport, or for the loss of any data left on the iPad before it is sent to Wriggle.

The iPad will then be returned to you set up and ready to be used under a new managed Apple ID, along with any physical text and workbooks purchased.



How can I get to school? - School Transport

We encourage as many students as possible to walk or cycle to school and there is a bicycle rack in front of the college. However, if you intend to drive your child to Creagh College please drive carefully in the vicinity of the college and do not obstruct the entrances, disabled parking spaces or the school bus set down area.

Please note that students are entitled to school transport to their closest 'Post Primary Centre' provided they live not less than 4.8km from that centre. Now that Gorey has two post primary schools, the town of Gorey is considered to be the 'Post Primary Centre' and the measuring point for determining eligibility for transport is Gorey Post Office.

Bus Eireann devises routes to serve the growing needs of Creagh College and their decisions are based on the applications they have received. If you wish to avail of School Transport and have not already done so please make an application online at www.buseireann.ie as soon as possible.

Will I get into trouble with teachers?

We certainly hope not! On the contrary, we are trying to do the opposite and reward you when you are doing your best to learn and behaving well.

Positive Affirmation Committee (PAC)... What does this mean?

The aim of this is to change the focus from discipline and to focus on positive targets. This might be academic or extracurricular achievements (getting a higher result than usual, playing on a county team, winning something with a local club) or random acts of kindness (such as helping another student or teacher).

This is to acknowledge the efforts of our students.

Sometimes, as teachers, we forget to recognise the efforts of those who are always good and this is an opportunity to reward these as well as those who are making an effort! Teachers have positively affirmed over 350 students since the scheme started and over 80 students have received three or more PACs. All students who received three or more got a pen and met with the committee to discuss their achievements. The Positive Affirmations Committee consists of Ms Spellman, Ms O'Brien and Mr Foley.

Under our Code of Positive Behaviour, from time-to-time we reward classes for good behaviour and academic performance. This may involve a treat like a trip to the cinema or something more significant: For example, in previous years we organised a day trip to the Outdoor Education Centre in Shielbaggan, a Skyline Tour in Croke Park and a trip to Funderland and the Wax Museum among others.

Unfortunately, we are not in a position to cover the costs of these trips so while students are allowed to participate as a reward for their positive contributions to college life, they are required to pay for the trips. We have found these trips to be of huge value in promoting high standards of behaviour and work within the college. We reserve the right not to allow students who have misbehaved (been suspended) during the year on these trips.

Mobile phones

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

- a) The college can accept no responsibility for mobile phones. Mobile phones are brought to college entirely at the owner's risk. The college accepts no responsibility for lost, stolen or damaged mobile phones.
- b) In order for students to be fully focussed on their school work their phone must be switched off and kept in their possession during the college day. Mobile phone use is

not permitted during or between classes. All contact between home and school (during the school day) must go through the main school office.

What extra-curricular activities do Creagh College offer to their students?

Creagh College recognises the importance of extra-curricular activities towards the well-being of our students. We offer a wide range of extra-curricular activities both during school and after school. These are just some of the activities that are on offer:

- Gaelic Football (Boys and Girls)
- Hurling/Camogie
- Athletics
- Basketball
- Rugby
- Equestrian
- Creative Writing
- Art Club
- Home Economics Club
- Science Club
- Film Studies Club

These activities normally commence in September. Keep an eye out on our Facebook page on our website and to announcements made on our PA system.

Additional Costs: Classroom Materials, Lockers, Insurance, Student Journals

The beginning of the school year brings with it a lot of expense for parents and we have tried to be as clear and transparent as possible in setting out the various costs that will arise during the course of the year. Rather than constantly sending home notes requesting small contributions towards various items that will be needed during the year we have decided to charge a flat fee of €60 per pupil. The items covered by this fee are set out below.

- Some subject teachers require students to have hardback notebooks for their subject. These will be supplied by the college and will cost approx. €15 in total.
- A4 Maths copies will be supplied by the college at a cost of €2.
- Every student is required to rent a locker in Creagh College. The rental fee is €10 per annum and includes a padlock. You will get your locker and a combination padlock in your induction week.
- All students will need a scientific calculator (approx. €12) for Maths classes and these will be supplied by the college during the first few weeks of term. Please do not purchase calculators yourselves: It will

assist greatly in the smooth-running of Maths classes if all students are using the same make and model of calculators and the college can get the best possible price by buying in bulk.

- Later in the year all students will require a standard geometry set for Maths (approx. €3) and again these will be supplied by the college.
- We operate a compulsory college personal accident insurance policy and further information will be provided in September. The policy covers your child 24 hours a day both within and outside college for accidental injury. In 2016/17 the premium was €8.
- Your school journal; This costs €10. This is a really important book. You need to bring it to school every day and record all homework in it. Important notes between your parents and your teachers will be recorded in the journal. If you lose it you will have to replace it at a further cost of €10. It is essential that students have their journals in class every day.
- SMS Text services: we re-introduced text-based communication mechanisms as of September 2016. Parents will be informed by text message of important college events, parents will receive a text message when their son or daughter is marked absent or late in the college. These services will cost approx. €10 per student.

Most incoming first year students have already paid this fee, for any students who have yet to pay it, this can be paid using our online payment system, Way2Pay, from September. We would appreciate it if this fee could be paid in full by the end of September.

While we have tried to be as comprehensive as possible in outlining these additional costs up front, it is possible that further items will be required during the college year.

Items that you should purchase before the school year begins

All students should purchase a supply of standard copybooks and bring these with them at the start of the school year. In addition, they will need a pencil case, a rubber, ruler, pencils, pencil sharpeners, pens and colouring pencils. We would also encourage you to consider buying zip folders whereby students can store all materials for one subject in a zip folder. Please also label everything with permanent ink. Lost and found is accessible at the end of break/lunch every day.

What will I study?

All students will study core subjects as follows:

- English
- Irish (unless an exemption has been granted)
- Maths
- Science
- Wellbeing - encompassing Physical Education, SPHE and CSPE
- History
- Geography (for 1st year: Geography becomes optional in 2nd year)

Modern European Language: In addition, all students will study either **French** or **Spanish**. At the end of first year you will have the opportunity to discontinue French/Spanish- although it is not widely advised to do so.

Optional Subjects: All students will do **three** additional optional subjects during first year. These have been given to you in the letter sent to you in June.

At the end of first year each student will choose **three** optional subjects to continue studying for 2nd and 3rd year i.e. at the end of first year, students will drop two of these five subjects (French/Spanish, Geography and the additional three they choose and are allocated to).

Short courses: You will do PE as a short course and one other short course from a list of: Artistic Performance, Civic Social Political Education, Coding, Digital Media Literacy, GAA: Going Well, Philosophy, Social Personal Health Education

Optional Subjects/Modern European Language

You will be sent a printout listing the optional subject classes to which your child has been assigned. All students will be offered the opportunity to study one of French or Spanish. Final decisions regarding which of these languages will be made based on your preferences and the availability of teachers in these subjects. Therefore, you should not purchase a language ebook until this is confirmed in August. We are hopeful that most students will get to study their preferred language but this cannot be guaranteed.

Please have the information regarding your child's optional subjects to hand when purchasing eBooks on the Wriggle store **before** 12th July.

When using the Wriggle store there will be a provision for parents to indicate that their child has an Irish Exemption. This will remove the Irish eBook from your order. Please note that Creagh College must comply with very strict Department of Education regulations regarding Irish exemptions. Should you choose this option and subsequently it is found that your child is not entitled to an Irish exemption you will be required to purchase the Irish eBook at a later stage.

There will be some additional costs associated with some of the optional subjects: Music students may be required to purchase a recorder (approx. €10) and a music manuscript copy, Technical Graphics students will need a set of good quality drawing instruments (approx. €11), Home Economics students will occasionally need to supply their own ingredients, Art students will need to purchase an 'Art Pack' (approx. €20), Woodwork, Technology and Metalwork students will be required to make a contribution towards their materials (approx. €25 for each subject). These costs will be notified to the classes by the teachers concerned early in the school year and payments should be made directly to the teacher involved.

What should I bring /wear for my first day at Creagh College

- Uniform
- School Bag
- Pencil Case (Pencils, Pens, Colouring pencils, Pencil Sharpener, Rubber)
- A supply of standard copies
- Packed lunch (for small break)
- PE gear (for Day 2 of Induction)
- iPad

Your first week - Induction Week

We are not in a position to give exact start dates for first year students. It is envisaged that first years will start on Monday 7th and Tuesday 8th September 2020. We will inform you by text message as soon as we can make that information available.