

## **Information for Parents & Guardians of incoming 1<sup>st</sup> Year Students**

### **Communication**

By spring time of the year your child is in 6th class, you should be receiving information from the school, mostly through SMS text messages. This is the most common form of communication where letters, google forms, presentations or payment requests will be sent via a link. If you do not seem to have received the same level of information as others, please contact the school at [info@confeycollege.org](mailto:info@confeycollege.org) to ensure your details are correct.

VShare is the school management information system in use. You can install it as an app on the main contact parent/guardian device. You can also check your contact details on this. At the start of school term, you will be able to view your child's timetable. You will need to submit any absences or early departures (sign out) through this app. You will also receive a link to the weekly newsletter, be able to view test results and behaviour notes. **Please do not give parental login to your child.**

You can also get info via the website [www.confeycollege.org](http://www.confeycollege.org) and follow the school on Facebook and Instagram, where you will see lots of updates and photos.

The best way to contact the school is via email to [info@confeycollege.org](mailto:info@confeycollege.org) with a message including the student's name and their teacher - eg parent of Joe Bloggs looking to speak to the teacher required.

A first year parents WhatsApp group will also be set up over the summer which can be useful for reminders and support in preparation for August/Sept. Usually the Scoil San Carlo parents (as the largest group) will set it up and then invite others to join. Keep an eye out and spread the word. If you are new to the school/area reach out to the Parents' and Guardians' Council (hereafter PGC) [confeyparents@gmail.com](mailto:confeyparents@gmail.com) with your number and one of our parents will add you to the group if you wish. We highly recommend this support as it can be overwhelming at first with all the information you will receive.

### **IPads**

#### **Buying your iPad**

If you purchase the iPad from Wriggle, you will get delivery of this to your house. If you are using your own iPad, you will need to send it to Wriggle so they can configure it and it should be back to you in a couple of weeks, delivered to your house. Information on how to order is in the presentation from the school. There is

usually an order deadline, and after the deadline the cost is higher. The deadline for the school year 2025/26 is June 25.

You can purchase a cover from Wriggle or purchase your own but it must be **black**. Please ensure it fits your child's version of iPad as each generation is a different size. If choosing your own cover, ensure it has a screen protector. Good brands are Otterbox, Griffin, Max Shield. A stand at the back is useful for students when following instruction from the iPad while writing or doing practical work. Some students may prefer a cover with a keyboard or an iPad pen but it is not expected and not usually the norm.

***Note: We have noted iPads have been delivered and left on doorsteps in the past. Ensure you put a note on delivery information to drop to a neighbour if not in or ensure you are home for delivery.***

#### iPad insurance

You can purchase iPad insurance through Wriggle (option to pay with iPad and will only commence when delivered), or you can organise your own insurance (house insurance or other gadget policy). Insurance through Wriggle is our recommendation, if your child's iPad stops working for some reason it will be fixed and returned to you shortly after. This is important as your child could be without an iPad.

#### **Books**

Incoming 1st year students in 2025/26 will receive eBooks only, pushed on to iPads by the publishers.

***NOTE: if for some reason your child changes option subjects after the start of term you will need to purchase the books yourself for this subject.***

#### **Other items on the Book List**

The booklist will be on the Confey College website under the Parents tab.

Under the School Book Scheme in 2024/25 all books, copies, journal, calculator and sketchpads were provided. We would advise that you do not buy anything until the start of term when you will see what is provided or further communication is sent by school. Additional stationery and pencil case should be bought for the start of term.

We would recommend having a zipped mesh folder for each subject, that is big enough to hold an A4 copy and loose sheets / test papers (make sure it fits in your child's bag). It is a really good way for your child to keep everything organised - you could have a coloured folder for each subject matching a coloured-in timetable and keep a pen, pencil or any items required for that subject such as a calculator, tables

copy, or colouring pencils in the folder. The subject written clearly on the top of the folder makes getting it out of their bag or locker much easier and can ensure a much smoother transition to secondary.

***Note: Students will need to use books and notes from 1<sup>st</sup> year onwards for state exams so keep everything safe and organised.***

### **Journal**

Your child will receive their school journal when they start school. Read the Journal front to back when your child brings it home, especially the School Rules. You will also both need to sign the agreement. The journal is an important document and must be brought in daily. If it gets lost, you can buy a new one at reception, otherwise sanctions may be received.

### **Schoolbag**

A good quality schoolbag is essential. The school are trying to keep the weight of schoolbags to a minimum but even without books, the student's bags can be very heavy with what's needed for the day, and copies add a lot of weight. Encourage your child to get used to using their locker from Day 1. The weight of the bag can be reduced if they can divide it into:

- Start of day to break time
- Breaktime to lunchtime
- Lunchtime to end of day

### **Uniform**

New items can be purchased from Bernard Owens, Leixlip, online or instore: tracksuit, jumper, skirt, boys trousers, tie and sports top. Girls have the option of plain navy trousers available from any department store.

The jumper and tracksuit top are crested so generics can't be bought. For incoming first years (2025/26) new crested polo shirts have been designed for PE and are only available from Bernard Owens. These are a light weight sports top in a dark colour, voted in by students for comfort and dignity. Older students can continue to wear a white polo shirt. The quality of uniforms is very good and they can last many years, so ensure there is some growing room where possible. Students often like the tracksuit baggy. The PGC will host a sale of second-hand uniforms over the summer - keep an eye out for messages alerting to this. We would highly recommend picking up a spare tie, jumper and tracksuit top. The school is very strict about students being dressed in the proper uniform otherwise they may receive a sanction. Random uniform checks are announced regularly.

***Note: Mark every piece of uniform with your child's name, even the tie! Their lockers are very small so cannot store a jumper or jacket in hot weather and we all know how hard it can be to find items in a teenager's bedroom!***

### **Footwear**

Footwear must be all black including sole - shoes or runners are ok, but no white stripes or colour logos allowed. For PE days, any colour runners are fine.

### **School Jacket**

The school jacket is compulsory and is the only jacket students are allowed to wear. The jacket is ordered directly from the manufacturer's website, and a fitting guide is available on the website. To help with sizing, the PGC will hold 2 fitting sessions over the summer combined with a second hand uniform sale.

We would encourage you to order as soon as possible on [soloform.ie](https://soloform.ie) so your child will have their jacket for the start of school in August/Sept. The jacket will be delivered to your home in 6-8 weeks.

### **Lockers**

Lockers are available to your child and provided by the school. They will receive a locker number and key - ensure it is on a marked keyring to avoid losing it. An extendable key chain can be good to keep it always secured to their bag.

Encourage locker use from the start, even in the first week or two if they are a bit nervous. Get them to use it for their lunch box and some folders. Ensure they get into the habit of getting what they need to bring home for homework before they leave the school. It really will help them in the long run.

### **Mobile Phones**

Mobile phones are not allowed at all during the school day. For any communication needed to a parent such as if they forgot their iPad or ingredients they can go directly to the office. If they are phoning home sick they should first see their year head.

### **School Charge**

There is an approximate €150 administration cost for First Year students and then for each subsequent year thereafter. This includes 24-hour insurance cover, photocopying, stationery for school exams, use of school equipment, locker, transport to sports, extra co and cross curricular events, text messaging service, VSware App, school documentation and postage. This is usually payable in July. You can pay this online on the Way2Pay website with the link provided in the text msg.

### **Getting to School**

The majority of students living in Confey/Leixlip are within walking distance of the school. Students walking can enter the school by the rear steps. Cyclists should not park their bike at the top of the steps; this is not part of the school grounds and there are no cameras there. There are bike racks located outside the A building.

### **Bus Services**

Students coming from Lucan/ Celbridge/greater Leixlip can use one of the Private School Bus Operators. James Mullally +35316290290 operates the Lucan route. Private buses drop students outside the A-building and collection is the same place. All buses will be clearly marked in the afternoons, and the drivers will get to know the students after the first week or two. The school will inform them of days when the school closes early.

Dublin Bus [www.dublinbus.ie](http://www.dublinbus.ie) bus stop for routes L54, L58, L59, and X31 are in Riverforest less than a 5min walk from the steps.

If you are using the private bus, make sure your child is at the designated pick up stop at least 5 mins early especially for the few 2 weeks until the traffic settles down in August/Sept. If you are using the public bus get your child a Leap card, it works out cheaper for you and quicker for your child for boarding. **Please ensure that your child's name is on their leap card.**

### **By Car**

As there is only one route to Confey College and the school is located at the back of a very large housing estate, you will need to allow for heavy traffic to/from the school in the mornings and afternoons.

We would encourage you to drop your child to the car park at Supervalu and get them to walk from there, likewise, you can pick them up at the same spot.

Please respect local residents, and do not park on the double yellow lines or otherwise block someone's driveway when dropping off or collecting your child. Do not park or stop your car at the top of the steps, it is dangerous for the students crossing and it also holds up the traffic in the estate. If you absolutely must drive in to the school yard please take extra care - students can be excited and unpredictable leaving school.

### **Students with Additional Education Needs**

When your child is in 6th class, their primary school should seek your permission to share any reports with Confey College, you may also decide to share copies of reports you may have at home with the school directly. These can be sent into the office and they will be sent on to the relevant staff member. Children with additional education needs may be allowed to have a locker in the Resource Room A04 in the A Building. This room is a quiet space and the lockers are bigger than usual, and

help can be given with timetable, and general organisation. Colour coding your child's timetable, copies, folders can be very helpful for organisation.

**Medication:**

If your child requires medication, either regular or emergency, during school time, please contact the school before the summer break to discuss options and how to bring medication to the school at the start of term.

**The First Day**

The first day is usually a short day to allow for your child to learn their assigned base class, meet their classmates and Class Tutor. Your child should arrive in full uniform and just needs to bring their iPad, a copy and a pen. The First Years usually are in school on their own for the first day to get their bearings, and to learn their way around. Other students may attend briefly to collect timetables. On the first day they will meet with their Prefects who will look after them for their first year. Prefects are like older brothers and sisters, and they can go to them with any queries or problems – they have all been there themselves!

Don't worry if your child is not in the same class as some of their friends, they will get to see them at break times, and sometimes during optional subjects. Making new friends is part of the changing school experience and as time goes on, they will get to know their classmates.

The first week or so will be a big focus on getting orientated and getting to know classmates. The school are very supportive and encourage your child, and yourself, to not put too much pressure on figuring it all out straight away. Be prepared for your child to be exhausted in the first few weeks of school – it's longer days for them and so many new things to get used to and stuff to remember!

**During the School Year****School Canteen**

Menu and prices available on the website (<https://tinyurl.com/Canteenprices> ) The canteen operators have introduced a Key Fob which parents can top up with credit to spend in the canteen. They also take card or cash. Information will be sent home at the start of the school year. Base classes will have an assigned area to have their lunch or can eat outside in nice weather.

**Bathrooms**

First years have their own dedicated bathrooms for use before school, after school and at break times. During class times there will be an allocated bathroom available to all students. No other years are allowed to use the first year bathrooms. If girls need sanitary products during the school day, they can be got from the reception,

and this will be handled very discreetly. There should also be some available in bathrooms. There are strict rules about bathroom use which will be discussed with students on their first day.

### Lost Property

Property can become mislaid in schools. We advise your child to check their bag, locker and previous location for the item. There is also a lost and found area in the main office or students can check with a member of the caretaking/cleaning staff to see if their missing item was located. Remember to label everything that your child brings to school.

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### **About the Parents' and Guardians' Council**

The Council are very active in the school. We meet once a month and organise fundraising events where all funds raised go back into the school to help our children.

"As a new parent to the school and my child not coming from Leixlip, I found joining the PGC invaluable to find out information and get help from other parents. Sometimes advice from parents in older years is a great help."

*Quote from a parent*

If you want to find out more about the Parents' and Guardians' Council contact us at [confeyparents@gmail.com](mailto:confeyparents@gmail.com). You will have the opportunity to join up at the First Year Welcome Night in the first term or the AGM.

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