



Open Night 2017

Information Leaflet ^{Page}

Academic Results:

In June 2016 a total of 36 students sat the Leaving Certificate or Leaving Certificate Applied Exams in St. Ailbe's. Our highest scoring Leaving Cert student achieved 550 points and a number of students were awarded a Distinction in Leaving Cert Applied. Recent changes in curriculum choice, timetabling, afterschool study, in-house exams and others are helping to enable our students perform better in state exams. This year 45 students will sit the Leaving Certificate exam and I have no doubt that their results will be excellent given the work ethic of the group.

Our Junior Certificate results are always very good. A's and B's in honours papers are regularly achieved by our students. Again changes to our curriculum choice and timetabling at Junior Cycle are having a significant impact on student attainment.

It is very important to recognise that students capable of achieving top academic results will do so in St. Ailbe's.

The school has a long and proud academic tradition with past pupils of St. Ailbe's working across the globe in Medicine, Engineering, Technology, Entrepreneurs, Teachers, Nurses, Plumbers etc.

As a school we take pride in the results achieved by all our students. As a school we aim to support all students to achieve their own academic potential.

Rising Enrolments:

As shown below, numbers in St. Ailbe's School have grown in the last number of Years.

2013/14	243 pupils
2014/15	258 pupils
2015/16	267 pupils
2016/17	290 pupils

While this growth in numbers is welcome we do not want to expand and grow too quickly. Thus there will be a limit on enrolments this year and not all applicants may be accepted.

Curriculum:

1st Year students are divided into 2 or 3 (depending on enrolments) mixed ability groupings for the year. Our core subjects are Irish, English, Maths, Science, Geography and French. A taster programme is run up to Christmas where students must then select 1 subject from each of the following groupings:

Option 1.

Art, Music, Technical Graphics

Option 2.

Woodwork, Home Economics, History

Option 3.

Business, Metalwork, Woodwork.

Please note that the subjects offered as core and the subjects offered within each option band may vary from year to year.

Along with the above we promote student well-being through PE, CSPE, Religion and SPHE. Our teachers run programmes such as "Friends for Life" that promote a culture of respect, build resilience and strengthen students' abilities to deal with issues that arise.

After Christmas in 1st year, honours and ordinary level classes may be established in Maths.

In 2nd year, honours and ordinary level classes are usually established in Irish, English, and French.

This is a very broad curriculum giving a great choice of subjects to both boys and girls.

The 'New' Junior Certificate.

Parents and students will have heard a lot about this in recent years. St. Ailbe's is implementing this new programme and teachers, the Principal and Deputy Principal have taken part in all necessary training sessions. Our current 2nd & 3rd years are following the new English course. Students coming into 1st year in September 2017 will follow the new Junior Certificate programmes for English, Irish, Science, Business (optional), Art (optional) and French as

well as other subjects from the old Junior certificate. Further information regarding the 'New' Junior Certificate will be provided to parents and students after the enrolment process is complete.

Assessment:

Our Christmas and summer exams take place in our sports hall for 1st years. Our 1st years are seated with 2nd and 5th year students in a very formal exam setting. Upwards of 170 students complete their exams together. This is very good practice in preparation for state exams. It is good training for our students as it highlights the importance of preparing properly for exams. Three reports are issued to 1st year parents/guardians. There are 2 parent/teacher meetings for 1st year parents each year. As part of the 'New' Junior Certificate programme, our subject teachers will carry out classroom-based assessments on every student.

Homework Clubs and Evening Study:

Our SCP team run homework clubs 4 evenings a week at no cost to parents/guardians. This takes place from 4pm to 5pm each evening. Teachers are available to assist 1st and 2nd year students with their homework each day. Before this begins students always get a drink and sandwich to keep the nutrition levels going. Sports activities for the group take place on Monday for boys and Thursday for girls. **The number of homework club places is restricted but other 1st & 2nd year students are offered 1 hour of evening study Monday to Thursday (4pm to 5pm).** There is no charge for this for 1st & 2nd year students.

For junior cert classes and senior cycle classes, evening study runs 4 days a week from 4pm to 5.50pm in our study hall. The cost this year is €7 per week.

Learning Support:

St. Ailbe's school now has 2 qualified learning support teachers employed with a 3rd teacher currently undergoing the qualifying process. Based on our internal assessments, a small number of students will be offered a place in the Learning Support class which is

All the school news can be found on our St Ailbe's Facebook pages. The main page is "St Ailbes School", our sports page is "St Ailbe's Sports" and we also have a page dedicated to the school musical which is called "St Ailbe's School Musical". The school Twitter handle is @StAilbesSchool.

timetabled opposite French. During this time extra support in English and Maths is provided. This is nearly 3 hours of extra tuition per week in this area. Where necessary the LS teacher links in with other subject teachers to do catch up programmes etc.

Our LS team will also run other support programs for students where resources allow and time has been allocated by the NCSE. (National Council for Special Education)

ASD Classes:

St. Ailbe's School is the only school in Tipperary Town with two dedicated classes for students on the Autistic spectrum. The school is very proud of this development. In the next 12 months the school will begin a large building project in order to further improve our facilities to support students on the ASD spectrum. The maximum number of students who can have access to each of these classes is 6. Further information regarding the specific requirements associated with enrolment into the ASD classes can be obtained from the Principal.

CAT 4 Testing:

This stands for Cognitive Ability Testing. It is a suite of tests that assesses a student's (thinking) abilities in key areas that support educational development and academic attainment. CAT 4 is the fourth edition of the test and comprises of the following sections or batteries which assess different aspects of ability. The 4 categories are:

- Verbal reasoning
- Quantitative Reasoning
- Non-verbal reasoning
- Spatial ability

Copies of these results are available for parents/guardians. As a school

we are developing our own system where we use these results as one measure of setting standards for our students in terms of exam results. They are also very useful in identifying students who may require learning support. Another benefit is that they highlight a student's particular learning style and subjects that may best suit this learning style.

This computer based test is a very useful tool for us as educators but it must be stressed that it is not a test or exam in the normal meaning of the word.

Guidance and Counselling:

Our guidance counsellor is available to all our students to assist with subject choices, CAO applications, HEAR and DARE applications and other issues that may arise.

Culture of Respect:

St. Ailbe's School has over the last number of years developed a code of behaviour built around respect. Students are encouraged to do the simple things well such as:

- Saying 'please' and 'thank you'.
- Holding doors for others.
- Respecting the fact that we all have individual and different personalities.
- Being very aware of what you say and write and the impact it may have.
- Having respect for our school uniform and school materials.

This culture is very much central to St.Ailbe's being a very warm and supportive learning environment for our students. All recent school inspections including a Whole School Evaluation (which can be accessed online) will confirm this fact.

School assemblies are held on a very regular bases where students receive recognition for their achievements and the school Principal constantly reminds students of the expectations we have in our school.

Discipline:

School discipline is strict but fair and disruption to teaching and learning by any student is dealt with as per school code of behaviour. If any parent/guardian wishes to tour the school during our school day I as Principal would be more than proud to walk you around the school.

Important rules:

- Junior Cycle students cannot leave the school campus during the school day. They must stay on site for lunch time.
- Students can only leave the school grounds if signed out by Principal, Deputy Principal or Year Head.
- Text are issued daily if a students is absent from school.
- School Uniform and School Journal must be respected.

It is important to note here that all students will see the Principal and Deputy Principal on the school corridors and grounds on a very regular basis. I am sure that all students will state that we are both very approachable. Our students like this fact and it is one that we as the senior management team in the school enjoy.

HSCL:

St. Ailbe's School has a full time Home School Community Liaison Teacher who is available to support students and parents/guardians with any issues relating to school.

SCP:

St. Ailbe's School has 3 staff at present working with us and 4 local primary schools.

Sports in St. Ailbe's School:

All students are encouraged to participate in sport in St. Ailbe's and as a school we compete in competitions against schools of a similar size to ourselves. Last year our Junior Girls football team won the Munster Final and our Junior boys football team won 4 games in their Munster championship. As a school we compete in rugby,

camogie, football, hurling, soccer, athletics and basketball competitions. In-school competitions are also very popular. Our 1st years have this year taken part in basketball, soccer, hurling and football competitions. Our rugby team won the Kilfeakle blitz in October. Camogie training started in early October.

As a school we would always be conscious of the fact that participation in sport is to be encouraged but should not be to the detriment of exam results.

Other Activities:

Our school Library is open 4 days a week for students to drop in and read. The library team also run board games and table tennis competitions. Our SCP team run weekly brain teaser competitions and quizzes.

Music and the Arts:

This is obviously a very important part of school life in St. Ailbe's. Our annual school musical is now regarded as one of the highlights of the year in terms of stage productions in Tipperary Town. All students are encouraged to take to the stage and perform.

As a school the success of these musicals has been founded on 2 key principles:

- Talented and motivated students, willing to work as a team.
- Fantastic team of teachers and support staff working with our students.

In the next few years it is planned to grow the culture of music and the arts in the school even further. Traditional music sessions take place every Thursday and students can perform on the 'Gig Rig' at lunchtime on Fridays. Music and the arts bring a smile to our faces in St. Ailbe's and long may the tradition grow and flourish.

School Facilities:

Our facilities are amongst the best in the country. Over €1 million has been spent recently to ensure that our students are provided with excellent infrastructures to support learning. The school building is always warm clean and comfortable. The school possesses the following:

- Canteen
- Huge sports complex
- Specialist rooms (metalwork, woodwork, home economics science labs, TG,)
- Astro turf pitches, GAA pitch, Soccer pitch and access to running track
- Full equipped Computer lab
- Large study hall
- Spacious corridors
- Locker areas
- Well maintained subject classrooms

Canteen:

Our canteen is open every morning at 8.30am for students to get a free breakfast of cereal, tea coffee, fruit and toast if so desired. The canteen is open every break and lunchtime and before homework club and study. Students can of course bring their own lunches to school. Our canteen staff are very friendly and very experienced and really do look out for all our students.

Caretaking Staff:

St. Ailbe's has one full time caretaker and two part time cleaning staff. Our caretaker is very good at assisting 1st years in settling in to school life. Our caretaker opens our school every morning at 8am - an option not available in every school.

Parents Council:

The following are the officers of our new council.

- Chairperson Jane Ryan
- Vice-Chair Mary Cummins
- Treasurer Anne Nash
- Secretary Melanie O'Grady

The Parents Council will be available to speak with parents/guardians of prospective 1st on our open night.

Other important pieces of information:

- St. Ailbe's runs Transition Year every year.
- students who avail of Transition Year get a 3 day subsidised trip to an outdoor pursuit centre each year on the

day they receive their junior certificate results.

- Yearly trips to international rugby games, musicals and other events are organised.
- Principal and Deputy Principal are always available to speak with.
- St. Ailbe's runs a school book rental scheme.
- St. Ailbe's keeps costs associated with education to a minimum for parents/guardians.
- St. Ailbe's School is one of 12 Tipperary ETB schools.
- Tipperary ETB offers Irish/French grants to students who attend summer college courses.
- Each year group has a Year Head and each class group has a class tutor.
- School offers the John Ryan Scholarship to 6th years who qualify each year.
- St. Ailbe's School has recently received excellent feedback on teaching and learning inspections.

St. Ailbe's Way:

Any person be it teacher, parent, invited guest, inspector who visits our school always makes a reference to the atmosphere in the school. This we refer to as the 'St. Ailbe's Way'. It is where we at all times strive to ensure that high expectations are set in an atmosphere of trust, respect and confidence between students, parents, community and staff.

**Open Night:
Wednesday 30th November at 7.00 p.m.**







