



LCA Newsletter

As we prepare for the upcoming year, we are delighted to welcome students and families to our Leaving Certificate Applied programme. This is an exciting new programme in our school and we are eager to hit the ground running in August. The LCA is a practical, student-focused programme that recognises a wide range of talents and strengths while preparing students for adult and working life, further education, apprenticeships and employment opportunities.

A key part of the LCA programme is Work Experience. Students are strongly encouraged to begin sourcing their own work experience placements over the summer months. This gives students the best opportunity to secure placements in areas that interest them and helps build confidence and independence from the outset. To support this process, students have already been provided with guidance documents and templates. These documents are also available on the school website for easy access throughout the summer.

The LCA programme is most successful when there is strong communication and support between school, students and families. Attendance, punctuality, organisation and a positive attitude are hugely important and help students gain the maximum benefit from all aspects of the programme.

Students can assist their start to LCA by:

- Organising a suitable work experience placement early
- Looking up the subjects they will be taking at Curriculum Online including our two Vocational Specialisms- Hotel Catering and Tourism & Graphics and Construction
- Maintaining good attendance and punctuality from day one
- Approaching the programme with positivity and enthusiasm
- Asking questions and seeking support when needed!

We are looking forward to building a positive and rewarding two years together and helping students achieve success in many different ways.

We wish all students and families a very happy and restful summer and we look forward to welcoming everyone on Thursday 27th August at Ilam for LCA induction day.



Ballymakenny College Summer Bulletin 2026 LCA



1. Back to School Details

Start-Up Dates 2026/2027



Thursday 27th of August	11am-1pm (LCA Class)	LCA Class- Students to meet Phil and Caroline at 11am in the HUB.
Friday 28th of August	8:30am- 10:45am (4 th & 6 th Year) 8:30am-12 noon (5 th Year)	4 th Year- Students to meet tutors and House Leader in Sports Hall 5 th Year- Students remain in the yard at 8:30am to meet tutors and House Leader 6 th Year- Students to go to base rooms at 8:30am to meet tutors
Monday 31st of August	8:30am- 10:45am (2 nd & 3 rd Years) 8:30am-3:30pm (1st Years) 8:30am-1pm (Cú Chulainn)	1 st Year- Students to meet tutors and House Leader in the yard at 8:30am(1 st Year induction day). Cú Chulainn- Students to meet tutors at 8:30am in Cú Chulainn 2 nd & 3 rd Year- Students go to base rooms at 8:30 am to meet tutors
Tuesday 1st of September	Full classes commence	Normal classes commence for ALL years. Proceed to base rooms for Treoir at 8:30am when bell signals.

Students should bring a snack for their start-up mornings as the school canteen will not reopen until Tuesday 1st of September.

Our Academic Calendar, which is included with this bulletin is also available on our school website. Please review regularly as this can be subject to change.

2. Ballymakenny College News

We hope this summer bulletin finds you all well. We look forward to welcoming our entire school community back in August and a special welcome also to our 180 new first year students.

For recent Ballymakenny College news and regular school updates, please visit our school website at www.ballymakennycollege.ie or keep up to date with all Ballymakenny news on our social media platforms – Instagram and Facebook.

3. Download the VSware App

As you know, we moved our communications away from the traditional model of writing absence notes in the school journal to now, logging absences on the VS App. This year and going forward, we will continue to operate as such. See guidelines below on reporting absence notes.

A reminder to all parents/guardians to please download the VSware app from the App Store or Google Play store if you have not done so already. Prompts on the app will guide you through the setup process. All communications from the school, including notifications about term reports will be through the VS App. Follow this link for more information on the VSware app – <https://support.vsware.ie/en/guides-for-parents>.





Ballymakenny College Summer Bulletin 2026 LCA

3.1 Guidelines on Reporting Absences

The following codes are available to parents through the VS app when recording student absences.

ILL – Unfit to be in school due to illness.

MEDAPP– Attending a medical appointment throughout the school day.

UFR– Urgent Family Reason

HOLS – Holidays



If also using the free text option, please limit your response to providing further explanation for the stated absence only. For all other matters, such as arranging a meeting or requesting a phone call home, please contact the school office directly.

A submitted absence note is strictly a record of explanation and does not constitute formal approval or permission. Due to the fixed options built into our school administration software, staff may be required to click a button labeled 'Approve' to process and log receipt of an absence notification. It does not mean the school accepts, supports, or grants permission for the student's reason to miss school time. Leaving the premises without separate formal permission remains an unauthorised departure under our school's Code of Behaviour.



4. Summer Reports

The Summer reports for current TY and 5th year classes will be available for viewing online mid-late June. We will send an alert through the VS App to all parents when they are available for viewing.

5. LCA Subject List

Visit the Curriculum Online website and select the Leaving Certificate Applied (LCA) tab to explore the subjects available, including Graphics and Construction Studies and Hotel, Catering and Tourism. Along with the compulsory subjects and Vocational Specialisms students will also partake in Ethics.

This is an excellent resource for understanding what is involved in each subject and how the LCA programme supports students in preparing for further education, training, and employment.

6. School Book Scheme



For the 2026/27 school year, all students in post-primary schools in the Free Education Scheme will receive free schoolbooks and core classroom resources.

Textbooks and stationery will be available to all LCA students in August when they return to school.

Note: Pencil cases and pens, pencils, markers etc are not included under this scheme.

Specialist materials for certain subjects will come under this scheme. Your teachers will inform you of this in the new academic year.



Ballymakenny College Summer Bulletin 2026 LCA

7. Student Support Service 2026-2028 for incoming LCA

Ballymakenny College offers a Student Support Service for LCA students at a fee of €125. (This covers both 5th and 6th year).

Please make payments online through VSware. The convenience of the online facility is that you have the option to make payments in instalments.

If parent(s)/guardian(s) have issues concerning these costs, please contact the Principal before your child returns to school in August. We feel this scheme represents very good value money and we have made every effort to keep the costs down for parent(s)/guardian(s).

The Student Support Services fee covers the following items:

- Locker
- VS App
- Pupil Insurance for 2 years
- Mock Examinations in 6th year
- Career Guidance Trips
- Curricular Trips arranged to support Classroom Learning.
- Buses for school games and matches (excluding supporter buses).



8. Ipad Devices in Senior Cycle

Due to the hybrid nature of educational provision at Ballymakenny College, students are required to continue using their iPads in Senior Cycle. It is important to note that students are not expected to buy new iPads for senior cycle. If you are keeping the device you bought in 1st year, you do not need to do anything as the school will organise that your MDM license is extended.

If you are intending to replace your child's device, parents can purchase managed devices through our iPad provider SELECT on the following number 01-5079100 or email at education@selectonline.com.

9. LCA Work Experience

Work Experience forms a central part of the Leaving Certificate Applied programme and provides students with valuable opportunities to develop practical skills, confidence and independence in real workplace settings.

Students will attend Work Experience **every Friday throughout the academic year**, allowing them to gain insight into the world of work while building communication, teamwork and time-management skills. It is very important that students organise and **secure their placement before returning to school in August** so that they are fully prepared for the beginning of the programme. Students are encouraged to choose placements that reflect their interests and future career goals where possible.

If any student experiences difficulties in finding a placement or has any questions regarding Work Experience, they should contact the LCA Coordinator as soon as possible so support and guidance can be provided.



Ballymakenny College Summer Bulletin 2026 Junior Classes

10. School Uniform

The senior school uniform will consist of the following:

- School jumper with blue strips
- Pack of crested t-shirts (red or blue)
- School Coat (navy or red)
- Trousers: students are permitted to wear skinny jeans, jeans, chinos, etc. – students are not permitted to wear tracksuit pants, shorts, leggings and any type of trousers with rips or a ripped effect.
- Footwear– runners and shoes with a good grip etc. Toeless shoes and Ugg style boots are prohibited.

Note in relation to PE: Students must bring a change of clothes for PE and are only permitted to wear their PE clothes into school, if their **PE class is the first class of the day.**

The uniform can be purchased from 2 suppliers in Drogheda.

–The School Uniform Shop (beside Mattress Mick's), Mell, Drogheda – (041) 9838825

Website: www.schooluniformshop.ie

–Bestwear, 4 Shop Street, Drogheda – (041) 983 6036

To avoid disappointment, it would be in your child's best interest to schedule a fitting as soon as possible and order their uniform. It is compulsory to wear the entire school uniform.

Our Parents Association are running a School Uniform Swap initiative on Saturday 13th of June and Monday 15th of June, 2026 from 10am –2pm. Free pre- loved BKC jackets and jumpers available to ALL students.

11. Office Opening Hours



The School Office is open daily (Monday – Friday) from 9am – 3.30pm.

Note: The School Office will be closed Monday 20th of July, reopening on the 27th of July 2026.

Important: If you have changed address or contact details can you please let the office know by email to info@ballymakennycollege.ie or reception@ballymakennycollege.ie

If possible, could parents please activate their mobile phone voicemail facility. Parents often receive missed calls from teachers throughout the day and subsequently ring the office unsure as to who was looking for them. If voice messages can be left, contact between the teacher and parent will be made more efficiently.



***The Staff & Management of
Ballymakenny College
want to wish you all an
enjoyable summer and
we look forward to seeing you all
back in August.***