



Ballymakenny College Summer Bulletin 2026 Junior Classes



1. Back to School Details

Start-Up Dates 2026/2027

Thursday 27 th of August	11am-1pm (LCA Class)	LCA Class- Students to meet Phil and Caroline at 11am in the HUB.
Friday 28 th 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 31 st of August	8:30am- 10:45am (2 nd & 3 rd Years) 8:30am-3:30pm (1 st 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 1 st of September	Full classes commence	Normal classes commence for ALL years. Proceed to base rooms for Treoir at 8:30am when bell signals

Tuesday 1st of September.

*1st years: We will be in contact with you in August with a checklist of what is needed for your Induction Day. Keep an eye out for our Ballymakenny College postcard in the post with all relevant details.

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. For incoming first years, you should have received a text message with your username. If you have not, please contact the school office.

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>.



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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 1st and 2nd year classes will be available for viewing online mid to late June. We will send an alert through the VS App to all parents when they are available for viewing.

5. Student Support Services for 2026-2027 for incoming 2nd and 3rd Year Students

Ballymakenny College offers Student Support Services for all students at a fee of €50 (this fee does not apply to incoming 1st years). Our school would not be able to provide our students with high quality resources without this fee. This fee covers a range of costs which have been listed below and we believe it represents incredibly good value for money.

The Student Support Services fee covers the following items:

- Locker
- VS App
- Pupil Insurance
- Mock Examinations in 3rd year
- Athena Academic Tracker
- Curricular Trips arranged to support Classroom Learning.
- Buses for school games and matches (excluding supporter buses).

All stationery and books will be covered by the Junior Cycle Book grant.

The closing date for the fee of €50 is Thursday 3rd of September, 2026. Payments can be made now on 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 the Student Support Services fee they can contact the Principal directly before your child returns to school in August.



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6. School Uniform Update

The junior school uniform will consist of the following:

- School jumper with red strips
- Pack of t-shirts (red, blue or white)
- *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.



*We have introduced a heavier, warmer crested school coat which is available to purchase this summer from our uniform suppliers. These coats are available in red and navy.

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.



7. 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.

Summary of the main points:

- School stationery and a student journal will be provided to all junior students. Note: Pencil cases and pens, pencils, markers etc are not included under this scheme.
- All schoolbooks required for 1st years will be provided under the new junior cycle free schoolbooks scheme.
- Any additional schoolbooks required for 2nd and 3rd years will be provided under the new junior cycle free schoolbooks scheme.



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- Novels/plays will be provided to students as required, to be returned to the school office at the end of 3rd year. They will be scanned out to individual students based on curricular requirements.
- Books of past examination papers as required for all subjects will be provided to 3rd year students during term one of the 2026/27 school year.
- Specialist materials for certain subjects will come under this scheme. Your teachers will inform you of this in the new academic year.

8. Athena Tracking



Next year, all students will have access to Athena Tracker. Parents/guardians, please take a look at this portal with your child. It gives an insight into how they are progressing academically and if they are reaching their potential. All term exam results will be uploaded; you can set targets for each of your subjects and monitor your own progress. More details on the website.

There will be a Parents/Guardians/Student information session next year, giving an overview of how to use Athena Tracker, and how these resources can be used to support your child's learning. More information will be available on our return to school.



9. Exam Revision.ie

Great news for all our 3rd year students !!! You will all have unlimited access to Exam Revision to aid you in your study. This includes distinction graded notes for subjects, quizzes on topics, presentations, and video tutorials. This is an invaluable tool to help you reach your academic potential. All students will be provided with a login when school returns in August.

10. 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.***