

# BANAGHER COLLEGE



Banagher College  
Coláiste na Sionna  
Banagher, Co. Offaly.



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Prospectus  
2024 - 2025

# COLÁISTE NA SIONNA

# INTRODUCTION

In September 2010 we moved into our new, purpose built, Public Private Partnership, state of the art school. It is a designated Community College.

Incorporating the long traditions of St. Rynagh's Community College and La Sainte Union Secondary School, it is in the Trusteeship of Laois and Offaly ETB. The dedicated staff team is led by Ms. Lily Kinahan (Principal) and Mr. Damian Shanahan (Deputy Principal).

Since then there have been countless exceptional and commendable achievements, excellent examination results, school drama productions, speech and drama awards, public speaking, sporting victories, winning enterprise and art projects, music students' fundraisers, graduation ceremonies, guest speakers, open day visits and much more. These activities coupled with the highest academic and teaching standards in class provide a recipe for success.

The vast range of subjects and the facilities now available to students is second to none. Every student who attends Banagher College Coláiste na Sionna will be assured of being offered all the necessary ingredients to happily develop every step of the way towards achieving his/her full potential, blossoming into a fully functional, Christian, mature member of society.

We all look forward with great optimism to your time in Banagher College Coláiste na Sionna, and will be delighted to welcome you as a new First Year to share in this exciting and fulfilling time of educational studies in Banagher College.

## MISSION STATEMENT

**Banagher College Coláiste na Sionna is a multi-denominational school which aims to provide an education which is truly Christian.**

We aspire to

- Provide a just and caring environment where each student is impressed with awareness of human dignity and to develop a sense of responsibility in each individual.
- Develop the talents of each individual and instil the desire to achieve one's full potential through a spirit of intellectual enquiry and academic endeavour.
- Foster in a caring community the desire for participation and challenge; to build individual and compassionate men/women of character.
- Our holistic educational aspirations encompass the intellectual, moral, religious, personal, physical and social dimensions of our being. Mutual respect for one another is encouraged and the joy of learning becomes a reciprocal experience.



Mr. Damian Shanahan  
Deputy Principal

# Banagher College Coláiste na Sionna

## Message from the School Principal

Dear 6th class Students and Parents/Guardians

It is with great pleasure that I extend a warm welcome to our 6th class students and parents/guardians. As you embark on a new chapter in your education I want to highlight our commitment to our core ethos values that guide our school: *Excellence in education, Care, Equality, Community, and Respect*. As your school principal, I am excited to embark on this educational journey with you, and I believe that together, we can achieve remarkable success.

**Excellence in Education:** Our primary goal is to provide you with an outstanding education that will equip you with the skills, knowledge, and values necessary to thrive in today's ever-evolving world. We are dedicated to fostering a learning environment that challenges you to reach your full potential and encourages you to explore, innovate, and grow.

**Care:** Your well-being is of paramount importance to us. We are committed to creating a nurturing and supportive environment where you can flourish not only academically but also emotionally and socially. Our teachers and staff are here to listen, guide, and support you on your educational journey.

**Equality:** At our school, we believe that every student deserves equal opportunities and respect, regardless of their background, abilities, or differences. We are committed to fostering an inclusive environment where diversity is celebrated and everyone has a voice.

**Community:** Our school is not just a building; it is a thriving community of learners, educators, and families. We understand the importance of working together to achieve common goals. We encourage active involvement from parents and community members because we believe that a strong community strengthens our school.

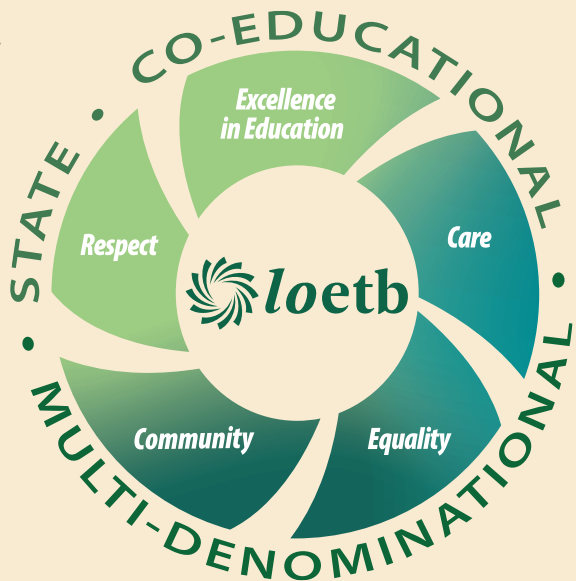
**Respect:** Respect is at the core of our interactions and relationships within our school. We expect all members of our school community to treat one another with kindness, empathy, and respect. Through respect, we build a positive and supportive learning environment.

**To our new students,** we are excited to have you join our school, and we believe that you bring unique talents and perspectives that will enrich our school community. I look forward to getting to know each of you and witnessing your growth and achievements during your time here.

**To Parents/Guardians:** Thank you for entrusting us with the education and well-being of your son/daughter. Together, we will make this educational journey one filled with exciting discoveries, meaningful connections, and educational excellence.

Tá súil agam go mbainfidh sibh taitneamh as an foilseachán seo.  
Le gach dea ghuí

L. Kinahan  
Principal





## BULLYING/CYBER BULLYING

Banagher College Coláiste na Sionna does not tolerate bullying. The role of the school is to provide the highest possible standard of education for all its pupils. A stable secure learning environment is an essential requirement to achieve this goal. Bullying behaviour, by its very nature, undermines and dilutes the quality of education, and imposes psychological damage.

As such, it is an issue, which is positively and firmly addressed through a range of school based measures and strategies by which all members of the school community are enabled to act effectively in dealing with this behaviour.

## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

School Masses, Prayer Services, Retreats, JP2 Awards, Seminars and talks are an integral part of school life. Students are also encouraged to put their faith into practice by working for justice and peace.

## DESIGNATED MGLD CLASS

In addition to the learning support provision in Banagher College Coláiste na Sionna, the school provides a designated class for students with mild general learning difficulties. Students who have a recommendation on their report, that this unit would best suit their needs, abilities and aptitudes, may apply for admission to the class.

## HOME-SCHOOL LINKS

Education in Banagher College Coláiste na Sionna is seen as a three way process between parents, students and teachers. Therefore, good communication between school and home is an essential part of our school policy.

## SCHOOL UNIFORMS

### GIRLS' UNIFORM

- Specified blue round neck jumper with grey stripe in the collar.
- Royal blue/navy/grey pleated skirt (Style no. 14774).
- White shirt or polo shirt with crest.
- Navy knee length socks or navy tights.
- A tailored navy trousers.

### BOYS' UNIFORM

- Specified blue round neck jumper with grey stripe in the collar.
- Slate grey (Orries) trousers.  
(Denim, Cord or Casual trousers are not allowed)
- White shirt or polo shirt with school crest.

### FOOTWEAR

- Sensible black, navy or brown shoes allowed.
- Deck Shoes allowed (white soles permitted on Deck Shoes).
- Runners style shoes MUST BE ALL BLACK – NO COLOURED SOLES, MARKINGS, STRIPES OR LOGOS ALLOWED. Black or white laces only. Canvas shoes not allowed.

**School Uniform is available from Home Needs, Main Street, Banagher.**



JCSP Teachers Meeting  
Mr. S. Duggan, Ms. N. Hehir,  
Ms. J. Hassett, Ms. B. Hassett,  
Mr. J. Drennan



Guidance Counsellor  
Ms. Claire Kenny



Cárde Co-ordinators  
Ms. Louise Brennan & Ms. Maria Doorly



TY Coordinator Mr. Nolan with TY Tutors  
Ms. Kenny, Mr. Lonergan & Ms. Dewane



# SCHOOL CURRICULUM

## JUNIOR CYCLE

There are three options available to students:

Regular Junior Certificate  
Junior Certificate Schools Programme  
J.C.A.

## Examination Subjects

Art, Craft & Design  
Business Studies  
Engineering  
English  
French  
Gaeilge  
Geography  
German  
History  
Home Economics  
Latin  
Materials Technology (Wood)  
Mathematics  
Music  
Science  
Technical Graphics

## Non Examination Subjects

Civic, Social & Political Education  
Computer Studies  
Physical Education  
Religious Education  
Speech & Drama  
Social, Personal and Health Education (S.P.H.E.)



Practical Achievement Task by LCA student



Technical Graphics



Science



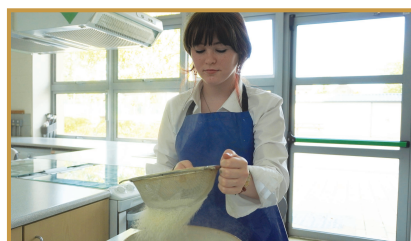
Woodwork



Art



Physics



Home Economics



Engineering

# SCHOOL CURRICULUM

## SENIOR CYCLE

Senior Cycle students have four options available:

Transition Year  
Regular Leaving Certificate  
Leaving Certificate Applied  
Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme

## Examination Subjects

Accounting  
Agricultural Science  
Applied Maths  
Art  
Biology  
Business  
Chemistry  
Construction Studies  
Design & Communication Graphics  
Engineering  
English  
French  
Gaeilge  
Geography  
German  
History  
Home Economics  
Latin  
Mathematics  
Music  
Link Modules  
Physical Education  
Physics

## Non Examination Subjects

Career Guidance  
Computer Studies  
Religious Education  
Physical Education



Technology

## FURTHER INFORMATION

### LCA (Leaving Cert Applied)

This programme is a distinct, self-contained two-year Leaving Certificate Programme. It prepares students for the demanding transition to adult and working life and recognises the talents of all students. Students are provided with opportunities to develop in terms of responsibility, self-esteem and self-knowledge. It enhances their communication and decision making skills and helps students achieve a more independent and enterprising approach to learning and life.

### TRANSITION YEAR

Transition Year is a stand alone year, between 3rd Year and 5th Year, where students undertake a wide selection of subjects in a modular format. This helps students choose the correct set of subjects for their Leaving Certificate. Added to this academic exposure is the opportunity to build their interpersonal skills, social awareness skills and personal confidence. Students undertake the important Microsoft Office Specialist, Disability Sports Inclusion Programme, Drive for Life programme, President's Gaisce Awards, Kayaking, JP2 Awards, Self-Defence and County Enterprise competition. Studies have shown that students who have taken the Transition Year Programme have a higher grade point average in the LC. (Scoring 30 points more)  
(The TY Programme – An Assessment by the ESRI 2004)

### DISCIPLINE

Our system is based on Christian values. The emphasis is on the development of self discipline and respect for others. Our Code of Conduct is drawn up with a view to ensuring good order and good discipline which in turn facilitate effective teaching and learning.

### CAREER GUIDANCE/COUNSELLING

The school has a Guidance Counsellor who together with other staff members provide comprehensive career guidance and education support programmes to students.

### LEARNING SUPPORT

The school has fully qualified Special Education and Learning Support teachers who have a very effective Educational Support Programme in operation. Specialist intervention can prove very valuable for students who have lost out or have fallen behind in a particular subject.

### CHAPLAIN

The school has a fully qualified Chaplain who works in conjunction with the Guidance Counsellor and Student Support Team and is always available to liaise with students, parents/guardians.

### PASTORAL CARE

Pastoral Care is the responsibility of all teachers particularly the Year Heads who co-ordinate the work of the Class Tutor. Each class has its own Class Tutor who takes a special interest in the general wellbeing and academic progress of each student in his/her class.

### PUBLIC SPEAKING

Our school has a long and noteworthy record in the art of public speaking. For many years, students have been actively involved in various exercises which promote eloquent public speaking, self confidence and success. Each year, First Year students are introduced to the concept of public speaking and given a grounding in the basics required for effective communication.



Mr. P. Bennett & Ms S. Gleeson, Learning Support Co-ordinators, liaise with parents, staff and Department of Education and Skills personnel to ensure that the resources are put in place



School Chaplain, Ms. Kathleen Gleeson & Fr. Pat Kiernan, P.P.



Our team of Special Needs Assistants:  
Mr. Robert O'Donoghue, Ms. Maura Feehan,  
Ms. Bernie Ryan & Ms. Siobhan Claffey



Student Support: Mr. P. Bennett, Ms. K. Gleeson,  
Ms. P. Keegan, Ms. M. Morkan, Ms. L. Kinahan.  
Missing: Ms. C. Kenny & Mr. D. Shanahan



# CODE OF BEHAVIOUR

The purpose of schooling should be to teach young people to teach themselves – how to live, how to work, how to direct their lives, how to shoulder responsibility. School Rules and Regulations must have this as their objective. Unless we discipline ourselves we cannot achieve our goals; young people must learn the value of discipline if they are to succeed. Students are expected to show respect for themselves and for all other members of the school community. Our Code of Behaviour is one that is based on the recognition of the student as an individual and yet creates an environment in which the welfare of all is protected.

## CÁIRDE

The Cáirde group consists of Transition Years who are willing to act as mentors to help incoming First Years integrate into their new school. As well as meeting in small groups, the Transition Years involved organise social events throughout the year.

## PARENTS' ASSOCIATION

Parents are elected from each district. The main aim of the Association is to promote the education and general welfare of the students of the school and to encourage parental involvement in the education of their children.

## STUDENT COUNCIL

The school has an active Student Council, whose main purpose is improving the quality of life for students and staff. They meet regularly with the aim of making the school a better place for all.

## Board of Management

Lily Kinahan, Damian Shanahan, Laura McDowall, Kevin Jordan, Sean Duggan, Sr. Goretti, Miriam Mullery, Adrian Staunton, John Carroll, Jim Cashen, Clare Claffey, Mary D'Alton.



Head Boys & Head Girls  
Emily Cormican, Orla Moylan, Eric Rigney and Ruairí Kelly



TY Cairde Leaders



Student Council



Outside Seating Area



# EXTRA CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES INCLUDE

An Chumann Gaelach

Aptitude Tests

Art Competitions

Athletics

Assemblies

Badminton

Basketball

Cáirde

Camogie

Career Talks

Carol Singing - School Choir

Charity Events

Computer Competitions

Cross Country Running

Drama & School Show

Educational Trips

Enterprise Education

Evening Study

"Excel" Awards

First Aid

Football

Foreign Trips

German School Exchange

Golf

Graduation

Green Schools - Awarded Second

Green Flag, Theme: Energy

Guest Speakers

Guitar

Hurling

Internet Safety

(Programme/Talks)

JP2 Awards

Karate

Ladies Football

Mock Interviews

Pantomime

Personal Development Course

Public Speaking

Quizzes

Retreats

Science Week

School Bank

Soccer

Speech & Drama

Student Council

Study Skills Seminars

Substance Abuse Seminars

Talent Show

Transition Year Activities

Tráth na gCeist

University Open Days

Young Entrepreneurs

Well Being



Senior Ladies Football Squad



Senior Ladies Camogie Squad



1st Year Boys at LOETB County Sports Day



U20 Boys Relay Team win Gold at LOETB County Sports Day



2nd Year Hurling Squad



Students competed in the Senior Leinster Schools Golf Competition.



# TRANSITION YEAR



TY students kayaking on the Shannon



TY's students team building day



TY Gaisce hike to Shannon Harbour



TY Gaisce hike in Portumna Forest Park



TY students enjoying Killary Adventure Centre



## S.T.E.A.M. ROOM

The school has recently added a S.T.E.A.M. (Science Technology Engineering Arts and Maths) room to provide a hub for digital learning and creativity in the school. Among other things, the room is used for various coding workshops facilitated by the school's S.T.E.A.M. Team.

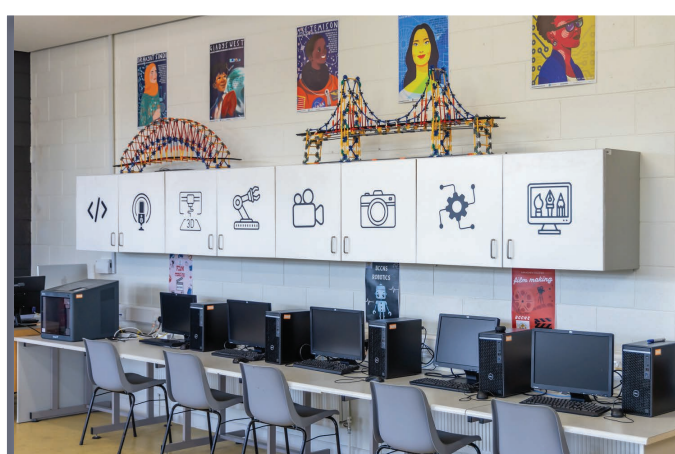
The room is equipped with state of the art digital equipment, including a full suite of Microbits and accessories, Vex Robotics kits, Sphero programmable robots, a 3D Printer and much more. The S.T.E.A.M. room also houses a video production studio, with green screen and 360 degree cameras, as well as Oculus Quest Virtual Reality.

The latest addition to the room is a fully equipped Podcast studio, called the 'Bog Pod Studio' where student teams use state-of-the-art equipment to record and share podcast content covering a range of subjects and themes. The studio has quickly become one of the most popular parts of the S.T.E.A.M. room.

The S.T.E.A.M. room is also used as a home for the School Digital Champion teams and School Robotics team, as well as being the base classroom for the TY Digital Technology curriculum. The purpose of the continuing development of the room is to provide further opportunities for students to develop a range of 21st Century digital skills. Recently the room has become home to the school's popular S.T.E.A.M. Club, where students can engage with various S.T.E.A.M. projects at lunch-time.



Members of the STEAM Club. Students are involved with robotics film-making coding and podcasting



S.T.E.A.M. Room

## EUROPEAN DIGITAL SCHOOL AWARDS

In 2023, Banagher College achieved a European Digital Schools Award as recognition for its achievements in using digital technologies to enhance both teaching and learning, as well as the overall student experience in the school.

After a rigorous judgement process, Banagher College was awarded all six categories in the competition for the work that has taken place as part of the School's Digital Strategy. Not only did the school get awarded all categories, but the school – thanks to its dedicated Digital Learning Team – is now also recognised as a mentor school, offering site visits and supports to other schools seeking to replicate the success of Banagher College in the area of digital technology use.



Mr. O'Brien, Ms. Kinahan & students being presented with Digital School Award



# WHAT YOUR NEW SCHOOL WILL OFFER

This school has been built to optimum size to benefit from the additional resources made available by the Department of Education and Skills.

The building includes state-of-the-art facilities and equipment such as 4 Science Laboratories, 2 Home Economics Rooms, 2 Art/Craft Rooms, P.E. Hall, Fitness Suite, etc. and will offer a top class atmosphere which will undoubtedly foster positive learning and development.

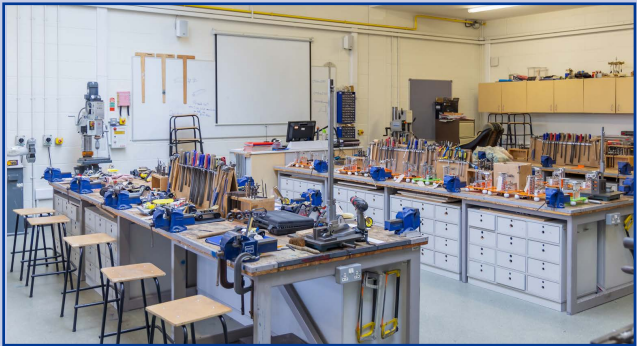
The management and staff of the school carry a wealth of experience and talent to the new school.

The level of pastoral care is excellent. Every student will be cared for in areas of both academic and personal development.

The subject choice and all individual areas of strength are catered for.

All aspects of extra curricular activities will be enhanced greatly including sports, public speaking and drama. Every individual or team-based activity will enjoy a wide ranging pool of talent and everyone will be encouraged to participate.

Supervised evening study is available for all students  
4.00pm - 6.00pm Monday to Thursday.  
2.50pm - 4.50pm Friday.



Engineering Room at Banagher College



French Room at Banagher College



Art Room at Banagher College



Canteen at Banagher College



6th Year students help out in Lourdes with Oblate Youth Service



Leaving Cert Geography field trip to Co. Clare



Leaving Certificate Geography field trip



5th & 6th Year Art Students visit Newgrange



# What you will find different in Banagher College Coláiste na Sionna

- Subject Options
- Pastoral Care Structure - Year Head, Class Tutor
- Caring Environment

## FIRST YEARS' IMPRESSIONS

In a recent survey the First Years were asked to give their impressions of their first term as students in Banagher College Coláiste na Sionna.

The following quotations are flavours of their responses - What Students' Like:

- Canteen, changing teachers and classroom every hour.
- The size of the building and helpful teachers.
- Subjects, atmosphere and size.
- The breaks are long and you can be with whoever you want outside or inside.
- That we get a taster of all the subjects before we pick our options.
- Meeting new friends and the options classes.
- Being able to hurl for the school.
- The teachers are very nice and helpful.
- That if you need any help they will explain it to you in a way that you understand.
- All the activities that we are offered.
- I like how clean the school is and I like the new subjects.
- Moving around, sport, clean, helpful staff, canteen.
- The school is clean, good sport, the canteen is good and is easy to get around.
- The lockers so we don't have to take our books everywhere.



Inclusion Areas



First Year Students receiving some Digital Training & Guidance



Cairde Leaders meeting with 1st Year students



1st Year Students



# TECHNOLOGY AT BANAGHER COLLEGE

Technology is now at the centre of the learner experience at Banagher College. The school prides itself on its ability to use the growing array of educational tech tools available to enhance the quality of the learner experience. The Microsoft 365 suite of software, with Microsoft Teams and Onenote at its centre, has become a crucial tool to assist teaching and learning for students in the school.

This digital transition, where the power of technology is harnessed to make the student experience even more engaging and rewarding, has led to digital technology being embedded across all our subject departments.

As well as our new S.T.E.A.M. room, which functions as the centre of digital learning in the school, each classroom is also fitted with state-of-the-art wireless technology – allowing seamless technology-driven interaction between students and teachers. The school also houses three fully functioning computer labs and a DCG suite, which are complemented by class sets of laptops and ipads.

This year's First Year cohort are the second group to be part of the next stage in the digital development of Banagher College. They have begun their school journey with their own digital learning devices, which they use to assist their learning and development in the school. The many benefits of students having their own educational specific learning devices are clear: everything from the advantages of using e-books; to giving students more autonomy over their own learning; to building their digital skills to prepare them for the digital workplace and society of the future. This group joins our second years as they lead the way to Banagher College becoming a fully 1:1 school (one device per student) as part of the school's Digital Learning Strategy.

More information on this initiative is available on the school website ([BCCNS.ie](http://BCCNS.ie))



German Exchange Students visit Hohenschwangau Castle



German Exchange Students visit Munich Townhall





## SCHOOL LIBRARY IS CENTRAL AND INTEGRAL PART OF SCHOOL LIFE

At Banagher College, we are very proud of our library, which is a central and integral part of our school life. Just this year, we received the coveted 'Wellread' award from the PDST, which recognises our school as a provider and enhancer of an embedded culture of reading. All our students, through their English teacher, are provided with the opportunity to visit our library regularly and are actively encouraged to choose books that develop their literacy, imagination and reading. We believe there is a book for every student and our library is continually updated with stock, which is both relevant and enticing to all our readers. Reading is a school-wide culture in Banagher College, where we encourage every student to create a habit of reading that has life-long benefits.



Ms. Kinahan & Mr. Shanahan welcomed back to the school some students who received over 500 points in their Leaving Cert 2023



## PARENTS/GUARDIANS OF 6TH CLASS STUDENTS

*"Our aim in education is to contribute towards the development of all aspects of the individual. Our dedicated and enthusiastic staff strive to ensure that all students who attend Banagher College go on to fulfil their potential, developing into mature and responsible adults along the way."*

Important information for Parents/Guardians and  
6th Class Students can be found at **[www.bccns.ie](http://www.bccns.ie)**

### Important Links

Annual Admission Notice

Application Form of Admission

Admissions Policy

Subject Options

BCCNS Twitter

Promoting Positive Mental Health

Extra Curricular Activities

Gallery of Recent Events

Department of Education Whole School Inspection Report

BCCNS College Awareness Week

For more information or if you wish to make an appointment  
to visit the school please contact us on

**Ph:** (057) 9151323

**Email:** [admin@bccns.ie](mailto:admin@bccns.ie)





## DATES FOR YOUR DIARY 2023

Applications open: Friday 20th October 2023

Applications close: Friday 10th November 2023

Notification from the School: by Friday 1st December 2023

Acceptance/Enrolment: Friday 15th December 2023



Banagher College Coláiste na Sionna, Banagher, Co. Offaly

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